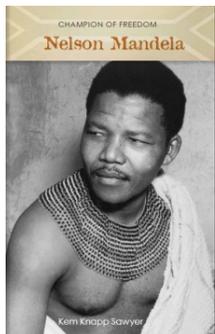


# Champion of Freedom



## Tri State Young Adult Book Review Committee

Title: Nelson Mandela  
Author: Sawyer, Kem Knapp  
ISBN: 978-1-59935-167-4  
968.06  
\$28.95

**Summary:** After spending 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela went on to become the first president of democratic South Africa, as well as winning the Nobel Peace Prize. This biography chronicles his life from his boyhood to his post-presidential work.

**Critical Annotation:** Densely packed with information and profusely illustrated with historical photos, this well-written biography of Nelson Mandela makes the freedom fighter and Nobel Prize winner's life accessible to upper middle school and high school readers. The tone is never preachy, even though some information-packed passages come off a trifle dry. It is apparent from the copious chapter notes and bibliographical references that a great deal of research went into the creation of this biography. It may be the most complete bibliographical work about Mandela for this age group.

The "Seeds of White Rule" sets the stage for apartheid, and gives context for Mandela's youth and college days. All the important people in his life are highlighted, even to the present day and his third marriage and social activism. The events leading up to his imprisonment are detailed, as well as the way South African government was shaped after his release.

A timeline and comprehensive index complete this excellent biography.

**Series Comments:** This volume is part of the Champion of Freedom series. There are 4 volumes in the series at this time. The focus of the series is profile the lives of courageous individuals. Other titles include Bonhoeffer, Gandhi, and Kyi.

**Recommendations:** Highly recommended for upper middle school and high school history and biography collections. This highly readable biography will appeal to both browsers and researchers.

- Pat Naismith, September 2012

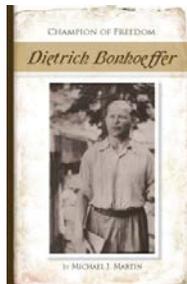
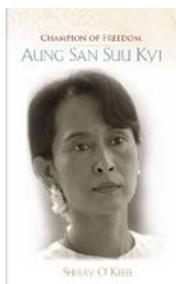
## Booklist

### Champion of Freedom series, Morgan Reynolds. Gr. 7-12

\*Starred Review\* **Aung San Suu Kyi.** By Sherry O'Keefe. Apr. 2012. 160p. illus. lib. ed., \$28.95 (9781599351681). 959.105092

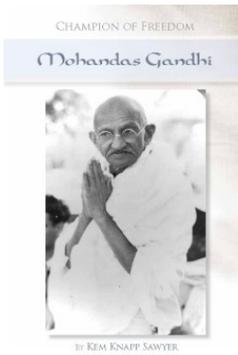
\*Starred Review\* **Dietrich Bonhoeffer.** By Michael J. Martin. Apr. 2012. 144p. illus. lib. ed., \$28.95 (9781599351698). 230.

**Nelson Mandela.** By Kem Knapp Sawyer. Apr. 2012. 176p. illus. lib. ed., \$28.95 (9781599351674). 968.06



This outstanding Champion of Freedom series presents a well-developed portrait of each of its freedom-fighting subjects. Each title vividly illustrates how the individual subjects came of age and how the situations in their countries led them into positions of both leadership and suffering. Detailed notes and long bibliographies reflect the amount of research that went into each volume, but the tone is never dry and scholarly but instead even-handed, crystal clear, and even personal. Aung San Suu Kyi, still very much in the news, is the daughter of the assassinated leader of Burma, and she sacrificed living with her husband and sons to try to fight the repressive government. The rarely profiled Dietrich Bonhoeffer tells—in a surprisingly engaging way—the story of a German theologian whose beliefs led him to be the first to stand up against the Nazis in their treatment of the Jews. *Nelson Mandela* brings to light the complexity of the man who became a leader against apartheid in South Africa, surviving years in prison to eventually become the president. The thoughtful book design places sidebars, maps, and other background information in ideal locations, and features splashes of color on every page with excellent photographs throughout. A thoughtful, invigorating standout.

- Susan Dove Lempke



## Booklist

### Mohandas Gandhi.

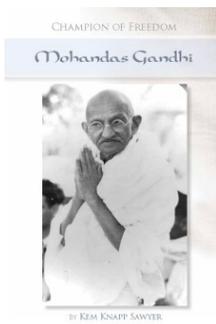
By Kem Knapp Sawyer.

2011. 144p. illus. Morgan Reynolds, lib. ed., \$28.95 (9781599351667).  
954.03.

#### REVIEW

First published October 1, 2011 (Booklist).

This title in the Champion of Freedom series starts with an overview of the British Raj at the time of Mohandas Gandhi's birth and what life was like for those living under it. The thorough biography then goes on to trace the key events, philosophical influences, and personal relationships that shaped the life and career of a man who spread the doctrine of nonviolence. Interesting anecdotes, explanations of Indian culture, and an engaging, well-organized narrative make this a solid resource for middle-school students and even those in early high school. Reproductions of maps, drawings, and photographs seem squeezed into the text but are accompanied by informative captions. Backmatter includes a timeline, citations to sources, bibliography, websites, and index. -Linda Perkins



### School Library Journal - October, 2011

SAWYER, Kem Knapp. *Mohandas Gandhi*. 144p. (Champion of Freedom Series). illus. maps. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds.

2011. PLB \$28.95. ISBN 978-1-59935-166-7. LC 2010047904.

Gr 8 Up—This is a fairly straightforward biography, focusing on Gandhi's political roles and belief in nonviolent resistance. The less-savory aspects of his personality, including his treatment of his wife and sons, are covered briefly. Sawyer conveys the importance of his early years fighting racial inequality in South Africa to his philosophy of satyagraha, mentioning the inspiration provided by Tolstoy and Thoreau. The chapters devoted to Gandhi's return to India are largely a report on the resistance to British rule in which he played a central role, but at this point it reads more like history than biography. —Rebecca Donnelly, Loma Colorado Public Library, Rio Rancho, NM