Great read for any black woman, lover of black women, mother of black women, lover of history, feminism or anyone else who loves to read about overcoming struggles and the strength it takes. Important book to read in a time where black women are often demonized or underappreciated as women. Read more. 4 people found this helpful. Helpful. Comment Report abuse. See the review. Write a customer review. On the occasion of Black History Month, I’ve selected the most influential books on race and the black experience published in the United States for each decade of the nation’s existence—a history of race through ideas, arranged chronologically on the shelf. (In many cases, I’ve added a complementary work, noted with an asterisk.) Each of these books was either published first in the United States or widely read by Americans. He called for physical assimilation: In a colder climate blackened skins would revert to their original white beauty; the woolly substance on black heads would become fine, straight hair again. His racist idea of the lighter and straighter the better still demeans after all these years. 1811-1820. The Souls of Black Folk. 1903. Chapter XIV. The Sorrow Songs. I walk through the churchyard To lay this body down; I know moon-rise, I know star-rise; I walk in the moonlight, I walk in the starlight; I lie in the grave and stretch out my arms, I go to judgment in the evening of the day, And my soul and thy soul shall meet that day, When I lay. Little of beauty has America given the world save the rude grandeur God himself stamped on her bosom; the human spirit in this new world has expressed itself in vigor and ingenuity rather than in beauty. And so by fateful chance the Negro folk-song—the rhythmic cry of the slave—stands to-day not simply as the sole American music, but as the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas.