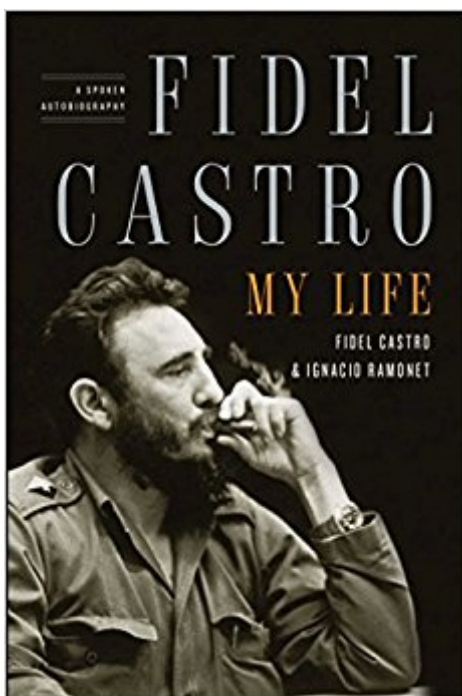


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Fidel Castro: My Life: A Spoken Autobiography



Synopsis

Now in paperback, the intimate and highly revealing life story of the world's longest-serving, most charismatic, and controversial head of state in modern times. Numerous attempts have been made to get Fidel Castro to tell his own story. But it was only as he stepped down after five decades in power, that the Cuban leader finally decided to set out the detail of his life for the world to read. In these pages, he presents a compelling chronicle that spans the harshness of his school teachers; the early failures of the revolution; his comradeship with Che Guevara and their astonishing, against-all-odds victory over the dictator Batista; the Cuban perspective on the Bay of Pigs and the ensuing missile crisis; the active role of Cuba in African independence movements; his dealings with no fewer than ten successive American presidents, from Eisenhower to George W. Bush; and a number of thorny issues, including human rights, the treatment of homosexuals, and the use of the death penalty in Cuba. Along the way he shares intimacies about more personal matters: the benevolent strictness of his father, his successful attempt to give up cigars, his love of Ernest Hemingway's novels, and his calculation that by not shaving he saves up to ten working days each year. Drawing on more than one hundred hours of interviews, this spoken autobiography will stand as the definitive record of an extraordinary life lived in turbulent times.

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Customer Reviews

This stunning autobiography of the controversial Cuban dictator is replete with stories spanning Castro's entire lifetime, everything from his relationship with Che Guevara to the Bay of Pigs

invasion. Todd McLaren and Patrick Lawlor share narration duties, but fail to capture the essence of Castro or Ramonet and the sheer power and importance of their lengthy conversations. Though clearly read and well-pronounced, the interviews are so forced and crafted that the tales lose their poignancy and resonance. Listeners will be hard pressed to accept these performers as the aforementioned individuals, without so much as a Cuban dialect employed by the readers.

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Starred Review Spanish journalist Ramonet sat down with Castro over the course of many hours, engaging him in long, involved discussions about his revolutionary life (and little about his personal life). The result is, in the words of the interviewer, Castro's "political testament, an oral summoning-up of Fidel Castro's life by Fidel himself at almost eighty." That rather simple description does not begin to cover the magnitude and significance of this major document. Presented in question-and-answer format, the book was originally published in Spain in 2006; its subsequent release in an English-language version has been "totally revised, amended and completed personally" by Castro himself. No surprise the interviewer is pro-Castro, and one would expect his collaborative effort with Castro to be one-sided, woven as it is from his subject's strongly held personal opinions. Nevertheless, the detail here, "filtered, of course," through Castro's memory and consciousness, nevertheless proves enormously fascinating, with some of their most interesting discussions centering on Che Guevara and on the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. By itself an incomplete history of the Cuban Revolution, to be sure, but an important "the ultimate insider view" contribution to the complete picture. --Brad Hooper --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very informative and gives you clear insight into what made Fidel the revolutionary he became. You become much more aware of social and political exploitation and the means that were and still are necessary to end inequality. You gain a fair amount of knowledge on a man whose reputation was tarnished by the United States because of a difference in political thought. I definitely think this is a must read for it leads to the reader having an open mind on international and historical affairs.

I bought this book, in the Kindle store, just as I was boarding a plane heading to Havana for the first time in my life, a couple of weeks ago. I think this is a relevant historic document if you are interested in the island, Imperialism and Latin America. For me, the most valuable passages were

related to Fidel's narration of historic events. Did care much for the passages in which he defends the Cuban Revolution, not because I judge it, but simply because I found it rather propagandistic. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn a bit more Cuba and its history after its independence from Spain and the U.S. I also recommend visiting Cuba.

It is not often near the end of an iconic, controversial, figure's life, you get to listen to them tell their story. Regardless of your political views, the story provides great insight into the history of this fascinating country and its leaders. Cuba seems to be entering a new phase in its evolving social and political history. This book provides an interesting vantage point to look at the past 60 years.

This is a unique book that illuminates the point of view of a very intriguing man who has managed to survive decades in power despite repeated attempts to overthrow him by the United States. One can always find fault in any book and this one is not perfect. However, the book does give very interesting views on various aspects of Cuban life, the Castro government, and the relationship between the United States and Cuba. Castro challenges many of his critics' claims and shows an erudite knowledge of history and contemporary world affairs. This is a great book for anyone wanting to learn more about Cuba, Castro, or how U.S. policies are viewed from the other side of the debate. Castro argues that the United States tries to undermine Cuba's government, therefore, forcing the government to restrict certain freedoms in order to survive. It is fascinating to read Castro's opinions and get the perspective of the man who lived through the events. Castro does, however, admit to mistakes he has made and how his views have changed over time. One downside is that the book was done with the help of a historian who could refresh Castro's mind on some events. It only detracts from the book if the reader feels that Castro's memory and perspective might have been influenced, however, I think it is minimal if at all. In any case, the book is an interesting study of history and memory by a very controversial leader.

An indictment of our mainstream media in their attempts to demonize Castro. Read historic details that you will not find anywhere else. If you enjoy reading this book, also check out the movie "Che el argentino" (two parts).

Excellent reading. It's a little more than an autobiography. A lot of background information.

Very interesting read. Learned some things.

Perfect, exactly what I needed.

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