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The Diana Chronicles

THE
Diana
CHRONICLES

TINA
BROWN



Synopsis

Years after her death, Princess Diana remains a mystery. Was she the people's princess, who electrified the world with her beauty and humanitarian missions? Or was she a manipulative, media-savvy neurotic who nearly brought down the monarchy? Only Tina Brown, former Editor-in-Chief of *Tatler*, England's glossiest gossip magazine; *Vanity Fair*; and *The New Yorker* could possibly give us the truth. Tina knew Diana personally and has far-reaching insight into the royals and the Queen herself. In *The Diana Chronicles*, you will meet a formidable female cast and understand as never before the society that shaped them: Diana's sexually charged mother, her scheming grandmother, the stepmother she hated but finally came to terms with, and bad-girl Fergie, her sister-in-law, who concealed wounds of her own. Most formidable of them all was her mother-in-law, the Queen, whose admiration Diana sought till the day she died. Add Camilla Parker-Bowles, the ultimate "other woman" into this combustible mix, and it's no wonder that Diana broke out of her royal cage into celebrity culture, where she found her own power and used it to devastating effect.

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Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed this book. I assume I was reading true facts from someone who was in a position to know. Whatever, the book seemed to be very fair and balanced between Diana and Charles. It showed more of Diana's true personality, and I identified with her. No one in her life had the idea that any young girl should expect to marry a man that was just true to her. How sad. She had that dream and good for her. If she had just been able to coexist with Camilla then everything would have been fine. Appreciated the fact that the book covered a lot of details.

The book is very well written, probably one of the better "Diana" books to come out this year. You won't find much that you haven't read before (big bibliography at the end, if you've heard of it- it's in there), the most irritating thing about it is that the extensive footnotes are also in the back of the book and they barely lead you to the point of interest on the relevant page. History book style, not tabloid like Christopher Andersen's "After Diana". No point in rehashing all 542 pages except to say that Ms. Brown would probably get her face slapped by the Princess for some of the content (I think sometimes even fairly so, but it might balance out in the end), she quotes Paul Burrell many times- yet never misses a chance to bash him (that seems to be a very popular thing to do among Diana writers), and has no use for Camilla. It's worth reading but I won't be taking it off the shelf very often.

Learned a lot, very entertaining. Details I'd never heard, let's you know the true Diana and all the Royal family.

I have always been a fan of Diana as we were only 6 months apart in our age. This book is very informative, I believe unbiased and gives the facts from both sides. I had never read the actual details of her crash so that was informative. I found I could not put the book down. I couldn't wait to get back to it. I learned so much about the dynamics of the monarchy, and you get the humanness of Diana and the struggles she had living in the stuffy rigid monarchy, and her quest to still be herself, and her forever struggle to find love, but yet you get the monarchy's take on Diana too. This is a great book!!!

I could not put this book down! I found my thoughts creeping back to the pages I left behind while I was going about my daily routine of errands & appointments. At first I thought this book would be very anti-Di, but Tina Brown was fair enough to share Princess Diana's positive side as well as Prince Charles's other faults aside from Camilla. I wish though there was more inside scoop on the

growing fondness post-separation between Charles & Diana. It would have been super if Tina Brown added pictures! Wonderful read with lots of inside scoop as well as clarifications on some of the myths, rumours & conspiracy theories.

Knowing that Tina Brown wrote this book, I purchased it expecting a witty but not necessarily incisive rehash of the life of the late Princess of Wales. I was pleased to find not only plenty of wit and lots of glamour, but also a deep, well researched biography. Brown relied not only on published sources but also on interviews with many of Diana's friends, servants, and relations. This, along with her own experience as a journalist and editor covering Diana, makes *The Diana Chronicles* an excellent read. Diana Frances Spencer seemed destined for either obscurity or greatness from the moment of her birth. She disappointed her parents, who desperately wanted a son and heir, and spent her early childhood being more or less ignored in favor of her two older and brighter sisters and her younger brother. Her parents divorced when she was five or six, increasing Diana's isolation and insecurities. During these years she began to develop the maternal instincts for which she became famous and the vindictiveness and cunning for which she was also well known. Brown does an excellent job of describing Diana's antecedents. The Spencer family had been servants and supporters of the Crown for centuries, but as Brown makes clear, it was a Crown and Royal Family which they and other Whig aristocrats controlled and helped create beginning in the eighteenth century. Diana's family home was Althorp House, a magnificent mansion filled with portraits and memories of years of power and influence. Diana was very aware of her heritage and saw herself as a reinforcer and reviver of her family's fortunes. Diana seems to have hoped and planned for a great marriage from an early age. Brown emphasizes Diana's determination to "keep herself tidy" during her teenage years, when most of her contemporaries were partaking of the benefits/problems of the pre-AIDS Sexual Revolution. Diana's self-control paid off when Prince Charles decided that he needed to get married and needed to marry a girl without a history. Diana was in the right place at the right time, seemed innocent and malleable enough, and most importantly had the blessings of Charles' real love, Camilla Parker-Bowles. After Diana's marriage reality quickly infringed on the fairy tale. Brown does an equable job of detailing the numerous sins and errors of both Diana and Charles. Like most people she finally comes down on Diana's side, pointing out that had Charles been willing or able to give up Camilla forever Diana would happily have had 10 children by him and been content to become a willing and cooperative member of the House of Windsor. However, Brown also takes care to critically examine and in many cases debunk many of the stories Diana told about the miserable treatment meted out to her, so that Charles and

the rest of the Royal Family come out far better than Diana intended. The best parts of the book deal with Diana's final years and the tragedy of August 31, 1997. It was heartbreaking to read about and re-experience those sad days, but gratifying to see Brown's justification of and sympathy with the actions of the Royal Family during that time. I also appreciated Brown's sympathetic treatment of Diana's numerous physical and emotional problems, including bulimia. These chapters heightened my sympathy and concern for Diana's sons, who must still have psychic scars. Another reason to read *The Diana Chronicles* is that it is a chronicle of our own recent history. Diana so dominated the popular press in Europe and America for so many years that everybody, even those who otherwise paid little attention to royalty, saw her as a familiar figure and acquaintance. I saw Diana from a distance several times in the 1980s, and I was interested to find in Brown's account corroboration of things I remembered noticing at the time. I watched her at Trooping the Colour in 1987, when she seemed to be ignoring her husband and actually turned her back on him on the Palace balcony. A few days later, I saw her arrive at the Guildhall in the City of London for a function. As she got out of her car the flashbulbs started going off and I saw her put her head down and grimace before seeming to take a breath and force herself to go on. *The Diana Chronicles* helped me understand better what she was probably dealing with at the time, and will help others who never had the chance to see her recognize the pain, sometimes self-inflicted and sometimes not, Diana and her husband and family went through.

This book was very well written and does the very difficult task of showing sympathy to both, the royals and Diana. It is entertaining, but doesn't have the salacious feeling that most gossipy writer's would. I would highly recommend this to any interested parties and thought it was well worth the time spent reading it.

Very well written with depth and excellent resource material. I might even read it again.

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