



Harold Robbins: Author of 79 Park Avenue

By Debbie J.

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Harold Robbins, one of the top-selling novelists of all time, sold more than 750 million copies of some 25 best-selling books printed in 32 languages. He was also one of the most controversial authors: right from the start, with the publication of his first novel written in 1948, Robbins use of graphic sexuality and violence provoked emotional reactions from critics and the public. A fascinating man, Robbins created an alternate persona for himself, blurring the lines between who he really was and the seemingly autobiographical characters in his novels. There are several alternate (and false) versions of Harold Robbins' early life and upbringing, many of which appear as part of his "real" writer bio in his publications.

Some have claimed it was Robbins natural ability as a liar who continually rewrote his own life that gave him the ability to write so prolifically. Perhaps the sheer quantity of writing he did contributed to a blurring of the lines between fact and fiction. Somewhere along the way, however, Harold Robbins became one of the most popular and well-read novelists in history.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

In the real story, Harold Robbins was born Harold Rubin, on May 21, 1916 in New York City. He was the son of Russian and Polish immigrants who were well-educated and well-off. His biological mother died in childbirth, and he was raised by his father and stepmother in Brooklyn, where his father was a pharmacist. Robbins graduated from George Washington High School at 18, married his high-school sweetheart, Lillian Machinovitch, and got a job as an inventory clerk at a grocery.

His father-in-law helped Harold get hired at Universal Pictures, where he managed to work his way up from shipping clerk to bookkeeping. Eager to become a producer, he began attempting to write. Although he struggled initially, he was spurred on by what he considered the poor quality of the books the studio was considering for screenplays at the time. After reading only 10 pages of *Gone with the Wind*, he declared "I can do better than this." In one version of his life story, he bet the head of production \$100 that he could write a better novel.

Regardless of the truth, his dissatisfaction with the films being produced by Universal Studios sent him in a more commercial direction in his writing. Robbins published Never Love a Stranger, the tale of a street orphan who rises to success, in 1948. This was followed in 1949 by The Dream Merchants. Both novels found immediate success and put him on the path to becoming a best-selling author...

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CHAPTER OUTLINE

Biography of Harold Robbins
+ Introduction
+ Background and Upbringing
+ Major accomplishments and awards
+ Personal Life
+ ...and much more

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