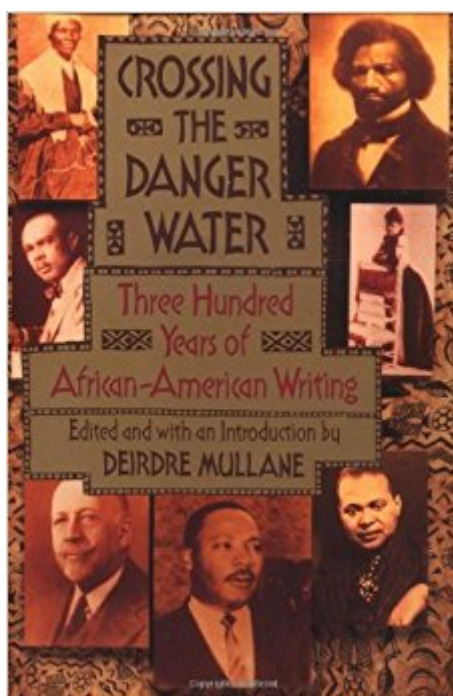


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Crossing The Danger Water: Three Hundred Years Of African-American Writing



Synopsis

The history of African-American life and thought presented in this anthology represents a far-reaching written and oral tradition, which is thought-provoking, inspiring, and impressive in its breadth. It includes poetry and prose by today's best and most well-known writers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an unusual array of writings by African Americans. Beginning with Olaudah Equiano's 1789 slave narrative and ending with Congresswoman Maxine Waters's testimony before the Senate Banking Committee in 1992 on the Los Angeles riots, this welcome anthology brings together a diversity of voices. It includes fiction, autobiography, poetry, songs, and letters by such writers as Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, and Richard Wright. Many topics are covered, from slavery, education, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and political issues to spirituals, songs of the Civil Rights movement, and rap music. To conclude, there's the surprising addition of Jesse Jackson's 1984 address to the Democratic National Convention. This book supersedes Richard A. Long and Eugenia W. Collier's *Afro-American Writing: An Anthology of Prose and Poetry* (Pennsylvania State Univ. Pr., 1985). Essential for literary collections.- Ann Burns, "Library Journal" Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Anthologies tend to be either literary or historical, but this substantial volume combines many forms of writing in an effort to mirror the African American experience in its entirety. The opening

document is the personal narrative of one of the first Africans to arrive on the American continent, Olaudah Equiano, a scout and interpreter in the employ of Spanish explorers from 1527 to 1539. Early government papers record such events as the emancipation of slaves for military service during the American Revolution, while slave revolts are described in vivid letters written by rebels. The varied and expressive selections, introduced by informative editorial commentary, follow the course of history up through the Civil War, Reconstruction, the founding of the NAACP, and on into the civil-rights movement, the Vietnam War, and even the L.A. riots. Editorials from early African American newspapers are reprinted as are court opinions, song lyrics, and folktales. Essays, poems, and speeches by Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Booker T. Washington, W .E. B. Du Bois, Gwendolyn Brooks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson, and Alice Walker are some of the collection's highlights. Donna Seaman

I love this book, I bought 3 copies to give as gifts to the elders of the family. This book contains everything from Uncle Remus "true" writings - how he spelled words out based on their sounds; Poems, Bibliographies, slave revolts, etc. This is a must have - Great reference book

Good book with detailed explanations. I needed this book for my class and enjoyed the info in the text. Happy I was able to get it for the price I paid. Very detailed which I enjoyed.

Great book

This book is very informative because it tells the story of black slaves from their point of view.

I have no problems with this, the book came when they said it would and the book was in excellent condition.

My cousin gave this book to me as a gift when I was 13. It changed my life. I learned so much from that book that I had never learned until that point. It gave me pride in my history as an African-American, but also gave me hope as a human being. I have since purchased this book for my 12-year old son and will purchase another one for my 6-year-old son. I want him to have his own copy when he is ready to read it and soak it all in. It is very sad that this book isn't as popular as it should be. I think it would be a great resource for a college course or maybe even a high school course.

I used this book while taking a Black History course. Everyone in the course agreed that it was the best book we had read on Black History. This was not just a book on history or literature (like most Black History books are) but a very enlightening combination of both subjects. The first thing that caught our attention was how it touched on those people that were involved in our history that are rarely if ever talked about. Also, some of the literature was from African stories that touched on the history of slavery from Africa. This was important to me, because many people blame slavery totally on whites, without an understanding that Blacks held slaves (in Africa and America also) and captured slaves for White Europeans. The letters written, such as those by the lawyers for Dred Scott, and John Brown gave you an interesting perspective of the struggles and the twisted legalities of the decisions passed down in those cases. Also, the personality differences revealed between some of our early leaders, such as W.E.B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington and other contemporaries further demonstrated why our fight for freedom has been such a struggle. This is a very good book and one worth reading and adding to your personal library.

It's a shame this book is not better known than it is. It is a classic collection of lesser-known writings of Black history mixed with familiar things such as MLK's Dream Speech and Booker T. Washington's Atlanta address. Among the lesser known items are important, but seldom-read documents such as the Emancipation Proclamation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments (reparations fans would do well to read article 4 of the latter document), and my favorite is Frances Harper's moving letter of sympathy for John Brown's widow (students in my own Black history classes have always been in awe of this as I've read it aloud). But enough said, read it, learn, think, and enjoy.

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