



## With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together

By Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee



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Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee are legendary stars of the American stage, television, and film, a beloved and revered couple cherished not just for their acting artistry but also for their lifelong commitment to civil rights, family values, and the black community. Now they look back on a half- century of their personal and political struggles to maintain a healthy marriage and to create the record of distinguished accomplishment that earned each a Presidential Medal for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts.

With Ossie and Ruby overflows with consummate storytelling skill developed by decades in the spotlight. From their early years as struggling actors in Harlem's black theater to Broadway and Hollywood stardom, they regale the reader with colorful, entertaining tales of the places they've been and the people they've met. But their charming humor is leavened with a more serious side, as they share their experiences of keeping a family together in a world where scandal and divorce is the rule, and of being artists and political activists in an era of intense racial ferment. Born into the struggle, their characters were shaped by the dynamic collisions of life, politics, and art; and from those experiences, they achieved some sense of their worth as married people, friends, and lovers.

Warm, positive, and compelling, this is a book that will surprise and challenge readers everywhere -- black and white, male and female, young and old. Lifting the veil of public image, media hype, and mystique, Ossie and Ruby speak of the real-life dilemmas and rewards of their lifelong search for purpose and value.



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#### With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together By Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee Bibliography

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Amazon.com Review

Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee met in 1945, when they were both performing in the same play on Broadway; Davis, resuming an acting career that had been interrupted by a World War II tour of duty in Liberia, was cast as the male lead, while Dee was originally hired as understudy to the female lead and soon found herself taking over the part. Three years later, still working together, they took advantage of a rehearsal-free day in their schedule to get married--and have been together through thick and thin ever since.

Trading turns with one another, Davis and Dee discuss the high and low points of more than a half century in each other's company. With Ossie & Ruby has enough stories for at least three books, covering the world of stage and film, the history of the civil rights movement, and the endurance of love and marriage. Their telling, in alternating first-person narration, is unflinching in its portrayal of the hardships they endured for being black-skinned and "left-wing" political activists--and equally firm in their continued dedication. This is a first-rate memoir by a man and a woman--each with a thriving career--who have collaborated to form a union even greater than the sum of its parts.

#### From Publishers Weekly

In December the co-authors will mark their 50th wedding anniversary, an almost unheard of milestone for two stars of the performing arts this century. Even before their marriage, according to Davis, "we were in love, head over heels, and stuck with each other forever!" Rather than just telling the story of a successful marriage, however, their book (related in alternate voices) provides a panorama of the 20th-century African American experience, or, as they label it, The Struggle. Both socialists and militant battlers for African American rights, Davis and Dee have known, and worked with, such leaders as W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, Martin Luther King and Malcom X. And they haven't shied away from the consequences of taking a public stand: during the flowering of McCarthyism, Dee was called a Communist sympathizer in the press. Still, with refreshing honesty, they steer clear of self-congratulation, as when Davis tells how, as a little boy, in exchange for a few pieces of peanut brittle, he acquiesced as some racist local cops mistreated him. Of course, Dee and Davis also chronicle their careers as pioneers on stage, film and television, from their involvement with New York's African American theater scene during the Depression to their work alongside stars like Sidney Poitier and Lena Horne. From Davis's youth as a "Negro boy surrounded by white hoods, burning crosses, and stories that brought the smell of burning flesh," to Dee's concern for the future of African American theater, this is a compelling read, effectively evoking the challenges and rewards that have attended the authors' roles as black leaders over the past 60 years. Photos not seen by PW. Appendix, index. Agents, Betty McCort and Susan Crawford. (Nov.) FYI: Also out this November is Ruby Dee's My One Good Nerve, a collection of verse based on her one-woman show of that title. (Wiley, \$16.95 192p ISBN 0-471-31704-7)

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#### From Library Journal

With acting careers spanning over 50 years, this husband-and-wife team provides a unique historical look at the American stage and film industry. Recounting their stories in two voices from childhood to the present, they share their experiences in acting at the American Negro Theater and the New Amsterdam Theater in New York. From there, they moved to California, performing in films and then television but always including theater as well. This is the first biography of their rich lives; it is suitable that they wrote it together and wrote it well. For collections of African American or theater biography.

-?J. Sara Paulk, Coastal Plain Regional Lib., Tifton, GA Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

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#### Eric Campanelli:

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