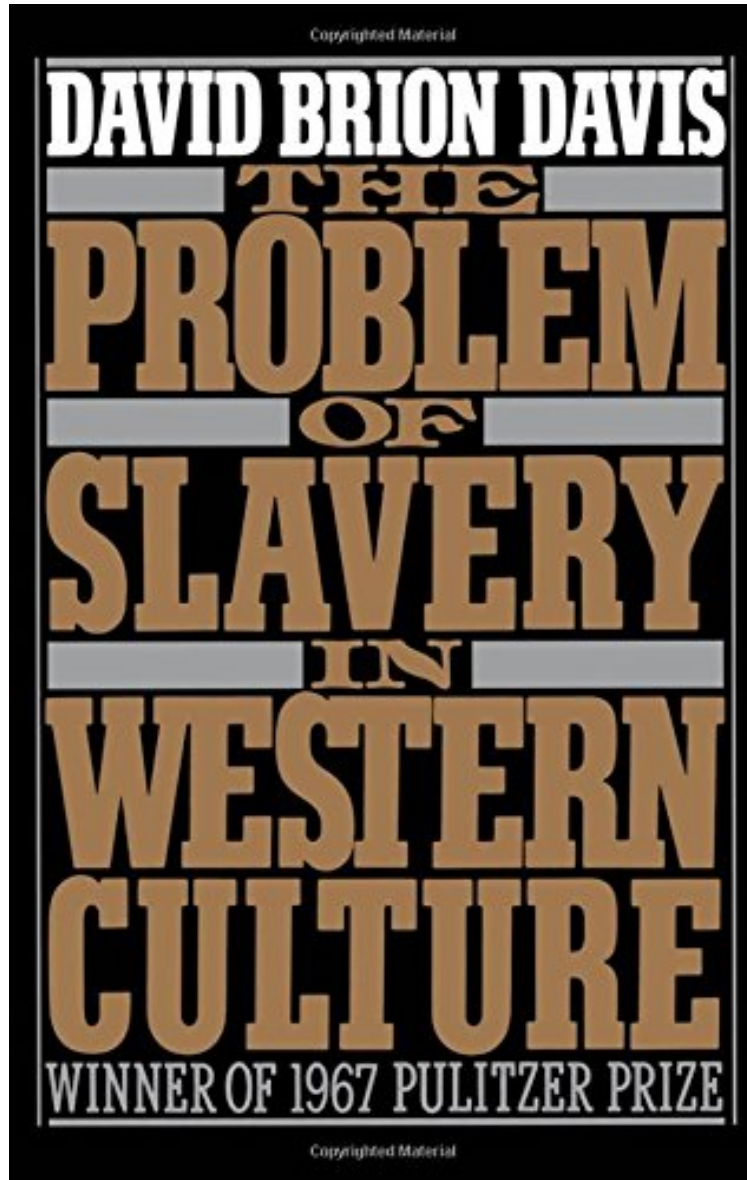


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The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Oxford Paperbacks)

David Brion Davis

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#575321 in Books David Brion Davis 1988-10-20Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 5.31 x 1.05 x 8.00l, 1.00 #File Name: 0195056396528 pagesThe Problem of Slavery in Western Culture Oxford Paperbacks | File size: 30.Mb

David Brion Davis : The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Oxford Paperbacks) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Oxford Paperbacks):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An important book that should be considered a classicBy Desert

RatThe subject matter of this book is difficult and sometimes quite deep in philosophical and theological concepts. Yet the author writes in a way that very readable without the slightest dumbing down. This is no trivial skill. From the earliest written records in of western culture and earlier still slavery was acknowledged and accepted as a normal part of the social and economic structure. That is a span of around 5,000 years. The first serious but faint questionings began less than 500 years ago. Another 200 years passed before there were any organized political move to abolish slavery. For nearly all human history the was noting peculiar about the "peculiar institution"; few gave it much thought except perhaps how to avoid it for themselves.If you were to take a time machine back to the period just before 1500 and ask and seek to discuss the evils of slavery with an educated European, chances are they wouldn't understand what you were talking about. You would not understand their lack of understanding. This book explains the acceptance of slavery was a consequence of radically different understandings of nature and society and religion. In short, we and our ancestors of 500+ years back might as well be aliens from different planets.This book, then, is not a history of slavery but a history of how the western world thought about it. I found this a slow read but not from boredom. Rather every few pages I had to stop and try to get my head around the ideas that are under discussion. Ancient philosophy not to mention theology are not really "my thing" so it took some effort. I suggest you read this book with your iPad nearby in order to access the Wikipedia and other sources. The author provides numerous footnotes and citations which temp diversions and excursions.The book ends in the decade just before the American Revolution. Although the author doesn't say as much, it is fairly obvious that the forces leading to the founding of the abolitionist movement, (the French Enlightenment, the Great Awakening and the outcome of the Seven Years War) were also the forces leading to the outbreak of the American Revolution.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Powerful BookBy Frank S WarnerEven though this is a scholarly book, it is very readable. What I learned about slavery is that the thinking that perpetuated it for many thousands of years is still with us. Slavery flourished long before Classical Greece. Then Aristotle "reasoned" that some people were meant to be slaves. It became the norm in Western Culture. Most people believed this was just the way the world worked. This view was never seriously challenged until the mid eighteenth century. The book taught me that just because something is a tradition, be it religious or otherwise, does not make it right. It also taught me that the we as a culture have not yet overcome slavery.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Unprecedented idealsBy Kenrick Hackett Jr.Wonderfully informative, and seems to be written as intended: to provide a foundation for understanding slavery in the United States. In this book Davis reveals that the modern notion that American slavery was sui generis can only be maintained by an ignorance of history. Because Davis is not just a historian, but a moral philosopher as well, he examines attitudes toward slavery down through history. Though he does not say so, one can conclude that presence of emancipation and equality as widespread social ideals are unprecedented in history. I look forward to reading the next volume in Davis's trilogy on the problem of slavery.

Winner of several national awards including the 1967 Pulitzer Prize, this classic study by David Brion Davis has given new direction to the historical and sociological research of society's attitude towards slavery. Davis depicts the various ways different societies have responded to the intrinsic contradictions of slavery from antiquity to the early 1770's in order to establish the uniqueness of the abolitionists' response. While slavery has always caused considerable social and psychological tension, Western culture has associated it with certain religious and philosophical doctrines that gave it the highest sanction. The contradiction of slavery grew more profound when it became closely linked with American colonization, which had as its basic foundation the desire and opportunity to create a more perfect society. Davis provides a comparative analysis of slave systems in the Old World, a discussion of the early attitudes towards American slavery, and a detailed exploration of the early protests against Negro bondage, as well as the religious, literary, and philosophical developments that contributed to both sides in the controversies of the late eighteenth century. This exemplary introduction to the history of slavery in Western culture presents the traditions in thought and value that gave rise to the attitudes of both abolitionists and defenders of slavery in the late eighteenth century as well as the nineteenth century.

"A magnificent work done in the finest tradition of historical scholarship."--C. Vann Woodward, Yale University"The most eloquent and scholarly book on slavery we now have in English....Here is cross-cultural history at its best."--Virginia Quarterly "A magnificent history of ideas....It will remain a magnificent contribution to intellectual and social history...[and] will be studied for decades to come."--Eugene D. Genovese, Journal of Southern History"A helpful survey of the origins of the institution and its developments down to the end of the eighteenth century."--The Atlantic"A large, immensely learned, readable, exciting, disturbing...volume, one of the most important to have been published on the subject of slavery in modern times."--M.I. Finley, The New York of BooksAbout the AuthorDavid Brion Davis is Sterling Professor of History at Yale University and President of the Organization of American Historians. Winner of the Bancroft Prize, the National Book Award, and the Beveridge Award of the A.H.A., he is the author of several books, including Slavery and Human Progress and The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution.