



Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored

By Clifton Taulbert



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A son connects to his father's history by the author of *Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored*. A journey home to the Mississippi Delta community of his own humble childhood became Clifton Taulbert's Christmas gift to his son — a trip to meet the people who had mentored and inspired Clifton as a boy, to see first-hand the value of family, community and love.

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Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored By Clifton Taulbert Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A businessman included in Time magazine's recent issue on blacks "making it in white America," the author lives with his wife and children in Tulsa, Okla. It's a long way from tiny Glen Allen, Miss., where Taulbert grew up in the 1950s, a time and place he describes with love in this funny, sweet, touching memoir.

Although his community knew the sting of discrimination, relations between white and colored were generally amicable. His cruellest memory of childhood occurred in Jackson, when he and his uncle were evicted from a circus by an usher: "This ain't the night for niggers." That is the only bitter note in a book about poor families who shared joys, sorrows and occasional treats in celebration of their heroes--Jackie Robinson, Marian Anderson, Joe Louis et al.--and about the author's triumph as an honor student in high school and college. Photos not seen by PW.

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From School Library Journal

YA-- In this touching autobiography, readers are treated to a view of life in a close, nurturing family in a small Mississippi town during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Taulbert writes of people who believed in hard work and had a strong sense of family pride and affection. There are special excursions to Greenville for frozen custard and hot french bread with his beloved "Poppa;" there is a long-anticipated trip to a tent show where he and his uncle are turned away because it is not the "night for niggers." But always there is the strong presence of the church, the place for putting aside the misery of backbreaking labor and renewing faith in the future. Illustrated with family photographs, this book is a loving testimonial to Taulbert's family, with a very positive, endorsing message. Well written with good descriptions, it is a gem of a book.

Barbara Weathers, Duchesne Academy, Houston

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From Library Journal

Black businessman Taulbert has written a brief, affecting, deceptively simple memoir of his youth in Glen Allen, Mississippi in the 1950s. On the one hand he emphasizes, "the important values . . . conveyed" to him in his "colored childhood" in the segregated South--the closeness of the extended family, communal assistance, and religious faith. But this is more than a gentle assault on the "oppressed blacks as miserable" myth. Segregation still stings in the world of Taulbert's youth, as he recalls stepping aside for whites, entering through back doors, and watching whites with fear and caution. In spite of its syrupy idealism (which tends to portray all blacks as warm and wonderful) and its lack of coherent organization, this is an important, moving work. Recommended for major public, university, and college libraries.

- *Anthony O. Edmonds, Ball State Univ., Muncie, Ind.*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Shirley Frazier:

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