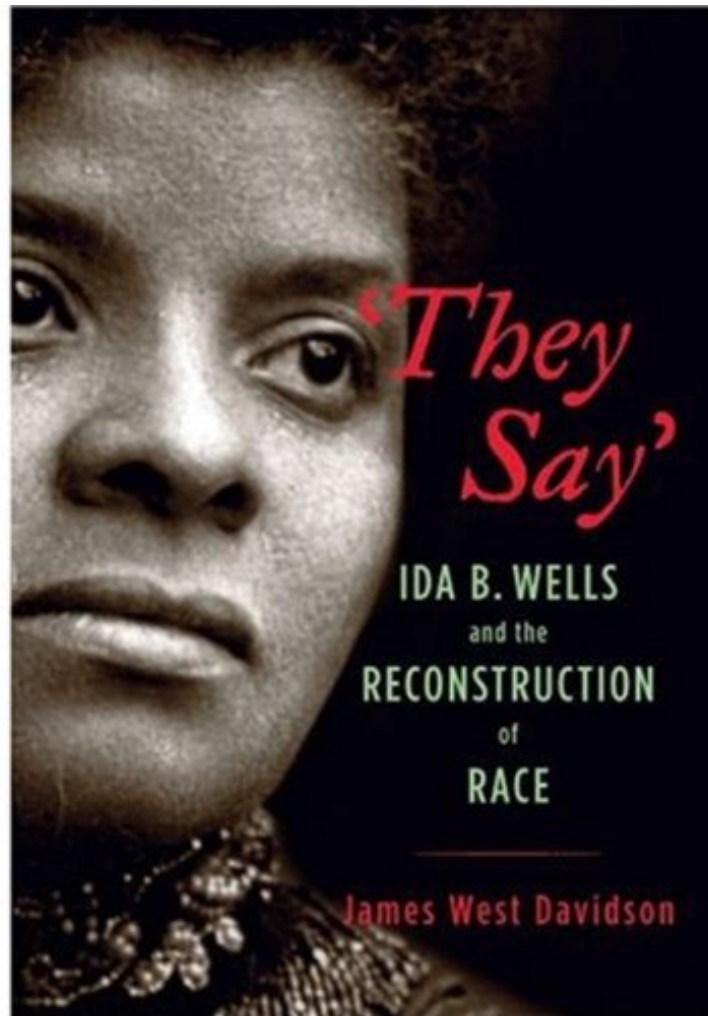


(Download pdf) "They Say": Ida B. Wells and the Reconstruction of Race (New Narratives in American History)

"They Say": Ida B. Wells and the Reconstruction of Race (New Narratives in American History)

James West Davidson

*DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#1992365 in Books 2007-10-09Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 4.80 x .90 x 6.80l, .70 #File Name: 0195160207256 pages | File size: 65.Mb

James West Davidson : "They Say": Ida B. Wells and the Reconstruction of Race (New Narratives in American History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised "They Say": Ida B. Wells and the Reconstruction of Race (New Narratives in American History):

13 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A Scholarly Narrative AttemptBy Mithridates VI of PontusThis great book on Ida B. Wells is not and explicitly does not try to be a biography but rather a scholarly narrative history. This is a noble attempt for which the book deserves praise since the historical narrative has long been a neglected and maligned form of serious history in a field dominated by scholarly monographs. Instead of chronicling all Ida's life as

do traditional biographies (the narrative stops in the late 19th century) Davidson tries to examine the ways that former slaves "reconstructed their identities" after the Civil War. Ida B. Wells is more than simply a vehicle for this lofty goal for this is distinctly her NARRATIVE that describes her immense struggles and immense victories. Ida B. Wells (July 16, 1862 - March 25, 1931) was born in Holly Springs Mississippi a two months before the Emancipation Proclamation. Her father was a carpenter born from a black mother and white plantation owner father who treated his son very well (meaning he had a profitable trade after the war). He became an outspoken proponent of black involvement in southern politics sometimes risking his life to vote. Some of the most interesting parts of the book examine the ways that the Southern Democrats prevented ex-slaves from voting. Her mother was cook who advocated the Victorian ideals in her household after the war. At the tender age of fourteen Ida's parents died in a Yellow Fever outbreak and she took over as surrogate mother to her young siblings. Ida was educated at the local college and became a teacher before finding her real passion while living in Memphis - journalism. She wrote outspoken political pieces dealing with key issues of the day (it was very rare for a women to be writing for newspapers, yet alone political articles). She waged a campaign against the increasing segregation in the railroads and was even forced to leave the newspaper she was co-owner of because her articles were seen as too controversial. She was an advocate of civil rights (traveling to the UK and all around America), women's rights in the male dominated field of political journalism, and launched anti-lynching campaigns. James West Davidson's book uses her early life (not a heavily documented period) to examine the KEY reconstruction issue that of self-definition in post-slavery new world where the "socially constructed definition of race [became] spelled out with greater and greater specificity" (pg ix). Davidson does a brilliant job weaving in sections of the education of blacks of the day, the beginnings of the Ku Klux Klan, even the growing postcard fad as Ida B. Wells comes into contact with these phenomena. This is a relatively new form of writing, one which tends to defy easy definition, and my primary critic comes from the fact that the narrative form forces all the analysis of her life to a lengthy Afterwards. Most readers (myself and my history honors reading group included) will be confused as to the purpose of such a form, in comparison to a more traditional biography until reading the massive Afterward. All in all this is a very well written book that certainly adds to existing scholarship on this remarkable woman. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great story a really great Eye opener By Ebony Preston Great story a really great Eye opener. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Katrina Wesley Good

Between 1880 and 1930, Southern mobs hanged, burned, and otherwise tortured to death at least 3,300 African Americans. And yet the rest of the nation largely ignored the horror of lynching or took it for granted, until a young schoolteacher from Tennessee raised her voice. Her name was Ida B. Wells. In "They Say," historian James West Davidson recounts the first thirty years of this passionate woman's life--as well as the story of the great struggle over the meaning of race in post-emancipation America. Davidson captures the breathtaking, often chaotic changes that swept the South as Wells grew up in Holly Springs, Mississippi: the spread of education among the free blacks, the rise of political activism, the bitter struggles for equality in the face of entrenched social custom. As Wells came of age she moved to bustling Memphis, eager to worship at the city's many churches (black and white), to take elocution lessons and perform Shakespeare at evening soirées, to court and spark with the young men taken by her beauty. But Wells' quest for fulfillment was thwarted as whites increasingly used race as a barrier separating African Americans from mainstream America. Davidson traces the crosscurrents of these cultural conflicts through Ida Wells' forceful personality. When a conductor threw her off a train for not retreating to the segregated car, she sued the railroad--and won. When she protested conditions in the segregated Memphis schools, she was fired--and took up full-time journalism. And in 1892, when an explosive lynching rocked Memphis, she embarked full-blown on the career for which she is now remembered, as an outspoken writer and lecturer against lynching. Richly researched and deftly written, "They Say" offers a gripping portrait of the young Ida B. Wells, shedding light not only on how one black American defined her own aspirations and her people's freedom, but also on the changing meaning of race in America.

"Lynching is the greatest disgrace in our history, and Ida Wells-Barnett was its most courageous assailant. James West Davidson has written an eloquent account of the growth of Wells-Barnett's self-defined persona as a black woman, journalist, and fearless crusader. Refusing to accept an identity shaped by others--'they say'--she boldly told the world that 'I say' who I am and what I stand for."--James McPherson, author of *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and *The Mighty Scourge* Davidson's narrative looking at the violent, tormented history of the post-Reconstruction South through the prism of the interior life of Ida B. Wells, one of America's undisputed heroes, is a refreshing way to open wider the door on the complexities of race, racism and identity that, regrettably, still haunt and challenge us today. We need highly readable scholarship like this, infused by the example of the redoubtable Wells to help give the lie to that the old adage that says 'we learn from history that we do not learn from history.' As an African-American woman and a journalist, I am grateful and inspired to have this testimony to a woman on whose shoulders I stand and whose legacy inspires me to stay committed to journalism that is informed by the righteous struggle of all peoples to be judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin."--Charlayne Hunter-Gault, *Journalist* "How did Ida Wells

become the woman who challenged the silence of America on lynching? James Davidson shows us by re-creating the world of African Americans during the turbulent decades after the Civil War. A touching, compelling portrait of an important life in crucial times."--H.W. Brands, Dickson, Allen, Anderson Centennial Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, author of *Andrew Jackson and The Money Men* About the Author James West Davidson is a historian and writer. His books include *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, *Nation of Nations: A History of the American Republic*, and *Great Heart: The History of a Labrador Adventure*.