

## Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation



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Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) and Herman Melville (1819-1891) addressed in their writings a range of issues that continue to resonate in American culture: the reach and limits of democracy; the nature of freedom; the roles of race, gender, and sexuality; and the place of the United States in the world. Yet they are rarely discussed together, perhaps because of their differences in race and social position. Douglass escaped from slavery and tied his well-received nonfiction writing to political activism, becoming a figure of international prominence. Melville was the grandson of Revolutionary War heroes and addressed urgent issues through fiction and poetry, laboring in increasing obscurity.

In eighteen original essays, the contributors to this collection explore the convergences and divergences of these two extraordinary literary lives. Developing new perspectives on literature, biography, race, gender, and politics, this volume ultimately raises questions that help rewrite the color line in nineteenth-century studies.

#### Contributors:

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