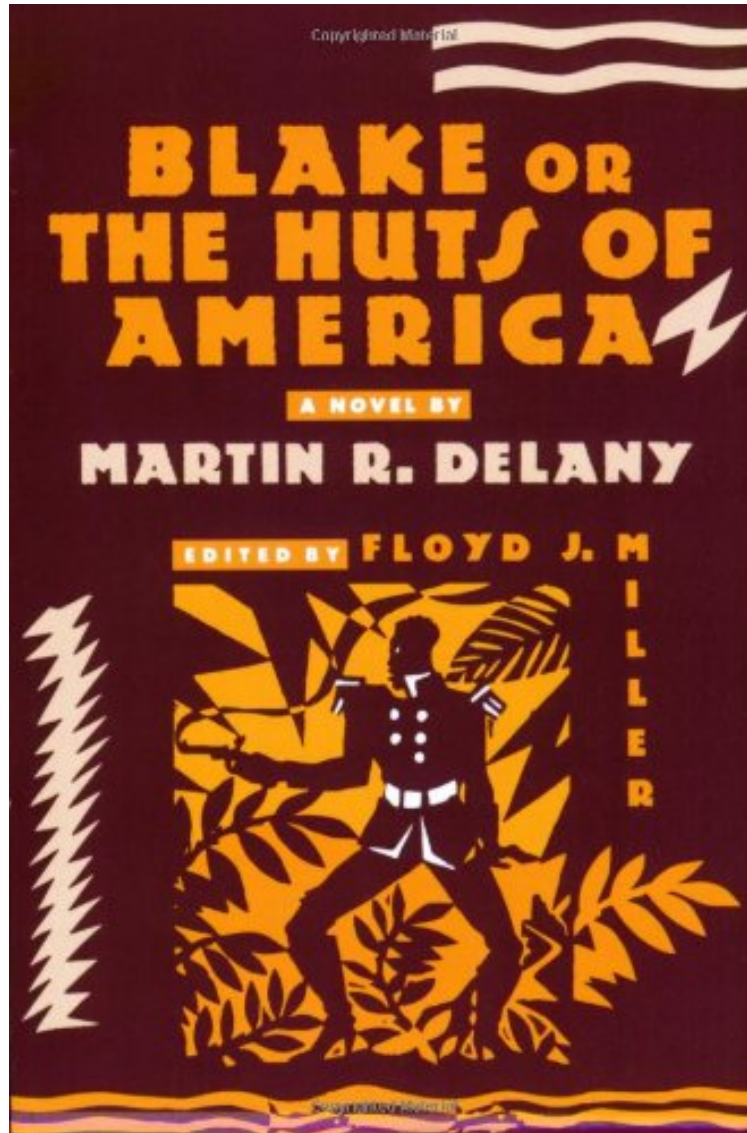


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Blake or The Huts of America

Martin R. Delany

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#697654 in Books Beacon Press 1971-06-01 1971-06-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 1.00 x 5.40l, .82 #File Name: 080706419X352 pages | File size: 25.Mb

Martin R. Delany : Blake or The Huts of America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Blake or The Huts of America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Historically significant novel By Donna S. Meredith This is a landmark book and in that respect, I rate it a 5 star read. It was written by a black man just prior to the Civil War, and it details the horrors of plantation life. Historically, the book is remarkable. Delany was trying to use the serialized story to spark insurrection and exodus from the States to start a black country elsewhere. And maybe he was right.

Maybe this country will never get it right. We make progress and then there's backsliding. I'm less hopeful now than I was in my 20s that true equality for all could be realized. As a novel, this story doesn't work very well. The repetitions of Blake visiting one plantation after another became tedious--and unrealistic as a black man never could have traveled so easily in the South at that time. By the time the novel hit Cuba, I skimmed it rapidly. Too much of the same old, same old. Still, I'm glad I read the book. What a remarkable man the author was!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A good story with a few flaws

By Randee Baty I read this book for an American lit class. I had never heard of this author until he was put on our reading list and I found the story to be very interesting but with a number of flaws. It's well worth reading because it was written right before the Civil War by a free black author and gives his perspective on slavery. It deals with the situation in Cuba at the time as well as the situation in the American south. Because of our lack of dealings with Cuba for the last 60 years, I wasn't aware of how much we interacted with them before or how they impacted the slave trade so that part was interesting to me. The main plot of the story is the slave, Henry Blake, trying to provoke a slave rebellion by going all over the south secretly and stirring up slaves on plantations. The flaws come in two areas. One is how easily Blake moves around the south even though he is an escaped slave with no papers. Very unrealistic. The other is a little harder to define but it comes down to the morality of the story. Blake goes through the south giving hope to slaves that they will soon be free and then he goes to Cuba and never comes back. He never actually starts the rebellion that he has everyone poised for. Now granted, the last six chapters of the story have been lost, but in the section that we have, he tells his Cuban friends that he will never leave them so it feels as if he is abandoning all the slaves in the south that he has poised for rebellion. Maybe that won't bother some people but it felt wrong to me.

Martin Delaney was never a slave so this isn't a slave narrative like *The Narrative of Frederic Douglass*. It's a complete work of fiction so he could take any liberties he wanted with the story and that comes through. He does recount some terrible incidents of slave treatment that were based on true stories but he makes most of it up out of whole cloth. When reading it, remember it's more "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and less "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl." If you are studying this period of American history, it's a good book to read because it shows the talent, mindset and imagination of the free African-American at the time. Just be aware as you read that it is fiction.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Pam Africanism and a Call to revolt during American slavery

By John H. Armwood This is a classic work and dispels the false impression that African Americans did not contemplate rebelling against slavery in an international way. This is 19th Century Pan Africanism. This is a must read for anyone serious about understanding African American history.

Delaney's hero is a West Indian slave who travels throughout the South advocating revolution, and later becomes the general of a black insurrectory fore in Cuba. Blake hopes that, with rebellion in Cuba and the expulsion of all Americans, Cuba's model as a self-governed black state will ultimately precipitate the downfall of slavery in the United States. Focusing on the political and social issues of the 1850s slavery as an institution, Cuba as the prime interest of Southern expansionists, the practicality of militant slave revolution, and the possibilities of collective action Blake is one of the most revealing novels of its period.

"A fascinating political and social document." *The New York Times*

About the Author Martin R. Delaney (1812-85) has been called the father of American black nationalism, and his only novel, *Blake*, powerfully dramatizes his separatist philosophy.