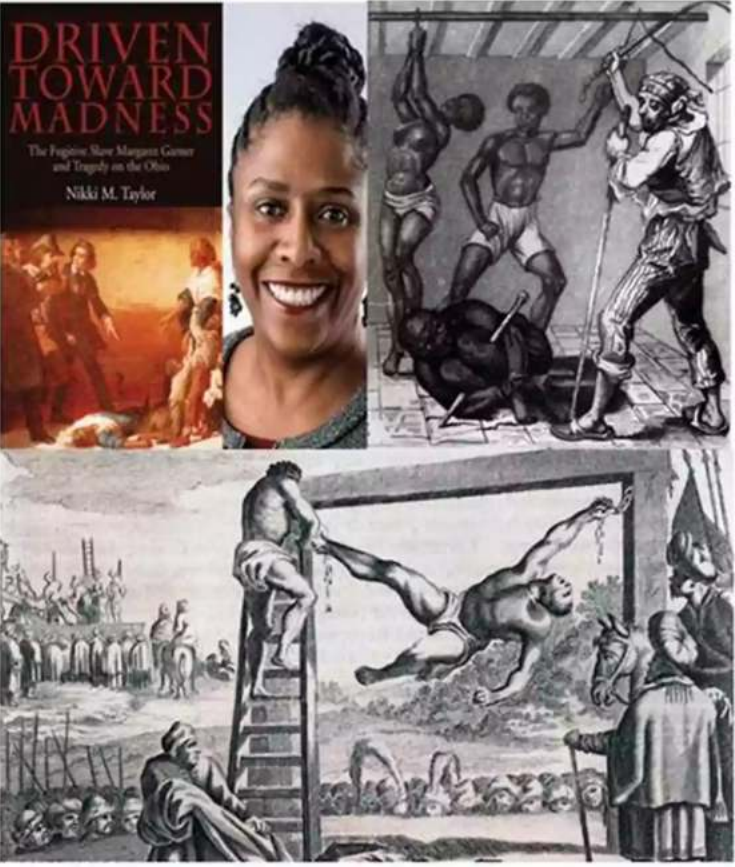


The Fugitive Slave Margaret Garner And Tragedy On The Ohio: New Approaches To Freedom



DRIVEN TOWARD MADNESS
The Fugitive Slave Margaret Garner and Tragedy on the Ohio
Nikki M. Taylor

NIKKI M. TAYLOR – DRIVEN TOWARD MADNESS – 2016

This book is essential if you want to understand a little bit why Margaret Garner, a runaway slave, killed her youngest daughter when her slave-owner arrived in Cincinnati to reclaim her according to the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act. This story is more than well-known thanks to Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* and the film adaptation of this novel.

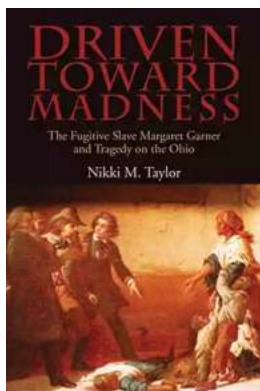
This book itself provides a full account of what we can know about the case and it refers every detail it mentions to the source or sources available, and that is what is important: the author tries to stick to the

Throughout history, there have been countless tales of bravery, determination, and resilience in the face of adversity. One such story is that of Margaret Garner,

a fugitive slave whose tragic escape attempted to secure freedom for her family. The events that unfolded on the Ohio River brought attention to the horrors of slavery and opened discussions about new approaches to freedom. This article will delve into Margaret Garner's story, analyzing the historical context, her journey, and the impact of her tragedy on the fight for emancipation.

The Historical Context

Margaret Garner was born into slavery in Boone County, Kentucky, in the year 1834. She was owned by Archibald Gaines, a prominent and wealthy slaveholder. Slavery was deeply entrenched in American society during this era, with millions of African Americans living in bondage, their lives subject to the whims of their owners.



Driven toward Madness: The Fugitive Slave Margaret Garner and Tragedy on the Ohio (New Approaches to Midwestern History)

by Kondwani Fidel (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 8616 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 180 pages



The abolitionist movement was gaining momentum, fueled by the tireless efforts of activists who aimed to eradicate the institution of slavery and secure equal

rights for African Americans. With tensions rising between pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions, the nation teetered on the precipice of an impending conflict.

The Journey to Freedom

Seeking an escape from the horrors of slavery, Margaret Garner, along with her husband Robert and their children, embarked on a treacherous journey in the harsh winter of 1856. Their destination: the free state of Ohio.

Guided by the North Star, the family traveled under the cover of darkness, navigating treacherous terrains and constantly evading capture by slave catchers. It was a perilous journey that tested their resolve and pushed them to the limits of physical and emotional endurance.

Finally, after weeks of constant fear and uncertainty, the Garners reached the safety of Cincinnati, Ohio, a city known as a beacon of hope for fugitive slaves. But their respite from slavery would be tragically short-lived.

The Tragedy on the Ohio River

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 loomed heavily over Margaret Garner and her family. This controversial law stipulated that escaped slaves, regardless of their location, must be returned to their owners upon capture. The Act also imposed penalties on anyone found aiding fugitive slaves.

Faced with the possibility of being captured and returned to a life of bondage, Margaret and her family, stricken with desperation, made a heart-wrenching decision. Rather than returning to slavery, they would sacrifice their own lives and the lives of their children.

On January 28, 1856, as federal marshals closed in on their hiding place, Margaret Garner, fueled by utter despair, chose to take the lives of her children

rather than condemning them to a life of servitude. This tragic act shocked the nation and ignited debates on the morality and inhumanity of slavery.

The Impact and New Approaches to Freedom

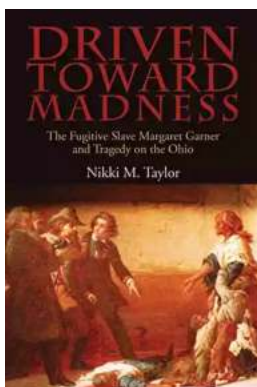
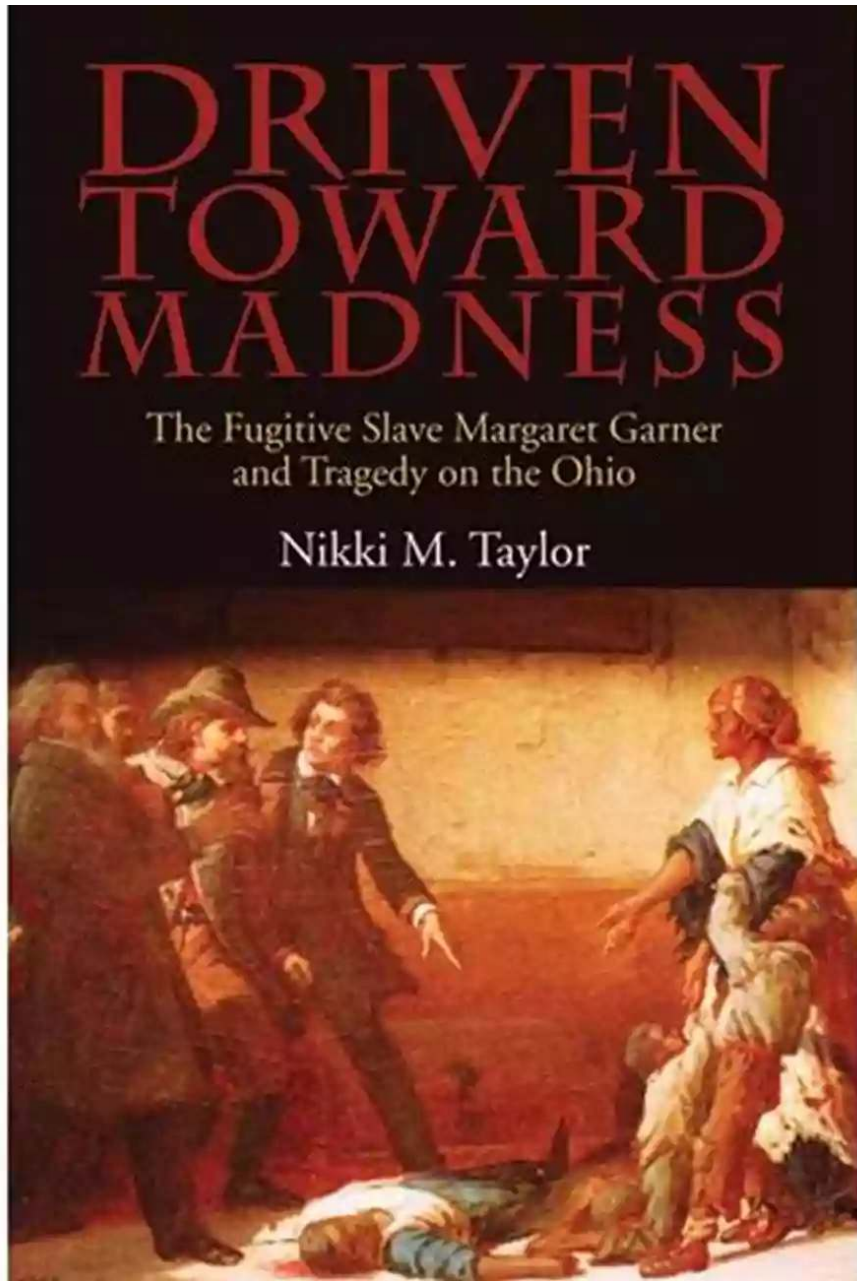
The case of Margaret Garner sent shockwaves throughout the nation, shining a spotlight on the horrors endured by enslaved individuals and their desperate struggle for freedom. Newspapers carried stories of the tragic event, prompting widespread discussions about the morality of slavery and the need for change.

Activists such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Beecher Stowe used Margaret Garner's story to galvanize support for the abolitionist cause. Stowe, in particular, was inspired by Garner's tragedy and went on to write the influential novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin," exposing the cruelties of slavery to an even broader audience.

Margaret Garner's sacrifice became a rallying cry for abolitionists, strengthening their resolve and pushing them towards new approaches to secure freedom. The tragedy forced many to examine their beliefs and question the institution that dehumanized millions.

Ultimately, the legacy of Margaret Garner endures as a reminder of the lengths to which individuals will go in search of freedom. Her story inspired change and provided a new perspective on the fight against slavery.

Margaret Garner's journey and tragedy on the Ohio River marked a turning point in the fight against slavery. Her desperate quest for freedom exposed the inhumane realities of the institution and spurred new approaches to secure liberty for all. Today, we remember Margaret Garner as a symbol of courage and resilience, a beacon of hope in the pursuit of justice and equality.



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Margaret Garner was the runaway slave who, when confronted with capture just outside of Cincinnati, slit the throat of her toddler daughter rather than have her face a life in slavery. Her story has inspired Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, a film based on the novel starring Oprah Winfrey, and an opera. Yet, her life has defied solid historical treatment. In *Driven toward Madness*, Nikki M. Taylor brilliantly captures her circumstances and her transformation from a murdering mother to an icon of tragedy and resistance.

Taylor, the first African American woman to write a history of Garner, grounds her approach in black feminist theory. She melds history with trauma studies to account for shortcomings in the written record. In so doing, she rejects distortions and fictionalized images; probes slavery's legacies of sexual and physical violence and psychic trauma in new ways; and finally fleshes out a figure who had been rendered an apparition.



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