



# Brothers Gonna Work It Out: Sexual Politics in the Golden Age of Rap Nationalism

Charise Cheney

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Brothers Gonna Work It Out considers the political expression of rap artists within the historical tradition of black nationalism. Interweaving songs and personal interviews with hip-hop artists and activists including Chuck D of Public Enemy, KRS-One, Rosa Clemente, manager of dead prez, and Wise Intelligent of Poor Righteous Teachers, Cheney links late twentieth-century hip-hop nationalists with their nineteenth-century spiritual forebears.

Cheney examines Black nationalism as an ideology historically inspired by a crisis of masculinity. Challenging simplistic notions of hip-hop culture as simply sexist or misogynistic, she pays particular attention to Black nationalists' historicizing of slavery and their visualization of male empowerment through violent resistance. She charts the recent rejection of Christianity in the lyrics of rap nationalist music due to the perception that it is too conciliatory, and the increasing popularity of Black Muslim rap artists.

Cheney situates rap nationalism in the 1980s and 90s within a long tradition of Black nationalist political thought which extends beyond its more obvious influences in the mid-to-late twentieth century like the Nation of Islam or the Black Power Movement, and demonstrates its power as a voice for disenfranchised and disillusioned youth all over the world.



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