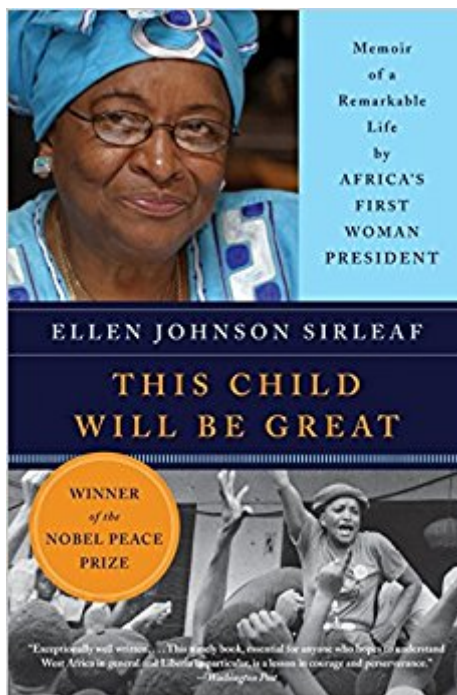


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# This Child Will Be Great: Memoir Of A Remarkable Life By Africa's First Woman President



## Synopsis

In January 2006, after the Republic of Liberia had been racked by fourteen years of brutal civil conflict, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf—Africa's "Iron Lady"—was sworn in as president, an event that marked a tremendous turning point in the history of the West African nation. In this stirring memoir, Sirleaf shares the story of her rise to power, including her early childhood; her experiences with abuse, imprisonment, and exile; and her fight for democracy and social justice. She reveals her determination to succeed in multiple worlds, from her studies in the United States to her work as an international bank executive, to campaigning in some of Liberia's most desperate and war-torn villages and neighborhoods. It is the tale of an outspoken political and social reformer who fought the oppression of dictators and championed change. By telling her story, Sirleaf encourages women everywhere to pursue leadership roles at the highest levels of power, and gives us all hope that we can change the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Forbes lists Sirleaf, the 23rd president of Liberia and the first elected female president on the African continent, among the 100 Most Powerful Women in 2008. In and out of government, in and out of exile, but consistent in her commitment to Liberia, Sirleaf in her memoir reveals herself to be among the most resilient, determined and courageous as well. She writes with modesty in a calm and measured tone. While her account includes a happy childhood and an unhappy marriage, the book is politically, not personally, focused as she (and Liberia) go through the disastrous presidencies of Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor. Sirleaf's training as an economist and her

employment (e.g., in banking, as minister of finance in Liberia, and in U.N. development programs) informs the perspective from which she views internal Liberian history (e.g., the tensions between the settler class and the indigenous people) and Liberia's international relations. Although her focus is thoroughly on Liberia, the content is more widely instructive, particularly her account of the role of the Economic Community of West African States. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Africa's first elected female president, Sirleaf chronicles her rise from an abused young wife and mother to a woman with a career in government finance and international banking to the president of Liberia since 2006. Sirleaf confronted corruption and incompetence through several Liberian governments and suffered imprisonment and exile for her controversial positions before ultimately returning and challenging the long and troubled history of her nation. Liberia was created by the U.S. to repatriate former slaves, creating a tension between Americo-Liberians and indigenous peoples that continues. She recounts her struggles at home and abroad; she watched dictator Samuel Doe and later Charles Taylor destroy Liberia while she continued to criticize U.S. involvement with corrupt regimes. Having no colonial power to overcome, Sirleaf contends that Liberia has often struggled to develop and maintain a sense of true national integration, something she has sought to achieve as she has worked to bring economic and social stability to her civil-war-torn nation. An inspiring inside look at a nation struggling to rebuild itself and the woman now behind those efforts. --Vanessa Bush --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This review request is well-timed - my Book Club will talk about this book tonight and my opinion may be over-ridden. I looked forward to reading this book due to its timely subject (first female President in Africa) and timely subject matter (how a third world country was tossed into total chaos when "democracy" failed). Thus I encourage readers interested in female leadership and the fragility of political systems to read the book. My gripes with it are with how it is written, not what it is written about. First, the book contains "everything you ever wanted to know about Liberia and Ms. Sirleaf and much you don't need to know if you never knew anything about either Liberia or Ms. Sirleaf." In other words, in my opinion, Ms. Sirleaf needed a stronger editor, if not a ghost writer. The book is ponderous in sections ... I rarely "leaf through" a book; I did so at times with this book. Second, and important to me, Ms. Sirleaf did not convey an emotional sense of her journey. For example, she left

her children with others while she attended schools and worked abroad, which surely would grip a mother with sadness. It is not conveyed. Further, she was imprisoned and in mortal danger from unstable political enemies, sufficient to terrorize most people (I'd think). She did not convey terror but rather tended to convey, more or less, that she was either "lucky" or felt "safe" in her gut. This while in a jail from which others routinely "disappeared!" I was left thinking that perhaps Ms. Sirleaf felt she had to always portray "strength," which no human being, save the disordered, can reasonably do at all times. Nor should any of us be expected to do so. Thousands upon thousands of Ms. Sirleaf's countrymen were killed by political leaders and warmongers ... Ms. Sirleaf seemed to want to convey that she simply glided above the fray, always challenging and speaking truth to power, but somehow always surviving relatively unscathed, often rescued by the intervention of international colleagues or business acquaintances. She did not develop fully how those relationships came to be so strong either. I'm glad she survived, but I would have appreciated her conveying some sense of human vulnerability. (At one point, Ms. Sirleaf must be whisked out of the country under cover of darkness. I was reminded of Marie Antoinette and her family attempting to escape from Paris, an episode that had my heart racing as I read about it. Ms. Sirleaf crouching in the back of a car in her jeans? Shrug. The dangerous immediacy of the matter was not conveyed to me. It could have been.) Perhaps if Ms. Sirleaf had spent less time on Liberian history and statistics, she could have spent more time telling me about herself ... and not just her "resume." I came away feeling she sort of simply believed the title of her book - she was the child mentioned and she **WOULD BE** great! Check it off on the Bucket List! OK - but for someone who let me in to learn all sorts of (to me, modestly interesting) information about international banking and African inter-relationships, Ms. Sirleaf did NOT let me in to her feelings. Yet, the book is called a "Memoir," not a "History." I think it was in fact the latter - on both subjects - Liberia and Ms. Sirleaf.

I finished this ebook with a renewed respect for Pres. Johnson. The text and thoughts were very well composed and fluent. This book is a good read for anyone interested in the past, present and future direction of Liberia and Africa in general. Ms. Johnson spends valuable time and effort describing her unique and courageous views on Liberian policy and historical mistakes. On a trip to Liberia not too long ago, she was on my same flight and walked around the plane to greet me and the other passengers - I appreciated her down to earth attitude then, and even more so now after reading this book. Her visceral account of the absolute horrors that have pillaged Liberia was gripping. She wrote it like she claims to live - without fear. I appreciated her blunt accounts of the attitudes of her countrymen - enemies and friends. There were a very few passages that seemed

self promoting and maybe a little grandiose, but Ms. Johnson is a politician, after all.

This book is so well written and easy to read. The life story of Ms Sirleaf is fascinating and should be read by all women especially young women. If Ms Johnson Sirleaf can survive growing up with an ill father, an abusive husband, a coup in her country to become the leader of her country we should all throw out excuses and just get on with it.

I read this book and The House on Sugar Beach to understand more about Liberia. Both are great books. This one is more educational than the other and highly enjoyable. I would give it 5 stars but there are a few places in the book that drag a bit and a few others that sound defensive, which I found slightly distracting. All the same, I highly recommend this book and I loved reading it. Inspirational.

This Child Will Be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's First Woman President President Sirleaf's absolutely riveting memoir clearly explains how and why Liberia imploded in 1980. She gives us an unvarnished look at Liberia's founding in 1822 by freed American slaves, carries us through the superficially peaceful Tubman years, and explains how her country's history and American ties led to the horror of 14 years of total anarchy. She ends her story with hope, pride, and plans for both Liberia and Africa. Her personal story is a strong, honest and inspirational narrative. From an abused teenage wife to a United Nations assistant secretary general, from living in exile to being elected president, she has lived an amazing life and she tells the story well. My family lived in a mining town in the Liberian bush from 1964-1972. We knew many of the problems that the country faced, and we had fears for its survival. President Sirleaf's memoir makes me want to return to help rebuild this remarkable country.

I love it!, I am left with the overwhelming desire to find a way to help Liberia. To give a hand in their struggles and to begin to build a bridge in America. So much she said was right and so much we should do. Yes, we should cultivate a relationship similar to America and Israel. Especially with the outbreaks of Ebola adding more conflict and suffering. I feel energized to help in some way we should all read this book !!! As women and the struggle between professional ambition and raising a family is a great struggle. So yes I am energized!! Wonderful book!

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This Child Will Be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's First Woman President Abraham

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