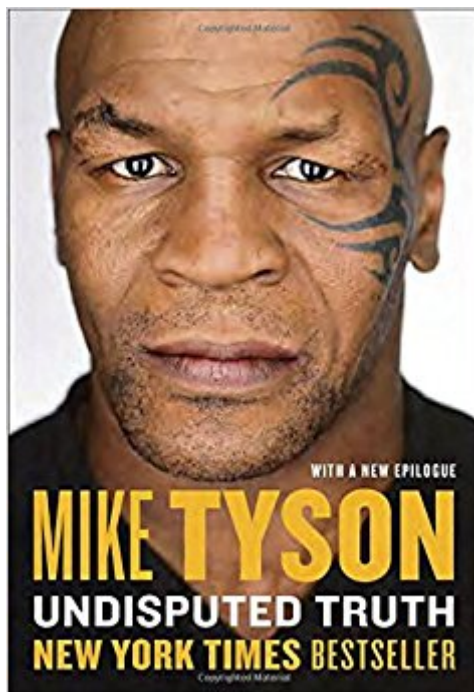


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# Undisputed Truth



## Synopsis

Be sure to check out *IRON AMBITION: My Life with Cus D'Amato* by Mike Tyson. "Raw, powerful and disturbing" a head-spinning take on Mr. Tyson's life. "Wall Street Journal" "Philosopher, Broadway headliner, fighter, felon" Mike Tyson has defied stereotypes, expectations, and a lot of conventional wisdom during his three decades in the public eye. Bullied as a boy in the toughest, poorest neighborhood in Brooklyn, Tyson grew up to become one of the most ferocious boxers of all time and the youngest heavyweight champion ever. But his brilliance in the ring was often compromised by reckless behavior. Yet even after hitting rock bottom the man who once admitted being addicted "to everything" fought his way back, achieving triumphant success as an actor and newfound happiness and stability as a father and husband. Brutal, honest, raw, and often hilarious, *Undisputed Truth* is the singular journey of an inspiring American original.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sharing a title with Tyson's limited-run one-man Broadway show (soon to air on HBO), this outspoken autobiography simultaneously confirms many of our preconceptions about the celebrity boxer and smashes some of them. Although he came out of poverty and family strife, and although he was following a criminal path at a very early age (he was robbing houses when he was still a preteen and sent to a state reformatory at age 12), and although schooling took a backseat to his fighting career (which also started when he was very young), Tyson does not come across as the

semiliterate thug he's so often represented to be. Most readers are familiar with his tumultuous life and career—the bizarre behavior in the ring, the sordid behavior out of it—but what's most surprising about the book is the introspection and self-awareness displayed by this self-proclaimed “trailer park nigga.” Leaving aside the question of how much of the actual writing was done by coauthor Solomon, who collaborated on several other noteworthy books, including a couple with Howard Stern, it's clear that the voice is Tyson's: it's raw and profane but also smart and witty. Different people have different opinions of Tyson, but he seems to know who he is, and he appears to be OK with that. A fascinating and frequently surprising autobiography. --David Pitt --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

“A masterpiece | grimly tragic on one page, laugh-out-loud funny on the next, and unrelentingly vulgar and foul-mouthed. Reading Tyson's memoir is like watching a Charles Dickens street urchin grow up to join Hunter S. Thompson on a narcotics-filled road trip • with the ensuing antics captured on video by assorted paparazzi.” —Hector Tobar, Los Angeles Times “Undisputed Truth is raw, powerful and disturbing • a head-spinning take on Mr. Tyson's life | Unlike other sports memoirists, he doesn't pull punches, offering up slashing comments on people who were once close to him. His narrative reminds us of just how far he has come from his rough beginnings, and, in a way, how close he remains to them. He had a punch like a thunderbolt from Zeus, but there have been a lot of big bangers in boxing; Mike Tyson's came with a pulsating story line like few others.” --Gordon Marino, Wall Street Journal “Parts of [Undisputed Truth] read like a real-life Tarantino movie. Parts read like a Tom Wolfe-ian tour of wildly divergent worlds: from the slums of Brooklyn to the high life in Las Vegas to the isolation of prison | Mr. Tyson's idiosyncratic voice comes through clearly on the page here • not just his mix of profane street talk and 12-step recovery language, cinematic descriptions of individual fights and philosophical musings, but also his biting humor and fondness for literary and historical references that run the gamut from Alexandre Dumas to Tolstoy to Lenin to Tennessee Williams | A genuine effort by a troubled soul to gain some understanding of the long, strange journey that has been his life.” —Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times “A hefty autobiography that might be the most soul baring book of its genre ever written | a fascinating look into a life that up until now had already been well chronicled | It's raw and profane | but it is also quite funny.” —Associated Press “Undisputed Truth, which is, without a

doubt, one of the grittiest and most harrowing memoirs I've ever read.

Flavorwire "Most readers are familiar with [Tyson's] tumultuous life and career—the bizarre behavior in the ring, the sordid behavior out of it—but what's most surprising about the book is the introspection and self-awareness displayed in it. It's raw and profane but also smart and witty. A fascinating and frequently surprising autobiography.

Booklist "Undisputed Truth, is the American dream writ large in raw detail: think Citizen Kane scripted by the writing team of The Wire. [it] has a great American novel feel to it. Tyson could easily be a Tom Wolfe or Norman Mailer creation.

Austin Collings, New Statesman "[A] lively mixture of a memoir.

Joyce Carol Oates, New York Review of Books "Tyson was ever practised at delivering the early killer blow; and so it is with this gripping and indecently enthralling autobiography. Tyson always had a way with words although much of the credit for this book must go to his ghostwriter Larry Rattso Sloman, who not only makes Tyson's life read like an Elmore Leonard thriller, but gifts him with considerable self-awareness and a memorably pithy turn of phrase. recounted in gripping, punch-by-punch detail in prose pungent with the reek of blood, sweat and petroleum jelly.

Mick Brown, The Telegraph (UK) "Thrilling addictive Sloman brings Tyson's voice springing off the page with its often hilarious combo of street and shrink, pimp profanity and the Eeprisony pseudo-intellectual modern mack rap of the autodidact.

Geoff Dyer, The Guardian (UK)

The day this book was released, I read an excerpt posted somewhere or another wherein Tyson strangles Don King from the back seat of a limousine that King is driving. That sold me - I thought I was going to read a couple hundred pages of Mike Tyson telling insane stories. What I got was immeasurably better. This book is Mike Tyson's life story, in Mike Tyson's words, as told to a writer. It might not be the undisputed truth, but it is his truth, and it's his entire truth. It is brutally, unforgivingly honest, and while he has few kind words for the likes of King, Robin Givens, and Desiree Washington, no one fares worse in these pages than Tyson himself. Whatever you may think of Tyson, he is without a doubt one of the most fascinating sports figures of the past hundred years. He's a study in contradictions: a terrifying boxer with a temper that one could charitably describe as "mercurial" and yet he speaks softly, almost effeminately, with a lisp. The man said he was going to eat Lennox Lewis' children and praised Allah in the same sentence. He was paid tens

of millions of dollars for fights that often lasted less than one round, and was bankrupt within ten years. Of course this guy's story is going to be great. But the two episodes in his life that he's most known for, his tumultuous (and allegedly abusive) marriage to Robin Givens, and his rape trial after a night with pageant contestant Desiree Washington gone horribly, irreversibly wrong, aren't glossed over. At all. If anything, he talks about them - the trial in particular - in detail that's simply uncomfortable. And it has to be. If he's to have any absolution, any redemption in the public's eye, he has to be able to tell his side of the story for those who want to hear it, those that wonder if perhaps his in-ring persona was unfairly turned against him. Undisputed Truth spends many, many chapters on how that persona developed, from both his cruel childhood on the streets of Brooklyn, to his being taught by Cus, the only father figure he'd ever known. Tyson's relationship with Cus is a well-known and oft-romanticized slice of boxing history, and the realization that everything that he learned from his childhood and from Cus that made him the tremendous fighter that he was being precisely what ensured his time at the top was so short and why he was so ill-prepared for life as Iron Mike had to have been painful to come to and write about. Whether you find Tyson as fascinating as I do, or want to learn more about the man behind the glove (and there's much, much more to him than I expected), or just want to know what in the world he was thinking with that tattoo, you absolutely must read this book. Don't expect 500+ pages of back-patting. All too often, memoirs are just a remembrance of happy times, rough patches smoothed over or omitted entirely. It's refreshing to read someone so well-known write something so unflinchingly honest about himself. This dives headfirst into the realm of absolute self-loathing. However much you might despise Mike Tyson for some of the things he's done in his life, he despises himself so much more for them. I want to think that this is the time he gets it right. That this is the time he has another chance and doesn't throw it away. That he's able to wipe away a little of the stain from his legacy, to be able to provide for his family, to find some peace. After reading his story, I'm not sure, but I'm rooting for him. Just like the old days.

I was a child of the 1980s and grew up during Tyson's tenure as a phenomenon larger than his sport. Anyone who did not live through that era simply cannot imagine how unbeatable Tyson was thought to be, and the total shock of him losing to Buster Douglas. I picked up Mike's autobiography during 's Black Friday sale, and it may just be the best autobiography I have ever read. The book is very dark and r-rated. Tyson tells some happy stories from his life, but he also goes into great detail about the brutality, depression and self-hatred that overshadow everything else in his life. I couldn't put the book down and finished the 580 pages in a little over a week. The whole book is

riveting, but the epilogue is especially sad -- Mike lamenting that his entire life has been a waste; all he has done with his life is fight, \*\*\*\*, get high and make babies. Tyson does not try to sugar-coat who he was, or who he remains, at all. He writes several times that he was an "arrogant \*\*\*\*\*" during his time as heavyweight champion. The book extensively recounts Mike's violent crimes, his addictions to everything from sex and drugs to spending money. I had no idea that Tyson's drug habit was so bad that he washed out of rehab many, many times and he ballooned to 380 pounds shortly before his appearance in "The Hangover." There are many shocking stories in the book, but the story that really touched me was Tyson talking about his accountant finding an IRA in his name worth \$250,000 that Cus D'Amato has set up for him at the very start of Mike's career. Even with all the terrible things Tyson has done in his life, it is hard not to feel at least some sympathy for him when writes that he sits and cries to this day when he thinks about that IRA because Cus was the only person in boxing who cared about anything other than how much money Mike could make for him. It's hard not to imagine how different Tyson's career would have turned out if D'Amato would have been 10 years younger and Don King never got involved. The stories Tyson told about living with Cus in Catskill, N.Y., are just fascinating. Who knew that D'Amato was a hardcore socialist who shouted "Liar, Liar, Liar" every time Ronald Reagan would appear on a television screen and that Cus declared bankruptcy because he refused to pay taxes to a right-wing administration? Who knew a guy raised in the "sewage" and violence of Brownsville, Brooklyn, as Mike often writes, was also the same guy who visited Cus' grave after winning the WBA title from Trevor Berbick to "show" the title to Cus and pour a bottle of Dom Perignon champagne on D'Amato's grave? Tyson also details how over the top the stealing by Don King was. King stole tens of millions of dollars from Tyson, but two small examples really seem to stand out, IMO. King charged Tyson a yearly salary for King's daughter to oversee a Mike Tyson Fan Club that never met and did not even reply to fan letters. King also billed Tyson a title sanctioning fee for a bout against Razor Ruddock that was not even a title bout. The many, many stories about sex and drug use in the book do tend to blur together after a while. Tyson does not try to make himself out to be a "good guy" and graphically details many horrible things he has done in his life. But it is hard not to feel a bit sad to read Tyson writing that when he dies, perhaps his grave will simply have a marker with the phrase "Now, I'm at Peace" and that perhaps fight fans of future generations will seek out his grave just like he did with his heroes. I wasn't much expecting much when I saw that Tyson was going to be releasing an autobiography. But for anyone who remembers how huge Tyson was in the 1980s, this book is a must read. You won't find many autobiographies as brutally revealing as this one.

Reading Tyson's biography reminded me of myself; and my own shortcomings, as a human being. As human beings, we have a dual nature: rational and emotional. We, humans, have to do our best to have a balance between rational thinking and emotions. Most human beings allow their emotions (feelings and lower desires) to govern/rule them. Like Tyson, we all struggle with our lower desires (sex, gambling, materialism, etc.). Read this book! By reading this book, you will find something in it that reminds you of yourself. Reading this book will help you learn why it is important to not be too quick to pass judgements on your fellow human beings; and the decisions that they make.

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