



# **Born on Third Base: A One Percenter Makes the Case for Tackling Inequality, Bringing Wealth Home, and Committing to the Common Good**

*Chuck Collins*

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As inequality grabs headlines, steals the show in presidential debates, and drives deep divides between the haves and have nots in America, class war brews. On one side, the wealthy wield power and advantage, wittingly or not, to keep the system operating in their favor—all while retreating into enclaves that separate them further and further from the poor and working class. On the other side, those who find it increasingly difficult to keep up or get ahead lash out—waging a rhetorical war against the rich and letting anger and resentment, however justifiable, keep us from seeing new potential solutions.

But can we suspend both class wars long enough to consider a new way forward? Is it really good for anyone that most of society's wealth is pooling at the very top of the wealth ladder? Does anyone, including the one percent, really want to live in a society plagued by economic apartheid?

It is time to think differently, says longtime inequality expert and activist Chuck Collins. Born into the one percent, Collins gave away his inheritance at 26 and spent the next three decades mobilizing against inequality. He uses his perspective from both sides of the divide to deliver a new narrative.

Collins calls for a ceasefire and invites the wealthy to come back home, investing themselves and their wealth in struggling communities. And he asks the non-wealthy to build alliances with the one percent and others at the top of the wealth ladder.

Stories told along the way explore the roots of advantage, show how taxpayers subsidize the wealthy, and reveal how charity, used incorrectly, can actually reinforce extreme inequality. Readers meet pioneers who are crossing the divide to work together in new ways, including residents in the author's own Boston-area neighborhood who have launched some of the most interesting community transition efforts in the nation.

In the end, Collins's national and local solutions not only challenge inequality but also respond to climate

change and offer an unexpected, fresh take on one of our most intransigent problems.

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