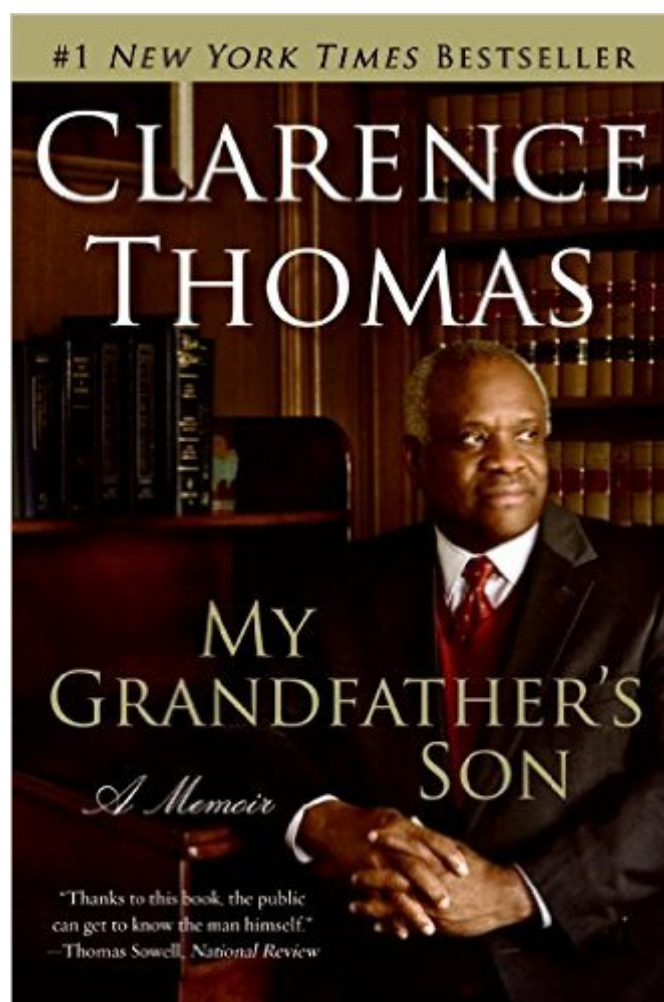


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My Grandfather's Son: A Memoir



Synopsis

Provocative, inspiring, and unflinchingly honest, *My Grandfather's Son* is the story of one of America's most remarkable and controversial leaders, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, told in his own words. Thomas speaks out, revealing the pieces of his life he holds dear, detailing the suffering and injustices he has overcome, including the acrimonious and polarizing Senate hearing involving a former aide, Anita Hill, and the depression and despair it created in his own life and the lives of those closest to him. In this candid and deeply moving memoir, a quintessential American tale of hardship and grit, Clarence Thomas recounts his astonishing journey for the first time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Even if you do not agree with everything Justice Thomas believes, this book will still keep you reading until the end. I could not put it down. Thomas writes in such a personal and down to earth style that you really feel like you know him as a person. His life story is amazing and the events he details really come to life. I am so glad I got an early copy and read it before the inevitable partisans show up here and lambast it simply because they disagree with the author. I for one can read something that does not echo my thoughts, but sadly others cannot. If you love non-fiction and also multi-layered stories than give this book a try. It really is unforgettable no matter your political party.

Often we make judgments based upon preconceived views and ideology. I, too, had misconceived notions about Clarence Thomas. I heard that he was a traitor to his race. However, by reading this

book, I gained insight into one of the most misunderstood people in our society. As an African American, I can say that his message of self-reliance is very pertinent and needed. The irony of this "so-called traitor"--is that his message of self-reliance is similar to the views held by Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey and Frederick Douglas. This is a must read for all Americans, especially African Americans.

Not since his confirmation hearing have we heard directly from Justice Thomas about his life, background and formative experiences. This autobiography is a much-needed retrospective and, in many ways, a refutation of those critics who question his intellect and depth. Justice Thomas takes us from his humble beginnings in the racist Deep South, raised by a tough love grandfather, to his days as a seminarian, to college and law school, and to government service that ultimately led him to the US Supreme Court. Most important, he provides his account of the Anita Hill fiasco. I think any objective reader will be hard pressed to read this account and not come away with a sense that what happened to Justice Thomas ranks among one of the most low down, dirty things our elected officials have done to any one individual. Whether or not one agrees with his judicial philosophy, this autobiography is an important book. It reveals a very thoughtful, complex, almost anguished man in such a way that I think both critics and supporters will be surprised. Regardless of one's point of view, Justice Thomas can and should be viewed as an example to people of all colors that economic disadvantage can be overcome.

The hero of this book is not Clarence Thomas. It is his grandfather who raised him and his brother from childhood. His mother was an illegitimate child, just as he was himself. The grandfather later married and, when his daughter, Justice Thomas' mother, was struggling to raise three children in the slums of Charleston, he took the boys in and raised them to be fiercely independent men. The grandfather and his wife had a neat and clean, though small, house and later he built a second house on family farm land outside the city. He kept the boys working on that farm in the summer, much to their anger, to keep them away from other boys who were at risk of serious trouble in the streets of Charleston. Justice Thomas' early life was one of hard work and hard study under the nuns in Catholic school. His grandfather scraped up the school fees to keep his boys out of the evil atmosphere that dragged so many young black men into trouble. For years, Justice Thomas and his grandfather had a tense relationship as neither could express his feelings well and the grandson only realized years later what a debt he owed to this harsh but loving man. The confirmation story, and the alleged "anger" are near the end of the book. The rest is an inspiring story of love and

discipline and a life that should impress anyone who reads it with the open mind. The book now goes to my daughter and it should be required reading for the pampered children of the middle class who have had few obstacles in their way thus far in life.

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is normally so quiet--on the bench and about his public life--that he almost has been perceived as reclusive. Finally, thoroughly, and happily, he has spoken (written) with "My Grandfather's Son: A Memoir." Thomas chronicles his rise from poverty, his upbringing by his grandfather who taught him lessons of personal responsibility, and his up-and-down road to the Supreme Court. All the while Thomas honestly depicts the barriers he faced and the hurdles he had to overcome. Of course, Thomas also finally speaks about the Anita Hill charges. With candor about the pain and with substantiating evidence about the facts, his side of the story is finally told. But the greater message of the book is the story of how Thomas moved beyond suffering and prejudice and bias to live the America dream. It is a story filled with hope and dignity. It is a story worth telling and worth reading. Reviewer: Bob Kellemen, Ph.D., is the author of Beyond the Suffering: Embracing the Legacy of African American Soul Care and Spiritual Direction, Spiritual Friends, and Soul Physicians.

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