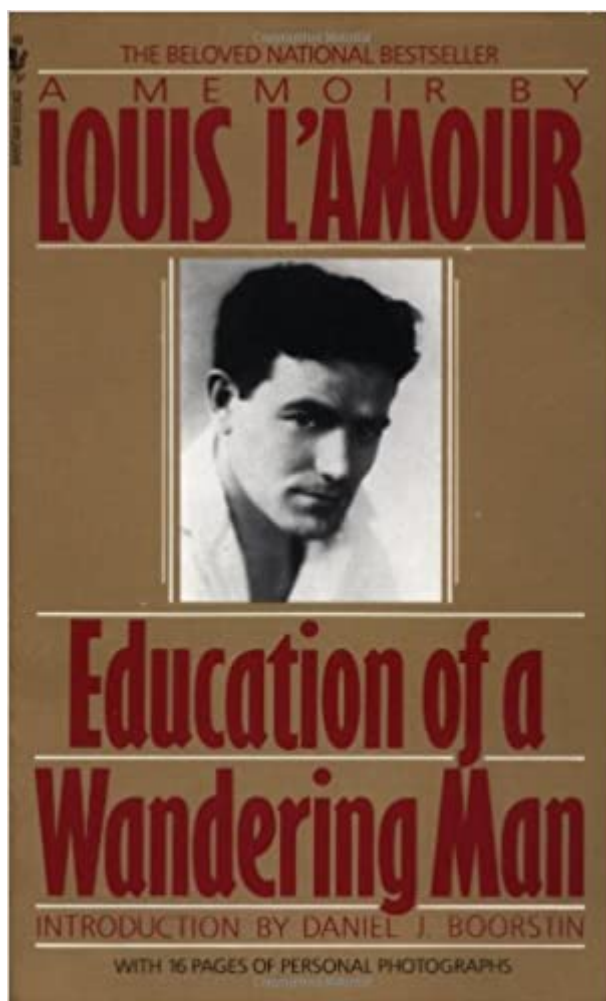


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# Education Of A Wandering Man



## Synopsis

From his decision to leave school at fifteen to roam the world, to his recollections of life as a hobo on the Southern Pacific Railroad, as a cattle skinner in Texas, as a merchant seaman in Singapore and the West Indies, and as an itinerant bare-knuckled prizefighter across small-town America, here is Louis L'Amour's memoir of his lifelong love affair with learning--from books, from yondering, and from some remarkable men and women--that shaped him as a storyteller and as a man. Like classic L'Amour fiction, *Education of a Wandering Man* mixes authentic frontier drama--such as the author's desperate efforts to survive a sudden two-day trek across the blazing Mojave desert--with true-life characters like Shanghai waterfront toughs, desert prospectors, and cowboys whom Louis L'Amour met while traveling the globe. At last, in his own words, this is a story of a one-of-a-kind life lived to the fullest . . . a life that inspired the books that will forever enable us to relive our glorious frontier heritage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is for the most fervent L'Amour fans only, those who consider it of moment, for example, to peruse his extensive reading lists for 1930, '31, '32, '33, '34, '35, '37 (the '36 list was lost). So banal is this memoir that one wonders if the late author regarded it as complete, or as the first draft it reads like. Ignoring chronology, L'Amour flits across his '30s' experiences in the western U.S. and Far East as seaman, ranch hand, mine guard, hobo. Interspersed are discourses on boxing, Buddhism, whatever comes to mind, on books he read by the likes of Shakespeare, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Nietzsche, plus pedestrian social observations and homilies. We learn that he was born

(when?) in North Dakota, one of five children of a veterinarian father; that, quitting school at age 15, he wandered for a spell; that his wife's name is Kathy and that he had children (how many?). Author of more bestsellers than can be tracked, accounted to be a superb story-teller, L'Amour is surprisingly superficial in his own yarn. Photos. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Despite being disjointed, rambling, and repetitious, these unfinished memoirs by the noted Western author (who died last June) possess a raw enthusiasm for life and for books that is too rarely encountered today. For most of the book, L'Amour recounts scattered anecdotes of his knockabout years as a sailor, prize fighter, silver miner, and longshoreman who ranged from New Orleans to Singapore with a book in his hip pocket. The memoir portions are tall tales, well told, but the "education" portions are mere catalogs of books that will hardly interest even the most loyal fans. Still, L'Amour's sincere love of books and reading and his faith in humanity lend the book considerable charm.- Michael Edmonds, State Historical Soc. of Wisconsin, Madison Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Lots of little nuggets of joy in here. I didn't know much about Louis L'Amour before reading this, afterwards, I don't know how much I know but I liked what I saw. I was a book addict but L'Amour puts me to shame. Like me growing up, he had a book in his pocket constantly and read whenever he stood still for two minutes. Unlike me, he left home, had adventures, saw the world while doing it. That's the other fascinating thing about this book: it opens a window to a world that's gone for good. L'Amour actually met some of the men who tamed the West, he listened to him, absorbed their stories, saw the land. This book, and all his books, are a link to those times. I'm way too fond of my comfort to even try what he did, to live by my wits and from the strength of my back. But he did, he really lived his life. There isn't a lot about his private life, his loves, his emotional development. He just suddenly is married and has kids with no mention of the woman or how they met. There are a number of strange voids here, but this one stands out considering how much a woman can teach a wandering man or a non-wandering one. But then, there's a midwestern prudishness that seems to be a part of his core, which is fine. Not everyone is a libertine or even wants to be one. A major part of the book is a discussion of what he read and what he thought about it. Trivia, sure, but interesting. It's not a bad booklist for any self-educated person. Got me interested in Livy, which I've added to my Kindle library (Technology is cool). Lots of little tidbits I enjoyed, like how to fight four men at once...something that came up in his early life more than once, it seems. Or what it's like to

survey a mine or why you have to shoot rabbits or starve if you live off the contents of your garden. The details stand out, like little scenes that are self-contained and isolated. One thing, though the book is worth a read, it was published posthumously and with minimal edits, I suspect. So there are repeated phrases and thoughts and oftentimes there will be tangents that don't seem to serve any purpose. If the man had lived to revise and publish it himself, I'm sure it would come out differently.

As one who tried, this reader can attest that the best lessons and personal improvement are not accomplished in classrooms: they happen while experiencing the Real World. Someone who attended school with Louis in Jamestown told me he always was the most curious and smart person in the room, but the repetition and error bored him to tears. As a former high school teacher, now college professor, I see the sad effects all the time of "school" on people who should be living and learning. While this "education" system is my place to be, I know I will never touch as many lives as Louis L'Amour does through his books and the people, places, and times he so keenly shared/shares through them.

I have never convinced myself to read any of L'Amour's Western fiction. My only prior exposure to his work being *Last of the Breed*, I book I read when published, again a few years later and just now as an audio book. In *Education of a Wandering Man*, the author writes of bygone times, the American West recalled at the edge of living recollection in the 1920's. He also writes of his own youth circa the 1920's, a time now lost to living memory. The book is a worthy read for those reasons alone. As one would hope, L'Amour's reputation as a storyteller is amply supported in this book. I have only one minor criticism. The illustrations include a photo of a countess (WWII) but no information on her that I noticed. Perhaps this is a late addition by the publisher.

I borrowed this book from my mom went on to lose the copy she gave me, ordered it on and then found my mom's copy. Even though I was disappointed to find the first copy now I have this book to add to my own library. Good read esp. if you're not the Western novel type and would just like to read about Louis L'Amour's life.

I will say, honestly, that I am not familiar with this writer or the other books he's written. I suggested this book and the reviews seemed promising. I must say that I really didn't care for the book. It had a few paragraphs worth highlighting and I did like the general premiss. It was inspiring to hear of a man's life, which was spent adrift in the world, traveling here and there. It gave inspiration to me to

read much more than I do and really opened my mind to the importance of the written word, not just for education, but to tell the story of "us" and our lives and history. He made a point that touched deeply for me. My parents just passed away and in going through their stuff we unearthed some pictures of my great great great grandparents and even some land deeds from further back to the 1830's, to the first generation of my family that came to the united states. I found this material so interesting, but there is nothing of substance to tell me what these relatives were like or what their struggles were. Louis L'Amour touched on how important the written word is to us and our story and I can't agree more. My biggest criticism of this book is that the story of his life seem to be in random, rambling order and throughout the book there are paragraphs of what he read at the time. It gets a little old after a while...i mean we get it, you read everything, twice. So, as I said, it's a so-so book in my opinion but that's just me.

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