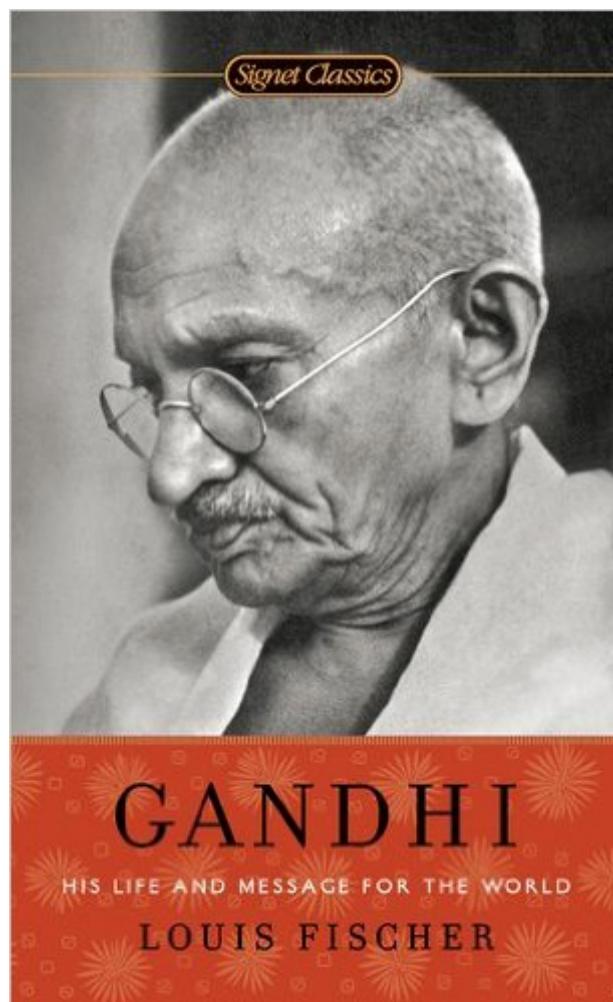


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Gandhi: His Life And Message For The World (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

This is the extraordinary story of how one man's indomitable spirit inspired a nation to triumph over tyranny. This is the story of Mahatma Gandhi, a man who owned nothing-and gained everything.

Book Information

Series: Signet Classics

Mass Market Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Signet; Reprint edition (November 2, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0451531701

ISBN-13: 978-0451531704

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.6 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (26 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #193,941 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality > Hinduism > Gandhi #38 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Asia > India & South Asia #702 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Biographical

Customer Reviews

The perfect introduction. This is the perfect book for someone who wants to learn the essentials about the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi without having to wade through some of the larger books that have been written. This one is under 200 pages, and is laid out in three easy to read sections (From Birth To Greatness - Gandhi In India - Victory and Tragedy). Fischer does not bog down into political minutiae, post-assassination trial stuff, or hair-splitting Gandhi-isms (on this latter point for instance, Gandhi's own autobiography devotes four consecutive chapters to his internal agony over whether or not to include goat's milk in his vegetarian diet)! Fischer's book is more of an OVERVIEW of the profound world-shaking life that was Gandhi. Yet it is immensely informative, and well-paced. The author personally met with Gandhi in 1942 and again in '46, and his book shows that he had a wonderful understanding of the Mahatma's faith and convictions. Those who want to know more about Gandhi should, however, go on to read the autobiography (subtitled "The Story of My Experiments With Truth") and also Yogesh Chadha's "Gandhi: A Life". The book ends abruptly with the three shots, the smile fading from Gandhi's face, and his final words on earth "Oh God." "His legacy is courage, his lesson truth, his weapon love. His life is his monument. He now belongs to

mankind."We turn the page, and hope that something is there... but it isn't. The world since, has not seen anyone like Gandhi.

This is one of the best biographies I've ever read, in part because of the enormous charisma of the subject and in equal part because of the obvious respect and affection with which he is treated by his biographer, Louis Fischer. Gandhi's life and message can be a life-changing experience for one willing to think about his search for Truth, and his unwillingness to compromise even in the face of seemingly insurmountable opposition. When I decided to read up on Ghandi's life, I was confronted with many many volumes. I didn't know which to choose, so I bought several, in hopes that at least one would be a good choice. I needn't have worried. This particular volume is small and thin, and I selected it in part because of its size - a thicker volume on a man I knew nothing about would have been too intimidating for a first exposure. What a wonderful surprise! Fischer's story of Gandhi's life was engaging from the first few paragraphs and riveting through Gandhi's last utterance. Fischer does not analyze very much - this is not a history of Gandhi's influence on India and the wider world; rather, it is the personal story of a man who touched lives. Mohandas Gandhi is presented in the context of his world rather than Gandhi's world being presented in the context of him. To me, that creates a more approachable man, one whose life can be emulated, not just revered. This is a must-read with the potential to become a must-do, or at least a must-think. Highly recommended.

Written by a foreign correspondant and author of many books on world affairs, this book is the best place to begin understanding the life of Gandhi. I used it to supplement the Oscar-winning film and found that the two complemented each other very well. It is a short book. In a matter of hours the reader will not only be introduced to the events of Gandhi's life and of the Indian independence movement, but she will also get inside the man. Fischer carefully considers Gandhi's religious convictions and experiences and thereby tries to explain Gandhi's incredible moral authority, both during his lifetime, and beyond. If you wonder why so many people consider Gandhi the most influential human being of the 20th century, read this book. And then be prepared to reexamine your own life. What do I value? Why? What is my purpose in life? What does it mean to be a just, compassionate, and merciful human being? Is a violent response to evil ever justifiable? Reading this inexpensive, 200-page paperback will pay rich dividends.

I find it a little odd that I just wrote in the title that people can be 'fans' of Gandhi. Like he is a rock star or famous model. But in essence that is what most people who admire influential people are.

And I admit that I am a fan of Gandhi. Being such I decided it was time to learn something about him that was not a movie (though the movie is very good; truncated but good) or a magazine article or some old handout from high school I found in a dark corner of my closet. So I chose Louis Fischer's short little biography. And I am very satisfied. Mr. Fischer does not make any excuses for being a fan of Gandhi either. Like another biographer of Gandhi mentioned, it seems everybody who ever saw Gandhi and spoke to him felt the overwhelming need to write something, preferably a biography, of him. Mr. Fischer met Gandhi twice, stayed in his Ashram for a week as a guest, and he documents it in this biography. I fear I will sound repetitive with my biography reviews, but once again this is a great introduction to Gandhi. Just over 200 pages, full of important details, but never drowning in the complications of them (though it gets close to such when dealing with the creation of Pakistan, which is admittedly complicated and difficult to explain). Louise Fischer writes with emotion. This is not a straightforward academic account of the life and times of Gandhi, but a thank you letter to the spirit and power that Gandhi was. For one rare moment I let the emotion sway me as Gandhi's death was recounted and I felt a very rare sympathy that I have rarely ever experienced with the written word; a remarkable achievement..

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