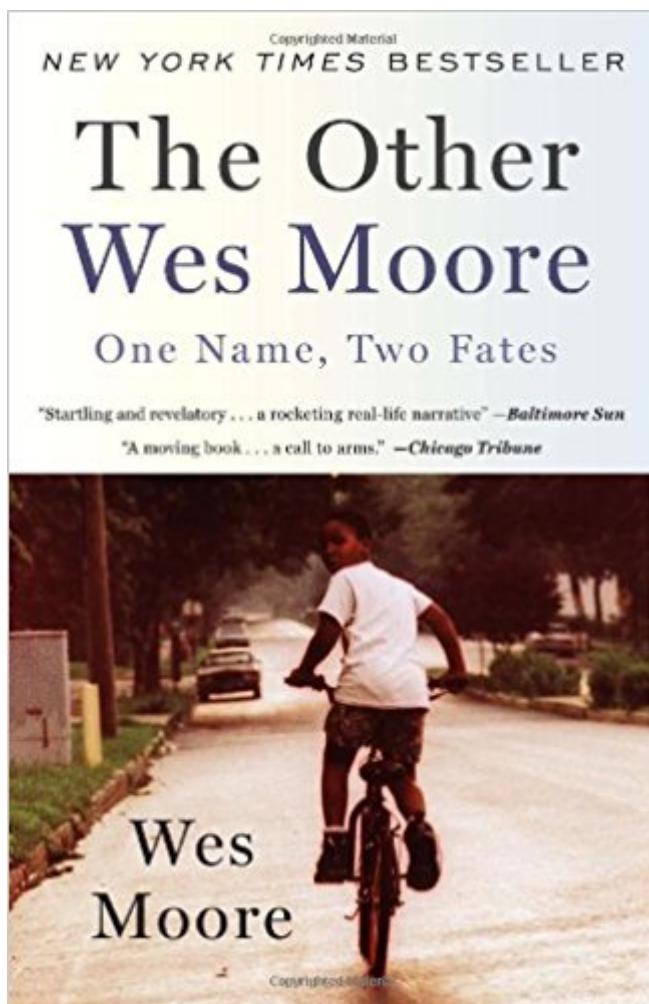


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# The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates



## Synopsis

Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world. "The chilling truth is that his story could have been mine. The tragedy is that my story could have been his."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Two hauntingly similar boys take starkly different paths in this searing tale of the ghetto. Moore, an investment banker, Rhodes scholar, and former aide to Condoleezza Rice, was intrigued when he learned that another Wes Moore, his age and from the same area of Greater Baltimore, was wanted for killing a cop. Meeting his double and delving into his life reveals deeper likenesses: raised in fatherless families and poor black neighborhoods, both felt the lure of the money and status to be gained from dealing drugs. That the author resisted the criminal underworld while the other Wes drifted into it is chalked up less to character than to the influence of relatives, mentors, and expectations that pushed against his own delinquent impulses, to the point of exiling

him to military school. Moore writes with subtlety and insight about the plight of ghetto youth, viewing it from inside and out; he probes beneath the pathologies to reveal the pressures—poverty, a lack of prospects, the need to respond to violence with greater violence—that propelled the other Wes to his doom. The result is a moving exploration of roads not taken. (May 4) 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.

**\*Starred Review\*** In 2000, Wes Moore had recently been named a Rhodes Scholar in his final year of college at Johns Hopkins University when he read a newspaper article about another Wes Moore who was on his way to prison. It turned out that the two of them had much in common, both young black men raised in inner-city neighborhoods by single mothers. Stunned by the similarities in their names and backgrounds and the differences in their ultimate fates, the author eventually contacted the other Wes Moore and began a long relationship. Moore visited his namesake in prison; he was serving a life sentence, convicted for his role in an armed robbery that resulted in the killing of an off-duty policeman. Growing up, both men were subject to the pitfalls of urban youth: racism, rebellion, violence, drug use, and dealing. The author examines eight years in the lives of both Wes Moores to explore the factors and choices that led one to a Rhodes scholarship, military service, and a White House fellowship, and the other to drug dealing, prison, and eventual conversion to the Muslim faith, with both sharing a gritty sense of realism about their pasts. Moore ends this haunting look at two lives with a call to action and a detailed resource guide. --Vanessa Bush --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The book doesn't provide the answer what makes a difference in a person's life, why some of us succeed and others do not. Reading about "other Wed's" choices makes you want to say "just stop and look around." It seems to come down to personal choices, but personal choices are affected by the environment.

As a teacher of students in an area of low SES, I have often pondered the question of when a person's fate is sealed. Who/what determines which children will be able to make it and which ones will barely survive. Wes Moore has delved into this question by looking closely at the lives of two children, one being himself, whose lives begin in the same environment, but end up on two very different sides of the coin. I recommend this book to all teenagers, no matter their situation. It will show you that everytime you make a decision for yourself, you clear a path to your fate, and you

usually have control of determining that fate. I recommend this book to all adults as well because it may help you grow in your compassion for those we are so often too quick to judge.

I read this book for several reasons. One that I have a friend who has expressed at one time he wished he could be two versions of himself at a defining moment in his life because he had a hard decision to make and wanted to be able to follow the course of each decision to its outcome to be able to live both those very different lives. Secondly I know people I love who have had hard times in their lives and just like both Wes' wanted I felt it important to show these people that only we can and should be the those who decide what hard decisions define us. I appreciate all who were involved in bringing their experiences into my life through this book! I can say even I came away a changed person.

I didn't think this book was well written especially towards the end. Author was not clear in comparing why the characters took such different paths which I thought was to be the focus.

My daughter and I read this, her 9th grade required book of the summer. Cannot understand why on earth this particular book was chosen as the one must-read. My 14-year old recognized that the difference between the boys' outcomes was primarily the influence of the parents. Both boys made bad decisions, but only one parent paid attention and intervened. Kids will hopefully take away an attitude of gratitude for their parents, and also love & sympathy for kids born to inattentive parents. I would hope the latter is meant to be the reason for the book choice. But unfortunately, the interjected political spin probably played a part too.

Do any of us really try to put ourselves in someone else's place? Can we do that without knowing their story? I enjoyed the chance of following both Wes' lives. Maybe I will start giving more people a chance to show me who they are trying to become.

I needed this book for a criminal justice class, I got a cheaper price then the college was charging.. I thought it would be a boring book but when I started to read it, I couldn't put it down.. The writer grabs you right at the get go and compels you to read to the end.. You will not be disappointed with this book. This book is a real life story about a family with broken dreams and survival with a alcoholic father and life is hard but many lessons learned in the life of this family..

I do like this book and I understand the parallels that the author is trying to draw between the two Wes Moores; however, there are a lot of times where I feel like there was more juxtaposition than parallels in their lives. It seemed like the author was trying a little too hard to stretch the fact that their lives were "so similar." But if you overlook the nitty gritty and get down to the broad picture, it makes a good point on society and how environmental factors play a role in psychosocial development.

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