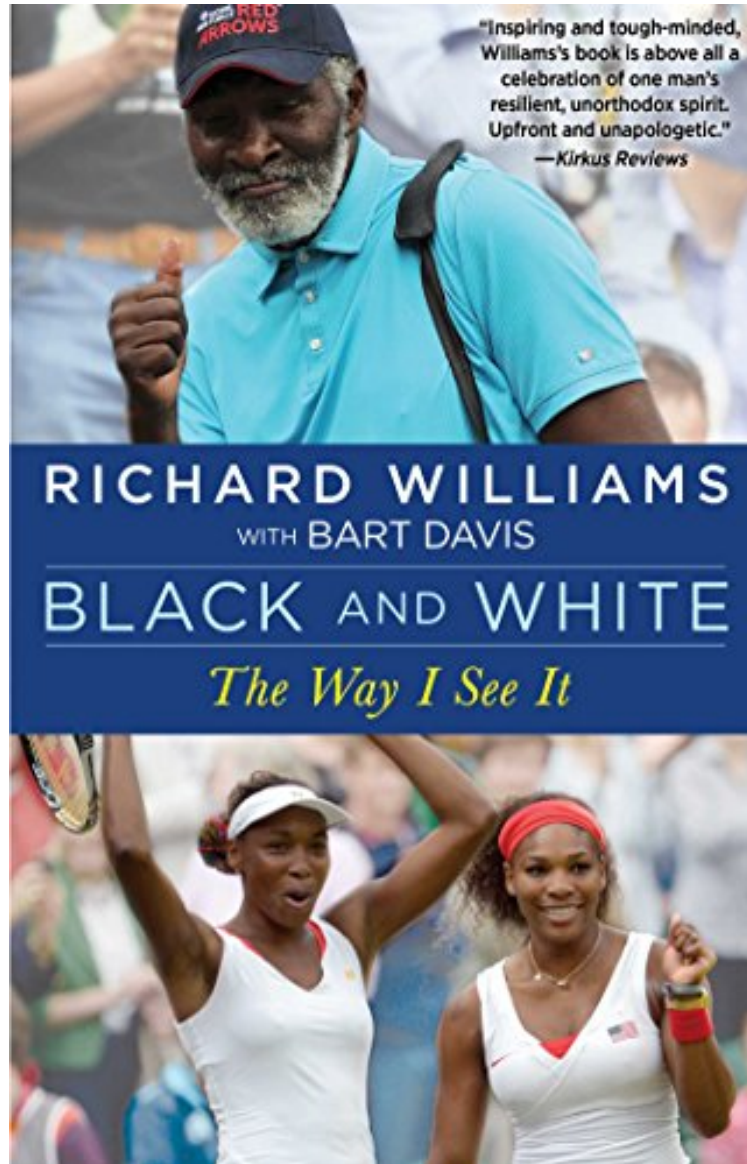


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Black and White: The Way I See It

Richard Williams

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Richard Williams : Black and White: The Way I See It before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black and White: The Way I See It:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed this book tremendouslyBy CustomerThis is a must read! I enjoyed this book tremendously. There are times when you are reading and feeling pure amazement at what this man has experienced in his lifetime. Pure wonder and astonishment at what he has overcome and accomplished. The read was very exciting full of adventure, intrigue, love and compassion. He takes you on a journey through the deep South

with all its challenges, to up North and his new life experiences, to finally the West with its opportunities and conquest. It is modern day Black Literature. If you like authors like Richard Wright or Reginald Lewis you will love Richard Williams because, he fits in that category. He makes history come alive with his colorful style of storytelling. You feel his emotions of sadness, joy, disappointment, hatred, joy, excitement and passion. It's a thriller, love story and horror movie all wrapped up in one book! Wow, thank you Richard for being so open and candid about your life! I found this book to be very inspiring, encouraging and hopeful of one day accomplishing my fight in obtaining the American Dream!!!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good book to read if you like Tennis, Serena, Venus or 80's/90's south centralBy Alex ArciniegaI enjoyed this book for reasons different than what I initially expected. Mr. Richard William's book is exceptional in the sense that it's an autobiographical look at his life, at times it's overwhelming to deal with characters coming in and out with little dimension. I expected to hear more about his wife, and a more in-depth view of the Williams sisters ascension to the personal relationships. What was unexpected that I did enjoy was his upbringing in the south and how it shaped him in the good and bad. It's a good book to read if you're into civil rights - which I wasn't expecting at all. The first half of the book really pulls you in, into his life and into his sadness. It's difficult to read this book without crying to be honest. The second half starts lagging a little, the pace and the voice seems to change at times. And then there's the bombastic nature of Mr. William's describing his struggles with the local gangs in south central. It's a good book, but less about tennis and more about Mr. Williams. The Williams sisters have a very strong father who wouldn't take no for an answer, ever.10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Great story about my heroesBy Robert McSpaddenI finally got the important pieces that were missing from the puzzle of my 23 years of being an ardent fan of the Williams family. Especially of Richard, Venus and Serena.I am a lifelong tennis player (since age 11) I was a Lynwood, California resident from 1933 to 1953..that's right I'm 80 years old. I retired from the Lynwood School District in 1992. During the last years before retirement I would run across Richard with Serena and Venus on the public courts of Lynwood and Hollydale . I remember distinctly how gracious, friendly, and proud Richard was when he would come over to the tennis court fence and talk with me while the girls were practicing. I guess he could tell I was totally impressed with what I was watching when he saw my jaw hanging close to the top of my chest. I got to talk with both Richard and Venus at Indian Wells at both the Tennis Garden and Grand Champions (the venue of the tourney before the garden) I was in the last two days of my first year of volunteer ushering at the Tennis Garden when the Venus-Serena semi was supposed to be played and it was canceled before it was played. I was ushering in lower bowl the Sunday of Serena's final with Kim Clijster and witnessed the booing of Richard ,Venus and finally Serena as they came into the main stadium. I was never so disappointed in tennis fans in my life. I spent 13 more years volunteering at The Garden without being able to see them. Now that you know something about the person writing the review I will write about the book. The story of Venus and Serena and Richard coaching his daughters. This story is undoubtedly the best sports story of the last century. I wasn't very far into the book when it dawned on me that this would make a great movie. I have long thought that Richard must have at least been a top collegiate player to be able to produce such beautiful strokes from those two little girls. Boy was I wrong. The part of the book that described his dream and how he made it come true was my favorite part. This book is a must read to understand the total story that is still unfolding about the lives of these two super champions. .

The fascinating, revealing, and in-depth memoir of Richard Williams, a self-made businessman, tennis coach, and father to two of the greatest athletes of all time—Venus and Serena Williams—set his mind to raise two of the greatest women champions in professional tennis well before they could even hold a racket. The father of Venus and Serena Williams had a grand plan for his daughters. The source of his vision, the method behind his execution, and the root of his indomitable spirit he held private. Until now. What he reveals about his success—his story of struggle, determination, hard work, and family—is told in the pages of this inspiring memoir, *Black and White: The Way I See It*. Richard Williams, for the first time ever, shares stories about the poverty and violence of his early life in Shreveport, Louisiana, in the 1940s—a life that could have ended on the day he was born because of indifference, racism, and cruelty were it not for the strength of his mother and the kindness of a stranger. Williams's mother was his hero, just as he became a hero to Venus and Serena, who express in the book the lessons he taught them and how much they love their much-criticized and even maligned father. His critics claimed that he was “in the way” of his daughters’ athletic success, that he was “destroying his daughters’ marketing and advertising abilities,” and even accused him of “abuse.” Richard Williams describes a family life held together by the principles that matter most: courage, confidence, commitment, faith, and above all, love. “When you’re younger, as a female, you flock to your father. When you get older, you’re closer to your mother. I still feel really, really close to my father. . . . We have a great relationship. There is an appreciation. There is a closeness because of what we’ve been through together, and a respect,” says Serena. “Training started early for my kids, but it wasn’t only on the tennis courts. I used to take Venus and Serena to work with me so they could learn the importance of planning, responsibility, and a strong work ethic, even at their early age,” Richard Williams writes. The self-made man saw the value of education and had the discipline

to practice what he learned. He went so far as to write a plan for his family's future before his tennis champion daughters were ever born. Richard Williams has walked a long, hard, exciting, and ultimately rewarding road for seventy years, fighting every hand raised against him while raising a loving family and two of the greatest tennis players who ever lived.

Richard Williams has long been widely regarded as an enigma. Now, in his own words he reveals himself as a proud—and sometimes dangerously stubborn—warrior with a keen, incisive mind. Part memoir and part how-to guide on raising children, this is a fascinating tale of a complex character who refused to give up or give in to the status quo. (Nathan McCall, author of *Makes Me Wanna Holler*) A tennis coach's up-by-the-bootstraps memoir about his life and the impact his upbringing had in shaping his tennis superstar daughters Venus and Serena Williams. The book was co-authored by Davis (*The Woman Who Can't Forget*, 2009, etc.). The author grew up the son of a single mother and an absentee father with "a terrible reputation for living off women and having babies all over"; his then-segregated hometown of Shreveport, La. His mother taught him the importance of remaining peaceful and tolerant in the face of discrimination. But Williams openly questioned the too-accepting attitudes he saw in the African-American community and became an angry, rebellious teenager who learned how to make a profit out of goods he stole from whites. Seeking to escape the violence and racism he saw around him, Williams traveled to Chicago. He continued to prosper but also saw that even successful blacks were resigned to the fact that they "could never have as much as white people." His next destination was Southern California, where he finally found the opportunities he needed to develop his formidable skills as a businessman and entrepreneur. When Williams accidentally discovered how profitable tennis could be as a profession, he decided to not only learn the game, but also teach it to the unborn daughters he believed would one day be at "the forefront of a white-dominated game." He read books, talked to experts, watched videos and played in the broken-down courts of South Central Los Angeles. Others scoffed at his plans, which included moving his family from Long Beach to the ghettos of Compton to toughen up the two daughters he eventually had. Williams had the last laugh when both girls went on to become two of the most winning and respected tennis players in the world. Inspiring and tough-minded, Williams' book is above all a celebration of one man's resilient, unorthodox spirit. (Kirkus) "At its core, this is a story about planning for greatness." (Juicy magazine) "Tennis coach Richard Williams is a controversial figure in women's tennis. I read his new book, *Black and White: The Way I See It*, on a plane ride to Vermont. I could not put the book down. I don't play tennis and typically don't follow it with the exception of Venus and Serena Williams. Raised in Compton, California, Venus and Serena Williams with the coaching of their father have dominated women's tennis for over a decade. Between them, they have won 15 Wimbledon titles, won more Olympic gold medals than any other women in tennis, each been repeatedly named the No. 1 female player in the world and earned almost every major award in the sport. Behind their success stands Richard Williams, their father and tennis coach. Through unorthodox methods and amid constant criticism, Richard Williams had a grand plan for his daughters. In this inspiring memoir, *Black and White: The Way I See It*, Williams, for the first time ever, shares stories about the poverty and violence of his early life in Shreveport, Louisiana, in the 1940s. Richard Williams used a unique parenting style as a coach and as a parent. He taught his girls how to think and he was not a super coach who acted like a tyrant. He would pull his girls from tournaments when he thought it was more important that they enjoy the childhood. At the end of the day, Richard Williams overcame major obstacles as a child, raised a loving family as an adult, and along the way, developed two of the greatest tennis players who ever lived." (Gary Johnson BlackMenInAmerica.com) About the Author Richard Williams is an American tennis coach and the father of Venus and Serena Williams. Bart Davis has written four nonfiction books, *The Woman Who Can't Forget*, *Closure*, *Shooting Stars*, and *Holy War on the Home Front*. He is a graduate of the Bronx High School of Science and Stony Brook University and holds a BA in English and an MA in social work. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. **Black and White** CHAPTER ONE Wimbledon is a special place for me. It's the tennis tournament where my daughters, Venus and Serena, have won the Ladies' Singles Championship ten years out of the past twelve. Yet, on that rainy Saturday morning in August 2012, anxiously looking down from our family box while Serena played her finals match on center court, I couldn't help thinking that we almost didn't make it here at all. Wimbledon is the oldest tennis tournament in the world, first played in 1877. It is the grandest of the four Grand Slams—including the French Open, the Australian Open, and the U.S. Open. It's the only one still played on grass, the game's first surface, the reason it was originally called "lawn tennis." Yet, with the terrible illnesses and foot problems Serena suffered in the past year, I never dreamed I'd be watching her compete here for the championship—in fact I feared I might never see her play again. During those dark days of her illness, there was actually a time I feared Serena was going to die. The doctors said they could not rule that possibility out. She had blood clots in her heart that could be fatal. I didn't know what to think or what to do. Then, hope grew, but just as Serena started to recover, she got an infection in her stomach and had to have a drain tube put in to help her heal. This was after two surgeries on her foot and toe. My children have been the center of my life since they were born, so I was beside myself with pain and fear. I never thought about tennis during

those gloomy days. I just wanted my little girl to live. When you see someone you love more than anything in the world so close to death, especially your child, you'd willingly die to save her. All during the first matches of the tournament, it was unbelievable to me that we were here. Serena felt it, too. A few times before her early matches, she became a little shaky and nervous and I had to remind her of her confidence and about being a champion. I wrote a poem to her. Step forward so you can see the light of day and know you are capable of conquering fear, defeating feelings of inadequacy, and rising above life's circumstances. One who is able to prevail is a shining example of power, strength, and confidence. It's just a matter of faith. I wanted Serena to understand that where she came from was great, where she was going would be terrific, but right now she should be elated just that she was here. I told her to forget about winning the tournament or losing the tournament. "You go out there and you put your best foot forward," I told her. "Not the one you cut up—put the other foot forward." It made her laugh. When Serena won the semifinal, I felt sure she would win the tournament. I didn't think anything could stop her now. Others were not so sure. I was walking the grounds before a tough match when a man said to me, "Your daughter could lose this next one, you know." I said happily, "No, it's impossible. She can't lose." "But it's such a tight match." I waved that away. "That doesn't matter. It's impossible." I knew he thought I meant "losing the match" was impossible. I didn't mean that at all. Serena couldn't lose a thing because just her being alive and here at all was a miracle. Everything else was small by comparison, immaterial. When Serena played Zheng Jie in the third round and the girl gave her such a hard time, I yelled out to Serena on the court, "Serena, relax and beat her like you did your sickness." She looked at me with a twinkle in her eyes and went on to beat that girl. When Serena got to the finals, she had such an easy victory in the first set I thought there was nothing to worry about. That's unusual. I'm like any other parent. I always worry. Even after all these years, it's terribly hard for me to watch my daughters play a match. But this one was going well. The first set was a blowout, 6-1. Then Serena faltered in the second and began making errors. Little by little, the set got away from her. She made small mistakes—a blown volley, a double fault, a down-the-line forehand long, and suddenly Agnieszka Radwanska broke her and evened the match at one set apiece. I hate rain delays, but this one gave me an opportunity to go talk to Serena. Venus went with me. There is a special champion's area in the locker room but I couldn't go back there, so Serena came out. We all stood in the lobby near the polished wood staircase that leads up to the balcony where the champions greet the crowd after they've won. It didn't matter that there were tournament officials and members all around us, and thousands of fans outside. "Serena, play her the same way I would play her, and you'll beat her," Venus told Serena. Serena listens to Venus before she listens to anyone. Venus is not only her older sister, she's the assistant coach, maybe the whole coach. Venus meant "play her all out." Use your serve. Use your power. Think of yourself as a winner. Venus uses her big serve to pull her opponent wide and then blows her off the court with three or four strokes. She gave Serena a final hug and whispered, "There's nothing in the world that can stop you now." That left just my daughter and me. Inside, I believed this Wimbledon final was going to be her greatest victory. I felt it with a sureness I could not explain. I got close to Serena and said, "You know you are a champion, and you know you can win. The three other girls you played before her, they couldn't beat you, and you're not gonna beat yourself here. You're representing life at this time, and it's your life. You know you're the best. Now, you go back out there and play to celebrate what life has given you." She looked at me, smiled that smile, and said, "I will, Daddy." I gave her a last hug and she went back to the locker room to prepare, and then back onto the court for the third set. Back in the box I kept saying, "Don't worry. Serena will win this match easily." Our family box was near enough to Radwanska's family that we could hear them yelling for their own girl. One of them said, "Can you believe how she's playing? She got a set on Serena. We could win this thing!" I think some of the people in our box got a little worried. I tried to encourage them. It's the Williams way, my way, to take your trials and turn them into triumphs, to turn your contests into victories, to fight and never let anyone else define or defeat you. Down on the court, Serena looked up at me and smiled. I knew she had gotten the message. It was as if I could read her mind. I beat this sickness, I can beat this girl, and she did. Serena won the championship and raced through the stands up to the box to hug me and her mother and sisters. I could not keep tears out of my eyes. I had brought two pairs of very dark sunglasses with me so no one would see if I cried. I gave that right up. I cried deeply when she won, but not because of her victory. Serena had survived death. She beat back all the evil forces of hell, stayed right here, and made this earth her heaven. I was so proud of her because I knew how hard she had fought to live, to give herself the opportunity to show how great she was once again. All that and more I felt that morning so far from the place I was born and raised in Shreveport, Louisiana. Wimbledon, with its white rule and its traditions and its royalty, was the other end of the world. Yet, were things so very different? In tennis, just as in Shreveport, there was a crowd and I had often heard it grow ugly. I was never sure for whom it cheered. Many people said to me, "I'm not pulling against your daughter, we're just pulling for the underdog." It only reminded me how when we first came up, people pulled against us even when we were the underdog. On that glorious morning of victory, the complexity of life could not help but cross my mind. I was elated. I felt stature, unique. I felt like a young father, not my seventy years. Watching Serena

race up to the family box, and every time she hugged me, I got a chill. My life had been so unique and special. Amidst the applause and cheers, I sat back for a moment and thought how blessed I was to have the two champions I predicted I would have, and how far we had come. And because of that, I thought about Shreveport, where it all began.