

## Document Citation

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# a.k.a. Cassius Clay

(~~Documentary - Color and~~  
black-white) ✓

United Artists release of William Cayton production. Stars Cassius Clay. Directed by Jim Jacobs. Screenplay, Bernard Evslin; camera, Izzy Mankofsky; editor, Ed Bartesch. Reviewed at Samuel Goldwyn Studios, Oct. 27, 1970. (MPAA Rating: GP). Running time: 78 mins.

This novelty documentary on Cassius Clay should get a good sendoff in its Nov. 4 national release, in light of outcome of last week's (26) Clay-Jerry Quarry brawl in Atlanta. Its timeliness undoubtedly will pay off handsomely, particularly among sports-oriented and black audiences. For general audiences it will mean nothing.

Career of the former champ is limned in detail both in countless clips and special photography, as the scene seldom wanders from Clay, no shrinking violet he as vocally and fistically he pounds over his theme that he's "the greatest." While no data is available, it becomes clear that all the fight scenes and sequences are drawn from the tremendous fight film library of Jim Jacobs, credited as director, who reputedly has acquired footage from every fight ever filmed.

Film takes cognizance of Clay's refusal to be drafted, his conviction and release during his appeal, both through the commentary of Richard Kiley, who acts as film's narrator, and boxer himself, apparently in an effort to give Clay's side of the issue. Footage, too, touches on his acceptance into the Black Muslims. Primarily, however, picture is designed to follow Clay's career from the time he started fighting at 12, his first real fight at 15, his winning the Olympics title and ultimately being sponsored by a group of 11 Louisville millionaires, through his championship.

Special sequences were lensed of Clay with Cus D'Amato, the trainer, in which they gab back and forth, latter playing down Clay's prowess and Clay defending himself by inserted clips from fights they are discussing to bear out his boasts. Footage is long on fighter's claims from everything from greatness to prettiness, both with Clay on-screen—clips and special shooting—and his voice off-screen.

Plenty of interesting sequences are shown on some of his fights, with British champ Henry Cooper, Sonny Liston and Floyd Patterson, among others. The controversial Liston knockout is shown, then repeated, as Clay in special footage illustrates the punch he claims kayoed the older man. His invasion of Liston's training quarters is there, too.

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wood comic, is in several shots with Clay, who credits Step with one of his knockout blows, and several long sequences focus on the late Malcolm X. Joe Louis likewise had a share in backward glimpsing.

Producer William Cayton has done a showmanly job of documenting his subject despite fact that occasionally there is no continuity. Kiley narrates forcefully from script written by Bernard Evslin.

Whit.

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