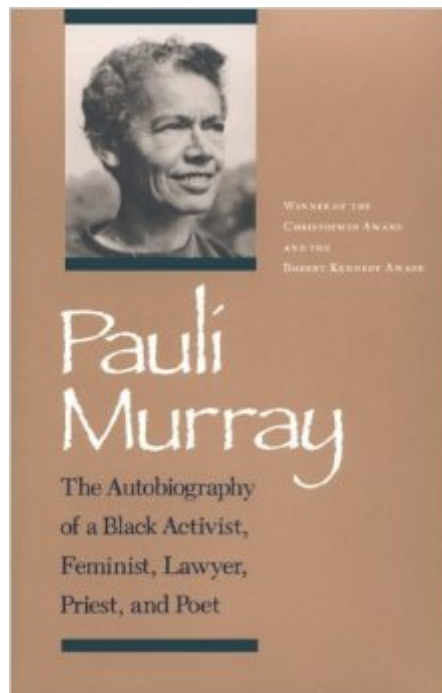


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Pauli Murray: The Autobiography Of A Black Activist, Feminist, Lawyer, Priest, And Poet



Synopsis

Pauli Murray (1910-1985) is regarded as "one of the least discussed figures in the history of twentieth-century African American women's activism." She was a highly regarded Feminist, who called attention to the plight of women, especially the colored and working poor. Roy Wilson

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Customer Reviews

An amazing woman and a fine writer, Ms. Murray brings our social history to life by looking at her own. Ms. Murray moved through the century finding new ways to contribute to each phase: from writing in Harlem in the 30's to helping to found N.O.W in the 60's. Denied admission to UNC in her youth because of her race, she said her first mass at a chapel there three decades later. Her intelligence and grasp of social issues is evident in her writing, as is her love of family, her strong faith and her pride in her race. If I am forced to a simple description, I can say this book is like if the Delaney Sisters were social activists. I have given away several copies of this book, as well as her history of her remarkable family. (PROUD SHOES, now back in print so grab it while you can.) The house where she grew up in Durham, N.C. still stands, very near my own home, and her many relatives continue to tell stories about Ms. Murray with pride.

Pauli Murray (1910-1985) is regarded as "one of the least discussed figures in the history of twentieth-century African American women's activism." She was a highly regarded Feminist, who called attention to the plight of women, especially the colored and working poor. Her gendered

perspective led her to become a civil rights activist, and an advocate for underrepresented working people in her capacity as both lawyer and a writer. "One person plus one typewriter constitutes a movement," she declared as she took up her challenge for the weak and down trodden in our society. Far sighted enough, She never blamed the poor for their poverty, a fashionable practice in current society. Murray's parents were educated working people. Her father was a school teacher in Baltimore and her mother a graduate of Hampton training School for Nurses. It was at Law School where she first became aware of "Jane Crow,"-- a overt form of discrimination against women in society. First she observed that there were only two female students in her class at the time-- "not more than two or three women" were enrolled, she said. On the professional faculty, the only woman was the registrar. "Jane Crow" even expressed itself in class through what she called the "free wheeling classroom style of informal discussion" which "allowed the men's deeper voices to obliterate [her] lighter voice." Her sex similarly deprived her of membership in her university's well-known legal fraternity. How would she characterize her general reaction to "Jane Crow"? She was at once disheartened and motivated by her rejection. This is a great book. I recommend it highly!

I read this for a book club and found it very interesting from a substantive point of view. I am a bit surprised that a poet - and she is a published poet - writes in a somewhat 'ordinary' style. Very little beautiful prose here. That said, the life she describes is full and interesting. She provides a good history of race relations from the mid-twenties until the end of her life. Her description of her early life is informative and her life story is compelling. I'd rate it an A+ for content and information and a B for style.

Still working my way through this autobiography. I can understand why Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg dedicated her Supreme Court confirmation to this incredible mentor. Pauli Murray was a powerful thinker, and her legal writing provided a lot of fire in the fueling of America's dream of freedom. She didn't get the credit, but she did most of the work. This is a MUST read! It's time to set the official record straight.

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