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Autore	Wallach Jennifer Jensen <1974->
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 163-169) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Autobiography and the transformation of historical understanding -- Subjectivity and the felt experience of history -- Literary techniques and historical understanding -- African American memoirists remember Jim Crow -- White memoirists remember Jim Crow -- Talking of another world.
Sommario/riassunto	Wallach (Georgia College and State Univ.) provides a fascinating look at literary memoirs that deal with US racism against African Americans. She rightly notes that historians have been loathe to accept memoirs as historical documents, since the genre is by nature subjective. However, she persuasively demonstrates that memoirs (as representative of "emotive inquiry") are indeed valuable primary documents, when analyzed properly. Wallach examines both black memoirists (Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston, Henry Louis Gates Jr.) and white memoirists (Willie Morris, Lillian Smith, and William Alexander Percy), investigating each independently and comparatively. The insights from her explications are remarkable, derived particularly through her use of theoretical and historiographical material. By maintaining that literary

(as opposed to nonliterary) memoirs provide the deepest historical understanding expressly because literary critics can apply their disciplinary tools to mine the material, Wallach will undoubtedly provoke a lively debate over the comparable utility of other kinds of memoirs, such as popular, vernacular, or ethnographic. Likewise contentious may be her focus on southern rather than broadly US racism. J.B. Wolford University of Missouri--St. Louis distributed by Syndetics.

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