



Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem

By bell hooks

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In *Rock My Soul*, world-renowned scholar and visionary bell hooks takes an in-depth look at one of the most critical issues facing African Americans: a collective wounded self-esteem that has prevailed from slavery to the present day.

Why do so many African Americans -- whether privileged or poor, urban or suburban, young or old -- live in a state of chronic anxiety, fear, and shame?

In *Rock My Soul*, hooks gets to the heart and soul of the African-American identity crisis, offering critical insight and hard-won wisdom about what it takes to heal the scars of the past, promote and maintain self-esteem, and lay down the roots for a grounded community with a prosperous future.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Prolific cultural commentator hooks (Communion) returns with another timely, provocative book on a thorny issue currently being debated in the black community. While popular books by black conservatives place the lack of significant social progress squarely on the shoulders of African-Americans, hooks cleverly repositions the argument, stating articulately that the symptoms of the stagnation (e.g., violence, self-sabotage, malaise and symbolic suicide) are old challenges only intensified by ongoing government neglect, racism, psychological trauma and patriarchy. In typical hooks fashion, she employs diverse sources to provide support for her penetrating, frank views on the troubles that often block blacks from achieving healthy self-esteem. While she admits the power of white racism has lessened, she believes the transition from rigid segregation toward full integration has resulted in crippling emotional and psychological trauma, breeding fear, paranoia, self-hatred, self-doubt and addiction as blacks try to emulate whites and compete in the workplace. Her take on how revised mental health approaches can ease some of these ills is worthwhile and informative. Despite a tendency to repeat some key points, hooks is especially effective when she addresses the devastating toll of low self-esteem and self-hate on black women and families, linking much of the damage to traditional and religious values. With each new book, hooks is deeply exploring the inner terrain of the black community, calling for a return to sound values, self-love and commonsense solutions while seeking new ways to cope with a modern world gone slightly mad. Overall, this is one of hooks's best efforts in recent years.

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From Library Journal

This is a passionate examination of the role self-esteem plays in the lives of African Americans, who, insists cultural critic hooks (Salvation), have been unable to address this issue openly as a crisis. She shows how historical movements for racial uplift have fallen short in this area and identifies the political and cultural barriers that keep blacks from emotional well-being.

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From [Booklist](#)

As astute, intrepid cultural critic hooks so eloquently observes, the inner lives of African Americans have been given short shrift in the annals of psychology. Up to now, there have been no accessible studies of the traumas of slavery or integration, a necessary move toward equality that destabilized the soul-nurturing realm of black culture. These persistent wounds to the collective spirit have long occupied hooks, inspiring a series of groundbreaking books about the formidable challenges of black American life, including *Salvation* [BKL F 15 01]. Here hooks traces the roots of the pervasive low self-esteem, debilitating feelings of inadequacy and inferiority, that burden even the best and brightest African Americans. As she explicates the complex psychological consequences of racism and the successes and failures of the black pride movements of the past, she points the way to a future in which African Americans are able to replace "chronic emotional pain" with healthy self-esteem. So cogent is hooks' thinking, so clarifying her language, that to read her is to set out on the path toward healing. *Donna Seaman*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ricky Copeland:

The book *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem* can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. Why then must we leave a very important thing like a book *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem*? Wide variety you have a different opinion about publication. But one aim this book can give many information for us. It is absolutely right. Right now, try to closer using your book. Knowledge or facts that you take for that, you could give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem* has simple shape but the truth is know: it has great and big function for you. You can search the enormous world by start and read a publication. So it is very wonderful.

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