

The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power Book PDF Download



**By:
Desmond Cole**

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Desmond Cole marries journalism and activism to bring forth stories of the ways anti-black racism is permeated in Canadian society and the ways that black people are resisting in Canada.

I respect how he discussed how struggles overlap and intersect amongst the black and indigenous communities in Canada and why resisting is so important. You really can't discount how much we have to stand together in solidarity to create change and keep pushing forward the need to combat anti-black racism in

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I respect how he discussed how struggles overlap and intersect amongst the black and indigenous communities in Canada and why resisting is so important. You really can't discount how much we have to stand together in solidarity to create change and keep pushing forward the need to combat anti-black racism in schools, in the "justice" system, in immigration policy and practice and in our every day lives.

Reliving some of the stories, knowing some of the people in the stories, being to some of the events and protests described in some of these stories - it was hard to go through a second time on the page.

As a person in Toronto working with various marginalized communities, having people in your family going through the same/similar targeted policing and police violence, reading this book was comforting in a sense. To know that we have people like Desmond Cole out here documenting these struggles, documenting the harm that anti-black racism causes in Canadian cities, we have young black people out here telling the truth and standing tall and not letting respectability politics, attempts at silencing by the old guard, false promises of comfort and job security sway them; it really, really fucking touched me. How Desmond Cole paints our distinct Canadian picture is important. We're not trying to compare tragedies between the US and Canada, and I love that he doesn't attempt to do that - he's highlighting how fucked up things are here, how unstable and unsafe things are here, how corrupt policing is here especially when it comes to how the truth of police brutality and harm against black citizens gets hidden under layers of corrupt or zero data collection, backtracking or disinterest by problematic, posturing politicians and layers and layers of unchecked and uncontested with white supremacy.

Justice for Abdirahman (March) was the hardest chapter of the book for me because I remember clearly when that happened and just how traumatizing it was, especially in the community that I lived in at the time which has a high Caribbean and East African population. To go through it again on

paper, hurt so much all over again. I had to stop and take a breath and come back to this book.

I can't overstate how happy I am that this book exists and that

also exists; both capturing the truth of the matter of anti-black racism here in Canada. I'm glad Desmond Cole exists. I'm glad that he asks the hard questions. I have issues with his weaponizing his stance in the community against certain black women in the community (looking back to the last mayoral election). I could get into that deeper, but yo, that's for twitter and doesn't have directly much to do with this book.

Lauren Simmons

I will preface this by saying Desmond Cole is a friend.

This book, man oh man, this book. It reads at once like a convo with Des, a call to action (you better fucking act), and a thoroughly-researched history. The narrative structure of a month-by-month account of Black activism in the year 2017 is a helpful device that gives the story a meaningful framework. Each chapter addresses a specific event or area of activism - immigration, Pride, police in schools, police brutality - but there are

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Ameema Saeed

Oh, what an incredible read.

The concept of Desmond Cole's "The Skin We're In" is unexpected, unique, and unforgettable. It's the story of Canada in the year 2017 - capturing a year of the systemic, social, and structural ways we (Canadians) have institutionalized and weaponized racism, especially anti-Black (& anti-Indigenous) racism:

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Cole uses his skills as a reporter, and a writer, seamlessly weaving together a month by month history of racism and resistance in Canada in 2017. Although it covered painful and heavy subjects, this book was unputdownable, & incomparable. I even found myself dog-eared pages, so

I could research further on topics and stories.

Cole's writing has always been impactful, and "The Skin We're In" is no exception. This is one of those books you think about for a long time after you read it - one that you find yourself referring to constantly. Definitely a must-read for all Canadians, especially those who like to use the refrain "not as bad as the U.S."

Monica

Seriously such a fantastic read about Black activism in Canada in one single year. There was so much I learned about what was happening in my own community that I wasn't aware of before, and really made me question some preconceived notions I had about activism and particularly Black

activism. I also really appreciated how Cole included some stories and histories of Indigenous peoples in Canada and how that relates to the fight for equity and equality today - because Indigenous peoples have

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Brittany

While I'm pretty well informed about Black issues in the US, I'm largely ignorant of what's happening to Black folks in Canada. This book was my first step toward remedying this. And, when you read it alongside contemporary events (pipeline protests and the militaristic government response), the parallels to the US are even more apparent. A must read for anyone wanting an inside perspective on race relations in Canada.