

Kingdom of Fear : Loathsome Secrets of a Star-Crossed Child in the Final Days of the American Century

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Brilliant, provocative, outrageous, and brazen, Hunter S. Thompson's infamous rule breaking -- in his journalism, in his life, and under the law -- changed the shape of American letters, and the face of American icons. Kingdom of Fear traces the course of Thompson's life as a rebel -- from a smart-mouthed Kentucky kid flaunting all authority to a convention-defying journalist who came to personify a wild fusion of fact, fiction, and mind-altering substances. Call it the evolution of an outlaw. Here are the formative experiences that comprise Thompson's legendary trajectory alongside the weird and the ugly. Whether detailing his exploits as a foreign correspondent in Rio, his job as night manager of the notorious O'Farrell Theatre in San Francisco, his epic run for sheriff of Aspen on the Freak Power ticket, or the sensational legal maneuvering that led to his full acquittal in the famous 99 Days trial, Thompson is at the peak of his narrative powers in Kingdom of Fear. And this boisterous, blistering ride illuminates as never before the professional and ideological risk taking of a literary genius and transgressive icon.

Kingdom of Fear is billed as a memoir, but in essence, all of Hunter S. Thompson's books could fit into this category since his life and work have always been tightly bound together by a mythology largely of his own making. (After all, this is the man who, before earning a single dollar as a writer, began meticulously saving a copy of every letter he ever sent.) Still, this is certainly an unconventional memoir, but then what would you expect from the father of gonzo journalism? In these pages Thompson manages to dig deep and reveal a few "loathsome secrets" without offering the kind of personal details he has always avoided. His childhood, for instance, is basically summed up in a sentence: "I look back on my youth with great fondness, but I would not recommend it as a working model to others." He does, however, reflect upon his considerable legacy, including his well-known, and admittedly exaggerated, use of controlled substances ("The brutal reality of politics alone would probably be intolerable without drugs"), as well as offer assessments of his own work, such as Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas ("It's as good as The Great Gatsby and better than The Sun Also Rises").

In this collection of twisted parables and outlaw adventures, Thompson writes about his early run-ins with agents of authority and the lessons learned; his stint in the Air Force and the beginning of his journalism career; his unsuccessful, though illuminating, bid for Sheriff of Aspen, Colorado in 1970 as the Freak Power candidate; the casualties and unintended consequences thus far in the War on Terror; and numerous examples of present-day injustice and hypocrisy--all with his characteristic mix of brutal frankness laced with humor. He also offers his own take on state of the Union: "The prevailing quality of life in America--by any accepted methods of measuring--was inarguably freer and more politically open under Nixon than it is today in this evil year of Our Lord 2002." Thompson continues to make even the most deadly serious subject matter endlessly entertaining. --Shawn Carkonen

Hunter S. Thompson's books include Fear and Loathing in America, Screwjack, Hell's Angels, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, The Proud Highway, Better Than Sex, The Rum Diary, and Kingdom of Fear. He was contributor to various national and international publications, including a weekly sports column for ESPN.com.

Hunter S. Thompson died February 2005.

Other Books

Hunter S. Thompson, Please note that the content of this book primarily consists of articles available from Wikipedia or other free sources online. Pages: 26. Chapters: Gonzo journalism, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, Where the Buffalo Roam, Spider Jerusalem, Uncle Duke, Oscar Zeta Acosta, The Rum Diary, Ralph Steadman, Gonzo: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Breakfast with Hunter, Fear and Loathing on the Road to Hollywood. Excerpt: Hunter Stockton Thompson (July 18, 1937 - February 20, 2005) was an American journalist and author who wrote Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (1971) and Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72 (1973). He is credited as the creator of Gonzo journalism, a style of reporting where reporters involve themselves in the action to such a degree that they become central figures of their stories. He is known also for his unrepentant lifelong use of alcohol, LSD, mescaline, and cocaine (among other substances); his love of firearms; his inveterate hatred of Richard Nixon; and his iconoclastic contempt for authoritarianism. While suffering a bout of health problems, he committed suicide in 2005, at the age of 67. Thompson was born in Louisville, Kentucky, the first of three sons, to Jack Robert Thompson (September 4, 1893, Horse Cave, Kentucky - July 3, 1952, Louisville), a public insurance adjuster and World War I veteran, and Virginia Ray Davison (1908, Springfield, Kentucky - March 20, 1998, Louisville), a librarian. His parents were introduced to each other by a friend from Jack's fraternity at the University of Kentucky in September 1934, and were married on November 2, 1935. On December 2, 1943, when Thompson was six years old, the family settled at 2437 Ransdell Avenue, in the Cherokee Triangle neighborhood of The Highlands. On July 3, 1952, when Thompson was 14 years old, his father, aged 58, died of myasthenia gravis. Hunter and his brothers, Davison Wheeler (born June 18, 1940) and James Garnet (February 2, 1949 - March 25, 1993), ..

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