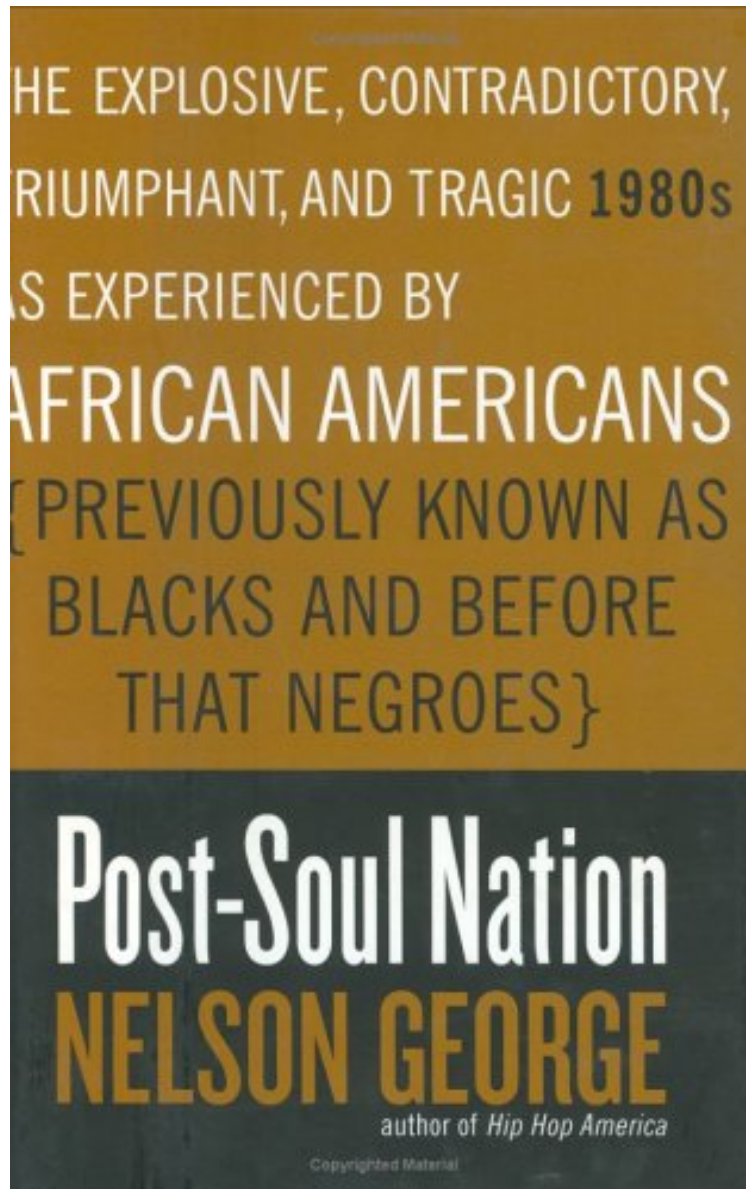


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Post-Soul Nation: The Explosive, Contradictory, Triumphant, and Tragic 1980s as Experienced by African Americans (Previously Known as Blacks and Before That Negroes)

Nelson George

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Nelson George : Post-Soul Nation: The Explosive, Contradictory, Triumphant, and Tragic 1980s as Experienced by African Americans (Previously Known as Blacks and Before That Negroes)

before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Post-Soul Nation: The Explosive, Contradictory, Triumphant, and Tragic 1980s as Experienced by African Americans (Previously Known as Blacks and Before That Negroes)*:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Quality and Simple Read of the African-American Connectiveness in the 80's
By Marquis Hunt**I do want to say that the review above me has absolutely nothing to do with the book. The argument of interracial schooling and how the AIDS virus came about have nothing to do with book, but issues the book glossed over as items in history. The criticism is borderline racist, only because there is nothing in the book that argues the reviewer's point. So, she essentially decided to bring up these arguments for reasons that won't help anyone decide to buy this book or not.**As for the review, this is a great 2-hour train read. There is a lot of information and tidbits that come up that will be new and exciting to read. It essentially is a chronological order of facts and situations that affected African-Americans within music, politics, economics, movements, education, entertainment, and lifestyle. It won't go in depth with the stories and facts or present any criticism in favor or against aspects of black culture; it merely presents the facts as they came about during those times. For example, one story talks of the ascension of a high-school basketball player who in 1980 dunks a basketball for the first time. The story ends with a quote from the 9th grader, who happens to be Michael Jeffrey Jordan. The stories don't play into the future, and are no more than 2-3 paragraphs long. So what you get is a great microcosm for how the news and stories were viewed at the time and not in hindsight. I recommend this book as it has a bunch of great referential information and facts that you never get bored reading about. The slant is very journalistic, as a lot of the stories are supported by quotes and news references. Very haunting is how AIDS came about and how there was so little information for years after the first infection was spotted. This isn't a book for you if you are looking for African-American critique. But if you are a history buff with a couple of free hours, this is well worth a pickup.
4 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Who Takes The Blame?
By Betty Burks
In February, 1969, a study titled "Black-White Contact in Schools: Its Social and Academic Effects" was published by Purdue University sociologist Martin Patchen. In it, he concludes "Available evidence indicates that interracial contact in schools does not have consistent positive effects on students' racial attitudes and behavior or on the academic performance of minority students." In March, it was declared that the AIDS virus started in Africa and on the Caribbean island, Haiti and spread to the United States via tourists. Get this! Susan Sontag decided in 1988 that "the virus was sent to Africa from the U.S. as an act of bacteriological warfare" as a conspiracy. July, 1985, a survey conducted in New York City using the HIV antibody test finds that of frequent drug users, 87 percent carried the infection. The majority of the addicts were black and Hispanic. In August 1988, on Zachary's birthday, Jean-Michael Basquiat died in New York village of a heroin overdose at the age of 27 (Zach was 26 then). He was a graffiti artist whose pieces sold for \$50,000 at the time of his death. There was a lot of debate about his artistic worth. This book traverses the years 1979 to 1989 in America and is mostly about the singers and groups in the entertainment area but also writers which proliferated during that time. It is the time of affirmative action and Clarence Thomas who was married to a Causcasian woman but courted the office girls and almost lost his nomination. I watched it all on t.v. The girl took all the blame, and she was honest and above-board, blameless. The results of overcompensation has caused much turmoil for us all in America and some are deceitful by trying to pull the wool over the eyes of political figures to the detriment of everybody.

After the extraordinary social and political upheaval of the 1960s and 70s, African American culture splintered in the "post-soul" decade of the 1980s. Black entertainers, athletes, politicians, and spiritual leaders enjoyed unprecedented prominence and influence while at the same time drugs and crime ravaged once-vital black neighborhoods. Michael Jordan dominated basketball and Michael Jackson swept the Grammys, but rage and desperation ruled the streets. In this fascinating history, Nelson George, one of the country's leading black cultural critics, chronicles the African American 1980s in all its excess, creativity, and despair. Sifting through the media, popular music, the arenas of sports and politics, cultural trends, street slang, and the changes that rocked Hollywood, Washington, Wall Street, and Madison Avenue, *Post-Soul Nation* will further confirm George as one of our most dynamic and original cultural commentators.

From Publishers Weekly
Black Americans in the 1980s became figures of influence as never before, while a conservative government sought to chip away at hard-won advances, and the twin plagues of AIDS and crack began to blight the lives of millions of ordinary citizens. George, novelist and journalist, borrows some of John Dos Passos's "Newsreel" technique (from the massive trilogy *USA*) to tell linked stories of oppression and freedom, in a present tense that makes for extraordinary intimacy and quickness. George is a superb reporter, and hindsight allows him to focus only on the stories that interest us today, though he uncovers many a half-forgotten cause celebre. His critical judgments provoke admiration and further thought. Sometimes they're arcane: about the characters played by Carl Weathers and Mr. T. in *Rocky III* (1982), he writes, "In writing the characters, screenwriter Stallone actually anticipates the black cultural wars that shape much black pop culture for the next twenty years." Here they all are-

Michael Jordan, Prince, Colin Powell, Whitney Houston, Tawana Brawley, Eddie Murphy, the rise of Jesse Jackson, the birth of BET (Black Entertainment Television), the horrific bombing of MOVE headquarters in Philadelphia, the Ishmael Reed-Alice Walker war over *The Color Purple*. George's extensive background is in music, film, fashion and sports reporting, and he also does a good job discussing 1980s literature. He's especially thorough on the rise of rap and hip-hop music and culture, and is pithy on pop: "While Michael [Jackson]'s ongoing theme is paranoia, Janet's is overdue sexual awakening and exploration." Only in the visual arts does the material seem thin on the ground: one might think Jean-Michel Basquiat was the only African-American painter working in the '80s, actually an extremely vibrant era for black painters and artists. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *Booklist* George, a cultural and music critic, first came on the scene some 25 years ago as a biographer of Michael Jackson. Since then he has chronicled the musical and cultural impact of the hip-hop generation. George highlights the events that, in his view, helped to shape American youth culture today. He takes a hard look at the "soul era" of the 1950s and 1960s, when civil rights and music took center stage in America. Then he looks at what he terms the postsoul era, comparing and contrasting its evolution from the preceding era. With a critical eye, he highlights contradictions in the current hip-hop scene, for instance, the fact that the gangster-rap veneer of black urban youth has been adopted by so many white youths; that many of the leaders of the rap movement, so strongly identified as urban, actually come from suburbia; and that hip-hop has impacted Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and Wall Street. This work will draw an audience interested in the undertones and backstories of American popular culture. Vernon Ford Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved Important ... A history of the '80s you won't find on VH1. -- The Miami Herald