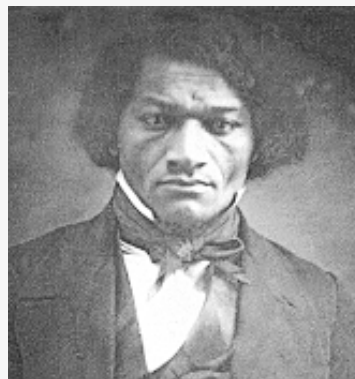




POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE - FREDERICK DOUGLASS



Frederick Douglass's home in the Anacostia area of Washington, DC remains much as it looked during Douglass's lifetime, with 90% of its original furnishings. His wife, Helen, preserved Cedar Hill as his memorial, organizing the Frederick Douglass Memorial and Historical Association in 1900. That group joined with the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs in 1916 to care for the home. In 1962, the 21-room home was turned over to the National Park Service. Its location, high on a hill overlooking the Capitol, and its period furnishings and artifacts (including an ebony cane given to him by Mary Todd Lincoln after Lincoln's death) make this a memorable site to visit.



Frederick Douglass, a self-educated slave, escaped to freedom in the North when he was 20. He had been born a slave on a plantation on Maryland's Eastern Shore, and had only known a life of slavery, until he was hired out to a Baltimore shipyard. From Baltimore, Douglass, dressed as a sailor, escaped to New York City, and later moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where there were many abolitionists.

Moved by the abolitionists to speak about his own life, Douglass stepped to the speaker's platform and soon became a spokesman for his people, who, until then, had no representative other than a few well-intentioned white abolitionists.

Encouraged by the positive reception to his speeches, Douglass wrote his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, published in 1845 (less than 7 years after his escape from slavery). It was the first account of slavery that many northerners had ever read, and the fact that it was written by an escaped slave gave it a sense of authenticity and emotive power that no white abolitionist could have mustered.

The book sold 30,000 copies within five years of publication and became a catalyst for the anti-slavery movement in the North. If you have not yet read Douglass' autobiography, we strongly recommend it for its vivid depiction of slavery.

Douglass's contributions to America go beyond his abolitionist speeches and writings, however. From the public platform, this self-educated man, now a powerful orator, writer, and newspaper publisher, used his voice to make America see that its ideals of democracy had not yet been achieved. His commitment to humanity would reach beyond the issues of slavery.

Douglass' newspapers gave extensive coverage to women's suffrage, and he spoke publicly on this growing issue.

When I ran away from slavery, it was for myself; when I advocated emancipation, it was for my people; but when I stood up for the rights of woman, self

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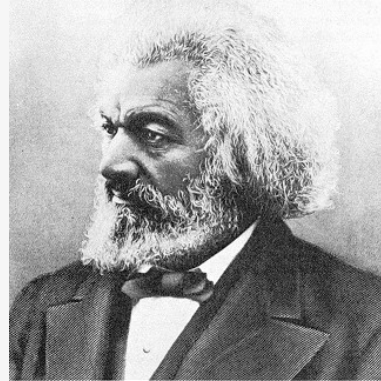
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was out of the question.
Frederick Douglas, April 1888

We learn from Douglass that we too have the power to make a difference and change the world for the better.

*I am for any movement
whenever there is a good cause
to promote, a right to assert, a
chain to be broken, a burden to
be removed, or a wrong to be
addressed.*



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