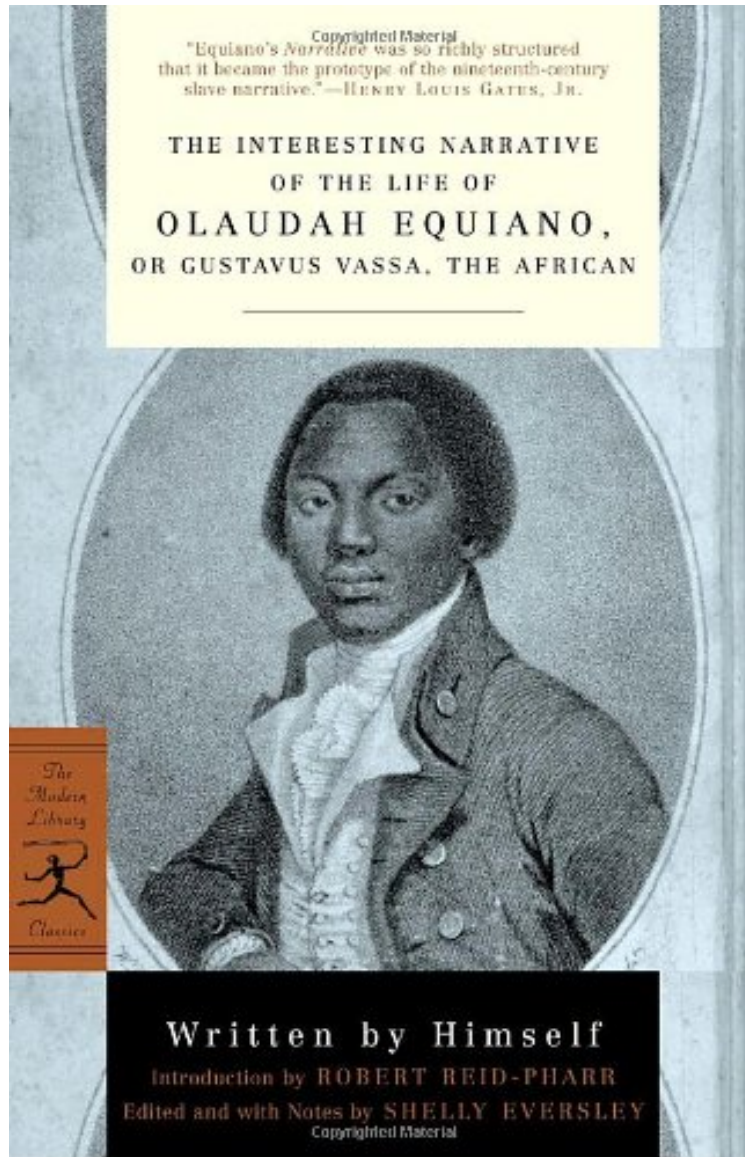


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## The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano: or, Gustavus Vassa, the African (Modern Library Classics)

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**Olaudah Equiano : The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano: or, Gustavus Vassa, the African (Modern Library Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano: or, Gustavus Vassa, the African (Modern Library

Classics):

22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Beauty from Ashes By Robert W. Kellemen Of all the firsthand accounts known to us as "slave narratives," Vassa's description is unique in many ways. To begin with, he takes his readers all the way back to his African roots, shedding historically-confirmed light on almost lost ancient traditions. His discussion of the harrowing and epically sad capture and separation of he and his sister are among the most moving in this genre. He then describes the despicable, inhumane conditions in the holds of the slave ships with a "you-are-there" writing style. Again, confirmed by other sources, these are some of the most often quoted accounts in historical texts. In this same chronological phase, Vassa also depicts the shared empathy among the enslaved Africans, helping us to see how they collaborated to survive. His ongoing narrative offers one of the more balanced looks at slavery. Vassa clearly tells the horrors of this evil system and the people responsible for it. At the same time, he often shares accounts of Europeans and White Americans who befriended him. In fact, his positive statements about non-Africans lend further credence to his critique of the many evils of slavery. His narrative also contains unique elements in his descriptions of his path toward freedom and his life as a freeman. We learn that in his era, for a man of his race, it was barely more tolerable to be free, given the hatred that he still endured. Though some reviewers tend to minimize or criticize it, his conversion narrative is classic. In fact, it may well have been the standard from which later testimonies were crafted about how "God struck me dead." Perhaps the evangelical nature of his conversion turns off some. However, if we are to engage Vassa in his other accounts, we must engage him here. Further, coming as it did later in his life, it is easy to see how his account of his entire life is entirely shaped by his conversion experience. Clearly, Vassa sees even the evils that he has suffered as part of a larger plan. In doing so he never suggests that God condones the evils of slavery. Rather, he indicates that God created beauty from ashes. Reviewer: Bob Kellemen, Ph.D., is the author of "Beyond the Suffering: Embracing the Legacy of African American Soul Care and Spiritual Direction," and of "Soul Physicians" and "Spiritual Friends." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pick it up By Yummaniecee Thompson Pick it up and read it for yourself don't believe everything you hear 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. From freedom to slavery to freedom By jermaine hendricks A very interesting and insightful read that allows the reader a virtual 'presence' in past history to witness the evil system of white-supremacy/racism. Understanding that the author was the first (perhaps only) enslaved African that actually traveled through the passage via ship and lived to write about its atrocities gives the reader an astounding and authenticated view into the savage merchandizing and inhumane treatment of human beings.

Edited and with Notes by Shelly Eversley Introduction by Robert Reid-Pharr In this truly astonishing eighteenth-century memoir, Olaudah Equiano recounts his remarkable life story, which begins when he is kidnapped in Africa as a boy and sold into slavery and culminates when he has achieved renown as a British antislavery advocate. The narrative "is a strikingly beautiful monument to the startling combination of skill, cunning, and plain good luck that allowed him to win his freedom, write his story, and gain international prominence," writes Robert Reid-Pharr in his Introduction. "He alerts us to the very concerns that trouble modern intellectuals, black, white, and otherwise, on both sides of the Atlantic." The text of this Modern Library Paperback Classic is set from the definitive ninth edition of 1794, reflecting the author's final changes to his masterwork.

"Equiano's Narrative was so richly structured that it became the prototype of the nineteenth-century slave narrative." —Henry Louis Gates, Jr. From the Inside Flap Edited and with Notes by Shelly Eversley Introduction by Robert Reid-Pharr In this truly astonishing eighteenth-century memoir, Olaudah Equiano recounts his remarkable life story, which begins when he is kidnapped in Africa as a boy and sold into slavery and culminates when he has achieved renown as a British antislavery advocate. The narrative "is a strikingly beautiful monument to the startling combination of skill, cunning, and plain good luck that allowed him to win his freedom, write his story, and gain international prominence," writes Robert Reid-Pharr in his Introduction. "He alerts us to the very concerns that trouble modern intellectuals, black, white, and otherwise, on both sides of the Atlantic." The text of this Modern Library Paperback Classic is set from the definitive ninth edition of 1794, reflecting the author's final changes to his masterwork. About the Author About the Introducer: ROBERT REID-PHARR, one of the country's leading scholars of early African-American literature, is a professor of English at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He lives in Brooklyn. About the Editor: SHELLY EVERSLEY is an assistant professor of American literature at Baruch College, specializing in African-American literature and culture. She is the author of *Integration and Its Discontents* and coeditor of *Race and Sexuality*.