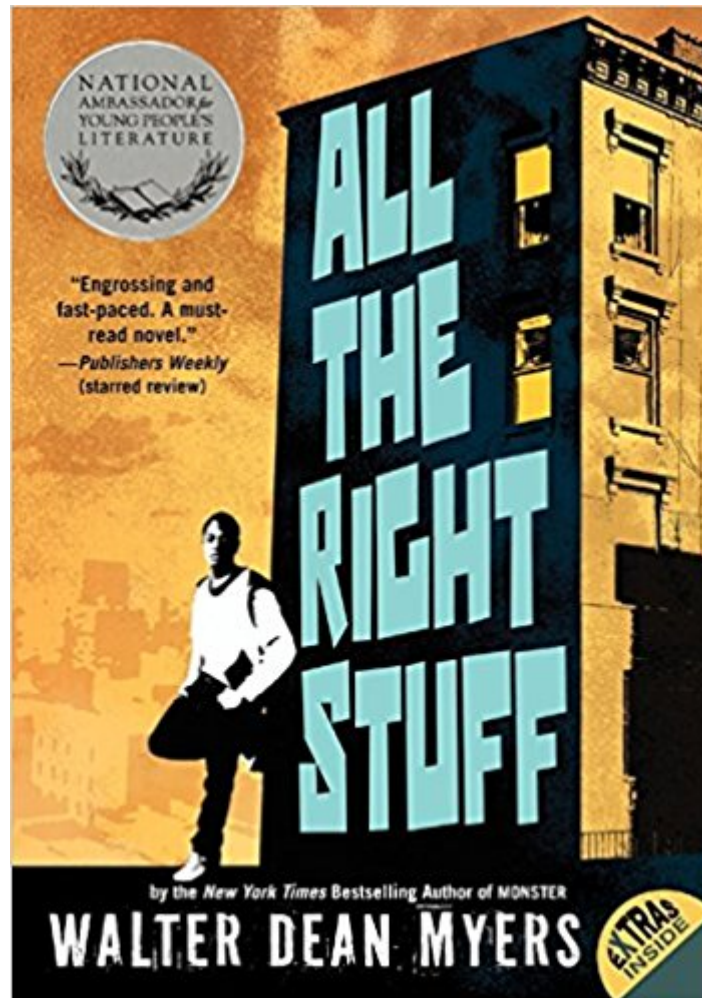




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All The Right Stuff



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Walter Dean Myers tackles the social contract from a teen's perspective in his novel *All the Right Stuff*. In one of his most thought-provoking novels to date, Myers weaves together political philosophy, basketball, and making soup in Harlem, with the depth that defines his writing career. After his father is shot and killed, Paul Dupree finds a summer job at a Harlem soup kitchen. Elijah, the soup man, questions Paul about tough life choices, even though Paul would rather be playing basketball. Over the summer, Paul begins to understand the importance of taking control of your life. All the Right Stuff includes a Q&A between Walter Dean Myers and Ross Workman, coauthor of *Kick*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Myers has cooked up a provocative novel that simmers long after its last pages. (Chicago Sun-Times) Engrossing and fast-paced | a must-read novel. (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) Rewarding. A good fit for school libraries in which the social contract is taught or emphasized. (School Library Journal) Begins with a bang. (Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA))

For Paul DuPree, life is about to get real. Paul is just coasting after his dad is shot and killed. Elijah won't stop talking about philosophy and how it affects Paul's life. Keisha has crazy basketball skills . . . and a baby daughter at home. Sly may be sleazy, may be wise. He's the

Harlem dude who sees the "social contract" as a tool to keep the poor down. This summer is about more than getting by. It's about taking charge of your life.

Having read many of Mr. Myers's books, I have come to expect the unexpected. This particular book was among the most unexpected in that it dealt with a lot of philosophical issues as they relate to city life for teens. There were many times I just wished to meet Mr. Myers one more time to talk about the contents of the book. This was one of the few YA books that has made me think long and deeply about the content. He delves into the ideas of Hobbs, Thoreau, and Rousseau and their place in the modern world. Answers are not readily available, but the questions sure are. This book is designed to make the readers think about the world and their place in it. It would be a great book for discussion of characters and people as well as how we come to believe as we do. If you get the chance to read the book, your experience will be heightened if you have the chance to talk about the book or at least its ideas with someone else.

Social contract is about the values you have as a person, the way you live your life in society, knowing how you want to treat people & how you would expect to be treated. Also realizing that there are consequences for the choices you make in life. It's about how you view the world and those in it. Also, knowing that life is not always fair. Sometimes we do the right thing but things don't always turn out the way we expect them too I think it is good reading material for young & old alike.

Although the book does indeed shed light on an important concept - the social contract - it is far too predictable in its telling. It's shameful that you have to wait until literally the last two pages to get the resolve to the character's dilemma. From an adult standpoint I felt I had gotten suckered into the bait-and-switch. I wanted to buy what the author was selling but I didn't want to have to sit through the pitch.

Fabulous. Very happy with item and service

I loved Walter Dean Myers, but this book made me wonder if he was losing his creative edge towards the end of his life. Myers is renowned for creating characters and plots that adolescents will find interesting and relevant, but the majority of this story is neither. As another reviewer mentioned, the majority of this book takes the form of debate between the main character, Paul, his mentor Elijah, and Elijah's all-too-obvious foil, Sly. Even as an adult reader, I found these debates a bit

tedious--I can't imagine how bored my high school students would be. Their insistence on debating the social contract makes all of the characters simply stand-ins for particular ideas with little personality of their own. The plot, such as it is, is almost entirely in the service of the sociopolitical commentary; plot twists are mandated by what idea of social contract Elijah is currently discussing. The manslaughter that opens the novel and the inexplicable appearance of an Uzi at the plot's climax are thrown in to add a bit of action, but are so disconnected from the plot as a whole that they do little to hold the reader's attention. Finally, I think Myers does his community a disservice by, in the end, insisting that the social contract is the answer to all Harlem's woes...He acknowledges that life is harder for some folks than others, but shrugs off the idea that something in society might be deliberately unjust or that systemic racism still exists. I like his message education is essential for helping people get out of the situations that they're in, but I disagree that simply learning to play by the rules is enough to lift his community out of the situation that White America historically placed it in.

Walter Dean Myers is a renowned young adult author, who is known for his emotional and powerful novels that truly showcase the inner turmoil of a character. With books like *Monster* and *Falling Angels*, Myers really showed his writing power through his expression of words through the pages of many of his other books. With this in mind, I am truly a little surprised with this new book, *All The Right Stuff*. A very thought provoking, intellectual piece of writing, however it exhibited very little in the area of plot, which isn't something that is true in his books that I've read. In *All the Right Stuff*, a young man named Paul begins with a social contract from the people around him. A major part of the this novel, was the theory of the social contract, a longtime debate on a person's natural and legal rights. The social contract debate has been going on for a long time and it's Paul's turn to try and decipher the true meaning. To be honest three fourth's of the book is the overall debate, over the social contract, leaving very little room the development of the plot. While his writing style and flow of the book went along nicely, I just feel like the storyline really didn't grow into something bigger. With most of the characters being dry and static, I found it very hard to connect with the book and its characters. From a learning stand point, of trying to learn something about the social contract, I would say that the book did a very good job. On an entertaining factor, however, I would say that the book didn't really make me crave reading it, like most of his novels do. - Joshua

This is the question addressed by this engaging and important new book from Myers. The social contract is a concept that runs through the heart of the book and it's the discussions and

conclusions that the main characters draws from his Socratic inquiries that will keep you thinking about the book long after you've finished. We often lament what we see as a kind of triviality in the entertainment and thinking of young people. All The Right Stuff is an excellent way to engage kids in the questions that matter now more than ever. Though some of the conclusions in the book will seem harsh, one of the solutions-active citizenship-is an idea whose time has definitely come. Highly Recommended for ages 11 and up.

Great story!!! I plan to use this in my classroom author study this year. I would definitely recommend this title.

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