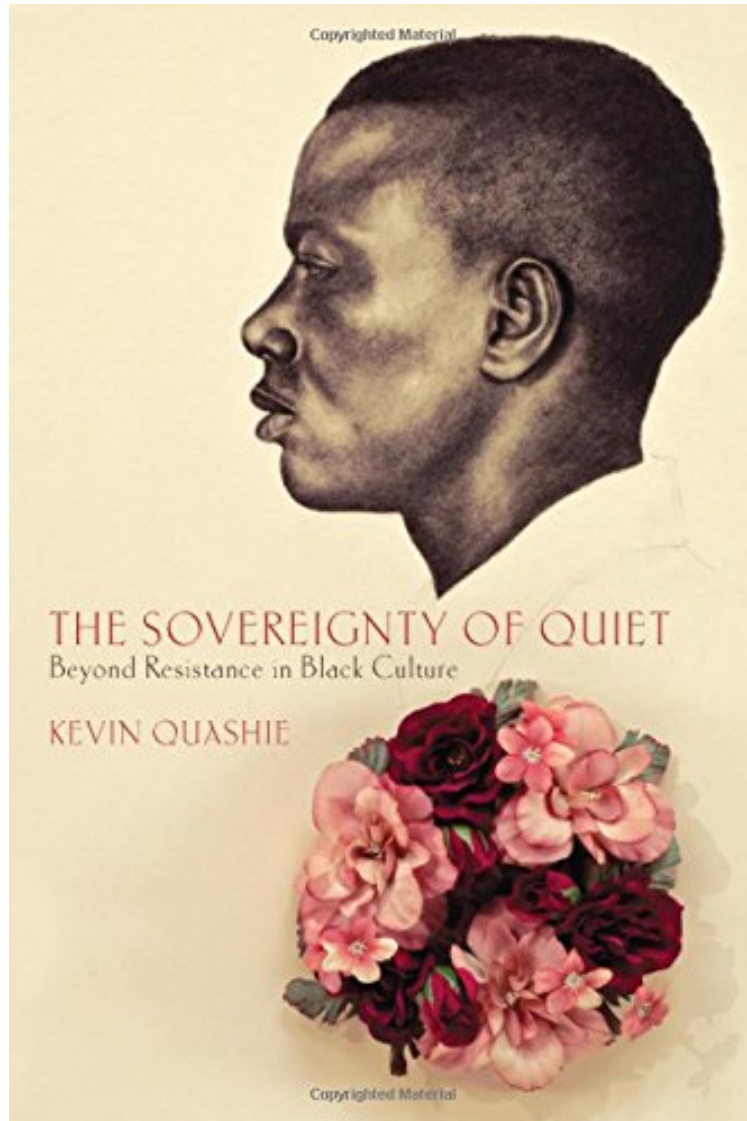


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## The Sovereignty of Quiet: Beyond Resistance in Black Culture

*Kevin Quashie*

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**Kevin Quashie : The Sovereignty of Quiet: Beyond Resistance in Black Culture** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sovereignty of Quiet: Beyond Resistance in Black Culture:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. "...where beauty lies."By Matthew I'm so grateful for this book and I would urge to read it anyone concerned with engaging the fullest possibilities of one's humanity and opening one's self to engaging the fullest possibilities of another's humanity. Quashie writes "Being able to see humanity amid the

discourses of the social world is where beauty lies." This is very much the effect of *The Sovereignty of Quiet*. Through a range of texts, film, artwork and photographs, the book witnesses the existence of a central human capacity and quality Quashie calls "quiet." In part, the book aims to expand the possibilities of how blackness is understood and perceived. Quashie writes that blackness is often described as "expressive, dramatic or loud" or it is equated with resistance--an equivalency tied closely to DuBois notion of double consciousness. Quashie's quiet expands beyond these central tropes of black culture to say there is much more both to how we can understand blackness, as well as the truth of one's individual humanity, black or not. What is quiet: We are quiet. For 130 pages, Quashie acutely observes the existence of quiet, and, with each observation, we see something distinct in the contours of quiet, the visage of quiet, but we recognize, ultimately, quiet is partly unknowable, partly wild, partly dark, partly so full it disappears, partly possibilities unformed, as Quashie says, quiet is the "habitat of the inner life," "a quality and capacity of the interior." Although the book is a cohesive piece of literary and cultural analysis, Quashie writes as a poet--the last page is a poem of quiet and perhaps it gets us as close as we can come to a summary of quiet as witnessed in the preceding pages. The nature of criticism is to deconstruct, but the best criticism actually creates, and such is the case with *The Sovereignty of Quiet*-- through careful witness, it creates a space for the recognition of and reveling in fuller possibilities for the mode and expression of one's humanity. It does so by finding quiet, by pointing to and celebrating the elements of quiet: interiority, surrender, attention, vulnerability, waiting, oneness-- in quiet, there is the possibility of radical freedom and it starts with trust, the surrender to the interior. We need this book, we need quiet.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a subtle and powerful book that excavates a ...By Customer This is a subtle and powerful book that excavates a different side of black traditions of survival, thriving, wellbeing, and politics. There are a host of interesting readings of literary and cultural texts that drives the sophisticated theoretical intervention Quashie makes around "quiet."

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic By Erika K. McCombs Excellent, just excellent. The concept of quiet is a thrilling theoretical approach that illuminates African-American studies and provides a brilliant new perspective on resistance as a cultural phenomenon.

African American culture is often considered expressive, dramatic, and even defiant. In *The Sovereignty of Quiet*, Kevin Quashie explores quiet as a different kind of expressiveness, one which characterizes a persons desires, ambitions, hungers, vulnerabilities, and fears. Quiet is a metaphor for the inner life, and as such, enables a more nuanced understanding of black culture. The book revisits such iconic moments as Tommie Smith and John Carlos protest at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics and Elizabeth Alexanders reading at the 2009 inauguration of Barack Obama. Quashie also examines such landmark texts as Gwendolyn Brookss *Maud Martha*, James Baldwins *The Fire Next Time*, and Toni Morrisons *Sula* to move beyond the emphasis on resistance, and to suggest that concepts like surrender, dreaming, and waiting can remind us of the wealth of black humanity.

"*The Sovereignty of Quiet* is a profound and excellent look at quiet and its relationship with black identity, black culture, and existentialism. With impeccable scholarship, beautiful writing, and powerful arguments, Quashie makes a fabulous contribution to the field. A success!"