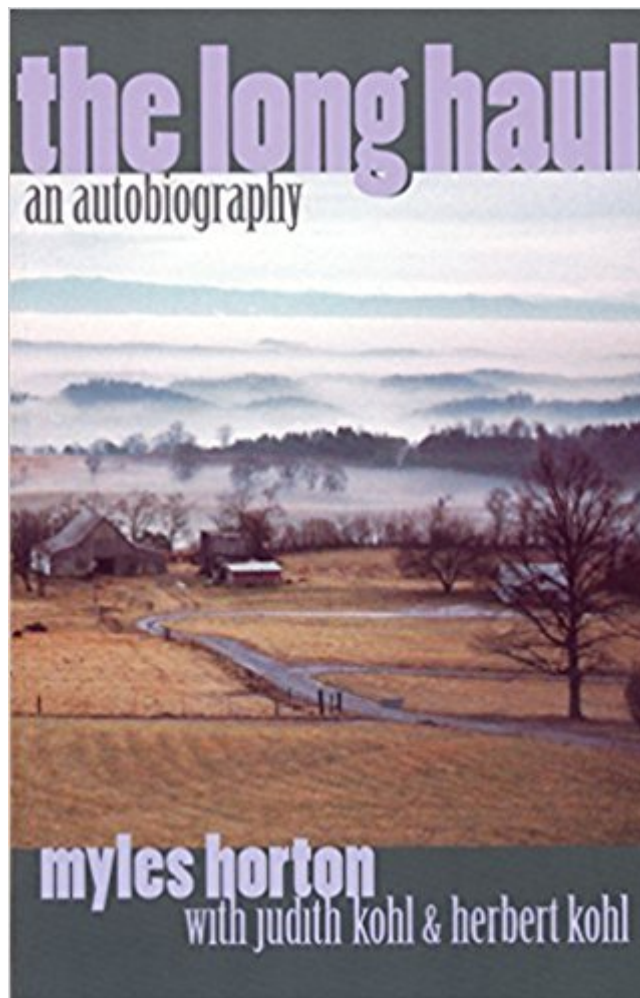


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# The Long Haul: An Autobiography



## Synopsis

In his own direct, modest, plain-spoken style, Myles Horton tells the story of the Highlander Folk School. A major catalyst for social change in the United States for more than sixty years, this school has touched the lives of so many people, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Pete Seeger. Filled with disarmingly honest insight and gentle humor, this is an inspiring hymn to the possibility of social change.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Horton's Highlander Folk School (now the Highland Research and Education Center) helped to mobilize black voter registration and to support unions and civil rights. "A believer in freedom not only of speech but of individual thought, Horton stresses that he has never cast his lot with Communism but tried to provide opportunities for oppressed people to advance themselves," said PW. Photos. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Horton aspires to a world in which all "people are of worth . . . you not only have to love and respect people, but you have to think in terms of building a society that people can profit most from, and that kind of society has to work on the principle of equality." His Long Haul to help build such a world has led him from a Depression-era Tennessee family to the founding of the Highlander Folk School to a world-renowned position in the field of community education. From 1932 to its abrupt, politically

motivated closing in 1961, the Highlander Folk School was a pioneer in experience-based education to address societal inequality in southern Appalachia. This book is primarily a treatise on the beliefs which governed Horton's life, rather than a traditional autobiography. (For a thorough history of the Highlander Folk School, see Aimee Isgrig Horton's *Highlander Folk School*, Carlson, 1989.)--

Annelle R. Huggins, Memphis State Univ. Libs. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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How a group of caring people can be transformed into a catalyst for social change. Myles Horton, and threads of the humanity who made up the Highlander School, championed the Appalachian working class, empowering them to stand up to the factory owners and politicians who used their lack of education against them. By respecting the knowledge and intelligence of the poorest, Mr. Horton was able to win the proud mountain people's respect and trust and help them to understand the foundations of the democracy within which they lived. This book has a great deal to teach about democracy, about learning, about our society's prejudices built on race, sex and education. It is a book about inspiration, about defining and learning about your own beliefs and where you stand on important issues that effect all of humanity today. Read this book for the history, to learn about the strength of a man and a group who followed their beliefs...but you will find yourself, in the end, learning about yourself.

This was a required book for a university course and as I read it found my pre-conceived thoughts about it were all wrong. I found out what a character Myles Horton was and how his style of learning was "out of the box" and it was ok to be that way. He was a very gifted person, with a lot of guts to do things that others had not tried or failed to be successful at. This is a must read for all who ponder their educational direction and influence on culture.

Excellent. A whole era comes alive. Myles Horton gives many insights into the early days of trade unionism movement and the civil rights movement. In both causes he managed to play a leading role and at the same time be a background figure. He was careful never to become an icon or an object of focus in his own right. Fascinating, inspiring and enriching.

Not much time for a long review.. I had to read this book for a class so wasn't looking forward to it. The book turned out to be fantastic. It's about Myles Horton, a civil rights leader and advocate. He writes it like he's talking to you, so it's very easy to stay involved in the book. I also really enjoyed

the countless insights he made about a number of different things. It's based in the 1930s through the 1980s. Mr. Horton was actually a mentor of sorts for Martin Luther King, Jr. Not a very descriptive review, but if you're looking for a civil rights/advocacy oriented book, I highly recommend this.

I was first introduced to THE LONG HAUL as a consequence of teaching a community organization course for which I had not been assigned for over 20 years. I felt I was out of my element. In seeking to prep myself for this course, I consulted key people in the US and my local community. I was prodded to read THE LONG HAUL. I must admit I was not enthusiastic. BIG MISTAKE! After 30 years of reading social science research monographs, research proposals, dissertations, MSW theses, and textbooks, I would say that THE LONG HAUL is one of the most (and perhaps the most) profoundly important piece of literature I have read addressing the social service arena. Although it is an autobiography, it offers critical insight into the failure of social service delivery. Prior to reading THE LONG HAUL, I believed that the major failure of sociology and social work was the inability to construct a meaningful theory of cultural diversity. Social work's failure to shepherd recipients off of TANF is associated with a lack of cultural understanding. Clearly, what we need is a theory for guidance. In his autobiography, Myles Horton takes us to the threshold of theory construction. Much of what "works" is counterintuitive. For example, if the police are monitoring Horton's actions because the authorities fear he will instigate a communist uprising, Horton will seek out the police. He would thank them for escorting him to his destination and explain to them his plans. The police move into a state of utter confusion. They are put in a position where they must walk with him rather than concealing themselves. Clearly, he knows what he is doing, but is unable to explain his actions that would enable readers to generalize these actions. The capacity of generalize and to use this generalization for an alternative environment is the heart of sociological theory. We learn how society functions by identifying patterns and see if they exist (or work) in other arenas. Perhaps theory construction is not possible. Perhaps cultural influences are so uniquely situated that a generalization from one arena to another is not possible. What is the common theme found in all of Horton's successes? I think the answer is LISTENING. However, Horton's form of listening is not the type of listening I was taught nor the kind of listening I read in cutting edge research and respected textbooks. It is, in fact, NOT the empathic listening. I do not believe that words exists which capture the essence of this type of Horton's listening, but I believe the concept of "blind" listening comes close. In addition, sociological frameworks such as Interactionalism and Phenomenology employ terms like "bracketing." Bracketing comes close, but does not hit the bull's

eye. Social workers must spend more time understanding Horton's methodology of listening, analyzing what he heard, and acting upon his analysis. I do not recall reading any book that had such a profound effect on my thinking. This autobiography is not merely the story of Myles Horton's life but rather a roadmap for improved social service delivery and empowerment. Every social worker should read this book -- even clinicians. In fact, I would say that any social work student who does not thoroughly enjoy this book, needs to change majors.

A fine, true, story of people who tried to stop hate and bigotry and were met with violence more than once. Long live the Highlander Folk School and the memory of Myles Horton and his people.

Great quick read it and great story. Had to read this book for my anti-diversity class and loved it.

I am still reading this book, enjoying the stories behind Highlander. And I am learning more about Myles Horton who brought together the many ideas resulting in adults teaching one another social justice in a beautiful setting in Tennessee. As a student for life and a believer in social justice, it is wonderful to discover the background for the beliefs that were learned and taught at Highlander supporting unions and the civil rights movement ( Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., were students)

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