

Narrative of the life of frederick douglass essay

[Business](#), [Career](#)



Narrative Of The Life Of Frederick DouglassIntroductionNo doubt, the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass is an motivating story with reference to a man's escape from slavery. This is an autobiography of Frederick Douglass taking place in the nineteenth century. Frederick Bailey, his birth name, was a slave in Maryland who made an escape to New York, and eventually to Massachusetts.

He must fight for his survival and freedom while watching and experiencing atrocious punishments to the slaves. The only trait that caused his slavery was the color of his skin. This essay will describe Frederick's life and survival in bondage, to his escape (Gregory P. Lampe, 1998. PP. 323).

According to the expert analysis the great Frederick was born into slavery in 1818 in Tuckahoe, Maryland. His mother was a black slave named Harriet Bailey, and his father was a white slave proprietor. Frederick was alienated from his mother at an extremely young age, before he knew Harriet as his mother. She would travel about four or five times to see him at night.

She would lie down with him at night, but was gone long before he awakened in the morning. When Frederick was about seven years old, Harriet passed away, and Frederick was not allowed to be present at her funeral. Frederick continued to live under the power of his master, Captain Anthony, along with other slaves. Anthony was a cruel master, who often whipped his slaves. The slaves would sing songs of freedom at night to help ease the pain of oppression (Columbia Encyclopedia, 2004). History of FrederickFrederick was sold at a young age to another slave owner by the name of Colonel Edward Lloyd.

Colonel Lloyd was an unbelievably wealthy slave owner in Maryland, owning three or four hundred slaves on his home plantation and many more on his other farms. Despite his wealth, his slaves received very little food and clothing. Colonel Lloyd was much more brutal to Frederick than Anthony. " I was seldom whipped by my old master, and suffered little from any thing else than hunger and cold." (Douglass fifty-six) Frederick was able to leave his plantation when he was about eight years old. " From my earliest recollection, I date the entertainment of a deep conviction that slavery would not always be able to hold me within its foul embrace; and in the darkest hours of my career in slavery, this living word of faith and spirit of hope departed not from me, but remained like ministering angels to cheer me through the gloom. This good spirit was from God, and to him I offer thanksgiving and praise." (Douglass forty-five) He attributes his good fortune to G-d, saying that even at the lowest points of his life as a slave; he would be urged on by his faith in G-d.

Out of all the slave children on the Great House Farm, Douglass is chosen to go live in Baltimore. He is sent to live with Hugh Auld, the brother of Captain Thomas Auld. No doubt, the three days most important to his move to Baltimore is believed the cherished days of his life (Autobiographies pp. 1-126). When he arrives in Baltimore, he is greeted by Mr. and Mrs. Auld, along with their son, Thomas. For the first time in his life, Frederick encounters something in a white slave owner that he has never seen before-kindness. Sophia Auld spent time with Frederick teaching him to read, before Mr. Auld forbid her to do so anymore. She becomes ruthless and vile.

“ But, alas! this kind heart had but a short time to stay such. The fatal poison of reckless power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.”

(Douglass forty-six) Sophia’s husband tells her that a slave knowing how to read can be dangerous to them. Frederick takes what he had learned from Sophia, and gains outside knowledge of how to read. He succeeds, and reads whenever he has the opportunity to do so (Philip S.

Foner, 1844-1860). In 1833, Frederick goes to live with a man by the name of Edward Covey for a year, who is known to be very cruel to blacks. For the first six months with Covey, Frederick is beaten regularly.

“ I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute!” (Douglass seventy-three) Frederick hits a short point in his life when he no longer needs to read, think, or even live. He explains himself as having been indistinct from a man into a beast. One day, when Frederick and three additional slaves are fanning the wheat, Frederick falls to the earth from tiredness, and is compressed by Covey. Frederick manages to escape to his true master’s house, but is commanded to go back.

When he arrives back at Covey's farm, he is beaten yet again. Frederick escapes to the cornfield, and meets an old slave named Sandy Jenkins. Sandy is very superstitious, and advises Frederick to carry a root over his right shoulder so that he will not be beaten. He does so, and when faced with Covey, he is not beaten. This is a great turning point for Frederick.

He now considers himself as a man. Now Douglass goes to labor for Mr. William Freeland, a fair and reputable slaveholder who is devoid of spiritual affectation. He enjoys beating his slaves and even considers the whippings his religious duty. Frederick is able to gather the slaves and teach them to read and write.

This was known as Sabbath School, because it met on Sundays. While working for Freeland, his uncle, Henry Bailey, refuses to be tied up and whipped, so he and the other slaves are taken to Easton Jail. Frederick is released days later and sent back to live with Hugh Auld.

He is sent to Baltimore years later, allowing him to easily plan an escape. Frederick is forced to pay Master Hugh his earnings of the week, and gets little reward for doing so. He gets a job at a shipyard to earn more money for Hugh, making him very happy. This allows Frederick to escape. He does not speak of the details of his escape so that other slaves had a chance for freedom as well. Frederick makes his way to New York, and later to Bedford, Massachusetts. Frederick Bailey changes his name to Frederick Johnson, and later to Frederick Douglass.

He marries a free black woman named Anna, and becomes one of the foremost figures of the abolitionist movement (Ziolkowski, 1991, 148-65).
Critical Review Frederick Douglass was the first slave to write a book about the life of a slave. He was a pioneer trying to use his great intelligence to show the world what his life and the life of his fellow slaves was truly like. Historically the book served as a basis on what happened to slaves and the life they lived in the 1800's.

The book described how the slaves were treated, how the masters ruled, how they thought according to Frederick Douglass (William L., 1987). It informed the United States on life in the south of a plantation slave and master, and the thoughts of many slaves of that time. The book also served a great purpose in an important time, antebellum, as anti-slavery propaganda. It depicted how brutal slave life truly was, showed how masters manipulated the slaves, and gave a great example of anti-slavery. In Douglass's words slave owners figured that if slaves learned to read they would be dangerous. Douglass learned to read, and he was not a violent person to anyone, never threatening a soul. This proved that the masters' views were wrong, that the slaves could be taught if given a chance and would still be as normal as any white person; another example of how the masters manipulated not only the slaves but also the people of America, telling them slaves would become violent if taught.

He risked his life just to live in the north; this shows how much slavery drove him and others to risk it all to get away from the evil brutality of slavery. This book served as a historical document describing the slavery life, the way

they were treated, the master's life, the plantation style, the ideas of both the masters on dehumanizing the slaves, and the ideas of Frederick Douglass on manipulation from masters and freedom. The poor lifestyle, mistreatment, and underprivileged conditions were all provided as intentional mistreatment to slaves by their slave owners. This displays the inhumanity and deceptive activity of the treatment of slaves. The meaning of the slaveholder was to dehumanize the slaves. The reason for this was to stop the slaves from flatterer restless, defiant, rebellious, or wanting more freedom.

The slaves were value money and wealth for the slave owners (Gregory P. Lampe, 1998. PP. 323). Slavery Concepts Therefore, they didn't want slaves to become unhappy and a threat to the production and income of the plantation.

The slave owners' method to uphold contentedness was to keep the slaves inconsiderate. The slaves were not to ever realize that their life was bad or could be improved upon. Douglass' first glimpse of the dehumanizing character of slavery was when he was a small boy around seven years old. Slaves each appeared to believe that they lived on the best plantation and would never openly portray any difference, even if they were whipped to a bloody mess on a regular basis. Douglass explains that a good master was one who fed the slaves enough each day. Many slaves were fed minimum amounts of food and almost always felt the pains of hunger (Bill Rolston, 2003).

PP. 45). Anti-Slavery propaganda was another big topic of this book; because of the fact that Frederick Douglass was a slave his life had given him the knowledge to know that abolition of slavery should happen. However cruel and inhumane they were, the slave owners knew the key to keeping their slaves productive and of value to their plantation. The exact birth-date of Frederick Douglass is unknown, even to him. " Slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have ever met a slave who could tell his birthday" (Daniel J.

Royer, 1994, PP. 363). Conclusion This was an amazing novel, with strong representation. It is terrible that one man is considered superior to another just by the color of his skin. Douglass showed his strong endurance by his survival as a slave, and escaping to freedom.

Aside from some minor details, this autobiography was very well written and extremely uplifting. The idea of his escape from bondage was inspiring as that he can manage to be so tolerant and gracious even after suffering through a tough life. Even through the harshest times of bondage, freedom and humanity lurks within us all. Work Cited Article Title: Frederick Douglass: A Black Abolitionist in Ireland Bill Rolston Describes the Impact of an Erstwhile Slave, Who Toured the Emerald Isle Speaking out against Slavery in 1845. Contributors: Bill Rolston - author.

Magazine Title: History Today. Volume: 53. Issue: 6.

Publication Date: June 2003. Page Number: 45+. COPYRIGHT 2003 History Today Ltd.; COPYRIGHT 2003 Gale Group
Article Title: The Process of Literacy as Communal Involvement in the Narratives of Frederick Douglass.

Contributors: Daniel J. Royer - author. Journal Title: African American Review.

Volume: 28. Issue: 3. Publication Year: 1994. Page Number: 363+.

COPYRIGHT 1994 African American Review; COPYRIGHT 2002 Gale Group
Book Title: Frederick Douglass: Freedom's Voice, 1818-1845.

Contributors: Gregory P. Lampe author.

Publisher: Michigan State University Press. Place of Publication: East Lansing, MI. Publication Year: 1998.

Page Number: 323. Douglass, Frederick. My Bondage and My Freedom.

1855. Ed. William L. Andrews.

Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987. Encyclopedia Article Title: Douglass, Frederick.
Encyclopedia Title: The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. Publisher: Columbia University Press.

Place of Publication: New York. Publication Year: 2004. Frederick Douglass, Autobiographies: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave; My Bondage and My Freedom; Life and Times of Frederick Douglass. The Library of America. 1, 126 pp. Philip S.

Foner, The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, volume 5. Supplementary Volume, 1844-1860
Ziolkowski, Thad. " Antitheses: The Dialectic of Violence and Literacy in Frederick Douglass's Narrative of 1845.

" Critical Essays on Frederick Douglass. Ed. William L. Andrews. Boston: Hall, 1991.

148-65.