



Life In Woke America — A Hero's Journey

Total words (manuscript): 170876 words

2. Genre & Market Positioning

This is a contemporary political/autofiction thriller with elements of domestic drama and techno-thriller (bioweapons, drones, AI). Books like this land when they combine a belt-way scandal, clear personal stakes, and a believable lead who moves from outsider to insider; your manuscript fits that reader expectation while adding a grounded “rise from the margins” personal story.

3. Summary

Life In Woke America follows Xavier King, a foster-care kid who grows into a technically gifted Army private. When Xavier and his mentor, Master Sergeant Juan Mono, build a practical security guide for military infrastructure they uncover something far darker: a secret biological lab and other suspicious assets with links to foreign interests. Xavier is spiked into national attention, put on a no-fly watchlist, and hauled before Congress—yet the threat remains.

Back home in the Texas Panhandle Xavier pivots to civilian life, launching a tech-forward handyman business that uses drones, AI tools and humanoid robots to train and employ young people from the care system. Along the way he meets Audrey, a capable, grounded woman who becomes his anchor: romance blossoms into domestic intention, and the book balances the national security plot with a slow, convincing love story about building a family out of broken pieces.

The novel moves between intimate scenes (couch time, family building, adoption conversations), small-town business logistics (Handyman Services), and high-stakes political intrigue (lab discoveries, transformer vulnerabilities, farmland purchases, and a growing picture of a coordinated attack). The narrative keeps the reader by layering human tenderness over rising danger: personal choices, community, and DIY technology end up colliding with strategic threats to national security.

4. Editorial Notes

Joel — the manuscript reads like the work of a writer who knows both his subject and his characters. Structure is clear: you anchor the bigger thriller beats in Xavier's arc, and the long sections of domestic life make the national scenes feel personal rather than schematic. Voice is consistent and convincing — plainspoken, sharp, and sympathetic to the protagonist's outlook.

A few practical edits will lift the manuscript quickly: tighten some long expository stretches in the middle to keep forward momentum on the thriller thread, smooth a handful of viewpoint shifts, and standardize chapter headers and scene breaks for rhythm. A light line edit and careful proofread will remove repeated small errors and polish the cadence; professional interior formatting and a strong, genre-appropriate cover will instantly make this look like a trade-quality commercial novel.

5. Target Audience

Readers of political and techno-thrillers who like grounded protagonists (think readers of Tom Clancy, Brad Thor, and modern patriotic suspense) and fans of contemporary autofiction with a romantic core. Also readers who follow national security and culture-war topics and who appreciate character-driven, idea-forward fiction.



6. Distribution Format

Recommended formats: E-book, trade paperback, hardcover, and audiobook. The story's cinematic pacing, strong dialogue, and layered characters make a full audiobook especially marketable; the paperback and hardcover support the weight and shelf presence of a long, thought-provoking thriller; the e-book lets readers discover it quickly. Because the manuscript is dialogue-rich and highly readable, all four formats will work well.

7. Price Recommendation (Market-Aligned)

Trade paperback (6"×9", ~624 pages): USD 24.99–34.99. Recommended cover price: \$29.99.

E-book (EPUB/MOBI): USD 7.99–14.99. Recommended price: \$9.99.

Hardcover (if produced): USD 34.99–44.99.

8. Book Size & Physical Experience

Recommend a 6" × 9" trim for the trade paperback and hardcover. That size fits reader expectations for contemporary thrillers and supports a comfortable line length for sustained reading; it also gives a solid presence on store shelves and reads well in the hand for a long novel.

9. Estimated Page Count

Standard production math (250–300 words per page) gives a page range of roughly 570–685 pages. A practical working estimate for layout and cover planning: 600–660 pages (working midpoint c. 624 pages). Use that range when estimating spine width, cover visuals, and printing costs.

10. Timeline Perspective

At a focused shop like Spines the manuscript can move from received manuscript to publication in about 6–10 weeks. That schedule includes a round of professional proofreading, a polished cover and jacket design, interior typesetting, and distribution setup for print and e-book. Because your file is text-centric (no complex graphics or illustrations), you won't need a longer art or production schedule.

Why now? The book taps directly into headlines and reader interest — national security, biotechnology, farmland and infrastructure vulnerabilities, and the cultural debates about institutions and "woke" policy. With the midterm/election cycle attention that follows every couple of years and an audience hungry for timely political thrillers, a spring or early-summer release positions the book to ride both seasonal reading lists and topical discussion.

11. Closing Reflection

Joel — you've written a novel that naturally translates to a strong commercial package: a gripping mix of public scandal and private longing, with an authentic lead who grows in ways that matter. With careful copyediting, professional formatting, a bold cover, and an audiobook produced by a skilled narrator, this manuscript will sit comfortably alongside commercial political and techno-thrillers and hit the market with authority. You've already done the hard work of crafting story, character, and stakes — now it just needs the final professional polish and the right launch plan. You're on a clear, promising path.

Reviewer: Market & Editorial Review — prepared for Joel Rakow