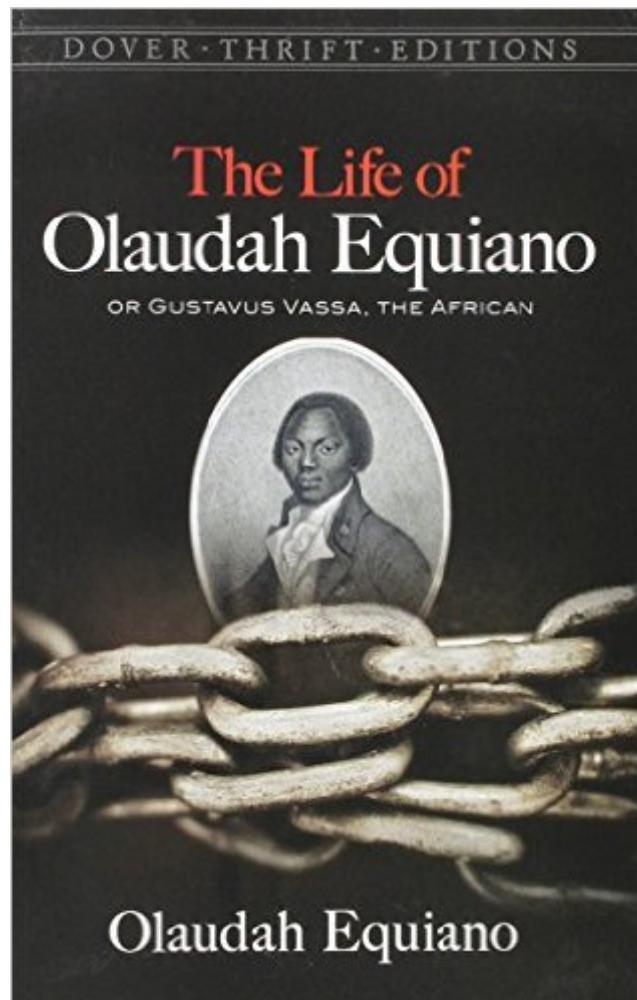


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The Life Of Olaudah Equiano (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

Compelling work traces the formidable journey of an Igbo prince from captivity to freedom and literacy and recounts his enslavement in the New World, service in the Seven Years War with General Wolfe in Canada, voyages to the Arctic with the Phipps expedition of 1772-73, six months among the Miskito Indians in Central America, and a grand tour of the Mediterranean as a personal servant to an English gentlemen. Skillfully written, with a wealth of engrossing detail, this powerful narrative deftly illustrates the nature of the black experience in slavery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As an American who has grown up hearing and learning about slavery and the slave trade in the US, and mainly in the 19th century, I appreciated the insight Equiano's book gives into the institution from other parts of the world, and in particular how racism evolved within an institution that had been taken for granted for centuries and had not been particularly racist. It is not the narrative of a victim. Not only does Equiano purchase his freedom halfway through the book, but also you can tell from the incidents he describes and from reading between the lines that he was a strong, even pugnacious person who didn't take any guff from people he did not respect. He was pragmatic, ambitious, and a fighter. While he accepted the social hierarchies of the time, including slavery itself until the latter part of his life, he shows no humility (except in terms of his spiritual condition). When he proposes to another person that he work for him as a servant, you get the feeling that he has just

given that person an honor. Equiano's autobiography is important for many other reasons. It is very much a book of its time, the late 18th century, when spiritual autobiographies were important both to the writers and the readers. (Make sure that when you buy an edition of this book you do not buy an edition that has been abridged, as the account of Equiano's religious/spiritual development is what has been cut, making hamburger of what remains). He has wonderful, sometimes acid, comments, to make on the churches he observes at the time. For example, here's his comment on a church service run by the Rev.

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