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International licence. It is free to read on Oxford Academic and offered as a free PDF download from OUP and selected open access locations. The idea that a child is intellectually 'gifted' has a social and cultural history. This book analyses that social history at multiple scales, and makes the 'voices' of the 'gifted' young themselves central through examination of their poetry, letters, and life-writing. In daily encounters, those labelled 'gifted' sometimes loved this label, and felt special in comparison to peers at school and siblings at home. For others, 'gifted' was a silly or embarrassing label, and many questioned the idea of separating off young people in terms of intelligence, as well as the specific forms of testing being used. Ideas of the 'gifted' child also reshaped family lives -- parents dedicated time to providing special leisure spaces for those thought of as 'gifted', running them in their own homes and taking their children significant distances to spend time with others that were also 'gifted'. Voluntary organisations were critical here, as the network through which young people and adults encountered the term, 'gifted', and lived and created it relationally, through interactions with one another. Voluntary organisations, looking to gain attention and visibility, also critically shaped the idea that the 'gifted' young were elites of 'the future', central to answering challenges of economic decline, global warfare, or humanitarian aid. The hopes placed on 'gifted' children between the 1960s and the 1990s were often sky high -- yet many 'gifted' young still felt that the community 'wasted' their talents, and did not support them. This book, then, provides new perspectives on the tensions between elitism and equality in modern Britain. It also offers vivid stories of optimism, hope, disappointment, and criticism, in which young people themselves play a central role.

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