



Richard Wright: Daemonic Genius : A Portrait of the Man a Critical Look at His Work

By Margaret Walker

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

An angry and deeply ambivalent man emerges from this passionately committed profile of novelist-essayist Richard Wright (1908-1960). In Walker's estimation, the author of *Native Son* and *Black Boy* hated black women and treated the two white women he married sadistically. Self-hatred pushed Wright to conceive of himself as "a white American with a black skin," even as he plunged into Pan-Africanism, Marxism and Freud for an anchor to his fractured self. Walker (*Jubilee*) and Wright were friends in the 1930s when they both worked on the WPA Writers' Project in Chicago. Combining biography, criticism and memoir, this excellent, flesh-and-blood portrait gets closer to the inner man than any previous volume. The author's claim for Wright as a Southern Gothic writer as well as an Afro-American one is buttressed by her intense account of his formative years in rural Mississippi. She also limns his bohemian life in New York and Paris, where he wrote eight books, unjustly neglected today. Photos.

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About the Author

Margaret Walker is the author of nine books, including the bestseller, *Jubilee*. Her book of poetry, *For My People*, which won the Yale Younger Poets Competition in 1942, is considered an American classic.

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