

**MARCH 2021**

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Rights: World

- Extensive ARC and review copy mailing
- National publicity campaign
- National print, online, and social media advertising
- Trade and retail advertising
- Promotion on Netgalley and Edelweiss
- Goodreads giveaway
- Feature in spring 2021 trade catalog, 2020 & 2021 academic catalogs, and 2021 curriculum catalog

### WESTMINSTER JOHN KNOX PRESS

was recently named one of *Publishers Weekly's* fastest growing publishers. The press seeks to provide resources for seekers and church-goers that engage social issues, deepen spiritual reflection, and strengthen community connection.

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*“Closing the purpose gap means removing the barriers, generating the resources, building the power, and imagining the future where those who are most marginalized thrive. Closing the purpose gap is spirit work.”*

*—from the introduction*

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## The Purpose Gap

### *Empowering Communities of Color to Find Meaning and Thrive*

PATRICK B. REYES

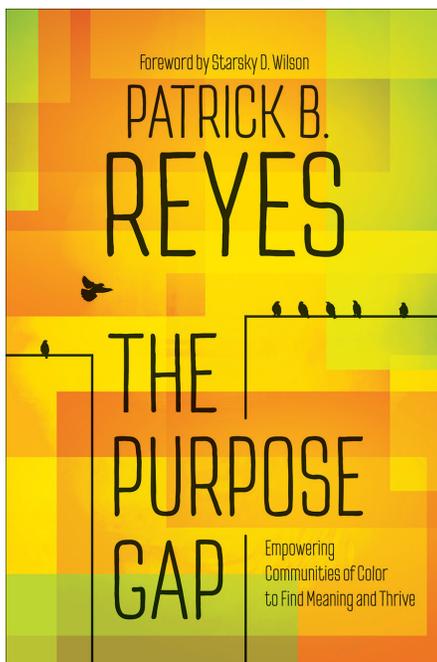
Foreword by Starsky D. Wilson

Far too much of the literature on leadership tells the story of heroic individuals creating their success by their own efforts. Such stories fail to recognize the structural obstacles to thriving faced by those in marginalized communities. If young people in these communities are to grow up to lives of purpose, others must help create the conditions to make that happen. Pastors, organizational leaders, educators, family, and friends must all perceive their calling to create new stories and new conditions of thriving for those most marginalized.

*The Purpose Gap* offers both inspiration and practical guidance for how to do that. It offers advice on creating a safe space for failure and nurturing networks that support young people of color. Professional guidance for how to implement these strategies in one's congregation, school, or community organization is also included.



**PATRICK B. REYES** is Senior Director of Learning Design at the Forum for Theological Exploration. He holds a PhD from Claremont School of Theology. He is the author of *Nobody Cries When We Die: God, Community, and Surviving to Adulthood*.



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## From the Author

Like the wealth, education, housing, and many other gaps, the purpose gap is the combination of these conditions that create a gap between those who can achieve their dreams and find lives of meaning and purpose, and those who must overcome great adversity just to imagine a better life. I wrote for those who want to eradicate this gap and build new worlds where our children can thrive.

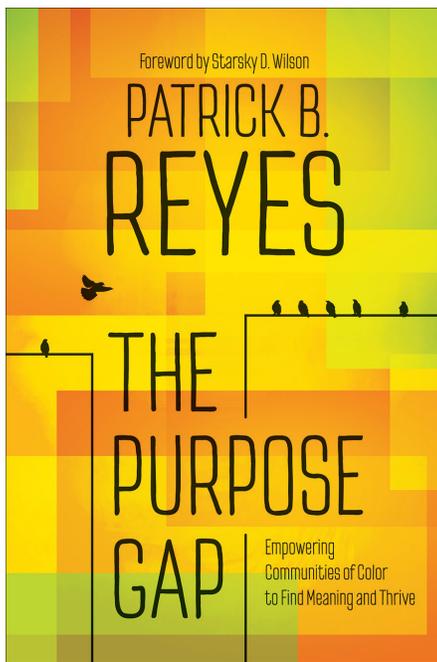
I wrote this book as a love letter to my people. I wrote for the left out, dispossessed, marginalized, my Chicano and broader Latinx/e/o/a community, Black, Indigenous, and people of color. I wrote for my children and our children's futures. I wrote for all those whose lives of meaning and purpose have been cut short through violence and incarceration. I wrote for those whose imagination about the meaning and purpose of their lives is limited by the personal and systemic pains of hunger, poverty, and abuse.

I wrote for parents, teachers, social workers, friends, neighbors, religious leaders, and elders who are creating the conditions for people on the margins to thrive. I wrote for and with those who no longer settle for gaining access to the systems of oppression that created the purpose gap. I wrote for and with those who close the purpose gap so that the next generations will have access to the resources, knowledge, and practices to dream big dreams and achieve their many purposes.

We can do this work no matter our circumstance, but we must be realistic with our starting place. Closing the purpose gap means not turning away from reality by escaping into false idealism. The gap is real. To close the purpose gap, we must draw on our BIPOC spiritual and intellectual wellsprings. In this book, you will find studies, stories, and visions that provide insights about how to create conditions for people to thrive in your community. The book is a guide moving from why the purpose gap exists, how to overcome it, and what the world looks like when we work to close the gap.

I did not find my purpose. My purpose found me in the form of my community, ancestors, and elders who spoke power over our lives, who saw something not just in me but in our people. This is an invitation for you to join that community of freedom fighters, world builders, dream chasers, spirit workers, soul healers, and ancestors in training. We can close the purpose gap together. I am grateful for your life. I love you. May we build the world together so that our descendants may have the lives and futures they deserve.

With all the love of my people,  
Patrick B. Reyes



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## Advance Praise for *The Purpose Gap*

“*The Purpose Gap* is much more than a book about overcoming challenges and the importance of mentorship; it is an invitation to wholeness. With deeply personal and vulnerable storytelling, Reyes invites the reader to remember our own stories so that we may connect and remember every part of our unique identities along the academic journey. For Reyes, bridging the purpose gap is one thing, but thriving on the other side, whole, is the true testimony.”

—**THERESA S. THAMES**, Associate Dean of Religious Life and of the Chapel, Princeton University

“Demystifying the hero’s myth to reclaim the responsibility gifted to us by our ancestors, Reyes draws on the spiritual and intellectual wellsprings of our antepasados with abolitionist teachings. . . . As Brown folks all too familiar with trauma tourism, Reyes calls our institutions to name the gap between purpose and opportunity by drawing on cultural community wealth and our stories of our sobrevivencia. . . . Reyes masterfully weaves storytelling, imagination, and critical consciousness to gift us with *The Purpose Gap*.”

—**CAROLINA HINOJOSA-CISNEROS**,  
Lecturer of English, Albert J. Griffith Ph.D. Endowed Fellow,  
Our Lady of the Lake University and author of *Becoming Coztōtōtl*

## Select Praise for *Nobody Cries When We Die*

“*Nobody Cries When We Die* is an outstanding journey. Reyes’s collection of stories offers an eye-opening window to Latinx life in the US. Written in a beautiful prose, the author recounts his experiences in a community forced into violence and finds a common thread in the permanent struggle for justice and healing. It is his Christian vocation that makes him keep strong in his convictions in front of heartbreaking stories. This is a must read for anyone who trusts we can build a better world.”

—**DR. SANTIAGO SLABODSKY**, Florence and Robert Kaufman Endowed Chair in Jewish Studies, Hofstra University, New York

“With a riveting writing style, Reyes’s memoir invites readers to explore their own inner labyrinth of Christian vocational discernment. At each twist and turn on the journey, questions abound. How am I going to live? Who is calling me to life? Can anything good come from my neighborhood? His approach to examining the depths of wisdom in lived experience of ordinary, often overlooked people is a breath of fresh air for theological writing and a gateway for readers to encounter the divine in the seemingly mundane.”

—**REV. DR. GREGORY C. ELLISON, II**, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, and founder of Fearless Dialogues