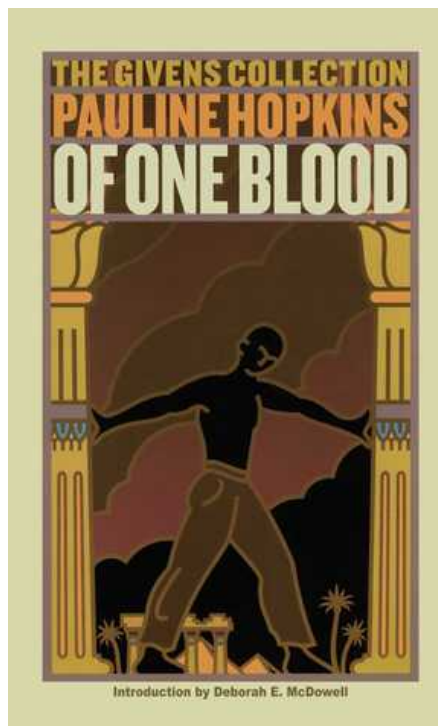




Of One Blood: Or, the Hidden Self: The Givens Collection

Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins

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Of One Blood is the last of four novels written by Pauline Hopkins. She is considered by some to be "the most prolific African-American woman writer and the most influential literary editor of the first decade of the twentieth century, though she is one of the lesser known literary figures of the much lauded Harlem Renaissance. *Of One Blood* first appeared in serial form in *Colored American Magazine* in the November and December 1902 and the January 1903 issues of the publication, during the four-year period that Hopkins served as its editor.

Hopkins tells the story of Reuel Briggs, a medical student who couldn't care less about being black and appreciating African history, but finds himself in Ethiopia on an archeological trip. His motive is to raid the country of lost treasures -- which he does find in the ancient land. However, he discovers much more than he bargained for: the painful truth about blood, race, and the half of his history that was never told. Hopkins wrote the novel intending, in her own words, to "raise the stigma of degradation from [the Black] race." The title, *Of One Blood*, refers to the biological kinship of all human beings.

Of One Blood: Or, the Hidden Self: The Givens Collection Details

Date : Published February 3rd 2004 by Washington Square Press (first published 1902)

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From Reader Review Of One Blood: Or, the Hidden Self: The Givens Collection for online ebook

Bryan Miller says

Wakanda as written in 1902. It takes elements of a ghost story, elements of Frankenstein, and elements of Wakanda (anachronistic as that comparison may be) and remixes it into both a love story and a quest novel. It's quite an extraordinary tale, especially considering it was written so long ago. But at the end of the day, Pauline Hopkins was interrogating what an African utopia might look like long before Stan Lee started playing around with it. This novel is worth checking out SO DO IT

behemothing says

An important take on the ubiquitous "lost race" theme of adventure fiction written from the perspective of a black feminist in the very early 20th century.

Madhavi says

Incredibly relevant and important in its historical context but far too melodramatic as a story

Wolverina says

I really liked this novel.

Hopkins narration in the story, moving from paranormal to portal fiction, to adventure to activist throughout the story is actually really beautiful. That said it does get a little confusing at times, I suspect though in part because I'm reading it as a novel rather than a collected serial.

Wendy says

Master's Degree -- English 630: American Gothic - Judging a book by it's cover (I had a different edition than pictured here, used college bookstore copy), this looked like it would be an awful book. It was actually pretty good... only problem is that it read like two different books, the American story and the African story.

Roger Whitson says

One of the first afrofuturist novels, Pauline Hopkins's OF ONE BLOOD is most powerful when it is describing the hidden city of Telassar. There are so many fascinating parallels with H. Rider Haggard's SHE, namely the notion of reincarnation, lost African kings, and ancient kingdoms. But Hopkins celebrates these

ideas as evidence of a longstanding kinship between Africans and Europeans.

Caitlin says

Not a long read (4ish hours), but kind of tedious. I enjoyed the first third, the middle third was way too full of ornate descriptions that I thought didn't really add to the plot or meaning of the story, and the last third felt like it was dragging out the inevitable ending.

Read for school. Wouldn't recommend, and wouldn't read again, but I can see its usefulness at the beginning of our reading plan in our African and African American literature class, as it portrays a historical U.S. African American perspective on Africa as the noble motherland and "Ethiopia" as both homeland and promised land, and a place that embodies the opposite of the woes of unfortunates, as the main character says.

Matt Sautman says

At first, I was not sure quite how I felt about the book. It is melodramatic and seemed to lack greater significance... that is at first, but the further along the reader gets, the more involved the story becomes, and those moments that transform those moments that the reader may had thought to be trite in the beginning and meaningless and reveals that beneath the shroud of a first time read of Hopkins's prose is a gothic piece of weird fiction about race and reclaiming identity. Ultimately, its underlying message pertains to the illusion of racial categories and the cyclical nature of time wherein past and present ideologies must combine in order to progress into a better world. I may say more at the risk of revealing spoilers.

Eric says

A fascinating novel from 1903 that appears to stage the transnational black political imaginary which defined much of the political energy around African American cultural production in the 1920s and 1930s. I very much look forward to thinking about this book's strange turns against their apparent correlates in Du Bois' strange "Dark Princess: a romance." If many of its turns are predictable for a reader familiar with Hopkins' (and Charles Chesnutt's) work, the development of a political message throughout the text, especially its expansion of the particularity of its contemporary American scene into the transnational, is thrilling enough to propel an enjoyable reading.

Angie says

Major Fields Prep: 16/133

By engaging a wide variety of literary genres and tropes - from the adventure novel, back-to-Africa tale, passing narrative, conjure tale, and tragic mulatto story - Hopkins confronts the changing epistemological terrain of the late-19th and early 20th centuries. "Of One Blood" alludes to both Biblical verse and to the polygenetic/monogenetic divide of the biological sciences, attesting to a single genetic lineage for all human races. Her tale (rather accurately) places the source of all human life and culture in Africa, particularly in Ethiopia. The protagonist, Reuel, discovers that he is the long awaited King of the lost capital of Ethiopia, a

utopic city hidden from the modern world. This place is utopic in much the same what Moore's original Utopia was; it is considered real, locatable on a map, bound, and fallible. It is vulnerable to European colonization and expansion, particularly through the rise of ethnographic sciences that invade, pillage, and "recover" lost artifacts for the sake of Western knowledge. The second sight and double-consciousness of African Americans, famously theorized by Du Bois in the same year, becomes intimately linked to this mystical heritage from Ethiopia, creating a temporal and geographic link between black people in America and in Africa. Almost begrudgingly proclaimed, to be "of one blood" also means that white persons are part of this lineage and the distinction between the races and, by extension, differential treatment of the races is illogical and indefensible.

Stafford Battle says

Great book from an era in American history when human rights, political change, Progressivism and technological innovation took place. Steampunk meets magic can probably best describe *Of One Blood* by Pauline Hopkins. The primary character is a young very fair-skin medical student (passing for white) who dabbles in the occult and modern miracles. The book is packed with social and scientific themes as well as lost civilizations and plot twists. Not a difficult read, but a book you may want to read slowly.

Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins (1859 – August 13, 1930) was a prominent African-American novelist, journalist, playwright, historian, and editor. She is considered a pioneer in her use of the romantic novel to explore social and racial themes. Her work reflects the influence of W. E. B. Du Bois. -- Wikipedia

I consider *Of One* to be the first speculative fiction stories written by a woman in America. She explores the "what if?" very well.

Yair Ben-Zvi says

While not the greatest of novels Hopkins' "*Of One Blood*" does just enough (I won't say right, but I'll at least say well) that it warrants itself a read. The prose is gorgeous (though given the pulp-y kind of story Hopkins decides to tell it almost comes off as funny in some respects) and story itself, while definitely overwrought, is not without importance given the zeitgeist out of which Hopkins was writing. I won't go too far with this review simply because I don't have much else to say about the novel. I won't call it a trifle or a bauble of American literary history as it is far more important than that. But I will say that this is an unexpectedly engaging (if at times soap opera dramatic) telling of something that, in a lot of ways, really feels like it prefigures the likes of Flash Gordon, Tarzan, and much else of the pulp genre. Worth a look for its history and its prescience (though more as regards literary genre conventions than its own troubled history, just my two cents).

Ronald Morton says

The slogan of the hour is "Keep the Negro down!" but who is clear enough in vision to decide who hath black blood and who hath it not? Can any one tell? No, not one; for in His own mysterious way He has united the white race and the black race in this new continent. By the transgression of the law He proves His own infallibility: "Of one blood have I made all nations

of men to dwell upon the whole face of the earth,” is as true today as when given to the inspired writers to be recorded. No man can draw the dividing line between the two races, for they are both of one blood!

I love lists, especially lists of books. Book Riot had an irresistible list earlier this year: 5 Bizarre 19th Century American Novels - of which this was one of them (but of course I just had to track them all down).

This actually operates pretty squarely within the realm of adventure lit (though showing glimpses of pulp/weird fiction) - so it straddles the line between Poe/Doyle and, say, Robert E Howard. It has a strong thread of the supernatural (and some eye rolling mysticism) along with an archeological expedition, murderous plots, hidden tribes, and ancient royal bloodlines. It also has a solid dose of social/racial commentary - fairly light today, but it would have been considerably more contentious in 1902-1903 when this was published.

I enjoyed this a great deal, it wasn't quite as bizarre as I'd hoped, and it wasn't quite as pointedly social-commentary either, but it is a great piece of adventure lit, and well worth checking out.

Ariel says

Read this for class: interesting ideas about race and history, but I felt the plot spiralled out of control and out of reason.

Chanel Earl says

I liked it, but I just have trouble with utopian societies that don't end up in ruin before the end of the book. That's a personal thing.

It was a quick read and I really got into it. I think I read it in a few days, and that was during the semester when I didn't have a lot of time.

Angelica says

I read this for my American Literature class. Honestly, as my rating will tell, I didn't like it. The plot became crazy and the characters were all irritating. I am not looking forward for the rest of the books I am going to have to read for this class. They all seem so boring, and this was just the first of nine. Nine boring books for a boring class that I need in order to graduate. How fun.

Sarah says

Meh. Read this book for my American Literature class (1840-1920). It starts off interesting, but it sort of escalated into this over-the-top charade and I couldn't take it seriously. It's very dramatic. I appreciate the

central message it's sending out (that we're all "of one blood," regardless of the color of one's skin), but I think the way Hopkins got there was a bit too much for my taste.

I also understand that the time in which this novel was written was a time in American history when mysticism and sciences hadn't yet become completely different spheres, so I can see readers at the turn of the century reading this with excitement and awe, but for me (in the year 2013) it was--at many times--laughable.

Eric Marcy says

Considering the amount of psychic stuff that goes down in this novel, the ending was rather ho-hum. We'll see if class discussion shifts my reading of this.

Haley Shannon says

Such an incredible book. The writing style is a little unusual, but the story is so incredible and serves as a beautifully poignant commentary on black lives in America after the abolitionist movement. Magic, ghosts, visions, hidden cities, and twists that you'll never see coming make this story both a fascinating adventure as well as an insight into a deeply important perspective.

Kristopher Van says

Great classic of socially moving.
