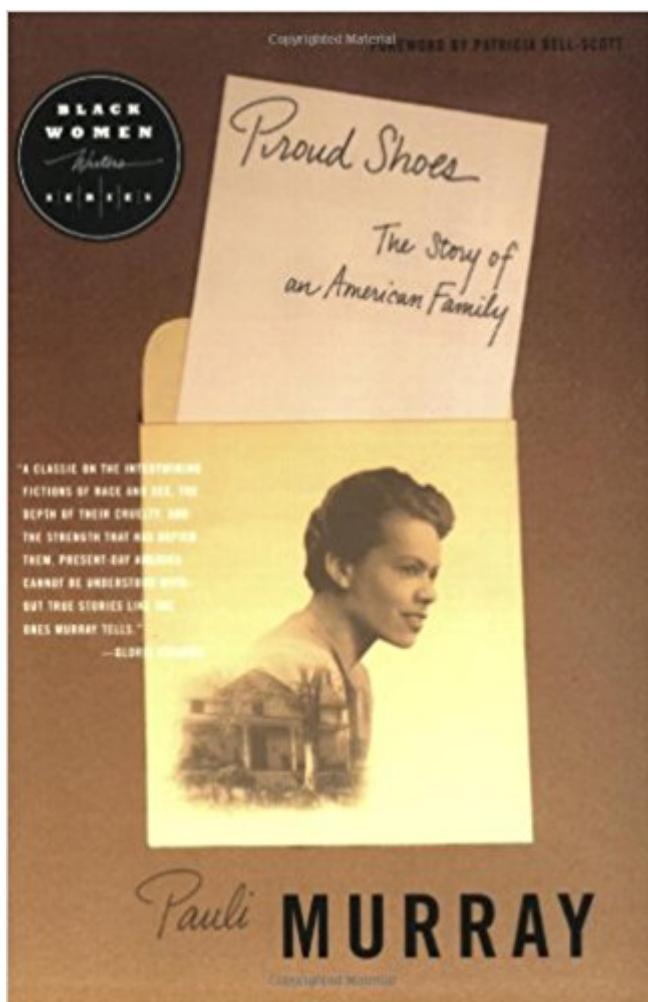


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# Proud Shoes: The Story Of An American Family (Black Women Writers Series)



## Synopsis

First published in 1956, *Proud Shoes* is the remarkable true story of slavery, survival, and miscegenation in the South from the pre-Civil War era through the Reconstruction. Written by Pauli Murray the legendary civil rights activist and one of the founders of NOW, *Proud Shoes* chronicles the lives of Murray's maternal grandparents. From the birth of her grandmother, Cornelia Smith, daughter of a slave whose beauty incited the master's sons to near murder to the story of her grandfather Robert Fitzgerald, whose free black father married a white woman in 1840, *Proud Shoes* offers a revealing glimpse of our nation's history.

## Book Information

Series: Black Women Writers Series

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #67,100 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in Books > History > World > Slavery & Emancipation #48 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Abolition #81 in Books > History > Americas > United States > African Americans

## Customer Reviews

"A classic on the intertwining fictions of race and sex, the depth of their cruelty, and the strength that has defied them. Present-day America cannot be understood without true stories like the ones Murray tells." *•Gloria Steinem*"Pauli Murray is one of the founding leaders of the modern American women's movement, and I am glad to see her wonderful book in print again." *•Betty Friedan* "Moving and remarkable." *Proud Shoes* traps the beast of American slavery, in particular, the strange and tragic domestic struggle between master and slave, and the ironic 'gift of white blood' that still nourishes and suffocates many Americans." *•Jack Hicks, The Nation*"A significant contribution to our understanding of the black experience in America." *•Publishers Weekly*

The Reverend Dr. Pauli Murray (1910–1985) was a lawyer and civil-rights activist, America's first black woman Episcopalian priest, and a founder of NOW. Patricia Bell-Scott is professor of family and child development and women's studies at the University of Georgia. She was founding editor of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Women* and has been a contributing editor to *Ms. Magazine*. She has published several books, including *Life Notes: Personal Writings by Contemporary Black Women*, *Double Stitch: Black Women Write About Mothers and Daughters*, and *Flat-footed Truths: Telling Black Women's Lives* (with Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey).

Dr. Pauli Murray was a hero. One of my heroes, as it happens. This is the true story of her family's journey from enslavement to moral, intellectual and economic success. These are the people who, today, are becoming America. When Dr. Murray, a recent Yale Law School grad, applied to the Massachusetts bar she had to account for an arrest she had in another state in the 1940's. It seemed she was protesting civil right violations when Martin Luther King was in high school. Any laws she broke at the time - and she did - had since been rescinded or repealed. She was admitted to the bar, as well as to several university faculties, and eventually to the Episcopal priesthood. This is a significant historical figure about whom we all should know more.

this book cannot be recommended highly enough. it is readable non-fiction, written in an almost prose-like manner. I laughed, I cried and I shared my copy with loved ones. Should be read by anyone who wants to understand the struggles of race and sex both in the civil war times and today.

A classic; the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray speaks to all of us in telling her carefully researched family story that embodied American History. Crucial reading for all of us to better understand our world beyond black and white.

It is an outstanding story regarding the lives of some of Pauli Murray's ancestors. I truly enjoyed reading about how her family members had a very strong interest in the education of blacks, especially the newly freed blacks.

This book is one that should be called both timely and timeless. I was profoundly moved by Murray's description - completely honest and brilliantly written - of her grandfather Robert Fitzgerald's experience during and following the Civil War. Likewise, although it was told only in vignettes through her eyes as a child, her description of how it felt to be a person of mixed race in the

American South during the first half on the 20th Century is extraordinary and important. At this point I need to explain how I discovered this book, which has had a profound effect on my own awareness of the realities of the racial situation in this country prior to my own experience of living and working in Tuskegee, AL, during the decade of most intense Civil Rights activity from 1966-1974. I am a committed fan of author Kittredge Cherry, whose novels "Jesus in Love" and "At the Cross" I have previously reviewed for . Cherry also has a blogspot, [...], which is extremely valuable in bringing to awareness many vital personalities and issues that are of great concern to me. On July 9th, this blog featured a brief discussion of Pauli Murray's life and accomplishments, and noted that the Episcopal Church was considering naming her as a Saint. The blog included mention of this book by Murray, which immediately motivated me to order it. It is a purchase I'm extremely delighted to have made. Cherry's blog also posted the update two days later: Murray was approved for inclusion in the Episcopal Church's book of saints, "Holy Women, Holy Men" in a vote late on July 11. She will be honored every July 1 on the church calendar. If one believes, and I do, that the arc of history does in fact bend towards justice as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., stated, then one must see this book as being part of that bending. First published in 1956, it was reissued in 1978, and the copy I have was printed in 1999. And yet, I only heard about it as a result of Cherry's calling attention to the action of the Episcopal Church. Still, this book has become more rather than less relevant, and I hope that there will be others who, like me, will be awakened to a new sense of significance and purpose by reading it.

The book tells of a past that explains present day problems and how Ms. Murray lived her life.

As described and promised

Interesting biographical history...enjoyed reading

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