



The Assassination of the Black Male Image

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson

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In *The Assassination of the Black Male Image*, noted political analyst and media critic Dr. Earl Ofari Hutchinson offers a searing, controversial indictment of our society's attitudes toward black men.

The black male image, he argues, has been battered, maligned, and assaulted by academics, the press, and Hollywood, as well as by some black rappers, comedians, feminists, filmmakers, and novelists—many of whom he accuses of reinforcing, and profiting from, ethnic and sexual stereotypes.

Offering both a wide historical perspective and acute insights into such racially charged events as the O. J. Simpson trial, the Clarence Thomas hearings, and the Million Man March, Hutchinson brilliantly counters the image of the black male as a figure entrenched in crime, drugs, and violence. At the same time, he issues a deeply moving call to rethink the way we view African-American men.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"The myth of the malevolent black male is based on a durable and time-resistant bedrock of myths, half-truths and lies," declares Hutchinson (*The Presidential Betrayal of African-Americans*). He criticizes media portrayals of black men, derisive code words used about black athletes and the media buzz over Waiting to Exhale's nasty portrayal of black men. Perhaps because the author is also a columnist and radio commentator, he skates briefly through his arguments; a few of his chapters (on Tina Turner, for example), stray from his thesis, and others include errors (*The End of Racism* did not become a bestseller). Hutchinson criticizes black males for using the word nigger. However, though he argues credibly that black violence is the product of a violent and poverty-ridden society, Hutchinson doesn't acknowledge that the problem of the underclass is both an economic and a spiritual/behavioral issue. Still, his advice is helpful. He suggests that readers persuade the media to cover the full spectrum of black life, not merely crime/violence/"hood" stories; he urges them to boycott music, videos and comedians, etc. who demean black images and to buy "positive black-oriented products" from black-owned stores and organizations. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

Hutchinson, a Los Angeles-based lecturer and commentator, shows that slanted standards manipulate how the world views black men and how black men view themselves.

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From Kirkus Reviews

An African-American lecturer and commentator demands a more balanced portrayal of black men. An earlier self-published version of this book by Hutchinson, who commented on the O.J. Simpson trial for CBS News, sold 30,000 copies, perhaps accounting for this breakthrough into a major publishing house (his previous books came out from small presses). But the first few chapters, each of which is really an independent essay, offer few clues to the volume's popularity. In a style reminiscent of the same Rush Limbaugh patter that he trashes in one of his essays, Hutchinson rails and hectors, ignores sources that do not support his theories, and interjects snide italicized asides. There is, however, a powerful cumulative effect to Hutchinson's writing that makes his central thesis difficult to dismiss. He argues that the overwhelming mass media image of black men is of evil incarnate, and that Americans--including many black women--are ready to pounce any time a black man slips up, from O.J. Simpson to Michael Jackson to Clarence Thomas to Louis Farrakhan. The vast majority of black men, who do not deal drugs, beat women, abandon their families, or evade employment, are virtually ignored. The scapegoating of black men for society's ills lets the government off the hook for economic policies destructive of blue-collar jobs; it also leads to disproportionate punishment of black lawbreakers, distorts public policy, deepens racial divides, and worst of all, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If Americans think that all black men are stupid, he writes, "there's no need to build more schools." If all black men are seen as lazy, "there's no need to spend more on job and skills training and entrepreneurial programs." Hutchinson demands that black men be transformed from the "universal bogeyman" to "human beings." His case is sometimes overstated but cannot easily be overlooked. (Author tour) -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thersa Moss:

The feeling that you get from The Assassination of the Black Male Image will be the more deep you rooting the information that hide into the words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to recognise but The Assassination of the Black Male Image giving you buzz feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by means of anyone who read that because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having that The Assassination of the Black Male Image instantly.

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