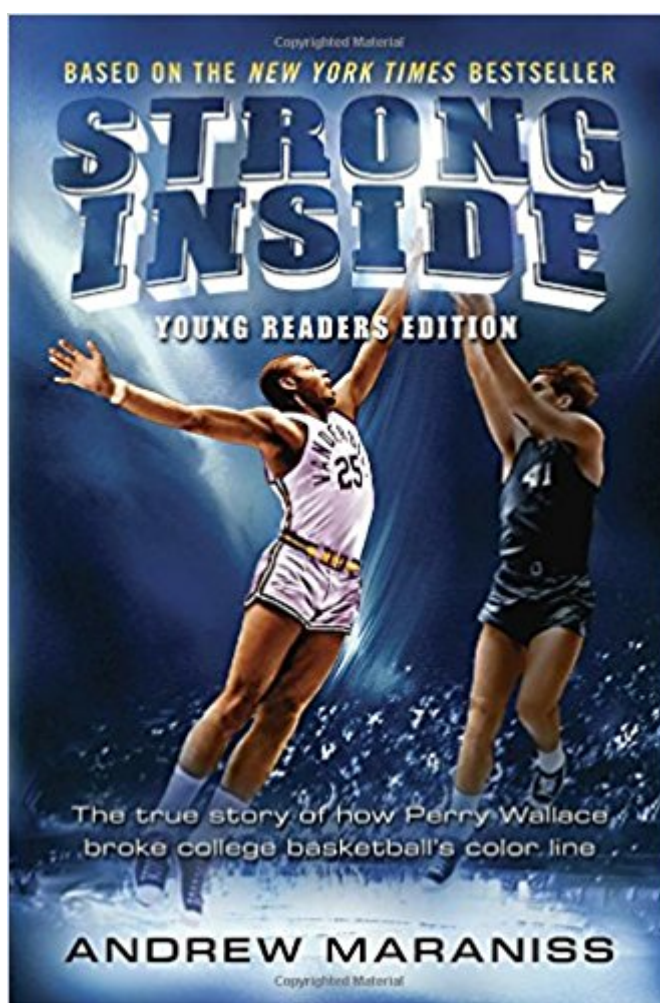


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# Strong Inside (Young Readers Edition): The True Story Of How Perry Wallace Broke College Basketball's Color Line



## Synopsis

The inspirational true story of the first African American to play college basketball in the deeply segregated Southeastern Conference--a powerful moment in Black history. Perry Wallace was born at an historic crossroads in U.S. history. He entered kindergarten the year that the Brown v. Board of Education decision led to integrated schools, allowing blacks and whites to learn side by side. A week after Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, Wallace enrolled in high school and his sensational jumping, dunking, and rebounding abilities quickly earned him the attention of college basketball recruiters from top schools across the nation. In his senior year his Pearl High School basketball team won Tennessee's first racially-integrated state tournament. The world seemed to be opening up at just the right time, and when Vanderbilt University recruited Wallace to play basketball, he courageously accepted the assignment to desegregate the Southeastern Conference. The hateful experiences he would endure on campus and in the hostile gymnasiums of the Deep South turned out to be the stuff of nightmares. Yet Wallace persisted, endured, and met this unthinkable challenge head on. This insightful biography digs deep beneath the surface to reveal a complicated, profound, and inspiring story of an athlete turned civil rights trailblazer. Praise for *Strong Inside* "This moving biography is thought-provoking, riveting and heart-wrenching, though it remains hopeful as it takes readers into the midst of the basketball and civil rights action." —Booklist, STARRED review "This portrait of the fortitude of a young athlete will make a huge impact on teens and is guaranteed to spark serious discussion." —School Library Journal "Even if you're not a history buff, this important story is worth your time." —Sports Illustrated Kids "A fascinating, very personal account of the effect that the civil rights movement had on one individual. . . . A must purchase for any middle school or high school library." —Miss Yingling Reads

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This moving biography is a thought-provoking, riveting and heart-wrenching, though it remains hopeful as it takes readers into the midst of the basketball and civil rights action." —Booklist, STARRED review "This portrait of the fortitude of a young athlete will make a huge impact on teens and is guaranteed to spark serious discussion." —School Library Journal "Even if you're not a history buff, this important story is worth your time." —Sports Illustrated Kids "A fascinating, very personal account of the effect that the civil rights movement had on one individual. . . a must purchase for any middle school or high school library." —Miss Yingling Reads "Praise for the New York Times bestselling adult edition of Strong Inside" "A heartbreaking work of staggering genius." —SLAM Magazine "Powerfully told." —New York Times "Nuanced and complex, Strong Inside is an invaluable resource for studying the state of race relations in the US, both past and present... Highly recommended." —Choice "Thorough and engaging... a long-overdue tribute to this little-known player." —Washington Post

Andrew Maraniss studied history at Vanderbilt University and as a recipient of the Fred Russell-Grantland Rice sportswriting scholarship, earned the school's Alexander Award for excellence in journalism. He then worked for five years in Vanderbilt's athletic department as the associate director of media relations, dealing primarily with the men's basketball team. The son of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and best-selling author David Maraniss and trailblazing environmentalist Linda Maraniss, Andrew was born in Madison, Wisconsin, grew up in Washington, D.C. and Austin, Texas and now lives in Brentwood, Tennessee, with his wife Alison, and their two young children. His first book for adults, Strong Inside: Perry Wallace and the Collision of Race and Sports in the South, was a New York Times nonfiction bestseller. Follow Andrew on Twitter @trublu24.

History I didn't know. Strong people, heroes where you don't expect.

It Was A Great Book It Was Very Engaging and Gives You Many Life lessons, It teaches you how to persevere great oppression

Strong Inside: Young Readers Edition by Andrew Maraniss tells the compelling story of Perry Wallace, a Nashville native who went on to become the first Black SEC basketball player as a Vanderbilt student. The book is not for the faint of heart, with graphic language and explicit examples of the racism and abuse that took place in our country. Those explicit experiences make this a perfect book for young people to read. This young readers edition was adapted from the New York Times bestselling novel of the same name. I was in the process of reading the book as one of the classes I co-teach was working through speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. The students had to write a compare/contrast essay about the two difference speeches, and views, of these civil rights leaders. A great example of a similar activity takes place in Chapter 16. Martin Luther King, Jr and Stokely Carmichael were speaking at the same conference on Vanderbilt's campus in April of 1967. King spoke on a Friday and Carmichael spoke the next day. One called for nonviolence while the other one called for something more direct. That Saturday night would see the start of the Nashville riots. Many in Nashville blamed Carmichael for leading the riots even though he was not even in the area. Learning about the early life of Perry Wallace was really fascinating as a Nashville native. I loved learning about the history of Nashville, and how life was like in Nashville for a young Black man. I think students would enjoy reading about life as a young Black man in the south and compare it to now. What are the differences? What are the similarities? How far have we actually come since then. There is a lot of basketball in this book, but it's so much more than just basketball. It's about Wallace playing on a basically all White team. It's about how Wallace felt on Vanderbilt's campus as a young Black man. The experience of Perry Wallace should be shared with as many people as possible, especially our youth. Maraniss writes in a way that would draw in reluctant readers. His writing is smooth and vivid. The smoothness makes the book fly by, while the vividness make the encounters Wallace face that much more damning. Teachers, I know you will want to use this in your classroom once you have read this. It needs to be in your classroom, and students across the United States should be reading this book. But specifically, the students of Nashville need to read this book. They need to know

Nashville's history. We shouldn't hide it. We should learn from it.

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