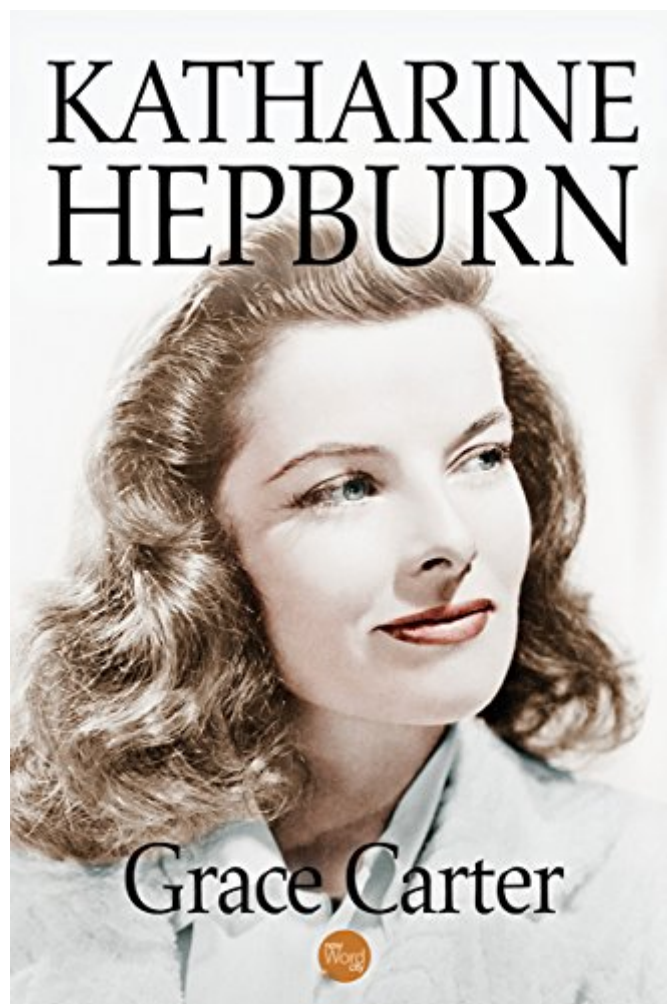


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Katharine Hepburn



Synopsis

Katharine Hepburn was far more than an iconic movie star who won four Academy Awards for best actress (the most ever) and made classic films - *The African Queen*, *The Philadelphia Story*, and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* - that still rank among the greatest of all time. She also exerted a singular influence on American popular culture, challenging rigid assumptions about how women should behave - and almost single-handedly gave them permission to wear pants. The list of adjectives used to describe Hepburn - bold, stubborn, witty, beautiful - only begin to hint at the complex woman who entranced audiences around the world (she could also be controlling, selfish, and self-righteous). So here is the full, epic story of "the patron saint of the independent American female," as one critic described her - from her breakthrough in Hollywood in the early 1930s to *On Golden Pond* in the 1980s to her dramatic affairs with Howard Hughes and Spencer Tracy and beyond. With her distinctive, patrician voice and tsunami-force personality, Hepburn always lived life strictly on her own terms. And oh, what a life it was.

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Customer Reviews

There was something about her, a director once said about Katharine Hepburn, early in her 60-year acting career, which spanned stage and screen and a record four Academy Awards for Best Actress. It's very difficult to describe in words. You can't describe music. There was a kind of luminosity. Some faces project light, the director said; Hepburn's was one of those. Her life, too, was brilliant – bursting with energy and excitement. But light is made all the more spectacular by the dark that precedes it, and encroaches its edges, and the shadows that it casts. And there was plenty of both in Hepburn's public and private life. This biography by author Grace Carter deftly delves into the spotlight and the shadows of arguably the greatest female star of classic Hollywood cinema. Like her wide-ranging roles, it's filled with comedy and drama, peaks and valleys – arcs which develop character and endear her to us. But perhaps Hepburn's most defining feature was her ability, through it all, to remain rigidly, uniquely herself. I think I'm always the same, she said in an interview in 1991. She refused to conform to expectations of her, or women of her time, and in doing so became an icon for the modern female. She didn't do it for the publicity – in fact, she shunned that type of attention. She simply knew no other way – having been brought up by exceptionally free-thinking and progressive parents, and surrounded by fiercely independent women. Through the stories Hepburn herself, and others close to her, told about her life and career, we are treated to much more than just the polished Hollywood script. We get both the grit and glamour – and, ultimately, insight into this remarkable woman. Katharine Hepburn died in 2003 at the ripe age of 96, but her legacy lives on in her films, in the fashions she inspired, and the wisdom she imparted with her trademark brashness.

A Life Well Lived Katharine Hepburn's acting achievements earned her a place among the brightest stars of the 20th century. And yet her influence on the culture went beyond stardom. Hepburn demonstrated to generations of fans that women could be as assertive, sharp, and successful. In this charming book, biographer Grace Carter brings Hepburn vividly to life.

I always enjoy a good Hepburn biography (keyword: good) and have read all 30+ of the books out about her but I was a bit disappointed by this. Almost all of the information is recycled from major Katharine biographies as well as quoting biographers who have been controversial with their 'facts' on her.

In this page-turner of a biography, Grace Carter demonstrates how Hepburn, with her stubborn Yankee independence, transcended the status of movie star to exert a singular influence on popular

culture, challenging assumptions about how women ought to behave. Highly recommended.

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