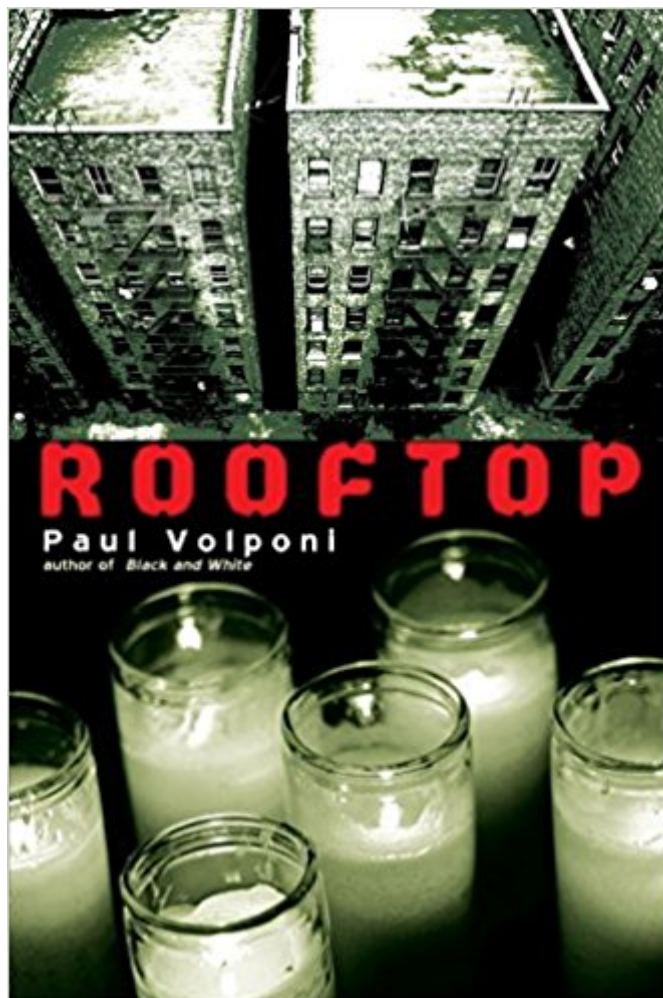




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Rooftop



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Synopsis

Cousins Clay and Addison were like brothers, growing up together in the projects, until they were ripped apart by a family argument. When they are reunited in a drug-treatment program, they try to work out their issues like a family. But one night, one wrong decision, leaves Clay shaken and Addison dead. And in the rash of events that follow, the truth of what actually happened on the rooftop of the apartment building is caught up in a clash of politics and racial issues. Will Clay be able to rise above the lies and face the truth?

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up
Clay, 17, a pot abuser, and his cousin Addison, 18, a crack dealer, both attend Daytop, a day-treatment program in New York City. At one time close, then separated by a family feud, the teens are now working through their problems together. Their parents have just begun to put their dispute behind them when Clay sees Addison shot by the police on the rooftop of the projects where he lived and the incident becomes the focal point of a campaign for racial justice. The pace of the story slows a little just before the shooting, but quickly picks up as the community rallies around the perceived injustice. Delving into the psychological trauma of Clay and the comparison of how he and Addison's younger brother deal with the killing, the author gives readers

a realistic look at individuals, family dynamics, and moral dilemmas. The raw language is in keeping with the story's events. Parallels can be drawn between this fast-paced novel and Walter Dean Myers's *Monster* (HarperCollins, 1999), and a classroom unit could easily be developed about the treatment of minorities within the U.S. justice system. The many facets of life in the projects are revealed through excellent character development, which enables this novel to shine. --Dylan Thomarie, Johnstown High School, NY Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Starred Review Gr. 8-11. After Clay makes some poor choices, his parents enroll him in a drug program and day school for teens, and now he is clean and studying for the GED. Then his first cousin, Addison, is admitted to the same program, where the childhood buddies reconnect. Drug-dealer Addison may have been "into shit on the streets," but Clay finds much to admire in his cousin, who is confident, funny, and caring. Their reunion is cut short when Addison is killed by a cop on a project rooftop, with Clay as a witness. Here Volponi's intimate, detailed story of the challenges facing poor, urban youth swells to encompass broader racial and political realities: Addison was a black teen killed by a white officer, and the ensuing investigation becomes a focus for activists protesting the arguably corrupt justice system. Under pressure, Clay lies about Addison's role in the shooting. He cannot undo the lie, but he begins to seek redemption in smaller ways. Despite some overdone symbolism, this thoughtfully crafted, deceptively simple story knits together a high-interest plot, a readable narrative crackling with street slang, and complex personal and societal issues that will engage teen readers. --B Holly Koelling Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

great

I really enjoy Paul Volponi and read everything I can by him. This book was not one of my favorites though. While it was well written, it just didn't have the inner-city feel of his usual books.

It was okay.

book was in awesome condition and perfect for my library. i appreciate your accurate description of this item I received.

I've recently finished *Rooftop* by Paul Volponi. This book is about two cousins named Clay and Addison who are reunited in a drug-treatment program called Daytop, after being split up as kids due to an argument between Clay's mother and Addison's mother. Well, once they are reunited at this program despite Clay's drug problem and Addison's drug selling problem, their relationship becomes tight that they're actually like brothers more than cousins. While in this program, attending everyday, Clay knows better than not to smoke weed, but Addison doesn't and keeps selling weed on the corner, which leads him to owe his "supplier" \$300 after he gets jumped by five members of a gang who steal his weed. Addison tries to get the money by illegally gambling but is discovered by Officer Henry who takes all the money away. Not seeing the kid (Clorox) who owes him the money, for a couple of days, he sees him one night, while walking with Clay, which leads him to the rooftop of a building, losing Clorox. Trying to walk down the stairs from the rooftop, holding his wallet like a gun, opens the door and yells BAM BAM, thinking Clorox was there but instead he is shot by the police and is killed on the rooftop, with only Clay watching. The killing of an African-American by a white police officer named Watisick causes a huge buzz in the hood in which people think that it was a racial killing. Despite Clay's untrue story about Addison being killed by the police after trying to "show his ID", for some reason after thinking that Watisick would serve up to 15 years in prison, the DA found a way to tell the story to a grand jury of mostly black people so they'd vote that it wasn't even close enough to being a crime to have a trial over, (from the book) which makes Clay breakdown after all this tragedy. After reading this book it lead me to think that all these events only took place because of money and weed. The reason why Clay was in the drug-treatment program was because he got addicted to weed so much that his grades dropped a lot and he started cutting school everyday to just to smoke weed with his friends. But most of all this all occurred because of money. The reason Addison sold weed on the corner was because he wanted money but before he got shot, he told Clay to promise him to get his brother Darrel to quit selling dugs. And the reason Darrel sold drugs was because he was selfish, he didn't care about anyone else, he just cared about the money, but he is later convinced by Clay and his own father that he shouldn't sell drugs, finding it out the hard way. Overall, Addison's death could've been prevented if he didn't sell drugs

Once again Paul Volponi shows how he is the king of urban fiction. I dive into his books knowing that I'm going to meet unforgettable characters. The people in ROOFTOP are no exception. The events and characters may be completely fiction - but you'd never know it. Long after I shut this book and Volponi's other books I'm thinking about what his characters have experienced. I dare anyone to pick up this book or any other Volponi book and not find that you care - but even more important that you are altered in a way that helps you see the world in a different light - that maybe, just maybe perceptions, stereotypes, attitudes are set aside and an altered view creeps into the very core of who you are. Hopefully the next time you see on the news or read about a troubled YA, you'll remember these books and carry some of the core messages so deeply conveyed about poverty, drug abuse, family, and racism. I think that Volponi has that kind of talent with his writing - something I admire deeply. As a teacher, I have always felt blessed to reach my students, to find through different means that I've made a difference. The joy of writing (and doing it in an exceptional way) is the ability to have a greater global impact. This is Volponi!

In ROOFTOP, Clay, arrested for drug possession, is enrolled in a special program called Daytop. It's for teens on parole. Kids report to the Daytop Center during the day where counselors (recovering drug offenders themselves) run a strict program complete with a philosophy statement, chores and responsibilities, study time for the GED, and a sense of family most of the kids are missing. At Daytop, Clay runs into a cousin he hasn't seen in awhile. The two are happy to be back together, but there is tension because Addison still lives in the projects and is actively involved in some nasty stuff. Clay's goal is to get free of drugs and make something of himself. His father is his role-model. Clay's dad has been able to beat the odds and build a laundry business from scratch and move his family out of the housing projects to the other side of the street. His dream is to see Clay not only earn his GED, but also go on to college. Even though Clay's home life is better than Addison's, he is still surrounded by less desirable elements on the streets and in school. He struggles to stay clean and pass his urine/drug tests. Another run-in for smoking pot and he'll be in jail for real. Running with Addison one night, Clay ends up on a rooftop chasing Clorox, who owes Addison money. Clorox gets away, but when the two cousins try to follow him, they are met by the police. Thinking the cops are really Clorox and his gang, Addison grabs his wallet and fakes that it is a gun. The cops open fire, and Addison is hit by a fatal shot in the chest. Having a seemingly innocent kid shot by the cops doesn't sit well in the projects. Family and friends are out to get the guilty cop sent to jail. The entire community becomes involved in trying to settle the score. Volponi

draws the reader into the tough lives of his characters. Vivid action and rough language paint a clear picture of life on the inner city streets. Reviewed by: Sally Kruger, aka "Readingjunky"

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