

Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*. New York: Viking Press, 2011 Pg. 608  
Paper: \$30.00

Prior to his death, Dr. Manning Marable was able to complete his classic tractate on the life and politics of Malcolm X. Unlike the accepted *Autobiography of Malcolm X* written by Alex Haley, which spends almost half of its commentary discussing his childhood and scant criminal past and reads more like literary fiction than a historical work, Marable outlines what can be as complete a picture ever of the man. From his father Earl growing up in Reynolds, Georgia in post reconstruction America, a proud Garveyite who left his first wife and remarried, eventually moving from Philadelphia to Omaha where Malcolm was born in 1925, a tone of the man is set that one would find hard to refute. From Nebraska, Malcolm and his family moved from Wisconsin, to Indiana, to Michigan, where his father died after having his body severed in half by Black robed Klansmen known as the Black Legion. With a more penetrating focus on Malcolm's father and his activities, the book provides insight that leads to what the author called his rise to "secular sainthood."

Many in the academy along with a host of writers, most of whom are African American, have been critical of the book although it is more apparent that they have not read the text in its entirety. They complain of the personal details regarding the man yet cannot offer any significant critique of the information and meticulous detail of what the volume entails. Marable presents new information ranging from the other women Malcolm asked to marry him before Betty to naming the real members of the "assassination team" that ended his life.

The book provides major insight on the impact of Marcus Garvey on how his mother and father raised him, focuses strongly on Malcolm's political development—from his joining the nations on Islam, to leaving, and starting Muslim Mosque, Incorporated to the Organization of Afro-American Unity.

This book is a must read and manages to evince what historical scholarship in the written form should abide to reflect. From his meetings with Robert Penn Warren, his close relationship with Maya Angelo, Percy Sutton, and John Henrik Clarke, it will be hard for anyone who reads this book to be disappointed or have anything negative to say or write about it.

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