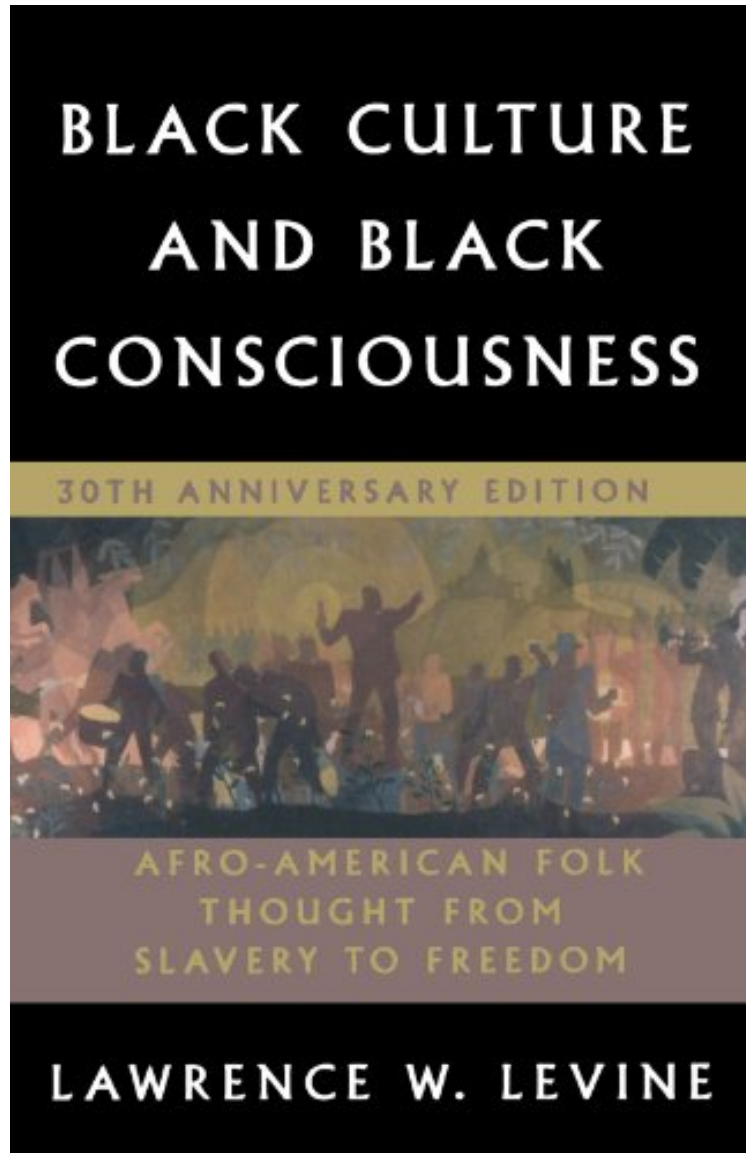


Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom

Lawrence W. Levine

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Lawrence W. Levine : Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lawrence LevineBy Heather M. One of the few academic textbooks for a graduate readings course that I was really happy I purchased. Levine's book takes you on a journey through African-American culture, and explores the importance of song, folk tales, and Christianity in slave culture. A must read, particularly for anyone interested in the Civil War era, slave culture, or history of the American South. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very Good ReadBy Taylor Means I ordered this book as part of my course curriculum for my African American Folklore class and it turns out to be a good read. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. very very detailed. scholarly bookBy gadfly If you want a reference for roots, sources of any Black song..work songs...and before then book is a great ref. for your shelf. Not light reading. Detailed and repeats= gives ref. to source of everything. That is what scholars do. I like the part, early, on, about observations of people who visited Africa either before or at beginning of Slave trade as to what they learned about African culture and tribal ways. Some tribes had/have a annual feast to poking fun at chief or ruler. I can see that has carried on into American culture now. Reminds me of Jewish Purim where everything is turned upside down for a day once a year. You can poke fun at chief and he has to take it. So when people say "It is a Black Thang" regarding something they find funny...maybe mimicing, or poking fun...has a very deep root. Over simplified.

When Black Culture and Black Consciousness first appeared thirty years ago, it marked a revolution in our understanding of African American history. Contrary to prevailing ideas at the time, which held that African culture disappeared quickly under slavery and that black Americans had little group pride, history, or cohesiveness, Levine uncovered a cultural treasure trove, illuminating a rich and complex African American oral tradition, including songs, proverbs, jokes, folktales, and long narrative poems called toasts--work that dated from before and after emancipation. The fact that these ideas and sources seem so commonplace now is in large part due this book and the scholarship that followed in its wake. A landmark work that was part of the "cultural turn" in American history, Black Culture and Black Consciousness profoundly influenced an entire generation of historians and continues to be read and taught. For this anniversary reissue, Levine wrote a new preface reflecting on the writing of the book and its place within intellectual trends in African American and American cultural history.

"Must be read by all who would understand the Afro-American experience and American culture in general." --Eugene D. Genovese "Through an exhaustive investigation of black songs, folk tales, proverbs, aphorisms, verbal games and the long narrative oral poems known as 'toasts,' Levine argues that the value system of Afro-Americans can only be understood through an analysis of black culture.... His work ranks among the best books written on the Afro-American experience in recent years." --Al-Tony Gilmore, The Washington Post About the Author The late Lawrence W. Levine was Margaret Byrne Professor of History Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, and Professor of History and Cultural Studies at George Mason University in Virginia. A former MacArthur fellow and a Past President of the Organization of American Historians, he was the author of a number of books, among them The Unpredictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History, Highbrow/Lowbrow, and The People the President: America's Extraordinary Conversation with FDR