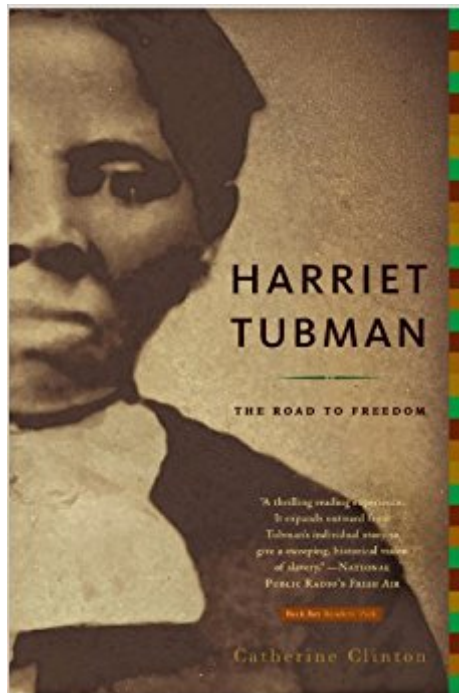


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Harriet Tubman: The Road To Freedom



Synopsis

Celebrated for her courageous exploits as a conductor on the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman has entered history as one of nineteenth-century America's most enduring and important figures. But just who was this remarkable woman? To John Brown, leader of the Harpers Ferry slave uprising, she was General Tubman. For the many slaves she led north to freedom, she was Moses. To the slaveholders who sought her capture, she was a thief and a trickster. To abolitionists, she was a prophet. Now, in a biography widely praised for its impeccable research and its compelling narrative, Harriet Tubman is revealed for the first time as a singular and complex character, a woman who defied simple categorization.

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Customer Reviews

Clinton has an extraordinary knack of compressing complex history into an informing brief paragraph or a single sentence, making this "first full-scale biography" of Tubman (1825-1913) a revelation. To the task of illuminating the "difficult to document" life of the woman known as "Moses," Clinton brings her deep immersion in Southern history, women's history and African-American history. Succinctly, she sets the stage upon which Tubman moves, offering just enough biographical detail to give less well-known figures vitality (Mary Shadd Cary gets more space than Frederick Douglass; Union general David Hunter more than William Lloyd Garrison) and just enough historical detail to render Tubman's milieu meaningful (unfamiliar Canadian history gets more space than the familiar Fugitive Slave Acts). Although she often posed as an old woman, Tubman was in her 20s

when she began her rescues, and in her mid-30s as the Civil War broke out. Clinton is meticulous (without being annoying) in distinguishing the speculative from the known in Tubman's private life. Of far greater consequence is Clinton's revelation of Tubman's public (though usually clandestine) work. In distinguishing between "runaways" and "fugitives," between "conductors" and "abductors... those who ventured into the South to extract slaves" ("all of them white men" before Tubman), in detailing the extent to which she "never wavered in her support" of John Brown, in chronicling her role in the Combahee River raid, Clinton turns sobriquets into meaningful descriptors of a unique person. In her hands, a familiar legend acquires human dimension with no diminution of its majesty and power. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

At long last Harriet Tubman, the subject of school myth and lore, has a full-fledged biography. Critics agree that Clinton does a remarkable job researching the life of a woman who left few traces; not only was she born into slavery, but she was also illiterate, and the Underground Railroad left no written records. Despite these obstacles, Clinton delves into university archives to paint a detailed portrait of Tubman's life--from her marriage, militant politics, and role in the Underground Railroad to her activism in the northern free black community of Philadelphia. Her significant contribution lies in placing Tubman's life smartly within 19th-century Southern history. In short, this graceful biography elevates Tubman from a minor cultural icon to a significant figure in American history. Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Although this book lacks great detail, I was pleased with that. Too many times authors, in my opinion get bogged down in the minutiae. I was looking to read a book about her life, start to finish, the overall picture. That is exactly what I found in this book. There was very little political opinion expressed which I found to be delightful and a reason to give this book five stars. It must have been very difficult for the author to tell this story with such limited information but I felt she did a great job with what she had. There appear to be other books available that go into greater detail regarding the actual operation of the UGRR and I may read one of them later. But for now, I have a much better understanding of who she was, what she did, and the theatre she operated in. Fascinating as it was, I was at times so angry reading about slavery and wondering how we ever let it happen. This woman is a true American hero, flawed as any of us I am sure, but the author did not focus on that. Another reason I award it five stars. If you want to know who Harriet Tubman was, read this book.

If we want to understand the racial divide in our country today we need to have a clearer understanding of where it all began. The life of Harriet Tubman not only clarifies the racial issues of our day, but the gender issues as well. I dare say, there is no woman in our American history that has impacted the world around her and changed our history in the process, more than she did. This is a hard read...but worth every effort to finish it.

I thought the first half of the biography was excellent and then it seemed to lose steam. Also, as a retired history teacher I was alarmed that the author placed the Battle of Shiloh in Virginia. Considering she has a PH. D in history I found such a mistake disconcerting and wondered if there were other historical errors that I did not catch since I am not a specialist on the UGRR.

I was truly amazed at how brave Harriet was in returning to the Deep South again and again to lead so many slaves to freedom. It was enlightening that she had become a ranking soldier, "General Tubman," that helped in the strategy of the raids. Her identity had to be kept secret for her safety, so her name didn't appear in any official records. It was not surprising, however, how our government had, many times, conveniently dismissed her claims for a retirement pension. After the bravery, the leading of the troops, the nursing of the soldiers, the endless serving the needs of the poor and displaced, and all of the praise and acclaim, she died a very poor, but not broken, hero.

What an amazing biography. On the Road to Freedom shows us the human spirit to be free. It shows us the courage it took for Tubman to follow her conscience, to follow her heart, to answer the calling to help slaves escape from slavery.

I really enjoyed this book. It gave a lot of background information about the underground railroad which I found very interesting. Have no clue! The added part about Harriet was interesting and kept my interest.

Watching Underground ... Harriett said her father taught her to cut down trees ... made me curious about the woman behind the character. Very well written and informative.

Good book. I like history, easy read.

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