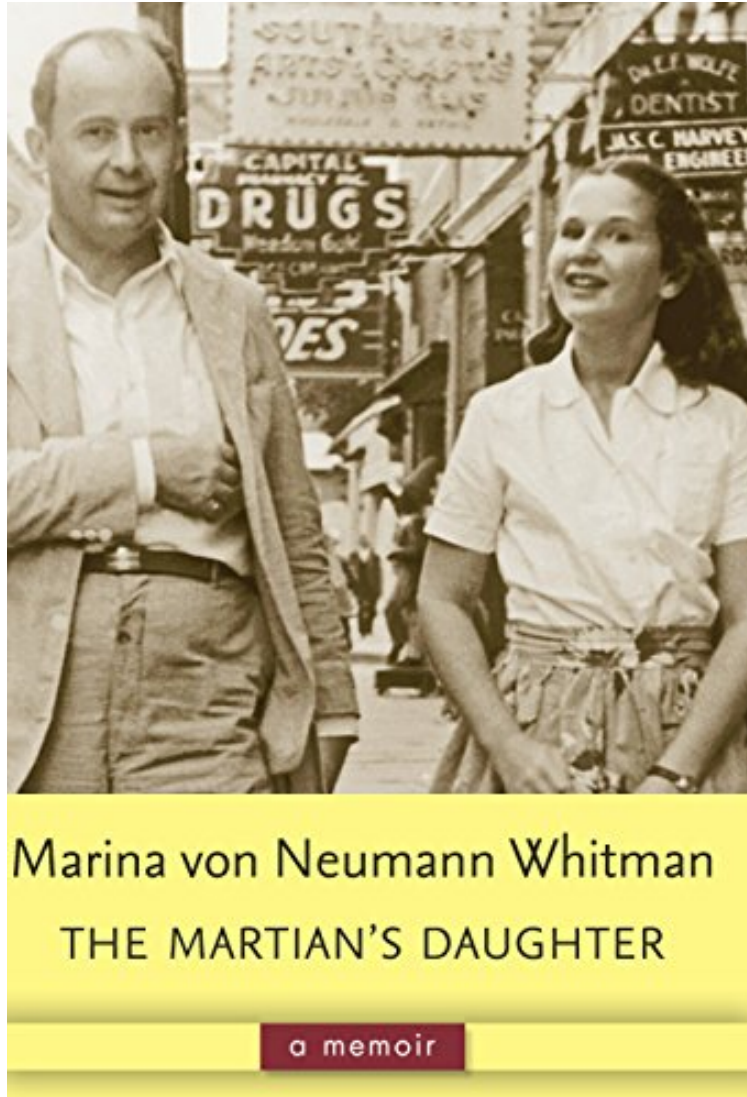


(Ebook free) The Martian's Daughter: A Memoir

The Martian's Daughter: A Memoir

Marina Whitman

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Marina Whitman : The Martian's Daughter: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Martian's Daughter: A Memoir:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Couldn't put it down... wonderful jorney!By D. O'ConnorWhat a wonderful book! Packed full of interesting and charming tales and tidbits, in beautiful use of words. More than I expected and I couldn't put it down. Every sentence is packed and interesting as you journey through the decades with Mrs. Whitman.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting title, interesting storyBy Gma SaraMartina Whitman's story is not a saga of growing up with a great scientist father, though she covers that aspect of her life sufficiently. She makes it clear that although she was recognized as her father's daughter, she was reared

equally in the home of her intellectually, emotionally, and socially powerfully mother, whose gifts contributed equally to Martina's character and personality. Neither of these parents was an obvious role model for the whole woman she became, and it's hard to see how the child's peculiar, privileged, alienated, disjointed, upbringing formed an integrated personality. Her obviously talented mother failed to create an official role for herself in the world and, one infers, was an uneasy (if not chronically disgruntled) wife and perhaps somewhat detached (?) mother, whom Marina nonetheless seems to have admired and trusted. Her father likewise had some difficulty with relationships and, predictably, gave parenthood a relatively low priority. The flaws in this assessment are two. First, there is a clear sense that Marina was not, as a youngster, in charge of her own life. Her parents accepted and fulfilled their responsibility to plan and provide, and though divorced, they did it without conflict. The second is her father's regular correspondence with Marina throughout her adolescence. The letters she quotes are as respectful, affectionate, and wise, as a daughter could wish. This combination of parental exceptions surely accounts for Marina's security in the world and trust in herself, a confidence that may have wavered occasionally but never cracked. It was this self-confidence that led to her best-ever decision, the one that made all her other critical choices possible and allowed her to succeed each time: she married the right partner. Few men could have been both strong enough to pull in her harness and flexible enough to follow her around. Her professional career might have been possible if she had remained single, but she couldn't have "had it all" without this particular husband, who was obviously the wind beneath her personal and domestic wings. His self-confidence must have been as great as hers; thank goodness, he didn't have as much to prove. Well, of course he didn't. It was Martina whose father was a Martian. I read a review that was critical of this memoir because it didn't reward the reader's curiosity about the Martian. I don't understand why the reviewer would have expected this book to do that. It's about von Neumann's daughter, as the title clearly states and as written. Mrs. Whitman has superbly delineated the experience of being the Martian's daughter. What disappointed me, unreasonably, I admit, was the absence of detail about how she managed, operationally. Did she have nannies or boarding schools? Who went to parent/teacher conferences? Did the kids ever travel with her? Was the marital era of bickering and quarrels worse or better because of her professional distractions? She must have been the primary breadwinner: how did they navigate those shoals? The author was kind enough at the end of her story to offer some closure, at least. Throughout the book, she spares her children: I recall no "cute-kid" stories. But at the end, she tells us that they "turned out" OK professionally and, more important to me, in their family systems and relationships. Best of all, IMO, she winds it up with what all of us so need to know: it's not necessarily personal defects that have kept us from being her and, in fact, she isn't altogether different from us. Really. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Inside view By J. Marsh I had never heard of Ms. Whitman until I saw her interviewed on C-Span's Book TV. I have watched numerous such interviews and enjoy all of them, but perhaps because I am currently attempting to become more informed about economics, I was motivated to purchase her book. The variety of Ms. Whitman's life/professional experiences in different sectors of our economy gives me a much better understanding of the link between public and private sector relationships. Also, the underlying details she includes about the gender-based barriers she faced throughout her career amount to a decades long window into U.S. women's history during the 2nd half of the 20th century. For me, it started out slow, because I was not that interested in her father, who accomplished so much in his relatively short life span, and who she obviously holds in the highest regard. But I remember remarks from other high profile authors, including Condoleezza Rice, Barack Obama most recently, Sonia Sotomayor, that as they began to write about their professional journeys, they realized they could not do justice to their individual achievements without including a heavy dose about their beginnings. After all, it's a part of who they are. As I continued reading and as her life experiences moved from one sector of our economy to another, as well as her thoughtful discussions of the companies on whose Boards of Directors she served, each chapter became more interesting. Her observations about GM management parallel those made by Steve Rattner, in "Overhaul", another fascinating book. Ms Whitman has shared her experiences in such a personal and straight forward manner that I was easily able to identify with her. And to make matters better, she is a terrific writer, in her own right! I have shared my enthusiasm about and have recommended this book to everyone who will listen.

One of the five Hungarian scientific geniuses dubbed "the Martians" by their colleagues, John von Neumann is often hailed as the greatest mathematician of the twentieth century and even as the greatest scientist after Einstein. He was a key figure in the Manhattan Project; the inventor of game theory; the pioneer developer of the modern stored-program electronic computer; and an adviser to the top echelons of the American military establishment. In *The Martian's Daughter*, Marina von Neumann Whitman reveals intimate details about the famed scientist and explores how the cosmopolitan environment in which she was immersed, the demanding expectations of her parents, and her own struggles to emerge from the shadow of a larger-than-life parent shaped her life and work. Unfortunately, von Neumann did not live to see his daughter rise to become the first or highest-ranking woman in a variety of arenas. Whitman became a noted academic during the 1960s and '70s, casting her teaching and writing in the framework of globalization before the word had been invented; became the first woman ever to serve on the President's Council of Economic Advisers and participated actively in U.S. efforts to reshape the international monetary and financial system

during the early 1970s; pioneered the role of women on the boards of leading multinational corporations; and became the highest-ranking female executive in the American auto industry in the 1980s. In her memoir, Whitman quotes from personal letters from her father and describes her interactions with such figures as Roger Smith of GM and President Nixon. She also details the difficulties she encountered as an early entrant into a world dominated by men and how she overcame the obstacles to, in her words, "have it all."

"Flipping through the pages of Marina von Neumann Whitman's life...feels like viewing several extraordinary movies in one sitting."—Tom Walsh, Detroit Free Press (Tom Walsh Detroit Free Press 2012-08-19) About the Author Marina von Neumann Whitman is Professor of Business Administration and Public Policy at the University of Michigan.