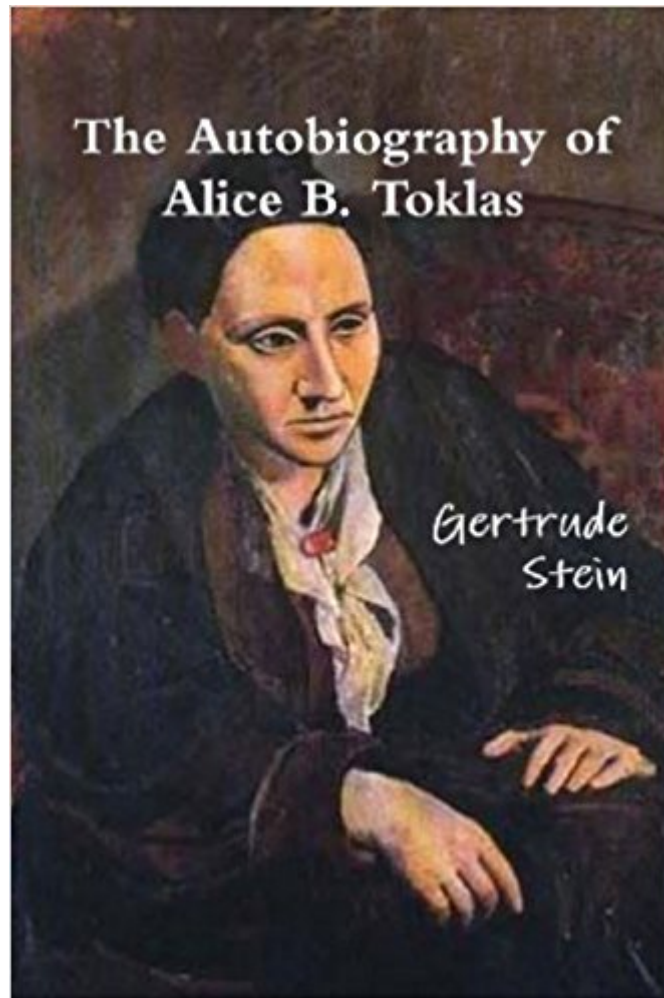




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# The Autobiography Of Alice B. Toklas



## Synopsis

The *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* was written in 1933 by Gertrude Stein in the guise of an autobiography authored by Alice B. Toklas, who was her lover. It is a fascinating insight into the art scene in Paris as the couple were friends with Paul Cezanne, Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso. They begin the war years in England but return to France, volunteering for the American Fund for the French Wounded, driving around France, helping the wounded and homeless. After the war Gertrude has an argument with T. S. Eliot after he finds one of her writings inappropriate. They become friends with Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway. It was written to make money and was indeed a commercial success. However, it attracted criticism, especially from those who appeared in the book and didn't like the way they were depicted.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 89 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Abridged by Joseph Hett (@jehosafet). --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I had heard of this book for many years and finally read it for a book group. It is really more about Gertrude Stein than Alice Toklas. It was very interesting to me to learn more about her and about all the famous people she was closely associated with, mostly in Paris. It seemed to me that the book is a vehicle for Stein to talk about herself in the third person. She was not at all shy about talking about her talent as a writer and her ease with making friends. But I did not find this offensive since it

was a very interesting book to read. There's lots about Hemingway and Picasso and many other writers and artists. Stein gives the background and makes references to her writings all through the book. It made me want to read some of Stein's other works. The only reason I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 is because I think it really would have been interesting for Toklas to have written about herself and Stein.

Gertrude Stein actually wrote this book as if she were Alice, who was her partner. It tells mainly about two topics, related to their lives in early 20th century Paris: their social life with a lot of famous people, mainly artists and writers such as Hemingway, Joyce, Pound, Aaron Copland, Matisse, and Picasso. This part was pretty interesting. What was anything but interesting was the other topic: her writing about her attempts to be published as well as all the compliments that people paid her. Her writing style is quite affected, with a bothersome lack of needed punctuation, for instance.

Thoroughly enjoying this book. A great insight into the Arts of her time and the way they lived. It is a book I have wanted to read since seeing The Stein Art collection in San Francisco a couple of years ago. Now I want to read one of Gertrude Stein's books.

If you enjoy art from around WWI, the modernists, Impressionists, Post Impressionists (Picasso, Matisse, Derain) of France, the writers like Hemmingway, Joyce, Apollinaire, this book makes the daily life of the times come alive. I read it before going to Paris and the point of view enriched my experience. An unusual writing style that was refreshing and simple. I had put off reading it in college and when I did it made the art world of the 1900's more meaningful.

It's odd but I do like it and, after all, it's by Gertrude Stein so I expected no less.

Tedious --- too bad as it was a great idea

I wonder what Alice B. Toklas would have written about herself had she done this autobiography. Gertrude Stein clearly knows that Toklas's life revolved around Stein's and, unashamedly, tells Alice's story from that perspective. Love comes through every pore of this book, however, as Stein, in Toklas's voice, describes the life these two women shared.

I read this for a class on Literary Paris. It is really a "biography" of Gertrude Stein, told through the

eyes of her partner, Alice B. Toklas, a bit of a joke by the author. Full of gossip and humor, the book centers around Gertrude Stein's life in Paris in the first third of the 20th century and tells of her interactions with many of the most important artists and writers of that period. She describes her writing as a bit like Bach, and it is very fugue-like with many characters and themes repeated, stories begun, interrupted and begun again and so forth. Her writing can be a bit cryptic, with unconventional word choices and little punctuation. Unfortunately, this ebook is so full of typos that it is even more of a challenge to follow. Not really worth \$3.50 for that reason - go with the paperback instead.

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