



AUTHOR

THERE ARE NO CHILDREN HERE

Name _____

Directions: Listen to the [audio interview](https://studsterkel.wfmt.com/programs/alex-kotlowitz-discusses-his-book-there-are-no-children-here?t=2.91%2C3183.443&a=NowAndThen%2CWhat2It) with author Alex Kotlowitz to answer the questions below:
<https://studsterkel.wfmt.com/programs/alex-kotlowitz-discusses-his-book-there-are-no-children-here?t=2.91%2C3183.443&a=NowAndThen%2CWhat2It>

How does Alex Kotlowitz's relationship with Lafayette, Pharoah, and LaJoe shape the narrative of *There Are No Children Here*?

Why does LaJoe say, "There are no children here"? What does this statement reveal about the lives of the kids at Henry Horner Homes?

In what ways does the environment of the Henry Horner Homes impact the daily lives of Lafayette and Pharoah?

How do the children at Henry Horner Homes adapt to the violence around them? What strategies do they use to survive emotionally and physically?



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How does Alex Kotlowitz's relationship with Lafayette, Pharoah, and LaJoe shape the narrative of *There Are No Children Here*? *Kotlowitz's close relationship with the family allows him to portray their story with deep empathy and insight. By spending nearly every day with them for a year, he goes beyond being an objective journalist and becomes a trusted friend. This personal connection gives readers an intimate view of the struggles and resilience of Lafayette, Pharoah, and LaJoe.*

Why does LaJoe say, "There are no children here"? What does this statement reveal about the lives of the kids at Henry Horner Homes? *LaJoe's statement reflects the harsh reality that the children at Henry Horner Homes are forced to grow up too quickly due to the violence, poverty, and trauma they experience. Despite their age, they have witnessed and endured things that rob them of a typical childhood, making them emotionally mature in ways that children in safer environments are not.*

In what ways does the environment of the Henry Horner Homes impact the daily lives of Lafayette and Pharoah? *The environment at Henry Horner Homes, characterized by violence, poverty, and neglect, deeply affects Lafayette and Pharoah. Lafayette becomes more withdrawn, fearful, and distrustful, while Pharoah clings to school as a place of escape. Both boys are constantly on guard, learning to navigate the dangerous spaces within their neighborhood.*

How do the children at Henry Horner Homes adapt to the violence around them? What strategies do they use to survive emotionally and physically? *The children adapt by developing a heightened awareness of their surroundings, learning when and where it is safe to walk, and taking cover when they hear gunfire. Emotionally, children like Pharoah try to distance themselves from the violence by saying, "I'm too young to understand," while others, like Lafayette, internalize their fears and stress, often leading to emotional strain.*



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How does Kotlowitz describe the state of public housing at Henry Horner? What changes has the complex undergone since LaJoe's family first moved in?

How does the relationship between Lafayette and Pharoah reflect the broader theme of survival in a violent environment?

How do the different reactions of the community to shootings at Henry Horner and in other areas like Winnetka reflect systemic issue.

How does Kotlowitz use the theme of silence throughout *There Are No Children Here* to highlight societal neglect of inner-city children?



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How does Kotlowitz describe the state of public housing at Henry Horner? What changes has the complex undergone since LaJoe's family first moved in?

Kotlowitz describes Henry Horner as dilapidated, with buildings made cheaply, exposed elevators, and little maintenance since the 1950s. Initially, when LaJoe's family moved in, the buildings were new, clean, and a source of pride, but over time, the complex deteriorated into a symbol of neglect, crowded with families and surrounded by violence.

How does the relationship between Lafayette and Pharoah reflect the broader theme of survival in a violent environment? Lafayette takes on the role of protector for his younger brother Pharoah, showing how children are forced to grow up quickly in environments of constant danger. Their bond is one of mutual care and survival, with Lafayette's cautious nature and Pharoah's innocence creating a dynamic where each copes with their environment in different but complementary ways.

How do the different reactions of the community to shootings at Henry Horner and in other areas like Winnetka reflect systemic issue. The contrast between the lack of response to violence in Henry Horner and the overwhelming support provided in wealthier communities like Winnetka highlights systemic inequality. When children in poor, inner-city neighborhoods experience violence, there is little assistance or attention from authorities, whereas shootings in affluent areas prompt immediate action, counseling, and support.

How does Kotlowitz use the theme of silence throughout *There Are No Children Here* to highlight societal neglect of inner-city children? Silence is a recurring theme in the book, symbolizing the indifference and neglect that society shows toward the struggles of inner-city children. Kotlowitz emphasizes how the violence, poverty, and despair in neighborhoods like Henry Horner are largely ignored by those in power and the broader public, reinforcing the sense of isolation and abandonment experienced by the residents.