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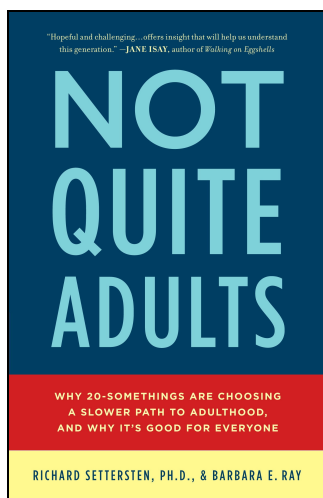
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NOT QUITE ADULTS

*Why 20-Somethings Are Choosing a Slower Path to Adulthood,
and Why It's Good for Everyone*

By

Richard Settersten, Ph.D., and Barbara E. Ray



Praise for NOT QUITE ADULTS

“A provocative look at how a changing reality is transforming the transition to adulthood for a generation of Americans, and the implications of this transformation in today’s competitive world.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Aside from enjoying a panoramic perspective on one generation, readers will be able to glean tips on everything from dating to parenting from this admirably lucid and fair-minded study that, in describing what is happening, reveals what is working.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“Amid all the outcry over young people stuck in adulescence and failing to launch comes this sensible portrait of a generation of almost-adults. Based on empirical research, and not hand-wringing punditry, Settersten and Ray reveal a new stage of development that slows the clock, but does not stop it, making slower, but steady progress to more durable relationships and stable social networks.”

—Michael Kimmel, author of *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*

We’ve been flooded with negative headlines about 20-somethings—from their sense of entitlement to their unwillingness to grow up to their attachment to their parents’ purse strings. The message is that these young people need to shape up and *grow* up—that they should take a fast track to adulthood just like their parents did.

But **NOT QUITE ADULTS: Why 20-Somethings Are Choosing a Slower Path to Adulthood, and Why It’s Good for Everyone** (Bantam Dell Trade Paper Original; December 28, 2010) by Richard Settersten, Ph.D. and Barbara E. Ray—the *only* commercial book to emerge from a decade of cutting-edge scientific research conducted by the MacArthur Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood on the challenges facing young adults today—offers a very different message, taking aim at our society’s widespread misperceptions about the causes and consequences of “delayed” adulthood.



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Informed by a massive body of research and more than 500 interviews with young people, **NOT QUITE ADULTS** shatters our current stereotypes, revealing that a slower transition to adulthood is actually a good thing in today's tough economy. This generation of young people is facing a very different world than their parents did, and for them, growing up too fast can be damaging. As the authors' research shows, adult kids who return home after college and delay marriage and child-rearing get a much better start in life than those who leave the nest too early, settling for low-paying jobs and having children too soon. In fact, unequal access to the resources that make this slower transition possible—including financial assistance, educational guidance, and social support networks—is deepening a class divide that will affect all of us, whether we're parents or not.

As Jane Isay, author of *Walking on Eggshells*, says, "In a world that is confused by 20-somethings, **NOT QUITE ADULTS** offers insight that will help us understand this generation. Hopeful and challenging, this book is a must-read for parents and policy makers alike."

More Praise for NOT QUITE ADULTS

"One of the most important functions of social science research is to raise the quality of public debate by challenging myth, conjecture, and sensationalism with empirical realities. This book does just that by presenting an integrated social map of young adulthood in 21st-century America."

—James Garbarino, Ph.D., author of *Children and the Dark Side of Human Experience*

"This outstanding book offers a fresh and compelling view of why it is taking this generation longer to make career and family decisions. The message here is about the value of 'slowing down,' and it makes sense not just for young adults, but also for their parents and educators, who are 'fast tracking children' into a lengthy period of being nearly, but not quite, adults. Learn about today's young adults, why they are making the life choices they are, and why we should feel good about it."

—Barbara Schneider, author of the *Ambitious Generation*

"The rulebook has changed; the good ol' days of a universally accepted school-work-family-retirement fast track are gone. Despite mainstream media's attempt to portray 20-somethings as a group of lazy, no-good slackers, **NOT QUITE ADULTS** uncovers the real story—how a slower, more calculated transition into adulthood often makes more sense and leads to a better future for us all."

—Sean Aiken, author of *The One-Week Job Project*

"There are three huge strengths that set this book apart from anything else available on the transition to adulthood. First, it is written in a lively and jargon-free style by two rare social scientists who are familiar with the English language. Second, its scope is stunning, including challenges to becoming an adult created by dramatic changes in education, relations between young adults and parents, marriage and its precursors, civic life, and the world of work. Third, the tone is relentlessly upbeat about the advantages these changes are opening up for young people. This book proves that it is possible to write an interesting book about a big social problem that reflects research knowledge while nonetheless being accessible

to the American public."

—Ron Haskins, co-director of the Brookings Institution's Center on Children and Families

"**NOT QUITE ADULTS** is perhaps the most important contribution to date about the strange new life of America's twentysomethings. Settersten and Ray are able to combine a deep grasp of the research with common sense advice for 'not quite adults' and their parents. The slower path to adulthood is here to stay; thanks to the authors, we are now much wiser about what that means for all of us."



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