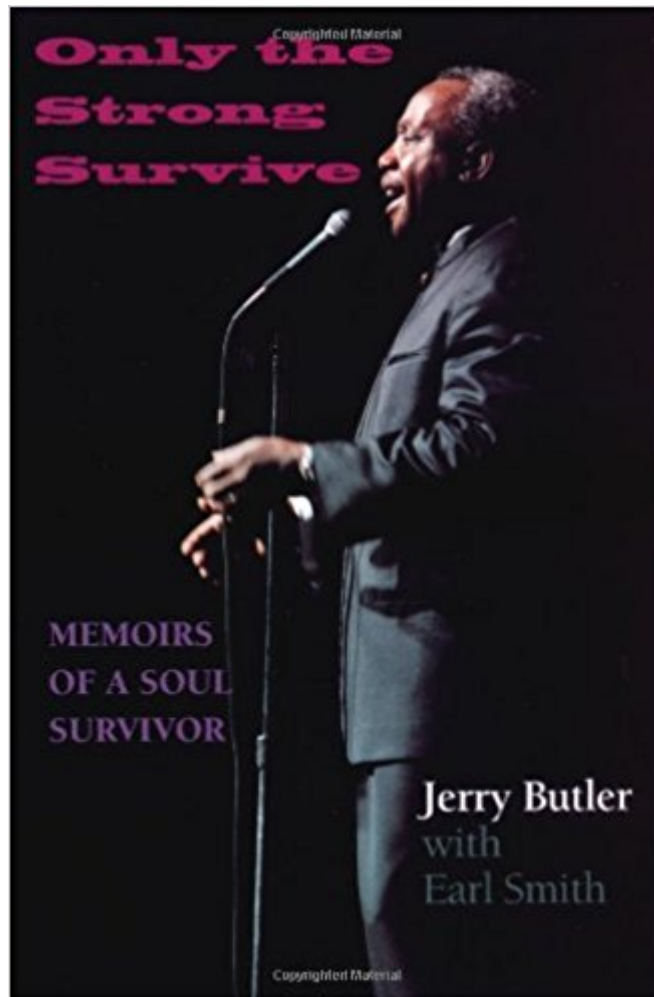


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# Only The Strong Survive: Memoirs Of A Soul Survivor (Black Music And Expressive Culture)



## Synopsis

Jerry Butler's *Only the Strong Survive* presents a portrait of a remarkable performer, as well as an up-close and personal look at the world of rhythm-and-blues. Filled with intimate anecdotes about such R&B legends as Otis Redding, Curtis Mayfield, Patti LaBelle, Sam Cook, and Dionne Warwick, Butler's compelling, sometimes hilarious, narrative is told against the backdrop of 1960s America. *Only the Strong Survive*, as told to Earl Smith, is an autobiography; but more than that, it is history. Drawing on countless conversations and interviews with Butler and others, Smith chronicles the "Iceman's" journey from rural Mississippi to Chicago, and the founding and eventual breakup of the legendary Impressions vocal group. Currently serving his fourth term on the Cook County Board of Commissioners, Butler also gives us a glimpse inside the world of Chicago politics. He shares stories of Harold Washington, Chicago's first African American mayor, and others, including Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. *Only the Strong Survive* is an entertaining, moving chronicle of one of America's music pioneers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jerry Butler's book tells an important--and fun--story about his history as the one great rnb singers. Did you know he co-wrote I've Been Loving You Too Long, with Otis Redding. Butler also worked with Curtis Mayfield, who produced and wrote for him. His composition "Brand New Me," has been covered by countless artists from Dusty Springfield to Phoebe Snow. Don't just get the book--pick

up his greatest hits too.

A MUST READ ESPECIALLY FOR DUSTY RECORD FANS. MR. BUTLER IS CLASSY AND ONE OF THE BEST PERFORMERS BACK FROM THE 60'S, A TRUE PROFESSIONAL. I STARTED READING THE BOOK AND COULD NOT PUT IT DOWN. TRUST ME THIS BOOK WILL NOT BORE YOU, WHAT I LIKE ABOUT IT IS JERRY AND EARL ADD A TOUCH OF HUMOR TO JUST ABOUT EVERY CHAPTER. THIS BOOK IS A KEEPSAKE. JERRY ALSO HAS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VOICES I HAVE EVER HEARD, DID YOU KNOW THAT HE WAS THE LEAD SINGER OF THE IMPRESSIONS AT ONE TIME AND HE LED ON THE SONG "FOR YOUR PRECIOUS LOVE" I AM A LIBRARIAN, AND I CONSTANTLY REVIEW AND PREVIEW BOOKS AND THIS IS A WINNER. AS JERRY SINGS IN ONE OF HIS SONGS "I'M A TELLING YOU".

I've been a fan of Jerry Butler for more than a half century. Growing up on Chicago's South Side in the '50's and 60's, I was struck by how much of his story about the groups, the music, the venues and Chicago's music scene, even the record industry, all resonated with me. He sort of downplays his entry into the business world with a beer distributorship, something that piqued my interest since, in Chicago, that can be a lucrative business. I wanted more on that as well as his venturing into politics. Jerry Butler is a remarkable man and his story is most interesting to those of us, black and non-black alike, who grew up on that thriving music scene. The book has an older copyright date than I expected but even with the passage of well over a decade the story still plays well.

A friend of mine gave me "Only the Strong Survive" as a Christmas gift, and now I treasure it as one of the best gifts I've ever received. This is more than a book about music--although eighty percent of it is. It is a history book, political book, inspirational book -- you name it! One would never think that a rhythm and blues singer had that much depth. For example, Mr. Butler uses the tragic case of his former bongo player to show the horrors of the war in Vietnam. Then, turning to politics, he reminds us of the debt we owe the late Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, and what all of us can do to make this world a better place. It is at once inspirational and entertaining, thought-provoking and profound -- a must-read for all serious readers!

Excellent autobiography from one of the giants of Chicago soul and a giant in the world of pop music in general. Lots of anecdotes about life on the road and the Chicago music scene from the 50s through the 90s. Butler is a major talent as well as an intelligent, literate man. A must read for

fans of popular music in the last half of the 20th century.

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