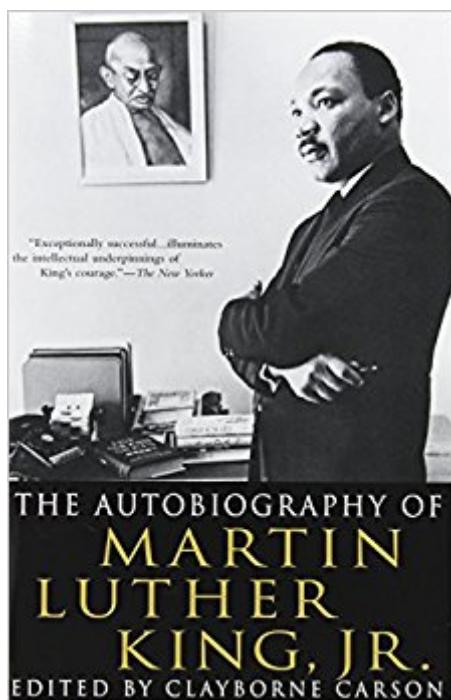


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The Autobiography Of Martin Luther King, Jr.



Synopsis

Using Stanford University's voluminous collection of archival material, including previously unpublished writings, interviews, recordings, and correspondence, King scholar Clayborne Carson has constructed a remarkable first-person account of Dr. King's extraordinary life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Celebrated Stanford University historian Clayborne Carson is the director and editor of the Martin Luther King Papers Project; with thousands of King's essays, notes, letters, speeches, and sermons at his disposal, Carson has organized King's writings into a posthumous autobiography. In an early student essay, King prophetically penned: "We cannot have an enlightened democracy with one great group living in ignorance.... We cannot have a nation orderly and sound with one group so ground down and thwarted that it is almost forced into unsocial attitudes and crime." Such statements, made throughout King's career, are skillfully woven together into a coherent narrative of the quest for social justice. The autobiography delves, for example, into the philosophical training King received at Morehouse College, Crozer Theological Seminary, and Boston University, where he consolidated the teachings of Afro-American theologian Benjamin Mays with the philosophies of Locke, Rousseau, Gandhi, and Thoreau. Through King's voice, the reader intimately shares in his trials and triumphs, including the Montgomery Boycott, the 1963 "I Have a Dream Speech," the Selma March, and the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. In one of his last speeches, King reminded his audience that "in the final analysis, God does not judge us by the separate incidents or the separate

mistakes that we make, but by the total bent of our lives." Carson's skillful editing has created an original argument in King's favor that draws directly from the source, illuminating the circumstances of King's life without deifying his person. --Eugene Holley Jr. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Carson, director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project and author of *A Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.*, has pieced together an incomplete study of King's life by supplementing his extant autobiographies (e.g., *Stride Toward Freedom* and *Where Do We Go from Here*) with previously unpublished and published writings, interviews and speeches. If King's rhetorical flourishes and use of the word "negro" sometimes seem outdated, the compilation still offers a concise first-person account of his life from his birth in Atlanta in 1929 to his awakening social consciousness and discovery of the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. History propelled King to center stage in the struggle for black liberation. When Rosa Parks refused to surrender her bus seat in 1955, the "once dormant and quiescent Negro community was now fully awake" and King, along with many others in Montgomery's black community, organized the bus boycott that would launch King into his leadership role in the civil rights movement. The book offers glimpses of King's family life as well a view of famous Americans such as Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X and JFK. (In 1960, King did not feel "there was much difference between Kennedy and Nixon." He writes, "I felt at points that he was so concerned about being President of the United States that he would compromise basic principles.") But what is most evident throughout Carson's study is the moral courage that sustained King and allowed him to inspire a largely peaceful mass movement against segregation in the face of bloody reprisals. (Dec.) FYI: In November, Carol Publishing will release *Seventh Child: A Family Memoir of Malcolm X*, by his nephew Rodnell P. Collins. (\$21.95 230p ISBN 1-55972-491-9)Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Phillips has written a few leadership books - and does a masterful job in each - yet especially here. For this book, he weaves through with a leadership lesson in each chapter - and generally places the lesson tied directly to something King did - trying to stay close to chronological order. He also supplies us with key quotes from King at the beginning and end of each chapter - for a quick summary and overview. Phillips sets the context in which King operated. This is huge! I don't believe you can't fully understand without immersing in the history, the mindset, the goings on of the time. Phillips doesn't assume the reader is familiar with King. He doesn't assume the reader knows the

circumstances of King's time. Phillips pulls the reader in; explaining the leadership trait King embodied; he explains what in King's past helped him to get here. He explains the historical context of what the culture was like, what current events caused the situation, what players were involved and a little on their mindset and background. He points out how even a great man like King made mistakes, how we evaluated his successes and failures, and how he grew and improved throughout. King's life was short and was lived mainly before I was born - he died at age 39 - and had learned more and accomplished more than many that lived to be twice his age. Being a student of leadership, but someone who knew very little about King, I chose this book to learn about both. It inspired me to read more about King. I am amazed at how he put his principles before even fear of criticism, family threats, and even death. I think the reader will learn a lot about King, his struggles, his faith, his life, his goals, and especially his leadership style. Yet, for burgeoning leaders, it is very insightful. It will make someone think about whether they truly want to be a leader and what sacrifices they are willing to make. Phillips makes this an easy read - but not an easy one to just race through without reflection.

This is part three of a three part series by Donald T. Phillips. Having read all three editions, it is difficult to say which book is "better" than the others. All three are FIVE-STAR and "MUST READS", however, the voluminous research that Phillips includes in **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ON LEADERSHIP** makes this OUTSTANDING!!! After reading this book I wrote the following reflection on MLK's life and legacy. This reflection was shaped by Phillips' work but it is not a review or sample of Phillips. Martin Luther King, Jr. saw himself as a prophet of his day and like the prophets in the Bible he guided his nation. He used moral compass to make sure that it pointed true, right, and straight. What else should we have expected from someone that was named after the father of reformation, Martin Luther. MLK was a second generation preacher and when he received his call to ministry it was a call to challenge the status quo and permanently change the course of our history. He often quoted the prophets, probably because he identified with them, and like the prophets he held the nation accountable. He identified with their message and from a Birmingham Jail he wrote a letter to white ministers who criticized his work and stated, "I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left their villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their home towns, and just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for

aid. When he delivered his most remarkable speech, "I have a Dream" from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963, he quoted the prophet Isaiah and Amos. In fact, the key verse of Amos' "oracle" was King's primary proof text. Citing Amos, King preached, "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." MLK did not just identify with the prophets of old, he also worked with the prophets of his day. Including Billy Graham. MLK spoke and prayed at Billy Graham's crusades. Furthermore, Graham recounts a conversation where King said, you fight from the stadiums and I'll fight from the streets. He also identified with Paul who wrote to the Corinthian "listing all the torture and violence he has received as a result of his message. King probably had Paul's words in mind when he wrote, "Due to my involvement in the struggle for the freedom of my people, I have known very few quiet days in the last few years. I have been arrested five times and put in Alabama jails. My home has been bombed twice. A day seldom passes that my family and I are not the recipients of threats of death. I have been the victim of a near-fatal stabbing." We know that on April 4, 1968 at a motel in Memphis, TN the assassin's bullet took his life and Martin Luther King Jr. entered the ranks of those called martyrs who gave their life to make the world a better place. As King was entered into eternal rest his life became synonymous with the lives of Lincoln, Ghandi, and Kennedy. King often urged his followers to "Meditate on the teachings and life of Jesus," and I am certain that on the day King entered the gates of heaven he heard the words of Jesus saying, "Well Done! My good and faithful servant."

The back story, and main story behind this one special man is something to enjoy. And I think Linus would say it best, the insight behind such a historic person would be beyond reproach. ...whatever that means. Anywho. Every detail of this man; his birth, his "dream" speech, his assassination, as well as Kennedy's, it's all in here. I plan on using this book as a basis for a very special stage musical project, just like Lin Manuel Miranda once did when he made the Hamilton Musical, using a 600 page book on Hamilton. 5 stars total, and a 9.5 out of 10 for this autobiography.... "free at last, free at last. Thank God almighty, we're free at last".

The rating is 3 stars because the Kindle edition sucks. I was using my iPhone Kindle app. Whole lines of text are missing in the middle of sentences... I paid \$9.99 for a version that is missing

WHOLE LINES OF TEXT. Unacceptable. On a side note, the book is quite good. I was lucky enough to get a paperback version of it to read. It's a lesson in history as well as a lesson in leadership. The leadership leads more to social/group leadership than business leadership. I think everyone should read it to understand how our country had created a system of racism and subjugation.

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