



Literary Capital: A Washington Reader

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Washington, D.C., has long been a magnet for writers and an object of interest and fascination to essayists, novelists, and poets. *Literary Capital* offers a compelling portrait of the city through the work of seventy authors ranging from early Americans such as Abigail Adams and Washington Irving to contemporaries such as Edward P. Jones and Joan Didion.

Arranged by both period and theme, this anthology begins with the founding of Washington in 1800 and extends through the early twenty-first century. In the introduction Christopher Sten explores two broad categories of prose—historical writing focused on politics and writing about the lives and times of the people of D.C. with official Washington as the setting. Sten also defines a core group of “Washington writers,” native and naturalized authors who focus much of their work on the city: Frederick Douglass, Henry Adams, Jean Toomer, John Dos Passos, Gore Vidal, Ward Just, and Susan Richards Shreve, among others.

Included are letters, essays, short stories, poems, and excerpts from novels and historical writings by a broad selection of such renowned American and international authors as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Charles Dickens, Alexis de Tocqueville, Louisa May Alcott, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Sinclair Lewis, Norman Mailer, Mary McCarthy, and Joseph Heller. The reader also incorporates many writings by well-known African American authors, including Booker T. Washington, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Jean Toomer, Sterling A. Brown, Langston Hughes, May Miller, Ralph Ellison, and Marita Golden.

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Jean Proffitt:

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Debra Weeks:

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Sharon Brogdon:

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