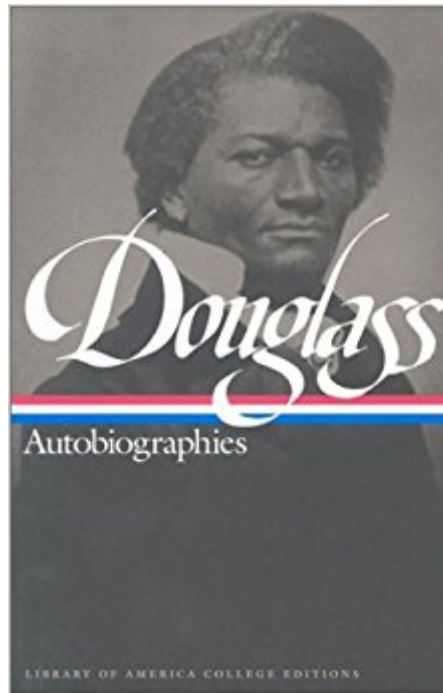




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Douglass: Autobiographies (Library Of America College Editions)



Synopsis

Book by Douglass, Frederick

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Frederick Douglass, an outspoken abolitionist, was born into slavery in 1818 and, after his escape in 1838, repeatedly risked his own freedom as an antislavery lecturer, writer, and publisher. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. was Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Africana Studies at Cornell University, and also tenured at Yale, Duke, and Harvard, where he was appointed W.E.B. DuBois professor of humanities in 1991. Professor Gates is the author of *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the Racial Self*, *Wonders of the African World*, *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Man*, *Loose Cannons: Notes on the Culture Wars*, and *Colored People: A Memoir*. With Cornel West, he co-wrote *The African American Century: How Black Americans Have Shaped Our Country and The Future of the Race*. He is also the editor of the critically-acclaimed edition of *Our Nig*, an annotated reprint of Harriet E. Wilson's 1859 novel, *The Slave's Narrative* (with the late Charles T. Davis), *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African-American Experience*, *Six Women's Slave Narratives*, and *In the House of Oshugbo: Critical Essays on Wole Soyinka*. He is a recipient of the MacArthur Prize.

Fredrick Douglass provides a remarkable look at the daily life of a slave. He explains the mechanisms used to maintain the slave system and how it affected the people involved. Many of his observations about education and economics are still valid. The writing style is not dated or affected. The stories are interesting and move quickly.

This is one of the most eye opening pieces of literature that I ever had the pleasure to read. I really feel that if everyone read this book there would not be such a problem with racism. I think that the book has not received the commendation that it deserves because many people are afraid of its contents and what it means to their lives - their ancestors were the cause of much of the horror and abuse that follows the abomination of slavery. It is one of the best books that I have ever read and I would certainly recommend it to those who are not too scared to read it. As for it being a piece of abolitionist rubbish - No way! Douglass was certainly not the only writer to portray his life of slavery in this context - they all can't be lying. Also, what right have we to be so critical of his life - This is his autobiography, not a pamphlet to try and rouse the masses against slavery and racism.

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This book lacks everything which it needs. Past the third chapter, the story begins to roll, but before that, it reads very much like an abolitionist pamphlet. I am very much in favor of what the novel tries to express, but the blatant way in which the message is conveyed takes away from the entire book. For a look at the institution of slavery and several examples of brutality from the Frederick Douglass' life, this is a good book, but do not expect to be moved or to feel as if you experienced the horror of the time. It could have been done better.

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