

# Contents

Introduction: Caviar, College, Coupons, and Cheese  
*Felice Yeskel* | 1

## PART I. POOR AND LOW INCOME

Cleaning Up the Trash: Fighting Shame *Linda Stout* | 17

North American Peasant *Fisher Lavell* | 22

I Work with Worn-Out Tools *Janet Lightfoot* | 29

Mexican Girl from Fontana *Geneva Reynaga-Abiko* | 32

What They Say about Poor Girls *Stephanie Jones* | 38

Better Than *Patience Rage* | 43

No Yellow Tickets: The Stigma of Poverty in  
the School Lunch Line *Wendy Williams* | 48

## PART II. WORKING CLASS

### *Reflections*

Those of Us from Rio Linda *Dwight Lang* | 59

The Cost of Passing *John Rosario-Perez* | 62

The Floors of the Met *Karen Estrella* | 67

Washroom Class Politics *Timothy Harris* | 72

Artichokes *N. Jeanne Burns* | 75

Here's How to Drive the Poor Crazy *Michaelann Bewsee* | 81

Red Datsun Security *Karen Spector* | 89

### ***Working Class and College***

A Box from My Grandfather *Janet Casey* | 92

Vacuum Cleaner Truth *Sierra Fleenor* | 96

I Am Working Class *Michelle M. Tokarczyk* | 100

Hitting the Academic Class Ceiling *K. Stricker* | 105

Blue-Collar Heart, Ivy League World  
*Jennifer O'Connor Duffy* | 108

Between Scarcity and Plenty *Camisha Jones* | 113

A Nuyorican's Journey to Higher Education: Toward Meritocracy or Internalized Classism? *Jim Bonilla* | 117

My Parents' Hands Are on My Back *Christine Overall* | 124

## **PART III. MIDDLE CLASS**

“Better Be Street”: My Adventures in Cross-Class Romance *Polly Trout* | 129

It's Who You Know and How You Talk *Betsy Leondar-Wright* | 133

Childhood Friendship: When Class Didn't Matter  
*Pamela Burrows* | 139

Finding Myself in the Middle *Monica Crumback* | 142

A Privileged Path in a Class-Shattered World *Anne Ellinger* | 146

Oreo? A Black American Experience *John Vaughn* | 150

Class Is Always with Us *Kyle Harris* | 156

## PART IV. OWNING CLASS

Born on Third Base *Chuck Collins* | 165

Money Was Never a Worry *Catherine Orland* | 172

The Women Who Cared for My Grandparents  
*Sarah Burgess* | 178

What Was It Like Growing Up Owning-Class?  
*Jennifer Ladd* | 181

A Day of Traveling across the Class Spectrum  
*Charlotte Redway* | 185

Social Capital *Sally Gottesman* | 188

## PART V. MIXED CLASS

Coming Clean *April Rosenblum* | 193

Ferragamos: A Cross-Class Experience *Zoe Greenberg* | 198

Girl Scout Green *Mariah Boone* | 202

Living beyond Class: My Journey from Haiti  
to Harvard *Jacques Fleury* | 206

Afterword: The Power of Story *Chuck Collins* | 211

About the Contributors | 215

Resources | 227

About Class Action | 229



# Class Lives

