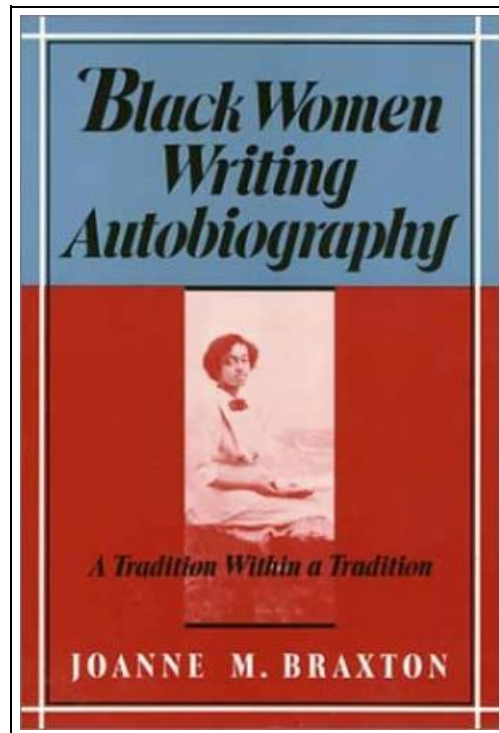


Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition within a Tradition



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BLACK WOMEN WRITING AUTOBIOGRAPHY: A TRADITION WITHIN A TRADITION

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Temple University Press, U.S. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition within a Tradition, Joanne M. Braxton, 'As black American women, we are born into a mystic sisterhood, and we live our lives within a magic circle, a realm of shared language, reference, and allusion within the veil of our blackness and our femaleness. We have been as invisible to the dominant culture as rain; we have been knowers, but we have not been known'. Joanne Braxton argues for a redefinition of the genre of black American autobiography to include the images of women as well as their memoirs, reminiscences, diaries, and journals - as a corrective to both black and feminist literary criticism. Beginning with slave narratives and concluding with modern autobiography, she deals with individual works as representing stages in a continuum and situates these works in the context of other writings by both black and white writers. Braxton demonstrates that the criteria used to define the slave narrative genre are inadequate for analyzing Harriet 'Linda Brent' Jacobs' pseudonymously published "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself" (1861). She examines 'sass' as a mode of women's discourse and a weapon of self-defense, and she introduces the 'outraged mother' as a parallel to the articulate hero archetype. Not even emancipation authorized black women to define themselves or address an audience. Late-nineteenth-century accounts in the form of confessional spiritual autobiographies, travelogue/adventure stories, and slave memoirs enabled such women as Jarena Lee, Rebecca Cox Jackson, Elizabeth Keckley, Susie King Taylor, as well as Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth to tell their own extraordinary stories and to shed light on the thousands of lives obscured by illiteracy and sexual and racial oppression. In her diaries, Charlotte Forten Grimke the gifted poet, epitomizes the problems...

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