



Discount: A Novel

Casey Gray

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Set in the American Southwest, forty miles north of Juárez, Casey Gray's ambitious, tragicomic, and ultimately redemptive novel follows a group of customers and employees through the twenty-four hour work cycle as they seek comfort and sustenance inside of the cinderblock walls of a classic American institution—The Superstore.

On the eve of the company president's visit to the store, a manager's drunk text to a coworker leads to a series of consequences as brutal as they are wide-ranging: Everyone around him will be affected.

With a cast of characters featuring Ernesto, a local gang member struggling to choose a job pushing carts over a desultory life as a drug dealer; Wilma, a grandmother working double shifts to support her family; and Keith, a high school student with a penchant for filmmaking, Gray offers a startlingly humane, utterly contemporary portrait of life on the suburban fringe.

A vision of an America barely getting by and assaulted by crime, corruption, and exploitation in all of its manifestations, *Discount* is nevertheless a triumphant and big-hearted novel that marks the arrival of a new voice we won't soon forget.

Discount: A Novel Details

Date : Published April 14th 2015 by Harry N. Abrams (first published April 9th 2015)

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Author : Casey Gray

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From Reader Review Discount: A Novel for online ebook

Jenn Kurrie says

#8/2016 ... The first novel from a creative writing teacher at New Mexico State University was clearly working through a lot of themes (superstores are bad, low wage workers are suffering, discrimination (age/race/sexual orientation) that often collided into one another abruptly. There isn't one character that wasn't deeply flawed due to their own choices and the book ends with them in an equally bad place as the beginning. Way too many characters to keep straight, which made it hard to keep my attention.

Catherine Martin says

I didn't like the beginning of this book and didn't think it was worth finishing. The first couple of chapters read like a catalog of all the worst WalMart employee stereotypes - the lazy one, the high one, the star employee, etc. I didn't see it getting any better, so I gave up.

Kylah says

I really enjoyed this book! If you're sensitive to foul language might not be the book for you. The social satire was just so dang funny!

Theresa says

This first novel is for lovers of social satire by the likes of T.C. Boyle and Carl Hiassen. Set in a SuperStore in New Mexico, the author follows the employees' lives for a few days. The store gossip mill is rife with buzz about the coming visit of Ken Provost, the current CEO. Although slow to start, the novel did pick up and ended with a bang. I appreciated and used the SuperStore organizational chart to keep all the plot lines straight. You'll never look at WalMart the same again!

Lori says

stuck with it and regret it. had hoped it would show characters who were quirky and likable similar to Billie Letts, home is where the heart is. unfortunately the characters were awful and you don't care what happens to them

Hanna Etu says

I was miserable reading a lot of this book. It is eloquently written and the characters are vivid and human,

but I didn't feel I could personally connect with any of them. At moments some of the characters were too strange or terrible to believe and the descriptions of events were gratuitously grotesque. I kept reading because I found myself wanting to know what happened to the characters and because the writing was compelling. However, while I am someone who works in editing, so I'm used to looking for mistakes, there were numerous obvious typos and errors that became distracting (and I read the final book, not the advance reading copy). I think the author has a lot of talent, however, I was frustrating in finding that I could tell, while I was reading it, that it was a man writing the book. Our selves will always be a part of our writing, that's just a fact, but I felt somewhat unsatisfied with some of the women characters in the book. Perhaps that was the point, but I'm just tired of women in books, television, and movies (**some vague SPOILERS ahead**) being used as plot devices for themes such as harassment, sexual violence, and pregnancy. I think it is props to the author that this book made me feel something, even if it was misery. If I'd really hated it, I wouldn't have finished it. The fact that I'm compelled to think and talk about it this much means something.

Laurie says

I'd describe this as hyper-real satire. It was too real for me, with a lot of depressing situations and characters. It was well written, and lot of the characters and scenes will stick with me, but I like a little less gritty capitalist realism in my pleasure reading.

Louie Haltom says

good book

PfromJ says

4.5 stars. Yow -- like looking at a drop of water through a microscope. Casey Gray can really write, and I can't wait for more.

Rita Mahan says

Started out loving this book about a day in the lives of various people employed at a "MegaStore". Since I've always hated the way corporate america works, I found this hilarious in many ways. Unfortunately about the middle of the book, everything seemed to slow down and lose my interest and I struggled to finish it.

Michael Martz says

This is an odd little novel. It's a 'day in the life' piece examining the customers, employees, managers, executives, and various other characters who work/shop/buy stuff/manage a thinly-disguised WalMart in the Southwest. It sort of reminds me, not sure why other than the 'day in the life' angle, of a couple of Kevin

Smith's films.

The writing is good and the dialogue is both real and often funny. However, my chief problem with the book is the lack of anything resembling a plot. The story is by turns funny and depressing, but it doesn't really go anywhere. Much happens during the day and we get a decent look into the lives of the many characters, but the mini-storylines, the most prominent of which is the potential visit by the Superstore's CEO, aren't enough to carry it.

Rock says

I can't think of a book I've read that has seemed as close to describing my life as this one. Although the plot is largely made up of unusual circumstances, the setting is everyday America described more accurately than I've ever seen it written. The author does a admirable job at keeping straight the voices of his diverse cast of characters, too, and it's funny to boot.

Phil says

A well-written and thoroughly enjoyable contemporary novel.

We all work. Like it or not, our work defines us. And yet often while reading we choose escapism, which is perhaps understandable (especially if you work with the public, like, say, at a Walmart . . .).

But Casey Gray's Discount offers up a different, richer form of escape: the chance to go deeply into the workaday world, only to emerge from the story seeing day-to-day life more perceptively, more sympathetically.

Looking forward to reading his next book.

Elle says

I had to think about this review. I guess the best way to describe this book is to cite a character from the book. They are talking and he says that he has an idea for a television show and then everyone from the show has a spin off even the minor characters. It is hard to keep track of all the characters in this book. But here's the thing, this is a real book. It is not hyperbolic, the Southwest is like this. There are no Ivy League Colleges and people have to motivate themselves to do better. There isn't as much to do. I can appreciate the Southwest coming from the Northeast but you have to get used to it. This book is a snapshot of this kind of world. You don't want to get smacked in the face by this kind of world but you do.

It is all about a Superstore. It is easy to surmise that they are talking about Walmart. There is a particular superstore in New Mexico that is dealing with the Limon clan, Amberlee a burned civilian coming from Iraq (They make her a cake. It's a lesson in irony.) Ron/Rich and his family although I don't see readily how they are related to the Superstore until the end. If you like dark and dry comedy filled with irony then this is the

book for you. I liked it because I have an appreciation for the truth of it but it's not my favorite.

Cathlin Gray says

Great book. Thought provoking.
