



Living and Dying in the Ida B. Wells Housing Projects: My Story

A. Watts

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Ida B. Wells and Darrow Homes were towering concrete and brick monsters-big, boxy, high- and low-rise buildings-built in the middle of hope and on the edge of desperation. Located on Chicago's south side, these projects provided homes to many people, but mainly to African Americans. After serving the community for sixty years, the projects have been demolished. A. A. Watts, who lived in these housing communities from her birth in 1947 until she left for college in 1965, reflects on their existence in *Living and Dying in the Ida B. Wells Housing Projects*. In this deeply personal account, Watts portrays life in the projects with a keen eye for detail. Poverty, premature deaths, and the misery of friends and neighbors color Watts' story, intimately revealing the despair and tragedy of a people struggling to endure life amidst immense sorrow. Artfully blending personal narrative with factual material, *Living and Dying in the Ida B. Wells Housing Projects* puts a human face to some of Chicago's most notorious buildings. Ultimately, though, it reveals how one woman's difficult childhood and adolescence shaped her future development, giving her the strength and courage to triumph over adversity.

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