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CLARION REVIEW ★★☆☆☆ BIOGRAPHY

Global Peace Lovers

Aesef Shafik
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While the Nobel Peace Prize can only be presented to one winner per year people understand that peace is a collaborative effort; as W.H. Auden once said “We are all here on Earth to help one another.” It is this collective spirit that Aasef Shafik draws upon in his book *Global Peace Lovers*. The text is a compilation of facts quotes common phrases advice and brief biographies from those influential individuals and organizations that have endeavored to promote world peace throughout history.

The book begins by listing motivational and inspirational statements that range from the simple “You can do it!” to the more philosophical “Heroes don’t like destruction and war. Heroes save lives and love peace.” Following these statements is the book’s most notable section: An encyclopedia-like collection of biographical information on some of the world’s most important contributors to the ideas philosophies and actions of peace. This section includes everyone from Mohandas Gandhi to Sean Penn. Lastly the text includes a compilation of facts about various world religions and charitable organizations as well as greetings of peace and friendship in the world’s languages; the book ends with memorable quotations offering words of wisdom.

Global Peace Lovers is a quilt created from a diverse range of materials; however the effect of so many elements woven together in one book feels more haphazard than coherent and consistent. For instance in the biographical section the entry on Mother Theresa is several pages in length and it fully details her life and work; on the other hand just a short paragraph is devoted to Nelson Mandela. In addition to poor organization and inconsistent development the information presented is not reinforced by scholarly resources; thus the book’s content often feels like a hodge-podge of information nearly anyone could compile by searching Wikipedia or Google. Indeed in the author’s “reference” section at the end of the book he notes that his major sources have been Wikipedia and its accompanying Web site Wiktionary.

While *Global Peace Lovers* has its faults its optimistic tone and good-spirited message may win over many readers’ hearts. Additionally it may also serve as an accessible reference guide for those seeking inspiration or information drawn from peaceable people and concepts.

JESSICA HIGGINS (August 5, 2009)

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