In this fascinating and meticulously researched book, bestselling historian Arthur Herman sheds new light on two of the most universally recognizable icons of the twentieth century, and reveals how their forty-year rivalry sealed the fate of India and the British Empire.

They were born worlds apart: Winston Churchill to Britain's most glamorous aristocratic family, Mohandas Gandhi to a pious middle-class household in a provincial town in India. Yet Arthur Herman reveals how their lives and careers became intertwined as the twentieth century unfolded. Both men would go on to lead their nations through harrowing trials and two world wars—and become locked in a fierce contest of wills.
that would decide the fate of countries, continents, and ultimately an empire.

Gandhi & Churchill reveals how both men were more alike than different, and yet became bitter enemies over the future of India, a land of 250 million people with 147 languages and dialects and 15 distinct religions—the jewel in the crown of Britain’s overseas empire for 200 years.

Over the course of a long career, Churchill would do whatever was necessary to ensure that India remain British—including a fateful redrawing of the entire map of the Middle East and even risking his alliance with the United States during World War Two.

Mohandas Gandhi, by contrast, would dedicate his life to India’s liberation, defy death and imprisonment, and create an entirely new kind of political movement: satyagraha, or civil disobedience. His campaigns of nonviolence in defiance of Churchill and the British, including his famous Salt March, would become the blueprint not only for the independence of India but for the civil rights movement in the U.S. and struggles for freedom across the world.

Now master storyteller Arthur Herman cuts through the legends and myths about these two powerful, charismatic figures and reveals their flaws as well as their strengths. The result is a sweeping epic of empire and insurrection, war and political intrigue, with a fascinating supporting cast, including General Kitchener, Rabindranath Tagore, Franklin Roosevelt, Lord Mountbatten, and Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. It is also a brilliant narrative parable of two men whose great successes were always haunted by personal failure, and whose final moments of triumph were overshadowed by the loss of what they held most dear.

I say this because Arthur Herman combines a couple qualities that are rare in a historian who writes for the mass market. First, he is a first-rate, PhD-trained historian, so you can trust his research. Second, unlike many scholars who try to write for this market, he writes in a straightforward style, unencumbered with academic jargon and pretense. I have read a lot of history over the last 20 years, both popular and academic, and he and David Hackett Fischer are in a class by themselves. The bottom line for this book is that you can trust his research and you will enjoy his writing.
The decision to do a dual biography of Churchill and Gandhi was brilliant. First, it gives the reader a break from focusing on one person through an entire book and allows the writer to change scenes frequently, not unlike techniques used in movies or TV. Martin Dugard used this effectively in Into Africa, his book about Stanley and Livingston and their classic trek through Africa. Second, the occasional interaction between the two, or at least the collision between their differing visions for India, allows Herman to link the two men and their stories from time to time. Lastly, they are simply two of the 20th century's most important figures. We can learn much from both men and thanks to Hermans comfortable prose we can enjoy doing it.

After I read Gandhi and Churchill, I watched Richard Attenboroughs (spelling?) 190 minute movie on Gandhi. I would recommend that to anyone who reads this book.

One question haunts me about Gandhi. His answer to the problem of Hitler and the Nazis was very unsatisfying. He basically said that the targets of his genocide should willingly die, rather than to defend themselves. Right before his death, he also scolded Hindus who ran from mobs of Muslims who were trying to kill them, essentially calling them cowards. I am a Christian who tries to take Christ and the Bible seriously and I see true self-defense and the defense of the defenseless as something that is required of me. While there is a lot to be said for nonviolence and peaceful civil disobedience as a first resort, I dont agree with using Gandhis position when people are faced with an implacable foe...Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, al Quida, etc.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Gandhi & Churchill: The Epic Rivalry that Destroyed an Empire and Forged Our Age by Arthur Herman - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!