



# Words to Make My Dream Childen Live: A Book of African American Quotations

*Deirdre Mullane*

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In 1918, Joseph Seaman Cotter, Jr., a promising young African-American poet who later died at the age of twenty-four, published a poem in which he prayed, "O God, give me words to make my dream-children live!" In this collection of some two thousand quotations, Deirdre Mullane has taken Cotter's prayer to heart and gathered the most memorable quotes from a wide range of sources--poetry, folk songs, political speeches, autobiographies, stories, novels, interviews, and essays--to illustrate the amazing richness of the African-American written and oral tradition. From the earliest tracts against slavery to the poetry of Maya Angelou, African-Americans have tuned to language to record their experience and to sustain their souls. Barred from education for centuries, they used the spoken word to hand down their daily wisdom, their faith in God, and dreams of freedom and justice, until the establishment and survival of their own press during the 1800s enabled them to document the horrors of slavery and discrimination, to name the political and social realities they faced, as well as to celebrate the everyday joys of their lives. An ideal companion to African-American history, this extensive and varied collection of quotes, from political figures to poets, from jazz greats to boxers, will be an important resource for writers, journalists, public speakers, and parents seeking an educational gift for their children. The entries are arranged alphabetically by speaker, along with a brief biography of each source. Also included is a subject index that allows a reader to research quotations on specific topics, such as "freedom" or "dreams." Encyclopedic and inspirational, *Words To Make My Dream Children Live* represents the living legacy of the word, both spoken and written, for African-Americans everywhere.

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