Peter Myers
Professor
Political Science

Frederick Douglass was the greatest of all American anti-slavery activists. Born into slavery in 1818, he was almost entirely self-educated. After his escape from slavery in 1838, he became a renowned abolitionist orator, the author of a best-selling autobiography, the editor of abolitionist newspapers, a friend and adviser to President Abraham Lincoln, and in the decades after the Civil War, the nation's leading advocate of equal rights for all. In these chapters, I analyze Douglass's reflections on the meaning of the Civil War as illuminated by the natural-law philosophy in which he discerned the moral architecture of American government.