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Temptations



Synopsis

Williams, a founding member of the legendary Motown group the Temptations, tells the story of the group's formation and its years of musical success.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love this book and I am grateful that Otis Williams wrote it. But I strongly suggest to all Motown fans to do your own research and read other books because things don't add up with Otis's version of the Temptations. I am not calling the man a liar because I admire him and I think he believes his own story, but I feel that he's trying to add importance to himself by taking away from David, Paul (my favorite), Eddie, Dennis and even Melvin. I didn't like the way he portrayed any of them. Yes, its true that David, Paul, Dennis and Eddie had both ego and personal problems, but I am sure that Otis had his demons too. In fact, from what I hear he wasn't the best person either. But he doesn't show that side to you in his book. The only bad thing he admits to is cheating on his wife and at times, I felt like he was bragging about his relationships with certain women. Although he was kinder to his friend Melvin, he portrayed Melvin as a follower and not a leader. I wonder why? One of the most disturbing tales in his book is about Paul's drinking problem. Its true that he had a problem, but Otis doesn't really talk about Paul's bout with Sickle Cell which made his problem even worst. Also Paul's "suicide" his rather strange and things don't add up (but do the research). I also found it odd that he didn't talk alot about how Berry G. ran Motown and why alot of the artists lived terrible lives after their Motown's glory years and why most died broke. By now, everyone knows that Berry was a cheat, but Otis seems to forgive him more than he forgives his brothers. Part of the reason why

they died so young has something to do with Berry. Now, I am not blaming Berry for everything.

I have been a fan of the Temptations for years, but I have to admit that my loyalty is really to the classic lineup that made the Tempts a household name: Eddie Kendrick, David Ruffin, Paul Williams, Melvin Franklin and Otis Williams. Not to slight the other singers who have been a part of the group, but these guys always have been my favorites. Otis Williams' book, TEMPTATIONS, is an interesting read, but really left me wanting to know what the other side of the coin was like. Even though Otis had his own view of what happened with the group (and I'm not implying that he wasn't entitled to that), the trouble is, with the exception of Melvin, the other members were depicted as talented men but troubled individuals with bad attitudes. According to Otis, he and Melvin were the sensible ones in the group while Eddie, Paul, David and later on, Dennis Edwards, were always the ones that were causing confusion. For every complimentary thing Otis would say about them, he'd follow it with something negative. I noticed that he did the same thing with certain members of the group that followed after the originals left as well. That mini-series that aired about four years ago that was based on this book only backed up his so-called belief that "No man is bigger than the group" (which was supposedly also Berry Gordy's belief - laughable, to say the least) and made him to look like the sane hero in a world filled with people running amok. No man is bigger than the group? Well, isn't this just what Otis has done by writing this book? Hasn't he made himself the be-all and end-all when it comes to finding out the history of the Tempts? No man is bigger than the group? Yeah, okay, whatever.

I thought the book was exceptionally short for a body of work lasting 45 years. Great pictures though. I had some major problems with the writing itself. It's like 45 years went by in a blur and he was an observer and not a participant. He didn't seem to take much interest in his bandmates, there's very little known about Eddie, Paul, David and Melvin. For a man with the inside track, very little is revealed. The book seems to be more about him and not the Temptations. He seemed also to forget certain facts, like, David was indeed married when he started seeing Tammi Terrell. When she announced that she and David were engaged back in the early sixties, is when she found out David was already married and couldn't marry her. (This also around the time her headaches started.) I don't what the relationship between Geena and Otis is/was, but for him to leave her and Davids' son out of the book was wrong, totally wrong. He acknowledged the others' wives, why not Geena? Another thing that disturbed me was Otis' "my way or the highway" attitude toward his group members. Truly adolescent behavior. When he wasn't scouting out women, he was scouting out

new talent. (But I guess in his mind it's the same thing). , "just in case so and so doesn't work out", seems to me, he was waiting on the inevitable. He comes off as arrogant and overbearing. "No one man's bigger than the group." Like Eddie said in the movie, "Who is the group for, who did "it" make sacrifices for?" OTIS, knows good and well, that he and Melvin could not have carried the group on their own. Eddie, Paul, and David didn't need "the group", as much as "the group" needed them.

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