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# On Michael Jackson



## Synopsis

Margo Jefferson's *On Michael Jackson* is a lucid and elegant cultural analysis of the rise and fall of the King of Pop. An award-winning cultural critic, Jefferson brings an unexpected compassion as well as her sharp intellect and incomparable insight to Jackson's 2005 trial for child molestation, startling us with her erudite illumination of a media-drenched circus that we only thought we understood. As only she can, Jefferson reads between the lines of Jackson's 1998 autobiography as well as published accounts of his childhood, his family, and Motown "where Michael and his brothers first made the Jackson 5 a household name" leaving us with provocative and perhaps unanswerable questions about Jackson, child stardom, and fame itself. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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## Customer Reviews

I borrowed this book from the library. I'm 3/4 of the way through, and thank God I didn't pay for it. I have to be honest, I don't think I've ever read an MJ bio with so many inaccuracies and armchair psychology wrapped around pseudo-intellectual speak. The inaccuracies are minor but abundant;

some examples are wrong song lyrics, messing up Katherine Jackson's maiden name, and attributing the wrong songs to music videos. The author uses the messes up the name for one of the TV shows she mentions. Even someone who knows about the Jacksons in passing can point them out without have to use Google. The sad part is that this book could have had some potential in terms of studying MJ's psyche, and had some good points about child stars, how they are sexualized, used up and spit out by the industry. But all of this gets lost in the problems I mentioned earlier, and writing that doesn't flow or holds my interest as a reader. The only thing keeps me from putting the book down is MJ himself. Honestly, I don't see how this book made it to print without a fact checker. And this is from a Pulitzer Prize-winning author? This book was published three years ago, how did this make it into print? If any publishers are reading this, I'm out of work right now, and if you're hiring fact checkers, I'll be happy to send my resume.

Ignore the one star reviews of this book! Margo Jefferson is on target when scrutinizing the inner workings of Michael's life and mind. "On Michael Jackson" is written through the perspective of academics and investigative journalists, or what I refer to as the "eyes in the sky". This book is not a tribute to an idol by a love sick fan! So if that's what you're looking for, be gone! This is adult reading for sentient minds and for some reason MJ's most ardent fans can't handle the truth. Mostly a thesis with biographical snippets sewn in, Jefferson's work discusses the controversial points of Michael's childhood, stardom, and sexual disorders. More importantly, it comments on America's obsession with the negative aspects of celebrity culture and the entertainment industry's exploitation of child stars. It's also telling of Jackson's paradoxical nature. I was shocked to learn that Jackson, a man who was constantly reaffirming his compassion for children and humanity, never cried once after seeing David Lynch's "The Elephant Man" over twenty times. While this little manuscript was written before his death, I believe the work is more about us than him. What kind of a society are we that we allow spectacles such as the disintegration of a troubled, aging star to feed our need for entertainment. In defense of Margo Jefferson, she must be one formidable writer if she has managed to set off so many people with only 150 pgs.

This Book is a disaster. I opened the book and read through the first pages, last pages, and found out a rudeness in its author. She didn't show a basic respect towards this music icon (let us not mention the other impression Michael left on this earth). There is no pre-word, no after-word about Michael and why she is writing about him. Instead she started with calling the first chapter FREAKS....I feel hurt and I feel offended and think:"how can a so called well-educated person be so

rude and ignorant? Sure she is entitled to have her opinion, and I don't have to like it. But before you talk about somebody, you owe that person the basic courtesy to talk about him first for its identity with some kindness. Especially when this person does have so many accomplishments the world has witnessed and he has touched millions of millions people's life with different ages, races, nationalities,....."I was deeply woken by Michael's music and his ups and downs, especially his sufferings in the last decade of his life. Then I develop a strong affection towards him and want to really know him through his own music, words, and thoughts, as well as through the impression he left onto others. I have to say, I am a new fan who just knew him in 2014. Then I started to buy his music and read anything I can find about him. This Book is a disaster. Don't buy it....Since I have been a loyal customer to , they gave me refund without asking me to send this book back. But I don't even want this book in my book collection. I think I will just burn it. Normally I am a balanced person, but this author's attitude is too outrageous for me to accept.

This is a very well thought out book - musings - on the life and work of Michael Jackson. It is especially fascinating on child stars and what we ask of them. Research-wise, she does lose sight of the facts surrounding MJ at times and chooses supposition over evidence on occasion. For example, she does not seem to give much credence to his vitiligo yet he first consulted a doctor about it in 1981 or thereabouts, long before the public had any idea of it. A picture exists of him from the early eighties which shows what he looked like with out make up to cover the patches. She also makes out that Michael dismissed Debbie Rowe when he had had enough of her - but I believe this was not the case. She twists the facts somewhat. But on the whole this book is worth reading by anyone interested in fame, our celebrity culture, race, gender. Some MJ fans won't like this book and I'd say it is aimed at the general reader, the curious or the fan who is open minded. Though her language may seem harsh, on reflection, Margo Jefferson does come down on MJ's side in the end.

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