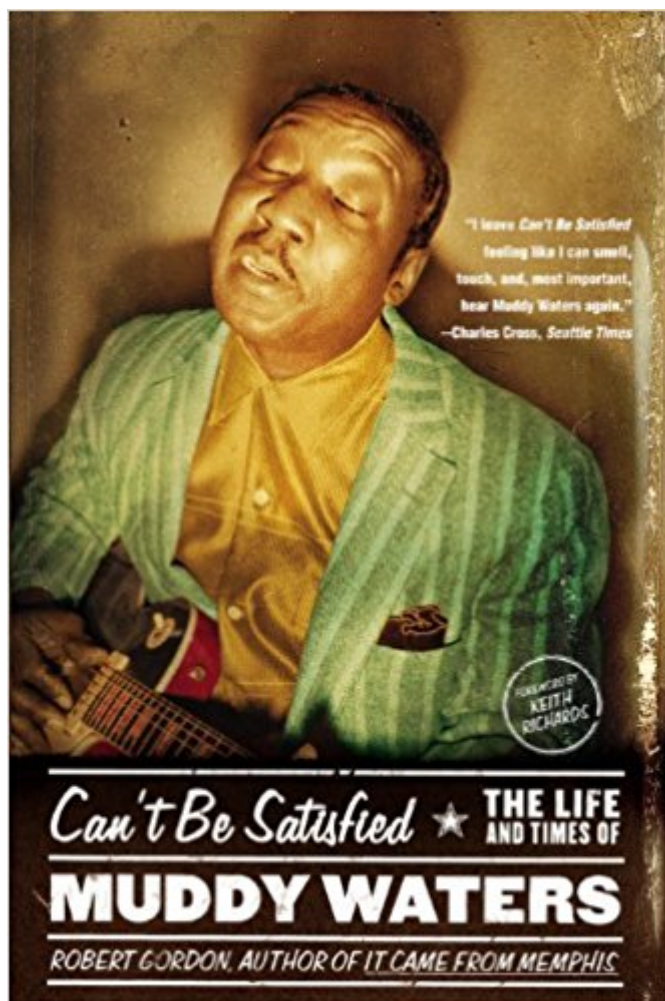


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# Can't Be Satisfied: The Life And Times Of Muddy Waters



## Synopsis

The epic, rollicking, up-and-down life of Muddy Waters, who went from Mississippi farmhand to musical legend, who invented electric blues and created the template for the rock-and-roll band and its wild lifestyle, is brought into sharp focus in this widely acclaimed biography. photos.

## Book Information

Paperback: 448 pages

Publisher: Back Bay Books; Reprint edition (June 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0316164941

ISBN-13: 978-0316164948

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 54 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #418,539 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #119 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Rhythm & Blues](#) #153 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Blues](#) #3326 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Arts & Literature > Actors & Entertainers](#)

## Customer Reviews

Muddy Waters's wailing slide guitar, stuttering rhythm and boisterous, sex-drenched lyrics (see "Hoochie Coochie Man" and "I Got My Mojo Working") inspired a generation of bluesmen and rock-and-rollers including a modish band of Brits who copped their name from his classic tune "Rollin' Stone." In this engaging biography, Gordon ("It Came from Memphis") mines some new territory, but the real punch comes from his telling, which reads as if he were on the front porch with friends, passing a half-pint of whiskey. Describing Waters's (n&#x82; McKinley Morganfield) birthplace in Issaquena, Miss., he writes that it was "where farmhands partied on weekends because they'd survived another week, because the land didn't swallow them, the river didn't drink them, the boss man didn't kill them...." In the early 1940s, Muddy fled to Chicago, cut several big hits for the budding Chess record label and became an international star. The author points out, however, that Muddy never left behind an ingrained obedience from his sharecropper days. Over the years, he would allow his bosses to tamper with his style often with embarrassing results and with his fair take of the profits. And as Gordon notes, success never did satisfy his other main passion. "He went through several wives, and always had women on the side, and women on the

other side too." After all, Muddy wasn't just talkin' blues he was the blues. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After arriving in Chicago from Mississippi in 1943, Muddy Waters (born McKinley Morganfield) became the first successful blues man to play electric guitar while performing in the style of his heroes Robert Johnson and Son House. Gordon (*It Came from Memphis*) treats Muddy with the same dignity that he seemed to exude in real life. The story opens with Alan Lomax's "discovery" of Waters during one of his famous field recording expeditions for the Library of Congress. Not long after, Waters reached legendary status as the premier artist on Chicago's Chess Records. Lean times then struck in the 1950s and 1960s as rock'n'roll pushed aside the blues, but in the 1970s Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones (named after one of Muddy's songs) turned on a whole generation of white youth to their musical idol. Gordon reveals Muddy's family life to be almost as rocky: he left several illegitimate children in his wake. Rather than judge his subject, however, Gordon lets the music do the talking. With vivid prose ("The rhythm evokes the banging of a tattered suitcase being pulled down a bumpy road"), he shows that Muddy didn't have to put on an act; he was the Hootchie Coochie Man, and he did have his mojo working. Likely to become the leading biography of this legendary artist, the book is recommended for all popular, blues, and ethnomusicology collections. Also available, though unseen by the reviewer, is Sandra B. Toozé's *Muddy Waters: The Mojo Man*. Lloyd Jansen, Stockton-San Joaquin Cty. P.L., CA Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Muddy Waters, like many of his contemporaries had a tough life which started as a plantation worker who had a way with the guitar. Moreover like other blues greats he was ripped off by publishing companies with contracts that took blatant advantage of his illiteracy. However unlike other players like Jimmy Reed (whose family had to settle the disputes with publishing companies after his death), Muddy was proactive after hiring his trustworthy manager Scott Cameron. He, like Son House was first recorded by Alan Lomax on his exploratory ventures through the Delta to record black music for the Library of Congress. Those field recordings and the interviews are an absolute treat to hear for any Muddy fan. This book is very well written, copiously researched and the end notes are a pleasure to read simply because of the granularity they delve into. Robert Gordon also writes a detailed review of all major albums and includes a section about how to go about buying Muddy's music. It is amazing how these field workers (Muddy, BB King, Wolf, Jimmy

Reed etc.) found fame and found their own ways of dealing with it. For Muddy, it was women, especially the extremely young sort while he stayed clear of excessive drinking like some of his equals. On a doctor's advice, he even gave up smoking completely towards the last few years. This book is a must for any blues fan and Gordon's bibliography includes some gems and one must laud his effort to put in literary recommendations for the blues fan.

good product

Purchased as a gift for my guitar-playing husband & he enjoyed it very much.

A good read! Covered life in the South and Chicago very well. Being from Chicago and loving the Muddy, I am very glad I own this book. If you enjoy the blues and are interested how one of the greatest ever got his start and lived his life for the genre-buy this book!

This book was a gift and he loves it. It came in good order. If you are a Blues Fan, this is a great read, I'm told.

What an amazing adventure--that is, the life of Muddy Waters. He was the true bridge between acoustic blues and electric. And his debtors (Clapton, Dylan and dozens of others) are a long line. The book is savvy, hip and well written. It's a must-own if you love this music.

The book gives some insight into Muddy's personality as well as ample facts about his career. Appended materials include reviews of every release plus extensive notes from interviews. As a long time fan of Muddy Waters, I never knew he was illiterate and largely unaware of his impact on the music world. Apparently he regarded performing his music as strictly business, and he often allowed himself to be manipulated by others. Still, he created Chicago blues and left behind some great music. Racism probably kept him from being a super star in his own time, but he introduced lots of us white kids to a new type of music with much more appeal than the usual top twenty.

Memphis writer Robert Gordon has written a gem of blues biography of the legendary Muddy Waters tracing his background in the delta through his emergence as the King of the Chicago blues scene in the fifties to the up and down fortunes of his career as musical tastes shifted and as his music reached new audiences until his death almost two decades ago. Gordon intergates materials

from the interviews that Muddy did for various specialist publications (like DownBeat, Living Blues) with his own interviews and other material from Muddy's relatives, bandmembers, managers and others for a book that is one of the better recent musical biographies I have read. Muddy and his music is brought to life. Unlike the other Muddy biography, Gordon provides some blood and flesh to Muddy as opposed to rendering him simply as some legendary icon and also brings the music to life along with some thoughtful commentary on the music. Anyone seriously into blues will need to have this. This book sets a high standard for biographies on Little Walter and Elmore James that are scheduled to be issued in the upcoming months

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