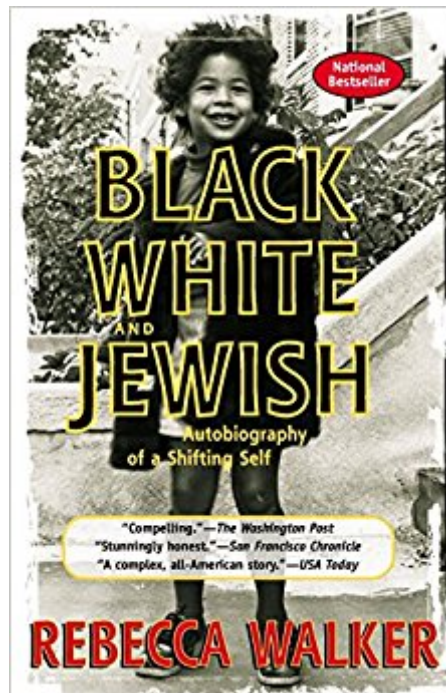




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# Black, White & Jewish: Autobiography Of A Shifting Self



## Synopsis

The Civil Rights movement brought author Alice Walker and lawyer Mel Leventhal together, and in 1969 their daughter, Rebecca, was born. Some saw this unusual copper-colored girl as an outrage or an oddity; others viewed her as a symbol of harmony, a triumph of love over hate. But after her parents divorced, leaving her a lonely only child ferrying between two worlds that only seemed to grow further apart, Rebecca was no longer sure what she represented. In this book, Rebecca Leventhal Walker attempts to define herself as a soul instead of a symbol<sup>151</sup> and offers a new look at the challenge of personal identity, in a story at once strikingly unique and truly universal.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The daughter of famed African American writer Alice Walker and liberal Jewish lawyer Mel Leventhal brings a frank, spare style and detail-rich memories to this compelling contribution to the growing subgenre of memoirs by biracial authors about life in a race-obsessed society. Walker examines her early years in Mississippi as the loved, pampered child of parents active in the Civil Rights movement in the bloody heart of the segregated South. Torn apart by the demands of their separate careers, her parents' union eventually lost steam and failed, leaving Walker to shuttle back and forth across country to spend time with them both. Deeply analytical and reflective, she assumes the resonant voices of an inquisitive child, a highly sensitive teen and finally a young woman who is confronted with the harsh color prejudices of her friends, teachers and families—both black and Jewish—and who tires desperately to make sense of rigid cultural boundaries for which

she was never fully prepared by her parents. Whether she's commenting on a white ballet teacher who doubts she'll ever be good because her black butt's too big, Jewish relatives who treat her like an alien, or a boyfriend who feels she's not black enough, Walker uses the same elegant, discreet candor she brings to her discussion of her mother and the development of her free-spirited sexuality. Her artfulness in baring her psyche, spirit and sexuality will attract a wealth of deserved praise. (Jan. 2) Forecast: Coming the heels of her mother's story collection, *The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart* (which offers a fictional treatment of Alice Walker's marriage to Leventhal), this literary debut by the younger Walker, who has been recognized by Time as one of her generation's leaders, is destined to generate excitement. Although Walker is likely to be compared to Lisa Jones (the daughter of Amiri Baraka and Jewish writer Hetty Jones), who tackled the myth of tragic mulatto in *Bullet Proof Diva* (1995), a collection of columns from the Village Voice, Walker's higher profile and narrative treatment of these themes will draw a wider audience who no doubt will greet her warmly on her 10-city tour. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Walker, the daughter of Alice Walker and attorney Mel Leventhal, shuttled among Mississippi, San Francisco, the Bronx, and Washington, DC, after her parents divorced. Here is her story of the need to redefine herself in each new setting. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rebecca grows up being the daughter of a black mother and a white, Jewish father. She has a wonderful family and experiences love all around her. One day her world comes crashing down as she is told by both her parents that they are getting a divorce. Rebecca and her mom move out of their wonderful home and into an apartment. Her life now changes drastically as she begins to notice that she is different from other kids. She doesn't fit into the white world and she doesn't fit into the black world so she decides that she is a child of the movement. Her mother lives in San Francisco and her father lives in New York. They decide that she will spend 2 years with one parent and 2 years with the other one. Her life changes drastically and she finds herself alone and lonely. Where does she belong? Is she black? Is she white? Her father marries a white lady and they have a white child. Her mother dates a black man. Rebecca ends up having white friends, black friends, hispanic friends and also finds herself being sexually active at a very young age because she seeks comfort. Her mother leaves her alone at home and she has to fend for herself. Her father ends up being disconnected to Rebecca and so that leaves her not knowing where she belongs. She

experiments with drugs and finds herself pregnant at fourteen. When she tells her mother, they both agree that an abortion is the best thing to do. Her struggles to find who she is and where she belongs prevail throughout the book but in the end she says, "I exist somewhere between black and white, family and friend. I am flesh and blood, yes, but I am also either." This book is worthwhile reading material. It allows the reader to go back and forth between cultures and races. We identify with Rebecca no matter what our race is. We feel what she feels and we understand what it is like to not know where you belong. Rebecca takes us on a journey to look inside of herself, her life, her love and her soul.

Excellent read!! Kept my attention. Rebecca Walker shares intimate details of her life between the white and black worlds she navigates. Sometimes funny, sometimes serious, but always captivating.

awesome product

Interesting book--made me think about things I have never thought about. I experience a struggle that I didn't have to live with and through. A great book of reflection and contemplation of who a person really is and how did they get that way.

The first book I originally ordered was ruined. Every other page was illegible because the quality of printing was blurry for every other page but hooked me up with a replacement within three days! Awesome! Good customer service ill say

Walker has an astonishing grasp of lived experience, which is complex, yet she writes with utter simplicity. She displays a grasp of childhood I envy, of the complexity of identity understood so simply that she communicates the true beauty of complex identity.

I bought this book expecting some insight into what it is to be black, white, and Jewish. Though Ms. Walker's memoir is well written and a quick read, it becomes apparent that her problems stem in majority not from being black, white, and Jewish, but from being the child of two divorced parents who do not seem to be particularly good or interested parents. Ms. Walker acts out from a very young age to parents who appear to be disinterested both in her behavior, but also in her education. It appears that Ms. Walker's largest problem is having two parents who expect her to raise herself,

rather than being seemingly responsible parents. Then that problem is complicated by being black, white, and Jewish. But, it leaves very uncertain what it would be like to be black, white, and Jewish with two parents who apparently were interested and were good, involved parents with a better custody sharing scheme than passing Ms. Walker back and forth every 2 years.

This book was well written and helped me capture Rebecca Walker's journey in consciousness.  
Ether, not blood binds us all

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