

CASE STUDY #4
FROM A CULTURAL STUDIES MASTERS' THESIS
TO A BIOGRAPHY ABOUT A MUSICIAN'S CAREER

Title

King of Soca: The Ultimate Insider The Ultimate Insider Reveals How Machel Montano Became One of the World's Most Popular Soca Artists

From the back cover

Headline: "What did it take to become **King of Soca?**"

The iconic Machel Jesus Montano: a small-village Trinidadian boy, still-born and exchanged at birth, grew up to become Winer Boi, then HD, and, ultimately, MONK Monté. In 2022, the acclaimed, award-winning King of Soca celebrates forty years in calypso and soca music—with a career that began at the age of seven—and now boasts more than a million fans!

This unique biography details how Montano achieved his remarkable success and longevity in a cut-throat industry. Who better to tell the tale than the ultimate insider: his mother, manager, confidante, and now biographer—Elizabeth "Lady" Montano?

In this book, you will get a first-hand account of Montano's rise to stardom, including never-before-revealed insights into:

- The Winer Boi, HD, and MONK Monté years
- His evolution, spiritual development, and re-inventions
- His collaborations and experimentations
- The historical calypso and soca landscape that shaped his career
- Photographs and newspaper articles from his massive archive

Montano's story brings to light what it *really* takes to rise to and remain at the peak of a music career that spans four decades as one of the most popular soca singers in the world. Whether you are a fan of Montano's 45+ discography and energetic, fast-paced style or simply interested in how a successful career is built, this engaging biography is sure not to disappoint.

Background

I worked with the author as editor for her masters' thesis, which was an analysis of the career of a highly successful Soca artist, Machel Montano, work of approximately 380 pages. About a year later, the author contacted me about revising her thesis into a book. This particular author was a joy to work with and listened to my suggestions carefully as they were presented in the developmental edit report and in online discussions. I began by asking her to find COMPS, which we discussed: what she liked/disliked. Then I had her flash write thirty pages—without stopping to edit—to see if she really had the enthusiasm required to write this book. At that point, I asked her to write her sloppy copy, again without editing, which the author then gave to me for a developmental edit.

The work was intended to be an art book with lots of photos, anecdotes, and features added to supplement the main story.

We decided upon the hero's journey as a suitable story arch for this book. I worked closely with the author to organize the material, decide what was "in" and what was "out," and build the scenes.

Challenges

Unrealistic timelines.

Project assistant.

Specific challenges

1. Copyright permissions for large number of poetic excerpts.
2. Style (personal, reflective)
3. Restructuring.
4. Rewrite introduction.
5. Placement of anecdotes and quotes.
6. Literature review.
7. Footnotes.
8. Introduction.
9. Story arch.
10. Extra bits.