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## Rooke's "You can change the world! Everyday teen heroes making a difference everywhere" (book review)

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# Book Reviews

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Rooke, M. (2019) *You can change the world! Everyday teen heroes making a difference everywhere*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 317 pp. \$18.95. ISBN 9781785925023

This inspirational book tells the stories of fifty teenagers from across the globe who've dared to change their own lives and the world they live in. These stories explain how to survive in a world often obsessed by celebrities, social media and appearances, by refusing to conform to other people's expectations. Heroes emerge. These examples of teens making a difference will inspire other teens to take positive action, to be courageous in pursuing a passionate dream or in fighting to overcome a threatening obstacle. Two examples of heroes include Alex and Hannah.

Alex, age 18, is a Canadian teen from Calgary who broke his spine on his fifteenth birthday. He was tobogganing in a dangerous area. He was immediately taken to the children's ward of the hospital. But at five foot eleven, and one hundred and fifty pounds, the children-sized morphine dosage he received was inadequate for his body size. He was shrieking. After surgery, he had to learn to live in a wheelchair. Left paralyzed, he had to rethink his life. Unable to join the rugby team and letting go of his dream of becoming a soldier were hard for him. But out of this tragedy, Alex began to fundraise, to speak to groups about outdoor sports safety. Great results! In one campaign, he raised over a hundred thousand dollars. He believes things happen for reason. Helping others is what he now does. Pushing, fighting hard to win victory over that day's trials are part of what he can talk about, and inspire others to do. Never Give Up, is his motto. Alex is a hero.

Hannah, a 17 year old, from Arlington Virginia, is a 'best buddy' to James, a person with a disability. Their high school Best Buddy chapter links two students together to build relationships; they encourage twice a month visits, doing something that interests both of them. Some play sports. Some read. Some hang out and chat, go for milkshakes, etc. But treating one another as equals is what this visit is all about. Now Hannah is President of their school chapter and she recognizes that she is less judgmental. For International Autism Awareness Week, everyone in the school wore sunglasses to find out how it feels to have sensory issues. She has inspired others to be more sensitive to people who have special needs. For many, Hannah is a hero.

In a world where teens are often labeled 'lazy, apathetic, and selfish', this book is needed. These fifty teens are dynamic and purposeful; they do make a difference and this book proves it! Purchase recommended for libraries serving teenagers or engaged in developing youth leadership and building social culture resources.

**Reviewer**

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