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Hollywood Divas: The Good, The Bad, And The Fabulous (Encore Film Book Classics 8)



James Robert Parish



Synopsis

Part of the Encore Film Book Classics series, this is a reprint of the original text to *Hollywood Divas* by James Robert Parish. Which slapstick redhead reduced Joan "Mommie Dearest" Crawford to tears? Which tragic songbird secretly carried vodka to her ambulance as she was carted off on a stretcher? Can you name the blonde prima donna who went on a shopping spree so wild that she bought a whole town? These are but a few of the high jinks of Hollywood's favorite "It Girls," whose overdrive to personal and career excess earned them the rank of diva. Each of the book's 70 chapters reveals in rich detail the subject's often torturous road to fame and how it shaped her oversized personality, needs, and demands. This volume delivers an eye-popping backstage peek into the lusty private lives and cutthroat careers of Hollywood's most memorable bad girls over the decades. The iconoclastic Hollywood Divas presented are: Jean Arthur, Lucille Ball, Tallulah Bankhead, Theda Bara, Drew Barrymore, Ethel Barrymore, Kim Basinger, Clara Bow, Louise Brooks, Brett Butler, Mariah Carey, Cher, Joan Collins, Joan Crawford, Dorothy Dandridge, Bette Davis, Dolores Del Rio, Marlene Dietrich, Shannen Doherty, Patty Duke, Faye Dunaway, Jane Fonda, Kay Francis, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Greta Garbo, Ava Gardner, Judy Garland, Greer Garson, Paulette Goddard, Melanie Griffith, Jean Harlow, Susan Hayward, Rita Hayworth, Sonja Henie, Katharine Hepburn, Miriam Hopkins, Whitney Houston, Betty Hutton, Janet Jackson, Grace Kelly, Veronica Lake, Hedy Lamarr, Jennifer Lopez, Jeanette MacDonald, Madonna, Jayne Mansfield, Liza Minnelli, Marilyn Monroe, Maria Montez, Demi Moore, Mae Murray, Vera Ralston, Joan Rivers, Julia Roberts, Roseanne, Diane Ross, Meg Ryan, Norma Shearer, Cybill Shepherd, Britney Spears, Sharon Stone, Barbra Streisand, Gloria Swanson, Elizabeth Taylor, Lana Turner, Lupe Velez, Mae West, Shelley Winters, Natalie Wood, and Loretta Young. A must-have volume for every pop-culture fanatic, *Hollywood Divas* promises to tantalize you with juicy tidbits and saucy scandals that earned each of these devilish darlings the title of diva. JAMES ROBERT PARISH, a former entertainment reporter, publicist, and book series editor, is the author of many published major biographies and reference books on the entertainment industry including *Whitney Houston: We Will Always Love You*; *The Hollywood Book of Extravagance*; *It's Good to Be the King: The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks*; *The Hollywood Book of Breakups*; *Fiascos: Hollywood's Iconic Flops*; *The Hollywood Book of Love*; *Jet Li*; *The Encyclopedia of Ethnic Groups in Hollywood*; *The Hollywood Book of Death*; *Gus Van Sant*; *Whoopi Goldberg*; *Rosie O'Donnell's Story*; *The Unofficial "Murder, She Wrote" Casebook*; *Today's Black Hollywood*; *Let's Talk! America's Favorite TV Talk Show Hosts*; *Prison Pictures from Hollywood*; *Prostitution in Hollywood Films*; *The Great Cop Pictures*; *Ghosts and Angels in Hollywood Films*; *Pirates and Seafaring Swashbucklers*

on the Hollywood Screen; Gays and Lesbians in Mainstream Cinema; Hollywood's Great Love Teams; and The Fox Girls. Mr. Parish is a frequent on-camera interviewee on cable and network TV for documentaries on the performing arts. The author resides in Studio City, California.

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Customer Reviews

The master of film books has done it again! Combining the glamorous, eccentric Divadom of Hollywood's Golden Age with the eccentricities of today's female stars is a fascinating trip. Parish knows well that the movie fan base is growing younger and includes profiles on all of today's controversial female celebrities along with the classic ladies of the silver screen. He also gives the reader a fascinating overview of how temperamental and demanding star behavior gives celebrities fodder to be included in today's "Inquirer/E!TV" mindset media coverage. The profiles are concise, fun and well-researched. I only wish I really cared about the ladies of today the way I do about the female stars of the 30s-50s. They just don't make 'em like they used to! But, If it is a book by Parish, get it.

The term "high maintenance" used to be a liability for movie stars; now it's a prerequisite. At least,

that's one of the two attributes of Diva-hood in motion pictures, the other being talent. As chronicled by James Robert Parish in his latest book, "Hollywood Divas: The Good, the Bad, and the Fabulous," such women have always been the mainstay of movies, they were just known by their own above-the-title names: Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, and Elizabeth Taylor, right up through Cher, Whitney Houston, Sharon Stone and Drew Barrymore. Here is a clever sorority roster of nearly a century's worth of unforgettable screen women from Theda Bara to Jennifer Lopez. What they have in common is that they can dominate a scene simply by entering it (that and make their male co-stars go crazy for them). Parish -- the dean of American film historians with over 40 books to his credit -- has the knack of writing in a tone that is both confident and confidential without sounding pandering, like a friend at a party who happens to know the inside story. We learn, for example, that Miriam Hopkins -- who almost played Scarlett O'Hara -- was smart enough to negotiate her own contracts but too volatile to keep them. We shudder at Demi Moore's contract demands yet admire her for her devotion to her child (if not her husband). And we read how Cybill Shepherd trumped the trash-mongers by the "simple" act of having character. But that's not to say there isn't enough scandal in these pages to grease the gossip gears: unwanted pregnancies, substance abuse, divorces, loonies and lovers abound. Yet it's not embarrassing to read about them. Each essay -- there are 70 plus an introduction -- is well-focused and individual, yet finds the quintessence in each great lady of the screen. An index and huge bibliography wrap up the package.

This book was a compilation of biographical vignettes on a few of the many women celebrities! It was obvious which ones the author liked best because he went on and on at some length and others that he didn't care for were quick little stories! He could have left out all these so called Divas that are still living, with the exception of the ones who have passed since publication of this book. The living we all ready know about and are boring enough as it is! Especially his very lengthy and boring piece on Britney Spears, who deserved none of the sweet things he wrote about her which made me feel he liked her the most! Believe me she did not deserve any of this as did Demi Moore! Then with the fablous silent stars like Clara Bow he only devoted a few short pages of mostly nothing! I'm so glad I did not buy this book! I borrowed it from Prime! A lot of what was written seemed to be taken directly from the INMDB! Most of what was written in this book I had already read on that very web site! I thought this book, by the tone of the title, would be a little more of a "tell-all", but it was a whole lot of mostly boring, all ready known facts or just rambling on nothing of much interest! But it did make me come to the conclusion that "all" but 3 of these so called Divas

were as stupid as the day is long and just as promiscuous, if not more! How these women even got through life with their total lack of brains is beyond me! I read this in about 5 hours & believe me, I am so happy that I did not buy this!

Had to give this book at least 1 star to review it but I would not recommend it unless you like reading People Magazine type biographies, complete with "boxed highlights" in it. All were short, most were contemporary figures and you would get more by reading the gossip mags at the supermarkets (same type of facts and rumors). Of the old Hollywood stars, there were a lot of inconsistencies, half-truths and questionable facts. I have read over 80 full length and extensive bios of old Hollywood stars (pre-1960) by different authors, sometimes several on the same star. In most every one of these articles - I call them articles because they certainly aren't biographies - Mr. Parrish claims that the men were "rumored to be homosexual or bisexual" and the women all had female lovers, as if it were a stated fact and something he could prove beyond the shadow of a doubt. Innuendos and speculations are not part of a good biography. But then dead stars cannot sue for slander or defamation of character. Don't waste your time or money by paying for this book.

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