

# MODERN MUSIC MASTERS



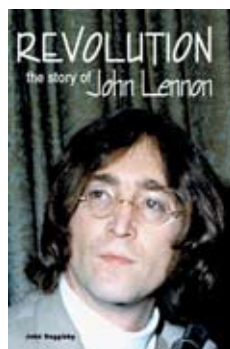
## Booklist

November 15, 2007

**Reggae Poet: The Story of Bob Marley.** Miller, Calvin Craig (Author) Nov 2007. 128 p. Morgan Reynolds, library edition, \$27.95. (1599350718). 782.4216.

He was raised in a Jamaican slum, his music was rooted in his community, and he was dead by age 36. Yet Bob Marley was beloved worldwide, and his popularity rages on. This highly readable biography begins with a dramatic concert during which Marley's life was under threat. The book then shifts to a chronological arrangement, beginning with Marley's unhappy childhood as the biracial son of a Brit and a Jamaican farm girl. Marley found himself in music and in his band, the Wailers, which achieved immediate success in Jamaica, and eventually far beyond. His reggae always had a political side, and Miller does a fine job showing the effect the music and the politics had on each other. He also

skillfully weaves in the complicated topic of the Rastafarian religion and the part ganja (marijuana) plays in it, and he doesn't hesitate when explaining Marley's complicated romantic life. The black-and-white and color photos are well chosen, though there could have been more. Quotes are sourced, and a time line and bibliography are appended. — Ilene Cooper



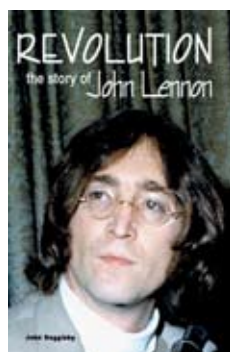
## The Horn Book Guide

Fall 2007

### Duggleby, John **Revolution: The Story of John Lennon**

176 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-034-9 \$27.95

(4) YA This sturdy, upbeat biography looks at the "intellectual" Beatle's short, whirlwind life, from adolescent upstart to rock star to peace activist to assassinated icon. The book contains a few inaccuracies, but it rarely ceases to be interesting, thanks to Duggleby's generosity with examples of Lennon's famously quick wit. Archival photos appear throughout. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. NB



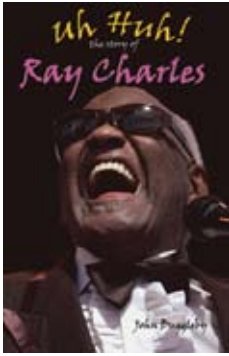
## School Library Journal

April, 2007

DUGGLEBY, John. *Revolution: The Story of John Lennon*. 176p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. Apr. 2007. PLB \$27.95. ISBN 978-1-59935-034-9. LC 2006033855.

Gr 7 Up—This title adequately pieces together the events and people in the star's eccentric life. Drawing on the fact that Lennon was born during World War II and describing his unsettled early childhood with his flighty mother and later with his overprotective Aunt Mimi, the author touches on the major moments in Lennon's life without going into too much detail. Readers will learn about his early fascination with Elvis Presley; his pre-Beatles days with the Quarry Men; and how George Harrison, Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr joined forces. Middle school students and those just developing an interest in the Beatles

would find this book a solid introduction to the rock-and-roll legend, but the relationship entanglements, particularly those involving John, Yoko Ono, and the other members of the band, would be most appreciated by older teens and adults. Duggleby doesn't reveal anything about Lennon that fans haven't known for years, but he does a fine job of compressing a full and fascinating life into this compact volume. A smattering of black-and-white and full-color photos appear throughout.—Sarah Krygier, Solano County Library, Fairfield, CA



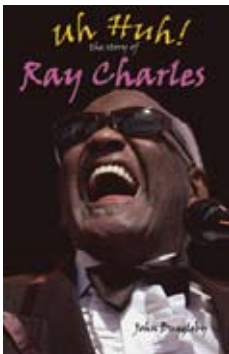
## School Library Journal

October 2005

### Carter G. Woodson Honor Book

DUGGLEBY, John. *Uh Huh!: The Story of Ray Charles*. 160p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. PLB \$26.95. ISBN 1-931798-65-6. LC 2005001287.

Gr 6 Up—An engaging and highly readable account of a musician whose talent has influenced not only generations of musicians, but pop music itself. Beginning with Charles's early years as a fatherless child learning piano at the feet of a barroom entertainer and ending with his posthumous Grammy award in 2004, the author portrays the stubborn, hard-working performer as both a product of his era and an innovator. To his credit, Duggleby does not mythologize Charles and discusses with candor the difficult subjects of marital infidelity and drug abuse. However, this is not, despite what the title claims, just the story of Ray Charles. Sprinkled throughout this excellent biography are sidebars and short articles about nearly every aspect of American music culture—from James Taylor to the Beatles to a history of soul, the Grammy Awards, and the California Raisins. Photos, in color and in black and white, appear throughout. A wonderful introduction to Charles as well as a great short history of African-American pop music.—Steve Baker, Kewaskum Public Library, WI



## VOYA

August 2005

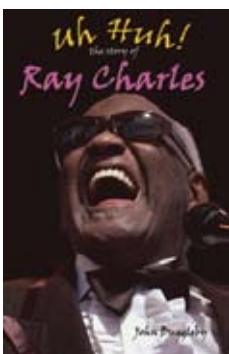
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### Carter G. Woodson Honor Book

Duggleby, John. *Uh Huh! The Story of Ray Charles*. Morgan Reynolds, 2005. 160p. \$24.95. 1-931798-65-6. Index. Photos. Biblio. Source Notes. Chronology.

This timely biography does a credible job exploring the complex personality of musical legend Ray Charles. Using chronological structure and many color photographs, Duggleby gives equal time to Charles's impoverished Florida childhood, his early career imitating jazz and blues artists, and his later successes as a pianist, singer, composer, and as the father of the musical genre soul. Text boxes explore related topics such as Braille and the Grammys. The book is current through 2005, when Charles won posthumously eight Grammys for his album *Genius Loves Company*. To his credit, Duggleby does not whitewash Charles's lifestyle, including information about Charles's extramarital affairs and his heroin addiction. Furthermore he builds a convincing case for the significant contributions Charles made to twentieth-century music, influencing the Beatles, Elvis, and other musical icons.

Overall the book reads smoothly, a quick pick for biography and music lovers, as well as an appealing selection for African American biography assignments. Not overly sophisticated, the writing is suited to a slightly younger audience than some subject matter (Charles' quotes often include mild cursing), which might work well for high-low readers. At times, it is confusing in precise timing of events. A chronology is included, although Charles's birthday is incorrect there (correct in the text), but no discography. These flaws aside, the book is recommended for schools and libraries that serve older teens, especially where biographies are in demand. —Caitlin Augusta.



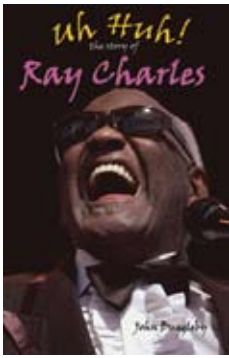
## Booklist

June 1, 2005

### Carter G. Woodson Honor Book

Duggleby, John. *Uh Huh! The Story of Ray Charles*. June 2005. 160p. illus. index. Morgan Reynolds, lib. ed., \$24.95 (1-931798-65-5). 782.42164.

Gr. 9–12. Ray Charles' early life was full of tragedies: poverty, blindness, and the death of family members. But by age 16, he was making a living as a musician. Duggleby traces Charles' long career and displays a sensitivity to the events surrounding his life (including his bitter battles with heroin and alcohol addiction), as well as a genuine understanding of his music and the breadth of his musical influences. Sidebars on "race" music, Braille, the Grammys, soul, and rock and roll enrich the narrative. An attractive design includes many photographs, often effectively sepia-toned. Charles' weathered and powerful voice still sings, and this effective biography shows the triumphs and tragedies that shaped this towering figure in American popular music. —GraceAnne A. DeCandido



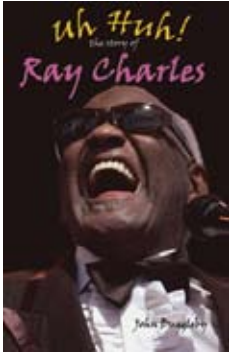
## The Horn Book Guide

2005

Carter G. Woodson Honor Book

Duggleby, John. *Uh Huh!: The Story of Ray Charles* 160 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 1-931798-65-6 \$26.95

(3) YA Musical giant, savvy businessman, recovered addict, and lousy husband, the late Ray Charles still dazzles in this enthusiastic warts-and-all treatment. Sidebars on related topics broaden the context of his rise from poor blind boy to American icon, but what gives this book its soul is Charles himself, extensively quoted throughout. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind.



## Young Adult Reviewers of Southern California

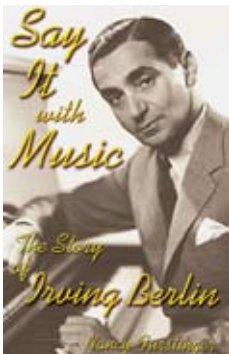
*Recommended Titles for Young Adults*

October-November, 2005 Vol. 43 Number 4

Duggleby, John. *Uh Huh! The Story of Ray Charles*. Morgan Reynolds, 2005. 160p. 978-1-931798-65-5.

Ray Charles was attracted to music at an early age when he discovered the delights of a piano. His realm of recordings and performances has covered several styles of music. Beside straightforward biography requests, this title can be suggested to those researching disabilities or music careers.

E.M. Roublow, LAPL, San Pedro Branch



## School Library Journal

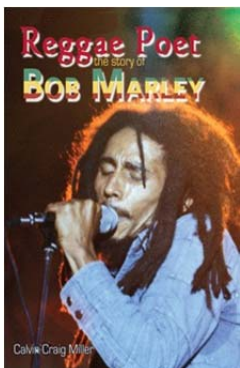
October 2003

Furstinger, Nancy. *Say It with Music: The Story of Irving Berlin*. July 2003. 128p. illus. Morgan Reynolds, lib. ed., \$21.95 (1-931798-12-5).

Gr. 5-9. The immigrant experience and a history of the early popular-music business in the United States form the background for this biography of one of America's best-known songwriters. In well-researched detail, Furstinger describes how Berlin developed from a youngster who sang other people's songs to a sought-after songwriter for Broadway and Hollywood. The lasting importance of his contributions is made evident, not only with the popularity of songs like "White Christmas," but also with the repeated singing of "God Bless America" following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Written in a lively style, the text is clearly documented with source notes, and well-placed, black-and-white photographs appear throughout. This is a more thorough account of Berlin's life than Thomas Streissguth's biography with the same title (Carolrhoda, 1995)

—Renee Eisenberg, formerly at Fieldstone Middle School, Montvale, NJ.



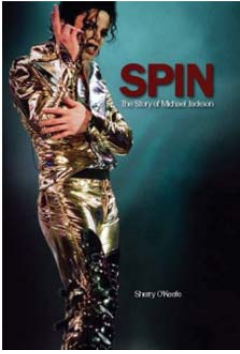
## School Library Journal

February, 2008

MILLER, Calvin Craig. *Reggae Poet: The Story of Bob Marley*. 128p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2007. PLB \$27.95. ISBN 978-1-59935-071-4. LC 2007027476.

Gr 9 Up—Marley and his larger-than-life story are adequately portrayed in this serviceable biography. Miller describes his subject's birth in the Jamaican village of Nine Miles in 1945 to a black mother and white father. His mixed racial heritage and poverty made his childhood difficult. He began playing music and singing at an early age and later formed the Wailers with a childhood friend. The band became known for a distinctive reggae sound that made them famous around the world. The clearly written text provides a solid background by discussing Jamaican history, Rasta beliefs, and contemporary political events. The book is evenhanded, showing Marley's successes as well as his flaws, including his extramarital affairs, and also mentions his use of marijuana and an

assassination attempt on his life. Black-and-white and a few color photographs add to the narrative, and source notes that identify the origins of the quotes appear throughout.—Kristen Oravec, Stephen S. Wise Elementary School, Los Angeles



### VOYA

O'Keefe, Sherry. *Spin: The Story of Michael Jackson*. Morgan Reynolds, 2010. 144p. \$28.95. Oversize pb. 978-1-59935-135-3.

On June 25th, 2009 most of the civilized world and indeed, undoubtedly many parts of the uncivilized world, were rocked by the news of Michael Jackson's death. So much so, for the better part of an hour Google was unable to process queries regarding the King of Pop and speculation over his demise crashed Twitter altogether. Love him or hate him, few can deny the genius of Michael Jackson, as he nearly single-handedly shattered many of the formidable barriers for African American performers. By insisting on total control of his creative output, he not only redefined pop culture in music, fashion and dance, but also considerably raised the bar on the production of music videos with his MTV release of *Thriller* in 1983. O'Keefe's book describes in detail Jackson's struggles with addiction, family, fortune, and fame, as well as the underpinnings regarding his health, eccentricities and accusations of pedophilia during his final

years.

Although told in exacting chronological order, one might get the sense this text may have been hastily edited, as similar passages sometimes appear too close together. On the upside, it's a fairly easy read and numerous full-sized color pictures help to illustrate not only Jackson's story, but also his dramatic physical transformation. A succinct timeline, sources by chapter and a bibliography are provided as well. Since Jackson's legendary notoriety and musical appeal apparently cross boundaries of both age and gender, this text is likely to appeal to a wide-ranging teen audience.—Judy Brink-Drescher.



### Booklist

Issue: November 1, 2010

*Spin: The Story of Michael Jackson*. O'Keefe, Sherry (Author)

Sep 2010. 144 p. Morgan Reynolds, library edition, \$28.95. (9781599351346). 782.42166092.

This biography of the King of Pop is highly readable and very complete. It follows Jackson from his earliest days in Gary, Indiana, and makes all the professional and emotional stops along the way. Throughout, readers can see where his music was informed by other influences and enhanced by his associations with people such as Quincy Jones; his own natural genius and the rewards of being a perfectionist are also discussed. But there is also much about his personal struggles with his family, particularly his father, his looks, and his isolation. Jackson's peculiar relationship with children is covered, including his trial on charges of child molestation, but the author seems to come down on the side of his not being a pedophile. Unlike many biographies,

equal weight is given to Jackson's music and personal life, and his marriage to Lisa Marie Presley is particularly well covered. Many black-and-white and color photographs add depth, and sources notes, a time line and an extensive bibliography are appended. If you need just one biography of Jackson, this is a good choice.

— Ilene Cooper



### School Library Journal

November, 2010

O'KEEFE, Sherry. *Spin: The Story of Michael Jackson*. 144p. (Modern Music Masters Series).

photos. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2010. PLB \$28.95. ISBN 978-1-59935-134-6. LC 2009054191.

Gr 6-9—The King of Pop's roller-coaster-ride life is recounted in this detailed biography. From humble beginnings in Gary, IN, to a sheltered life on the road as a child and young man, Jackson never knew a normal childhood. His talents surpassed those of his brothers, and family conflict drove him to separate himself professionally. O'Keefe does not shy away from the star's deep insecurity and bizarre behavior, including the molestation charges and multiple plastic surgeries. Finally, the text mentions his struggle with prescription drugs with little explanation and recounts the day of his death. Overall, he is presented as a misunderstood, talented recluse with a kind, quiet nature. The narrative is occasionally bogged down by detailed discussions of contracts and

music-business wheeling and dealing. Full-color photos appear on almost every spread, presenting accessible and varied portions of text. The story of the man and his music is well told, and this offering is less formulaic than typical series biographies.—Richelle Roth, Boone County Public Library, KY