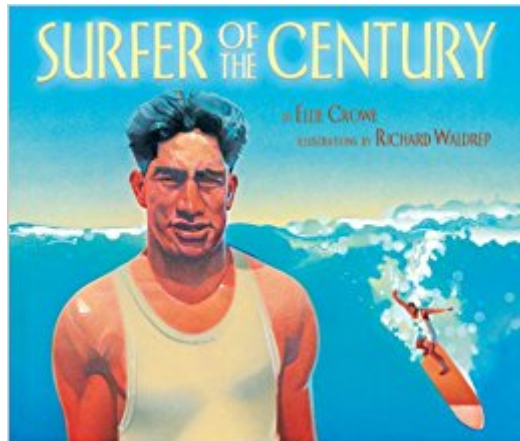




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# Surfer Of The Century: The Life Of Duke Kahanamoku



## Synopsis

Growing up in Honolulu with the Pacific Ocean as his backyard, Duke Kahanamoku learned to swim and surf at a young age. By his early twenties, Duke's lightning-fast swimming won him a place on the 1912 United States Olympic team and a gold medal in the 100-meter freestyle race. Over the years Duke struggled with racism and financial troubles, but by the end of his twenty-year Olympic career, he was a six-time medal winner. Although a swimming champion, Duke's passion was surfing. He traveled the world, introducing surfboarding to Australia and the east and west coasts of the United States. Considered the father of modern surfing, Duke spread his love of the ocean and Hawai'i wherever he went. Throughout his life Duke Kahanamoku was beloved for his modesty, sportsmanship, and amazing skill in the water. Today he remains a legendary waterman and an inspiration to all to live life with aloha. aloha: love, kindness, grace, affection, compassion; also traditional Hawaiian greeting or farewell

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 980 (What's this?)

Paperback: 48 pages

Publisher: Lee & Low Books; Reprint edition (June 15, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1600604617

ISBN-13: 978-1600604614

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 0.2 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,228,342 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in [Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Olympics](#) #263 in [Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Water Sports](#) #606 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Sports & Recreation](#)

Age Range: 7 - 12 years

Grade Level: 2 - 7

## Customer Reviews

This strikingly illustrated picture-book biography celebrates Duke Kahanamoku, who broke records as an Olympic swimmer and introduced surfing around the globe. Crowe begins in 1917 with an exciting account of 27-year-old Kahanamoku's nearly two-mile ride on a giant wave. Subsequent

spreads hark back to Kahanamoku's early years, when he lived across the road from Waikiki Beach, through swimming training that earned him Olympic gold and worldwide fame. Although Crowe references the racial discrimination that Kahanamoku encountered, younger readers may still need help putting some generalizations ("public beaches and pools on the mainland were mostly closed to people of color," for example) into historical context. In addition, the short, lively text, suitable for reluctant readers, loses focus as it shifts between Kahanamoku's swimming and surfing accomplishments. A thorough time line helps pull things back together, while dramatic colored-pencil-and-gouache artwork enhances the sense of Kahanamoku's iconic persona in glossy stylized images of the muscled athlete charging through sparkling waters. A welcome introduction to a groundbreaking figure rarely covered in books for youth. Engberg, Gillian --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

...father of modern surfing, who battled racism, politics and financial difficulties on his way to becoming a gold- and silver-medal-winning Olympic swimmer.. Waldrep's stunning Art Deco-style airbrush illustrations complement this rich picture. --Kirkus Reviewsbiography brings to light a seminal figure in the history of surfing and Olympic swimming. ... a portrait of a man whose humility, good nature, and hard work allowed him to forge a path of success despite a background completely lacking in privilege --The Horn Book Guide..Crowe depicts his encounters with racial discrimination with sensitivity, underscoring the courage and character he developed to face these setbacks...vibrant, action-filled illustrations... Well researched and fact-filled. -- Starred Review --School Library Journal

This (true) story is an inspiration to adults and children, alike. And it is beautifully illustrated to boot. I found the book on a trip to Hawaii and fell in love with the images. I was familiar with Duke Kahanamoku, but not with all the details of his life. I was therefore pleased to learn so much from this story, aimed at children. Well written. My friends' kids loved it. I bought two copies for myself; one to keep and one to cut up and frame, as the illustrations are so exceptionally lovely.

Inspiring story about the life of surfing legend, Duke Kahanamoku, and how he popularized surfing, the sport of ancient Hawaiian kings. My eight year old loved it!

Nicely written and documented with wonderful illustrations! A great blend of personal success and a historical perspective of the times.

This book had great details and had my students wanting to re-read it numerous times. THAT is the mark of a great book. It was totally engaging and beautifully illustrated.

Duke Kahanamoku was an Olympic gold medalist, the father of modern surfing, and an icon of Hawaiian culture. Crowe tells the story of Kahanamoku's boyhood in Honolulu where daily swims in the ocean developed his strength and technique. Qualifying for the Stockholm Olympics in 1912, he made friends with another American athlete, Jim Thorpe. Duke almost missed his first Olympic race because he overslept. In a wonderful display of Olympic spirit, his chief competitor, Cecil Helay, from Australia, refused to swim unless the officials let Duke compete. Such magnanimity is hard to imagine in today's endorsement rich, high-stakes winner-takes-home the-Wheaties-box environment. He popularized surfing and promoted Hawaii all his life. Duke's Creed of Aloha is a fitting ending to an excellent biography of a man who always exhibited good sportsmanship and Olympic ideals. Richard Waldrep perfectly illustrates the story with wonderful full color illustrations that evoke vintage art deco travel posters.

Duke Kahanamoku, widely regarded as the person who spread the popularity of modern surfing, also won six Olympic medals over the course of swimming career. This fascinating book tells the story of Duke's upbringing on the Hawaiian island of O'ahu and his quick progression up the ranks to become Hawaii's fastest young swimmer and later an Olympic champion. He also promoted the sport of surfing, which was previously only known in Hawaii, in Australia and the United States, and he introduced the idea of using surfboards for rescue and lifeguard operations. Woven throughout the interesting biographical account are powerful economics lessons related to scarcity and discrimination. Financial constraints and barriers associated with racism contributed to the challenges that Duke faced in his quest to compete internationally and become the "fastest swimmer in the world."

Who brought surfing to Australia? Who invented the Hawaiian flutterkick? Who was the first Hawaiian to win an Olympic medal? Who was sheriff of Oahu for over two decades? Who championed the use of a paddleboard for ocean rescues? Duke Kahanamoku, that's who. Ellie Crowe describes Kahanamoku's accomplishments in her book, *Surfer of the Century: The Life of Duke Kahanamoku*. The writing is concise, and the illustrations by Richard Waldrep are very complementary to the text. By its very nature, this book is a summary, meant as a general overview

of Kahanamoku, probably for kids aged 10-12, but interesting for all who want to know more about Duke. Kahanamoku is really a "feel good" story, and Crowe makes note of both his insecurities and his extraordinary accomplishments. Read this one with your keiki.

This is such an interesting story! My 9-year-old son read it all in one sitting, which is rare! It's about Duke Kahanamoku, the swimmer and surfer who brought surfing to the world. It's fascinating to read about how he went to Australia and the aussies were amazed to see him ride waves on a board. His trials to get into the Olympics as a swimmer are also really interesting- Duke had such an unusual life. The book is very well-written, and each story from Duke's life draws you in. The illustrations are really nice too- lots of blue ocean. It's a very attractive book, with different colored pages where the writing is, which is something I haven't seen in a book before. Gorgeous!

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