

= Madonna : An Intimate Biography =

Madonna : An Intimate Biography is a book by American author J. Randy Taraborrelli , chronicling the life of American singer Madonna . The book was released in April 2001 by Sidgwick & Jackson in the United Kingdom , and in August 2001 by Simon & Schuster in the United States . Taraborrelli first considered writing the book in 1990 , but , realizing the project might be premature in respect to Madonna 's fledgling career , set it aside . He began writing the book in 1996 , when Madonna gave birth to her daughter Lourdes .

Other books about Madonna 's life and career had been based on previously published material , but Taraborrelli 's biography was the product of research spanning a decade and includes exclusive interviews with Madonna 's close friends , business associates , family members , and her father , Tony Ciccone . These interviews were conducted by the author himself , as well as his team of private investigators . Taraborrelli also interviewed Madonna over the course of years , and often drew from his first @-@ hand experiences while writing the book . Madonna : An Intimate Biography received a mixed response from critics . Some considered it a compelling piece on Madonna 's life , while others thought Taraborrelli 's writing was unprofessional . Despite the mixed response the book was a commercial success , and became a bestseller in the United Kingdom .

= = Summary = =

The book opens with Madonna 's birth , her early years in Michigan , and her 1977 move to New York City where she was involved with modern dance , two pop groups , composing , and releasing her 1983 debut album , Madonna . Her rise to superstardom as a pop icon is chronicled and her cutting edge music videos , albums , first concert tour , film roles , and marriage and divorce to Sean Penn are examined . The book investigates her controversial religious imagery and her erotic productions , Erotica , Sex , and Body of Evidence . The book describes a mellowing in her appearance and provocativeness , and , among other things , the release of her next several albums , her Golden Globe Award @-@ winning musical film portrayal of Eva Peron , and her high @-@ grossing Drowned World Tour . The births of daughter Lourdes and son Rocco , and her marriage to second husband Guy Ritchie , are chronicled .

= = Development = =

American journalist and celebrity biographer John Randall Taraborrelli first met Madonna at a press conference in 1983 . She spoke of her youthful struggles before the release of her debut album , and of her belief that she would someday enjoy great success as the " century 's biggest star " . Taraborrelli thought her brash , cocky , petulant , self @-@ indulgent , and a mediocre beauty with a voice to match .

Taraborrelli was proven wrong , and , in 1990 , he considered writing her biography , but put the thought aside , thinking such a venture was premature . He pointed out that " most subjects need time for evolution and personal growths , before their stories are ripe enough to put on paper . Madonna was in an ambitious , self @-@ involved phase during which nothing mattered more to her than her career . " He picked up the writing again in 1994 , but felt the same way about her , and hoped the time would come when the singer would focus on her personal life , rather than her career . A personal evolution occurred in her life with the birth of daughter Lourdes in 1996 , and it was then that Taraborrelli sensed the time was ripe to begin writing her biography .

= = Writing and release = =

Taraborrelli decided to focus on the singer 's private life ; who she really was . Many books about the superstar were based on previously published material , but Taraborrelli had ten years of research to draw upon including interviews with people who had not spoken about Madonna in public and his own interviews with the icon . Taraborrelli and his team of private investigators

interviewed Madonna 's close friends , business associates , and family members including her father Silvio Ciccone .

While researching the book , Taraborrelli realized that one of the greatest misconceptions about Madonna was the general perception that she was cold and unemotional in her personal relationships . The opposite proved true ; Madonna was indeed emotionally vulnerable , and Taraborrelli cited as an example the icon 's 1990 relationship with actor Warren Beatty . Their relationship was generally perceived as nothing more than a means to promote their film Dick Tracy , and Madonna was regarded under the circumstances as opportunistic . Taraborrelli discovered however that Madonna actually had strong feelings for Beatty . The actor however was not as emotionally invested as Madonna , and the relationship ended with her heart being broken . Taraborrelli observed , " So , what I think will surprise people with this story are the many times that Madonna has ended up feeling alone and rejected . She has built her entire career on an image of indestructibility . But at least in her personal life , and again , I make that distinction , because this isn 't necessarily true in her business life , she is one of the most fragile subjects I 've ever written about ... This book is really about placing her life into the proper historical context , and once again answering the why questions about her . "

= = Critical response = =

The book received mixed reviews . Caroline Foulkes wrote in The Birmingham Post : " The thing about this biography is the depths to which Taraborrelli has dug to get information on a famously controlling woman . He relates revealing anecdotes as if they were mere bagatelle , making News of the World style revelations look like kid 's stuff . If Taraborrelli were to include in his list of acknowledgments ' thanks to the maid who let me into Madonna 's bedroom to raid her underwear drawer ' , it wouldn 't be any great surprise . " She also felt that " despite the sensationalism , Taraborrelli 's writing style lets him down . Too often it descends into the kind of mush you expect from an airport novel , with the singer coming across more like a character from Shirley Conran 's *Lace* than a real woman . " Peter Sobczynski reviewed the book for the Post @-@ Tribune and felt that " the problem with writing an unauthorized tell @-@ all biography is that , in this information @-@ rich world that we live in , by the time a book gets written on somebody , most of the juicy stories are already common knowledge . To make up for that , the tell @-@ all author needs to fill his or her pages with either a thoughtful analysis of the subject at hand , or , frankly , newer and better dirt . Unfortunately , celebrity biographer J. Randy Taraborrelli does neither with his latest concoction , *Madonna : An Intimate Biography* . "

William Leith of the London Evening Standard was impressed with the biography , and noted that " the thing about Madonna is not in her sensationalism , it ? s in the fact that how much humane she appeared in the book . Taraborrelli does a fine job of capturing the world 's most famous courtesan , in the most infamous way " , and John Smyntek from Knight Ridder thought " Taraborrelli [is] retelling all [the known facts about Madonna] and more . After all , in those 10 years , the Great Woman has had two children , wed and maintained her image as a major pain in the keister . He does a great job of bringing forth these unknown facts . " Ward Triplet of the Kansas City Star felt that although the book is " an eerie , but compelling day by day account of Madonna , and how she became who she is , sometimes Taraborrelli feels like revealing more about his process of writing than his subject " , and Ann O ' Neil in the Los Angeles Times complimented the book for being " different " from the " regular dirt written everyday about Madonna . "

Sylvia Sharma from The Daily Mirror felt that " Taraborrelli 's rummage through Madge 's life can bring you to shame . This is the Madonna biography all had been waiting for , this is who she is . Not the staunch woman that we see , but a woman who is no different than one of us . " Mike Thomas from Chicago Sun @-@ Times said that " Filled with private details from Madonna 's life , Taraborrelli gives us the first in @-@ depth look at the Material Girl in more than a decade . The following outtakes from friends , former friends , Taraborrelli and Madonna herself were hand ? picked for your perusing pleasure . Or displeasure . Madonna , as with all pop icons , is an acquired taste . "

= = Publication history = =