

Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Trauma and Violence in the Lives of Young Black Men

John A. Rich MD MPH

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LIVES OF YOUNG BLACK MEN

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Trauma and Violence in the Lives of Young Black Men:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring and challenging book about trauma, racism, and healingBy
K PennerJohn Rich's remarkable book charts his journey as a doctor seeking to understand an epidemic of violence

among young, urban African-American men. As he begins to interview some of the gunshot victims in the hospital where he works, Rich struggles to separate the complex, frightened, traumatized kids he gets to know from their stereotypes--in the media and even in the language of his fellow doctors and nurses--as unthinking monsters who are to blame for their own injuries. One of the great strengths of this book is Rich's compassion for and willingness to learn from the men he interviews. Never excusing violence, Rich uncovers the unfortunate logic in what is usually seen merely as "senseless." As compelling as the stories that he gathers, Rich's own narrative is inexorably entwined with theirs. As he movingly states, "it is only when we are transformed to embrace the humanity and defend the dignity of these young men...that we will engage them as full partners in our efforts to bring about healing, hope, and change." This is important reading for those in the helping/healing professions and all of us who hope to bring about that change Rich describes so eloquently. 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. excellent resource for teachers and youth workers

By L. Gordon As an educator, I highly recommend this book to teachers or anyone who works with urban youth. It can be used as a text to help students (middle school and up) critically examine issues of race, gender, violence, and inequality. And it can help youth workers develop a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of many young men of color in urban communities, especially since the stories in the book are told largely by the young men themselves. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. read this today

By reggie This book is a call to action. The way Dr. Rich places a narrative connecting the cold statistics of violence with real human stories is invaluable. This is an example of the power of physicians working for social justice and looking at violence as a health issue. Shame on Florida for banning Doctors from talking about guns

Medical school taught John Rich how to deal with physical trauma in a big city hospital but not with the disturbing fact that young black men were daily shot, stabbed, and beaten. This is Rich's account of his personal search to find sense in the juxtaposition of his life and theirs. Young black men in cities are overwhelmingly the victims and perpetrators of violent crime in the United States. Troubled by this tragedy and by his medical colleagues' apparent numbness in the face of it, Rich, a black man who grew up in relative safety and comfort, reached out to many of these young crime victims to learn why they lived in a seemingly endless cycle of violence and how it affected them. The stories they told him are unsettling and revealing about the reality of life in American cities. Mixing his own perspective with their seldom-heard voices, Rich relates the stories of young black men whose lives were violently disrupted and of their struggles to heal and remain safe in an environment that both denied their trauma and blamed them for their injuries. He tells us of people such as Roy, a former drug dealer who fought to turn his life around and found himself torn between the ease of returning to the familiarity of life on the violent streets of Boston and the tenuous promise of accepting a new, less dangerous one. Rich's poignant portrait humanizes young black men and illustrates the complexity of a situation that defies easy answers and solutions.

From Publishers Weekly The statistics startle: homicide death rates are more than 17 times higher for young black men than their white counterparts. Rich, chair of the department of health management and policy at the Drexel University School of Public Health, considers the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder on the survivors. His account is professional, as he finds analogies between his subjects and combat veterans and victims of sexual assault, and personal, as he reports how spending hours and days with these young men transformed him. Two particularly detailed moments stand out: one follows a young man through emergency room protocols, another follows Rich through prison visit procedures. Although Rich's research spans two decades, he focuses most sharply upon four young men he encountered at Boston City Hospital. The high level of violence in their communities makes young men feel physically, psychologically, and socially unsafe, Rich observes; thus, ironically, these violent young men seem to be looking for safety in a violent world. Rich joins the ranks of Rachel Carson, Michael Harrington and Ralph Nader for bringing attention to a pervasive social problem with a fresh perspective and warranted urgency. (Dec.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "John Rich joins the ranks of Rachel Carson, Michael Harrington and Ralph Nader for bringing attention to a pervasive social problem with a fresh perspective and warranted urgency." (Publishers Weekly) "John Rich was selected for a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in 2006, and his incisive book demonstrates why. Replete with poignant vignettes, this book unveils his findings. Not surprisingly, he exposes the deep human sensitivity of his subjects. Highly recommended for readers of urban sociology texts such as Nicholas Lemann's *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America*." (Library Journal) "A remarkable and sensitive account of [the author's] lengthy interviews with boys and young men who were rushed, bloodied and on gurneys, through the doors of the emergency room." (Washington Examiner) "Those of us who spend time tracking violence and its impact on every aspect of life in urban America as well as anyone with an ounce of humanity ought to be thrilled to see a book like *Wrong Place, Wrong Time* come along. It looks beyond the gunplay, offering a window on urban violence by putting faces with the cold statistics and presenting stories in the victims' own words." (Colbert I. King Washington Post) "Wrong Place, Wrong Time calls us back to the table to see our safety as intimately connected to the safety of the young men we dismiss with cliché even as they become the prime bogeyman of our conscience in urban America." (Baltimore City Paper) "In his vital

new book, *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*, Rich lets the reader share and differentiate among the harrowing stories of young black men cut down by violence, stories he collected during the term of a five-year, \$625,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health." (Karen R. Long Cleveland Plain Dealer)"Rich does not sugarcoat the cycle of violence or portray the African-American men who populate the book as saints. Rich does hold out hope, however slim, that understanding that all human beings have more commonalities than divergences could make a difference." (Raleigh News and Observer)"A concise yet powerful examination of urban violence from the perspectives of those on the receiving end." (Philadelphia Inquirer)"Powerful... Scholar-practitioners like Dr. John Rich are helping find the answers we urgently need to better understand the cycle of violence and save our children from being its next victims." (Marian Wright Edelman Huffington Post)"Written in a style that would make an accomplished novelist proud, the attention to detail is remarkable. Rich takes the reader with him on a voyage of discovery as he interviews each subject. The case studies are punctuated with his honest, insightful and informed reflections as he recounts the real-life experiences of young black men and their search for a way out of their almost impossible lifestyles. The case studies are condensed summaries of the author's involvement with these young men over a period of years." (Nursing Standard)"Dr. Rich is an excellent writer. He is a passionate reporter who becomes one of his characters, as vulnerable as those he writes about." (Annals of Emergency Medicine)"Rather than dwell on statistics or prescribe policy, the stories reveal the human toll of violence and help explain the seemingly inexplicable levels of violence in particular communities. And like all good stories, they are both entertaining and edifying." (Judy Schaechter, MD Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine)"If we are going to reduce the violence in our devastated inner cities, we need to understand its causes. That is how Dr. Rich has done such an invaluable service: giving a voice to the young men who are routinely demonized for trafficking in violence and showing us humans reacting to desperate circumstances." (Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO, Harlem Children's Zone)"John Rich's illuminating narrative powerfully renders America's domestic 'killing fields.' *Wrong Place, Wrong Time* is an urgent and deeply moving up-close portrait of urban violence and the all too common killing of young black Americans a highly perceptive work that provides in-depth understanding where there is often too little. It is a telling account that should be required reading by everyone." (Elijah Anderson, Yale University, author of *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*)"John Rich, who has devoted so much of his career to the study of violence especially in men of color challenges us to see beyond the injuries and the anger and to hear and appreciate the plight of these men and to understand that they, like us, seek a place of safety in their lives." (David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., 16th Surgeon General of the United States)From the Back Cover"Medical school taught John Rich how to deal with physical trauma in a big city hospital but not with the disturbing fact that young black men were daily shot, stabbed, and beaten. This is Rich's account of his personal search to find sense in the juxtaposition of his life and theirs. His poignant portrait humanizes young black men and illustrates the complexity of a situation that defies easy answers and solutions."John Rich joins the ranks of Rachel Carson, Michael Harrington and Ralph Nader for bringing attention to a pervasive social problem with a fresh perspective and warranted urgency." Publishers Weekly"A concise yet powerful examination of urban violence from the perspectives of those on the receiving end." Philadelphia Inquirer"Powerful... Scholar-practitioners like Dr. John Rich are helping find the answers we urgently need to better understand the cycle of violence and save our children from being its next victims." Marian Wright Edelman, Huffington Post"Rich does not sugarcoat the cycle of violence or portray the African-American men who populate the book as saints. Rich does hold out hope, however slim, that understanding that all human beings have more commonalities than divergences could make a difference." Raleigh News and Observer"Written in a style that would make an accomplished novelist proud, the attention to detail is remarkable. Rich takes the reader with him on a voyage of discovery as he interviews each subject. The case studies are punctuated with his honest, insightful and informed reflections as he recounts the real-life experiences of young black men and their search for a way out of their almost impossible lifestyles." Nursing Standard"Those of us who spend time tracking violence and its impact on every aspect of life in urban America as well as anyone with an ounce of humanity ought to be thrilled to see a book like *Wrong Place, Wrong Time* come along. It looks beyond the gunplay, offering a window on urban violence by putting faces with the cold statistics and presenting stories in the victims' own words." Washington Post