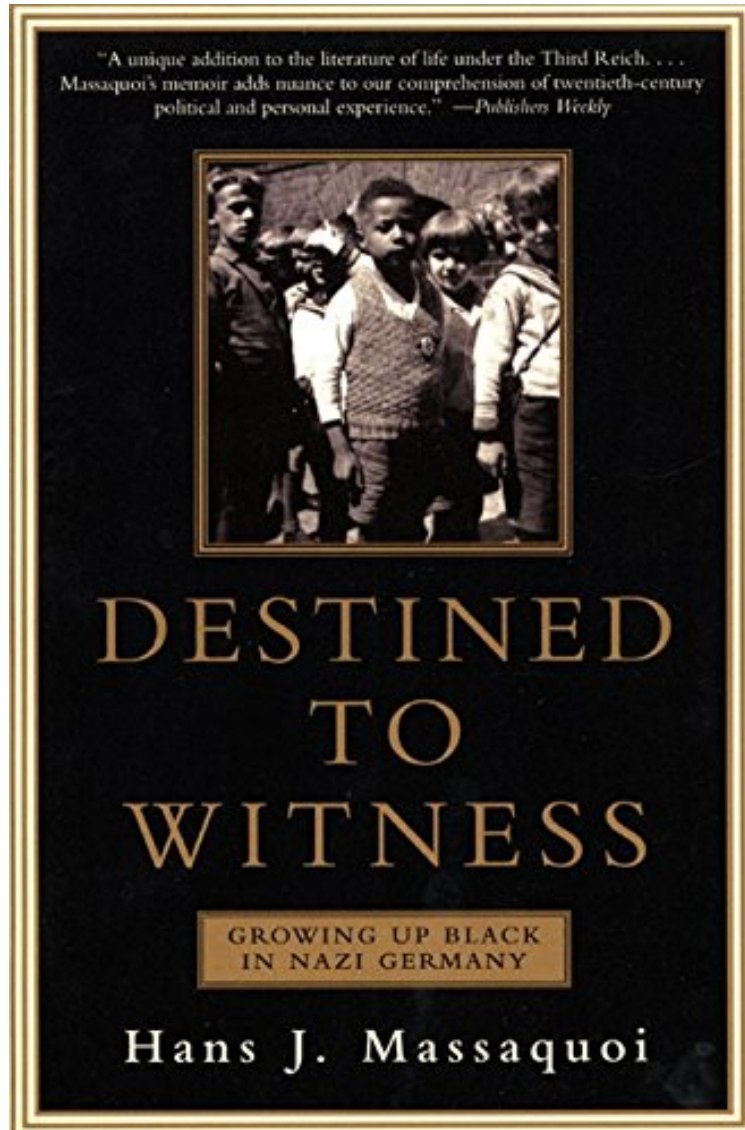


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Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany

Hans J. Massaquoi

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#207125 in Books Hans J Massaquoi 2001-02-06 2001-02-06Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x 1.08 x 5.311, .89 #File Name: 0060959614480 pagesDestined to Witness Growing up Black in Nazi Germany | File size: 27.Mb

Hans J. Massaquoi : Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Courageous and BoldBy Bruce E. McLeod Jr.Hans Massaquoi's book " Destined to Witness" was especially interesting. The conditions under which he had to survive as a black child,

born to a white mother, growing up when Nazism invaded Germany, were extremely difficult. Being black and living in Germany in the 1920s under a totalitarian and racist system and subjected to the dehumanizing conditions was a herculean challenge however, it did not prevent him from trying to belong even though the odds were against him. Imagine living a country which denies your existence bereft of any humanity. Its like swimming upstream where each day is filled with uncertainty and dystopia. The love and the courage demonstrated by his mother and extended family, as well as from some of his schoolmates and neighborhood friends, provided some solace and comfort. His was a difficult life in transition. His migration to the United States began a successful journey where his journalistic career blossomed and excelled to new heights. All the better to begin life anew. Great read. Bruce E. McLeod, Jr. 25 March 2015 Las Vegas, Nevada

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Unique perspective By C. R. Greyraven This memoir grabbed my attention in a way that usually only a novel would. The author tells a very personal story of himself as a child in a difficult family situation that interweaves with and parallels an entire society's upheaval. A black Liberian father (son of an ambassador) and a white German mother (working class) start the story in post WWI Germany. The author weaves evocative detail into this tale of a dark-skinned child growing up in Hamburg with a single mother who battles to protect her son from discrimination as Hitler rises to power. The author speaks with both human or pathos as he describes his teenage years in a nation going to war for Aryan supremacy. He brings to life the horror of the bombing of Hamburg and the brutal struggle for food and shelter that he shared with many Germans in post-war Germany. His adventures and misadventures with American servicemen in Germany and then with his Liberian family in Africa bring another layer into sociological insights offered to the reader. The story wraps up in the USA, pulling the threads of historical trends into more recent decades. A well-told tale from a unique perspective. Highly recommended. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An amazing life story By Wanda Phillips A very lucky man takes us out onto the knife's edge of his life. His smart, well-grounded mother provides the security needed for a mixed race child to survive Nazi Germany. Those of us for whom the second world war is history can benefit from this man's journey through the rise of Nazi Germany, the war years, and the contrast of life in Liberia, then America. Luck and his sensible mother give him an insider/outsider view; here is a man who could have been crushed into self-loathing or killed by racists at several points in his life, but he keeps his head, he makes a wonderful life for himself, and he proves all the weird bigotry wrong, again and again. A well-written memoir. The author applies his journalist's training on his life to provide an insightful examination of the Nazi regime. He presents his life and it becomes clear that regardless of the hate propagated in the culture, he comes out a rather strong, flexible, and cheerful man. He looks at the inverted racism and corruption of Liberia without the embarrassment or shame that some would project. He remains convinced that America is the true land of the free, except in the southern states. Even when that idyllic vision is wiped away by the casual bigotry of some of the Americans he meets, he loves America for its high aims. He celebrates the potential that America represents for him. In truth, it is his large family that gives him the glow that shines through his entire story. In the darkest days he and his mother find a way to live with dignity.

This is a story of the unexpected. In *Destined to Witness*, Hans Massaquoi has crafted a beautifully rendered memoir -- an astonishing true tale of how he came of age as a black child in Nazi Germany. The son of a prominent African and a German nurse, Hans remained behind with his mother when Hitler came to power, due to concerns about his fragile health, after his father returned to Liberia. Like other German boys, Hans went to school; like other German boys, he swiftly fell under the Fuhrer's spell. So he was crushed to learn that, as a black child, he was ineligible for the Hitler Youth. His path to a secondary education and an eventual profession was blocked. He now lived in fear that, at any moment, he might hear the Gestapo banging on the door -- or Allied bombs falling on his home. Ironic, moving, and deeply human, Massaquoi's account of this lonely struggle for survival brims with courage and intelligence.