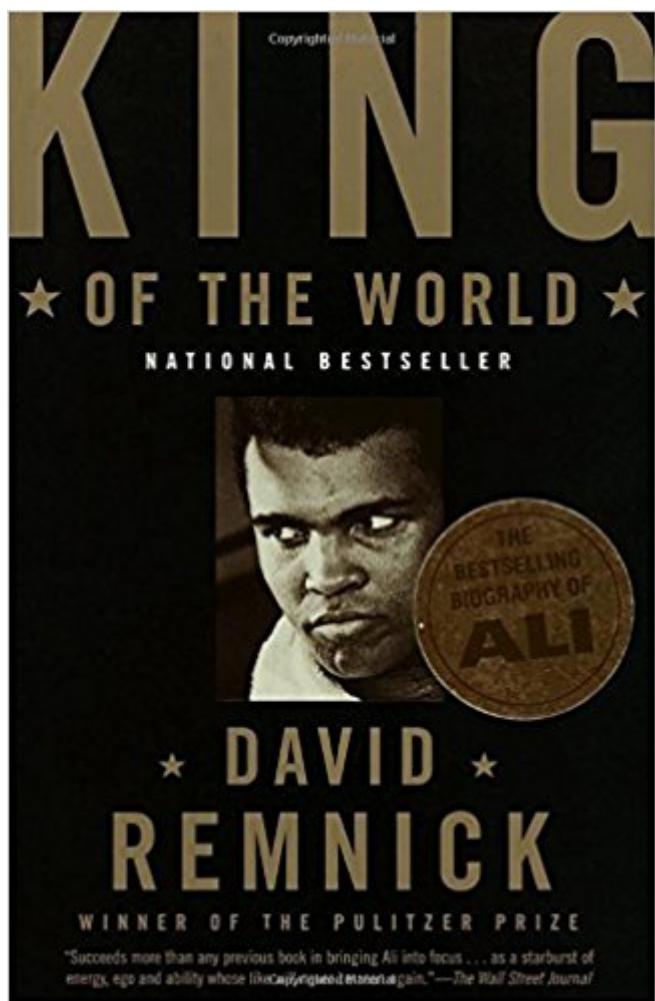


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# King Of The World: Muhammad Ali And The Rise Of An American Hero



## Synopsis

With an Introduction by Salman Rushdie On the night in 1964 that Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) stepped into the ring with Sonny Liston, he was widely regarded as an irritating freak who danced and talked way too much. Six rounds later Ali was not only the new world heavyweight boxing champion: He was "a new kind of black man" who would shortly transform America's racial politics, its popular culture, and its notions of heroism. No one has captured Ali--and the era that he exhilarated and sometimes infuriated--with greater vibrancy, drama, and astuteness than David Remnick, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Lenin's Tomb* (and editor of *The New Yorker*). In charting Ali's rise from the gyms of Louisville, Kentucky, to his epochal fights against Liston and Floyd Patterson, Remnick creates a canvas of unparalleled richness. He gives us empathetic portraits of wisecracking sportswriters and bone-breaking mobsters; of the baleful Liston and the haunted Patterson; of an audacious Norman Mailer and an enigmatic Malcolm X. Most of all, *King of the World* does justice to the speed, grace, courage, humor, and ebullience of one of the greatest athletes and irresistibly dynamic personalities of our time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

You'd think there wouldn't be much left to say about a living icon like Muhammad Ali, yet David Remnick imbues *King of the World* with all the freshness and vitality this legendary fighter displayed in his prime. Beginning with the pre-Ali days of boxing and its two archetypes, Floyd Patterson (the

good black heavyweight) and Sonny Liston (the bad black heavyweight), Remnick deftly sets the stage for the emergence of a heavyweight champion the likes of which the world had never seen: a three-dimensional, Technicolor showman, fighter and minister of Islam, a man who talked almost as well as he fought. But mostly Remnick's portrait is of a man who could not be confined to any existing stereotypes, inside the ring or out. In extraordinary detail, Remnick depicts Ali as a creation of his own imagination as we follow the willful and mercurial young Cassius Clay from his boyhood and watch him hone and shape himself to a figure who would eventually command center stage in one of the most volatile decades in our history. To Remnick it seems clear that Ali's greatest accomplishment is to prove beyond a doubt that not only is it possible to challenge the implacable forces of the establishment (the noir-ish, gangster-ridden fight game and the ethos of a whole country) but, with the right combination of conviction and talent, to triumph over these forces. --Fred Haefele --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"I ain't got no quarrel with them Vietcong," Ali said in 1967 on refusing to be drafted. He was sentenced to five years in prison, and though the Supreme Court would overturn his conviction four years later, principle lost him his title, big bucks, the support of many admirers and the best years of his fighting life. Vietnam postdates most of New Yorker editor Remnick's (Lenin's Tomb) coverage, as he writes little about Ali in the post-Sonny Liston era. At its best, the book recalls the boxing writings of A.J. Liebling, while Remnick's frequent use of Ali's hilarious "rapper" doggerel adds to the melancholy humor through which he describes the Louisville kid who beat gambling odds on the way to the heavyweight title but couldn't beat the medical odds. "The history of [prize] fighters," Remnick writes, "is the history of men who end up damaged." Only in his middle 50s, the once graceful Ali, last seen worldwide clutching the Atlanta Olympic torch in a trembling hand, is disabled by degenerative Parkinson's disease. To many, though, he was disabled even earlier by his conversion to Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, which, whatever its controversial separatist image, "orders [Ali's] life and helps him cope with his illness," according to Remnick. The author smartly records Ali's defiant besting of adversaries in and out of the ring and shows him to be a champion human being. 16 pages of b&w photos. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book was a gift for my daughter. She loved it. Over and over she shared bits of information she'd learned from this book at the dinner table such as "Muhammad Ali opposed war." Or "Did you know Muhammad Ali went to prison for his beliefs?" This would likely be an excellent book for any

teen, adult, or maybe even a middle-school child who is an accelerated reader.

As a child growing up Ali was my absolute favorite athlete. This book does a great job of showing the influences that helped shape Cassius Clay and led Clay to the Nation of Islam. I learned that Ali did not even choose that name for himself, Elijah Muhammad chose it for him and in many ways Ali was manipulated by this group to further their agenda. It does not paint a one-sided picture of Ali, we see a man of complex emotions, thoughts and behaviors. We see a man who could be loving and generous but who could also turn on a friend in the blink of an eye as he did with Malcolm X. We see a man whose braggadocio and clowning was all a very calculated act to psych out opponents, drive up ticket sales, and to psych himself up. A great read for any fan of boxing, and anyone interested in the times that shaped Ali and the people he fought.

I give this book no more than a "D". It's more about the sports writers and Muslims than about Ali. I wanted to see his record and who he fought more than what a writer of some magazine or newspaper had to say. I saw Ali fight Karl Mildenberger but his name was barely mentioned along with many others. I also met Sonny Liston several times and was nothing but as nice as he could be. I was a teenager then and looked up to both Liston and Ali. Also saw Ali vs Lyle Azado. No mention. "D"

Absolutely the best book about Ali. I am a long time fight fan, and this book talks about the fight game back in the early 60's when Patterson and Liston were the champs, but upstart Cassius Clay (Ali) was beginning to change the world, starting with boxing. Of course the coverage of Ali is wonderful, but the discussion of the other two is also very intimately done. Great Book.

this is a great book that brings back boyhood memories.

One of the best books on Ali concentrating on the formative stage of his career and his pivotal role in the public and social life of USA. Contrasting him with Sonny Liston and Floyd Patterson the book covers known ground but with great insight and detailed research and interview. The material from Ali's corner doctor - Pacheco, is especially illuminating about the champ his mindset and the world they inhabited. Read it.

I really enjoyed the telling of those memorable fight scenes and the way the fighters come to life as

real people in their times. The book deciphers the life and times of American attitudes during the time of the Civil Rights Movement. Importantly for me it shows how we are all creations of our environments and how different individuals respond to their reality. Muhammad Ali comes across as a vulnerable brave souls trying his best to survive as a black Man in white America. I found it riveting reading

A truly fascinating look at the life and times of one of history's greatest athletes who also happened to be a great man, true to his convictions. No one will ever forget Ali lighting the Olympic torch in Atlanta in 1996. A fitting, deserved legacy.

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