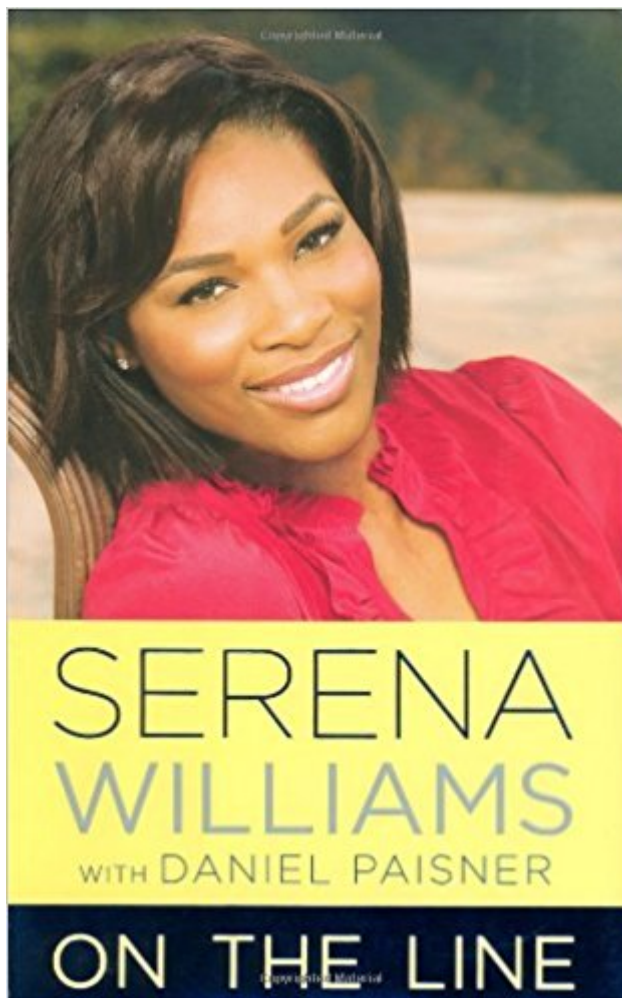


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On The Line



Synopsis

One of the biggest stars in tennis, Serena Williams has captured every major title. Her 2009 Australia Open championship earned her the #1 world ranking for the third time in her illustrious career - and marked only the latest exclamation point on a life well and purposefully lived. As a young girl, Serena began training with an adult-sized racquet that was almost as big as her. Rather than dropping the racquet, Serena saw it as a challenge to overcome-and she has confronted every obstacle on her path to success with the same unflinching spirit. From growing up in the tough, hardscrabble neighborhood of Compton, California, to being trained by her father on public tennis courts littered with broken glass and drug paraphernalia, to becoming the top women's player in the world, Serena has proven to be an inspiration to her legions of fans both young and old. Her accomplishments have not been without struggle: being derailed by injury, devastated by the tragic shooting of her older sister, and criticized for her unorthodox approach to tennis. Yet somehow, Serena always manages to prevail. Both on the court and off, she's applied the strength and determination that helped her to become a champion to successful pursuits in philanthropy, fashion, television and film. In this compelling and poignant memoir, Serena takes an empowering look at her extraordinary life and what is still to come.

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Customer Reviews

In this able mid-career autobiography, tennis sensation Williams chronicles a childhood spent living the game with her four sisters and determined parents, and the success that followed. Faith, work ethic, and a love of tennis were paramount to the Williams children's upbringing, qualities that saw

her through title contests from coast to coast, and then worldwide. Along the way, she's established schools in third world countries and visited "slave castles" on the African coast; she also persevered through the fatal shooting of her oldest sister in 2003. Waylaid briefly, Williams came back stronger than ever, a testament to her determination, sheer guts and game sense of humor. Philosophical nuggets are scattered throughout: "You might think you're in control, but you're never really in control

"From the first time I met her, to watching her capture the US Open, Serena has always amazed me with her ability on the court, her curiosity away from it and her overall love for life. Serena Williams is taking her life to an all new level." — Billie Jean King
"On the court, Serena is the most challenging opponent I've come up against, and off the court, she is a loving sister and a true friend. Serena has been a role model for me and an inspiration. It is difficult to imagine how I would have achieved many of my greatest accomplishments without her in my life." — Venus Williams
"Serena has dredged deeply into her emotions and those of the First Family of tennis—hopes and fears, aches and triumphs—to craft an exceptional memoir. Ascending from nowhere to the top of the world, she has run an exciting zig-zag course transforming darkest days into bright victories on her way to the International Tennis Hall of Fame." — Bud Collins

With 11 major titles, Serena Williams is arguably the best female tennis player of her generation, with only her sister Venus and Justin Henin challenging her for the title. As is true of most top-level athletes, Serena is beloved by many but also has a fair number of detractors (especially after some recent on-court behavior at the 2009 U.S. Open). I have long been a fan of hers; I love her emotional, aggressive style of play. However, like other players with this style (see Mary Pierce), Serena can come across as petulant and a bit of a drama queen. So I was eager to hear what she would write (with the help of Daniel Paisner) about her life and career so far. Serena's story of growing up in Compton and becoming a world-class athlete alongside her equally talented sister Venus is so well-known that I wasn't expecting much new material, but I wanted her insights into the tale. Fortunately, Serena more or less delivers. Her self-insights aren't quite as insightful as one might hope, but given that she is still mid-career, I wasn't expecting the kind of wisdom one might receive from a Billie Jean King. Several matches and highlights of her career are detailed here; Serena writes that she selected important tennis times that helped shape her. The best bits are more personal - about the death of her older sister Tunde and her struggles with body image. Surprisingly, Serena admits that her 2004-2005 career dip was mostly due to depression from the

loss of her sister. Her infamous match against Kim Clijsters is described in detail. No, not her 2009 U.S. Open match but the 2001 Indian Wells finals match, during which Serena was booed because Venus had pulled out last minute from their semifinal match. Serena and her family have said that they heard racist comments from the crowd. Her version of the story is pretty unvarnished, but she otherwise keeps things below a simmer elsewhere. I would have liked to have read more insights from Serena about the tour. Instead, what she gives is pretty vague, describing most of the players as "nice." She does take a small swipe at Dinara Safina when she says that she didn't mind being ranked #3 in the world knowing that the two players ahead of her has never won a major title before. However, there's relatively little gossip or bravado. Overall, Serena gives a fairly balanced account of herself and her career. She doesn't present herself as a saint, and she sometimes doesn't take as much responsibility for some of her faults as she should, instead laughing it off as her being the Princess of her family. I doubt that anyone's minds will be changed about Serena by reading this book. I went into this book a huge fan of Serena Williams who was somewhat shaken by her behavior at the 2009 U.S. Open (a few of her comments have become unintentionally ironic after that incident, including the title). I ended the book feeling pretty much the same way - Serena is a terrific tennis player who has some amazing qualities but is also flawed at times. I was happy that I read the book and would recommend it to others interested in her career and women's tennis in general, but I hope that she will someday write another book that goes deeper. I'm betting that the upcoming autobiography from Andre Agassi will be that kind of reflective memoir.

Love this book and give it to all my tennis playing friends! Serena, even though she utilizes a co-author, gives a refreshing first-person account of how she and Venus became the amazing tennis stars they are. Seeing how their family sacrificed and rose through the challenges of inner-city LA was fascinating, and truly inspirational.

This book is awesome, and I do not say it because it wrote Serena Williams, but I do say it because I understood this book wrote Serena's spirit, openly, and towards the others spirits. This book is for sure for ones that love to be buried deeply in feelings. If you cannot feel deeply the things in life, so you cannot understand completely what is this book about. If you don't have the higher level ability of perceptiveness or a sufficient level of empathy, I think then you cannot see the real value this book really has. Serena opened her heart, her feelings, her inward world, the most precious place we all have in life, to all the readers. Wow! I feel blessed that I could/can feel what she wanted to say see the message she sent when she's talking about sufferings and coming back to the glory.

Reading this book so I felt more than just like a fan because I had the opportunity to feel close to Serena like a human being that kept listening with comprehension talking to its best friend. Really a great feeling. So if you want to read this book, then read it by heart and try to perceive it, because without that you'll miss the full experience and the whole message.

good reading

Great one

I am a huge fan of Serena Williams, but I was more excited to purchase the book than I was while reading it. The book had good facts about her life and career, but it was very vague. I expected her to be a lot more open. My opinion may be biased, however, by the fact that I finished Andre Agassi's "Open" right before Serena's book. That book was EXCELLENT.

I liked it a lot. I'm an older woman just playing the past two years and I found her story inspirational.

If you like the all-american road to success story, then On The Line will be a good choice. It reads like Serena is talking to you. I really enjoyed reading about how she has become number one in tennis, over and over again.

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