

Muhammad Ali: I Am the Greatest (American Rebels)

By John Micklos Jr.

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"I refuse to be inducted into the armed forces…" That simple statement, made on April 28, 1967, changed Muhammad Ali from being simply the heavyweight boxing champion of the world to being a rebel, taking on the mighty United States government. His protest against serving in the Vietnam War had political, racial, and religious undertones, and it led to nationwide discussion of all of these issues. Ali's passion to speak his mind and stand up for his beliefs stood as a hallmark throughout a boxing career that spanned more than twenty years. Decades after his boxing career ended, he continued to tour the world promoting peace and spreading goodwill even as his own health deteriorated. Over the years, he truly earned the nickname he first bestowed upon himself way back in 1964 when he first won the heavyweight crown: "The Greatest."

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Editorial Review

From Booklist
Starting with signature quotes printed on each front cover, these titles in the American Rebels series interject words from their famous subjects, and those who knew them, on nearly every page. Those well-integrated voices humanize the larger-than-life figures and create fascinating, well-organized portraits, which, true to each individual's "rebel" label, include frank (although nonexplicit) mention of substance abuse and sexual relationships. Each title begins with a turning point for both the figure profiled and the reach of his societal influence. Religion, rather than sports, starts off Muhammad Ali, beginning with the athlete's 1967 declaration: "I refuse to be inducted into the armed forces of the United States because I claim to be exempt as a minister of the religion of Islam." Skillfully chosen photos, chapter notes, and suggested-reading lists complete these well-researched, wholly engaging introductions to iconoclastic individuals whose continual questioning of authority and conventional wisdom will hit home with teen readers. Grades 8-11. --Gillian Engberg

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Susan Swain:

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