

# Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells (Negro American Biographies and Autobiographies)

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Ida B. Wells (1862-1931) was one of the foremost crusaders against black oppression. This engaging memoir tells of her private life as mother of a growing family as well as her public activities as teacher, lecturer, and journalist in her fight against attitudes and laws oppressing blacks.

"No student of black history should overlook Crusade for Justice."-William M. Tuttle, Jr.,  
Journal of American History

"Besides being the story of an incredibly courageous and outspoken black woman in the face of innumerable odds, the book is a valuable contribution to the social history of the United States and to the literature of the women's movement as well."-Elizabeth Kolmer,  
American Quarterly

"[Wells was] a sophisticated fighter whose prose was as thorough as her intellect."-Walter Goodman, New York Times

"An illuminating narrative of a zealous, race-conscious, civic- and church-minded black woman reformer, whose life story is a significant chapter in the history of Negro-White relations."-Thelma D. Perry, Negro History Bulletin

Alfreda M. Duster, who died in 1983, was the daughter of Ida B. Wells and Ferdinand L. Barnett, the first black state's attorney in Illinois.

Towards the end of her life, realizing that her work was already becoming forgotten history, Ida B. Wells wrote the massive, unfinished memoirs that form Crusade for Justice. An outspoken and determined woman with seemingly limitless energy, Ida B. Wells began her crusade against the oppression of black people in 1884, when, at the age of sixteen, she sued the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad for evicting her from a first class car. A teacher and journalist, she began a one-woman anti-lynching campaign after a close friend was murdered. She traveled throughout England and later in the United States gaining support; got married; began the first clubs for black women in the US; started a reading room, shelter, and employment service for black men in Chicago; investigated race riots; and had six children. Her children and husband (she refers to him as "Mr. Barnett") remain almost invisible in this book, but what Crusade for Justice lacks in domestic detail, it makes up for in personal opinion. Ida B. Wells was a forthright woman who worked with many famous leaders of the early twentieth century, and she does not hesitate either to blast her opponents or to praise those who earn her respect - including President Wilson, Booker T. Washington, Susan B. Anthony, and Frederick Douglass. Her history is packed with facts not often taught in schools and filled with the fervor of a woman who spent her life proving that one person can and must make a difference. -- For great reviews of books for girls, check out Let's Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14. -- From 500 Great Books by Women; review by Erica Bauermeister

Other Books

Ida B. Wells, Born into slavery in 1862, Ida B. Wells went on to become an influential reformer and leader in the African American community. A Southern black woman living in a time when little social power was available to people of her race or gender, Ida B. Wells made

an extraordinary impact on American society through her journalism and activism. Best-known for her anti-lynching crusade, which publicly exposed the extralegal killings of African Americans, Wells was also an outspoken advocate for social justice in issues including women's suffrage, education, housing, the legal system, and poor relief. In this concise biography, Kristina DuRocher introduces students to Wells's life and the historical issues of race, gender, and social reform in the late 19th- and early 20th-century U.S. Supplemented by primary documents including letters, speeches, and newspaper articles by and about Wells, and supported by a robust companion website, this book enables students to understand this fascinating figure and a contested period in American history. [?] [?] [?] [?] [?] . The increase is discussed in Ida B . Wells and Jacqueline Jones Royster, Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B . Wells , 1892-1900 (Boston: Bedford Books , 1997), 10. Wells , Crusade for Justice , 64."