

# Althea Gibson: Always Wanted to Be Somebody



## Althea Gibson: I Always Wanted To Be Somebody

by Alan Lightman

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 1700 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 153 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Althea Gibson, a trailblazing athlete and a true pioneer, made history by becoming the first African American to win Wimbledon and the US Open. Her remarkable journey, marked by determination, resilience, and unwavering spirit, continues to inspire generations. This article delves into the life and legacy of Althea Gibson, shedding light on her achievements and the impact she had on breaking down racial barriers in the world of tennis.

## Early Life and Passion for Tennis

Althea Gibson was born on August 25, 1927, in Silver, South Carolina. Her family moved to Harlem, New York, when she was three years old. Growing up in a poor neighborhood, Althea faced numerous challenges but found solace and escape in sports. She discovered her passion for tennis at the Harlem River Tennis Courts, where she honed her skills and developed a fierce competitive spirit.

## Overcoming Racial Barriers

In the 1940s and 1950s, racial segregation was rampant in the United States, and tennis was no exception. African American players were often denied entry into tournaments and faced discrimination on and off the

court. Despite these obstacles, Althea Gibson remained determined to break through the color barrier and compete at the highest level.

In 1950, Gibson made history by becoming the first African American to compete in the US Nationals (now known as the US Open). Although she lost in the first round, her participation marked a significant step forward in the fight for racial equality in tennis.

### **Triumph at Wimbledon and the US Open**

In 1956, Althea Gibson's dream of winning Wimbledon became a reality. She defeated Angela Mortimer in the final, becoming the first African American to win the prestigious tournament. The following year, she made history again by winning the US Open, becoming the first African American to win a Grand Slam singles title.



Gibson's victories at Wimbledon and the US Open sent shockwaves through the tennis world and beyond. Her achievements shattered racial barriers and inspired countless others to pursue their dreams regardless of their race or background.

### **Legacy and Impact**

Althea Gibson's influence extended far beyond the tennis court. Her success as an African American athlete helped to break down racial stereotypes and pave the way for future generations of athletes. She became a role model for young people of all races, proving that with perseverance and determination, anything is possible.

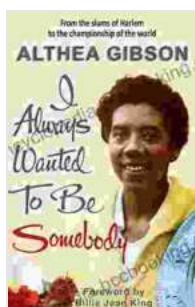
In addition to her tennis career, Gibson also excelled in other areas, including golf and singing. She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1971 and the Women's Sports Foundation International Hall of Fame in 1988.



After retiring from tennis, Gibson dedicated herself to mentoring young athletes and working for social justice. She passed away in 2003, leaving behind a legacy of triumph, inspiration, and a lasting impact on the world of sports and beyond.

Althea Gibson's journey is a testament to the power of determination and the human spirit. She shattered racial barriers, triumphed over adversity, and inspired countless others to reach for their dreams. Her legacy as a trailblazer in tennis and a role model for generations to come will continue to inspire and motivate for years to come.

The book, "Althea Gibson: Always Wanted to Be Somebody," provides a comprehensive and captivating account of Althea Gibson's life and accomplishments. Through vivid storytelling and in-depth research, the book captures the essence of this extraordinary athlete and the impact she had on the world of tennis and beyond.



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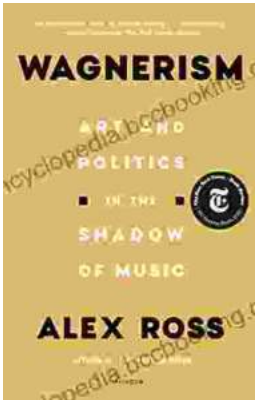
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