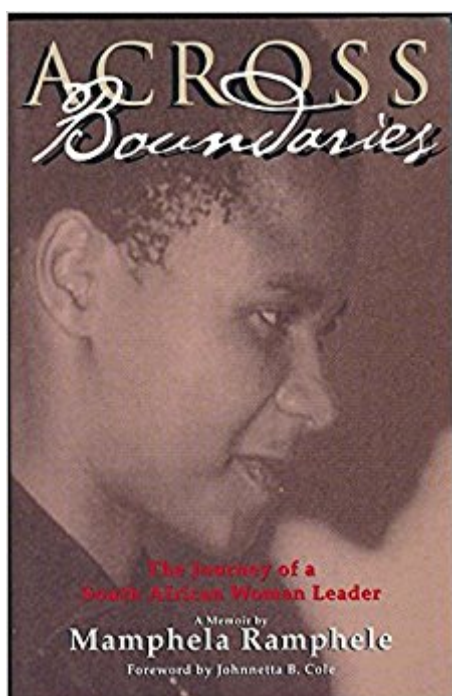


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Across Boundaries: The Journey Of A South African Woman Leader (Women Writing Africa)



Synopsis

"Survival," writes Mamphela Ramphele, "is a stronger force than the fear of offending others." Born black and female in apartheid-ruled South Africa, Ramphele went on to become one of the most distinguished women on the African continent; a prominent activist, medical doctor, anthropologist, teacher, university leader, as well as a mother to two sons. *Across Boundaries* chronicles Ramphele's inspiring journey, and reveals the staggering personal losses that coexisted with her astonishing political and professional achievements. In addition to recounting the fascinating and often gripping events of her life, she describes the personal side of her experiences; her early struggles to maintain dignity and hope in a world that devalued both black people and women; her battles against despair, especially after the murder of her colleague and lover Steven Biko and the death of her third child in infancy; her mistakes and regrets, as well as her triumphs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this important autobiography, a black South African physician writes with dramatic immediacy about her struggle for personal and political independence. She begins with her rural childhood and years in medical school; describes her time as political activist with her lover, Steve Biko; and finally talks about her present position as vice-chancellor at the University of Cape Town. While Biko was tortured and finally murdered in prison in the 1970s, she was bearing his child in a wilderness area where she had been banished by government decree. She talks frankly about her passionate, stormy relationship with Biko, and she attacks the reverential "Gandhi" view of him promulgated in

the movie Cry Freedom. What gives her story special power is not only the political freedom story, but her honesty about her failures and her fury and her survivor guilt. There's deep commitment here, but no martyrdom, no preening. Women everywhere will recognize her conflicts about her roles as mother, academic, political activist, lover, and friend. Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"What gives [this memoir] special power is not only the political freedom story, but her honesty about her failures and her fury and her survivor guilt. There's deep commitment here, but not martyrdom; women everywhere will recognize her conflicts about her roles as mother, academic, political activist, lover, and friend." Booklist "Across Boundaries is an autobiography that captures both a unique heart and a nation's history. No matter where or how each of us lives, Across Boundaries gives us a rare leader who teaches us to teach ourselves." Gloria Steinem "Stunningly moving and inspiring." Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund "Using adversity to advance the cause of freedom and justice, Mamphela Ramphele created an oasis of humanity and dignity in a wilderness of despair and oppression... This is [her] riveting testimony told in her inimitable way." Archbishop Desmond Tutu "Ramphele's life and work are illustrative of her indomitable spirit. She makes life better for all who know her and for many others as well." Frank Thomas, President, Ford Foundation, 1982-1996 "What gives [this memoir] special power is not only the political freedom story, but her honesty about her failures and her fury and her survivor guilt. There's deep commitment here, but not martyrdom; women everywhere will recognize her conflicts about her roles as mother, academic, political activist, lover, and friend." Booklist "Across Boundaries is an autobiography that captures both a unique heart and a nation's history. No matter where or how each of us lives, Across Boundaries gives us a rare leader who teaches us to teach ourselves." Gloria Steinem "Stunningly moving and inspiring." Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund "Using adversity to advance the cause of freedom and justice, Mamphela Ramphele created an oasis of humanity and dignity in a wilderness of despair and oppression... This is [her] riveting testimony told in her inimitable way." Archbishop Desmond Tutu "Ramphele's life and work are illustrative of her indomitable spirit. She makes life better for all who know her and for many others as well." Frank Thomas, President, Ford Foundation, 1982-1996

Anyone interested in the early years of the Antiapartheid movement in South Africa, will be

interested in the life of Mamphela Ramphela, a most remarkable black woman, who defied all the odds of the apartheid regime. A leader in the Black Consciousness Movement, under constant police surveillance, she earned a MD and Ph.D. in anthropology. She was Steve Biko's significant other and while she was being "detained" without trial in the Transvaal, pregnant with Steven's child, she learned of Biko's brutal death while he was being detained. Despite hardships and heart aches she ran one of the nation's first community health centers and is now Chancellor of the University of Cape Town. Here is her story written in her own words.

I found Mamphela Ramphela's autobiography very interesting and amazing. The struggles she went through during her life absolutely amazed me! She is one of the strongest women I have ever heard of. I enjoyed reading about her fight for rights, her relationship with Steve Biko, and how she balanced all of her activities. I found it very interesting that she did not put motherhood as a priority in her life as many other women do. I enjoyed reading "Across Boundaries" and I thought Mamphela did a good job of telling the true story of her life.

This book is about Mamphela's political life. Personal aspects of her life are rarely told unless they pertain to her activism or illustrate inequality. Individuals are rarely mentioned; those that are, are rarely mentioned more than once. Don't read this book if you want an old-fashioned story with interesting characters who interact to create entertaining plots. Read this book to learn about the battle of a black woman against patriarchal apartheid. Read about her strengths and the sacrifices she made for the movement.

Across Boundaries is an excellent book focussing on a mother's struggle to want a job and to be a mother at the same time. Even though this book was written by a woman from Africa it still pertains to many American mothers who struggle over the same problem. This book did not only focus on the mother aspect, but also on the fact that a woman wanted to help the condition of other women also.

Across Boundaries by Mamphela Ramphela is a fascinating autobiography about the extraordinary journey of a South African woman leader. From historical events to her personal experiences, Ramphela describes these events and struggles with dignity. Throughout her endeavors as a young child and continued to her adulthood, she is committed and determined to succeed and to make a difference. An honest testimony that shows her fears and courage. This is an excellent book and it will keep you reading for this one woman's strength is amazing. Through moderate to difficult times

and tribulations Mamphela Ramphele keeps a remarkable and uplifting attitude that helps bring new light to unfortunate situations.

Across Boundaries was an excellent book about a women's struggle to be another and have a career. As said in the book "Recognising that you are a member of the global village is essential to lifting you above the narrow nationalistic interests and concerns of your own country (222)."

Mamphela's life was a pursuit for women to rise above the boundaries and the story was very detailed, and well written! END

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