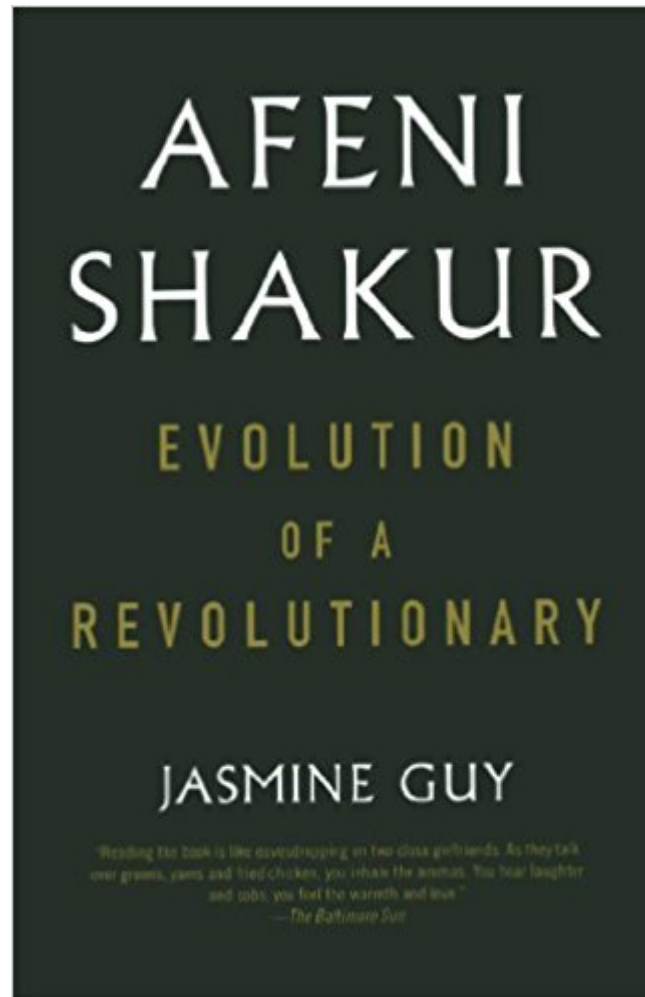


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Afeni Shakur : Evolution Of A Revolutionary



Synopsis

Before becoming one of the most well-known members of the Black Power movement, Alice Faye Williams was not unlike any other poor, African American girl growing up in the impoverished South. But when her family moved to New York during the radical sixties, she became intoxicated by the promise of social change. By the time she turned twenty-one, Alice had a new name -- Afeni Shakur, derived from the Yoruba term for "lover of people" -- and a new vision for the future. The rest is history. In 1969, Afeni was arrested along with other members of the Black Panther party on 189 felony charges that included 30 counts of conspiracy. Though she was eventually acquitted of the charges, Afeni spent eleven months in jail before being released. Once on bail, she became pregnant with a son: Tupac Amaru Shakur, a rap megastar until his tragic death in 1996. In this searing work, renowned actress and Afeni's trusted friend Jasmine Guy reveals the evolution of a woman through a series of intimate conversations on themes such as love, death, race, drugs, politics, music, and of course her son. Filled with startling revelations and heartbreaking truths, Afeni's memoir is a powerful testament to the human spirit and the perseverance of the African American people.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Being a contemporary of Afeni and also a graduate of a historically black college and university, this book hit home so many times, while bringing fond memories in the process. I have, in many instances while reading the same page of the book, both laughed and cried. I also have A son

who was Afeni's son's contemporary and can only imagine the hurt she feels over the loss of her only. I am impressed with the writing and delivery of this book. My big Sunday hat goes off to Jasmine Guy who has so eloquently personified the saying "you can't tell a book by looking at its cover." I didn't think I could truly enjoy any writing besides those of J. California Cooper (read them all and waiting for the next one), but found myself equally engaged in this one. I am glad that, after attending a Hugh Masekela book signing, I came away with his signed CD and Jasmine and Afeni's book. Thanks for the memories and the black history refresher.

I was totally immersed in the conversations between Afeni and Jasmine. I felt as though I were right in the room with them, hearing the stories first hand. It would be very wrong to assume that Ms. Guy is only an actress. She writes with such eloquence and candor that one must also call her 'author.'

A great conjunction of author and subject, *AFENI SHAKUR: EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY* will surprise those who think they know it all about Tupac Shakur, or even those who have taken his hint and done a bit of research on his mom, the legendary Black Panther of Oakland. For the actress Jasmine Guy has written a remarkable book, giving us the illusion of actually knowing Afeni Shakur and participated in her struggles for equality and black hegemony in the last third of the 20th century. I didn't know Jasmine Guy could write so well, but here she is, page after page of careful, extensive research plus such a winning way of drawing out her mysterious, courageous subject. This is a book with heart and soul.

Jasmine Guy's conversation with and translation of Afeni Shakur gives new definition of the word artist. Guy makes us understand the importance of this revolutionary woman, not because she was Tupac's mother, but because she is a woman of strength and substance and courage who tried to change things socially in this country during some very scary times for African Americans. Though Afeni Shakur did not live a flawless life, we understand the importance that a mother has in admitting her mistakes and learning from them. I completed this book wanting to be a better, more understanding mother.

I'll admit that what initially drew me to this book was having been so affected by 'Pac's music in my life and also being such a huge fan of Jasmine Guy's as well. That is, like I said, what DREW me to the book. What kept me reading however, what would not let me put this book down, was experiencing the unexpectedly fascinating legacy of a woman whose name the title beholds. The

cover and design of this book itself lend foreshadowing of what is between the pages. Sleek. Majestic. Classic. Simple and unassuming. Quietly enthralling. To read Afeni Shakur: Evolution of a Revolutionary is to feel invited in on an intimate conversation between two friends, two women with layers and layers of depth and life experience. It's like gathering at the feet of a storyteller with wisdom and a history that you've heard about and find yourself enthralled the more you hear. I read it in a day and a half without intending to do so. But it flowed so well that I couldn't put it down. I'm convinced now, more than ever, that genius begets genius. Here's to--not necessarily learning more about 'Pac--but instead learning and growing to love his dignified and inspiring roots. Thank you, Afeni and Jasmine, for sharing this journey with us.

I purchased this book the day it was released and read it in a few days, and while I'm just now writing my review, I must say that the story is still very fresh in my mind as it is not one to be easily forgotten. The dialogue is real and frank. I felt as if I had a true understanding of Afeni and the demons she struggled with from her childhood on. Afeni is an intelligent woman with a past full of problems, including her crack addiction that she has now overcome. She is a woman who makes no excuses for what she has done and never absorbed herself in the compliments Jasmine gave her. She makes no excuses for her mistakes, and that's what I appreciated most of all. That's where I felt her strength. Now, Afeni Shakur seems somewhat at peace, very family-oriented, and prepared to handle all that Tupac left behind. I also understand how Tupac wrote such profound music, including, of course, Dear Mama, lyrics that ring true to what he saw around him. I felt that Jasmine Guy did a wonderful job of writing the story and was an interesting narrator. Reading this book was an event for me. Much better than TV. I would curl up on my sofa or in my bed and never skip one word or any pages as I read. Often, I felt like I was sitting right beside them. I also enjoyed how the reader was able to get a glimpse into Jasmine's life. I purchased the book because I wanted to get to know the woman who birthed the musical genius Tupac, and I came away with a great understanding of who Afeni Shakur was and how her life evolved.

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