

= Madonna (book) =

Madonna is a biography by English author Andrew Morton , chronicling the life of American recording artist Madonna . The book was released in November 2001 by St. Martin 's Press in the United States and in April 2002 by Michael O 'Mara Books in the United Kingdom . Morton decided to write a biography on Madonna in 2000 . The release was announced in April 2001 by St. Martin 's Press . President and publisher Sally Richardson described the biography to contain details about Madonna 's ambitions , her relationships and her lifestyle .

Morton interviewed about 70 people who had known Madonna since her youth . He had to spend a lot of evenings in bars and clubs in New York chatting to people ? including artists , musicians , and directors ? who had an interesting perspective on Madonna and the world . After its release , Madonna received mixed reviews from contemporary critics , who pointed out Morton 's poor writing skills and felt that the book did not present anything new about the singer . The book was a commercial disappointment . In the United States , the book reached eight on The New York Times Best Seller list , and sold half of its initial print .

Madonna herself was critical of Morton writing a biography on her life , and sent a letter to him , asking him to stay away from her family and friends . Morton remained unabashed , saying that he wrote the book because of his interest in the star , not least because she has made a " difference " to pop culture and modern culture . In 2004 , a lawsuit was filed against the author by Jim Albright , one of Madonna 's ex @-@ lovers mentioned in the book . The lawsuit regarded an image in the book , portraying one of Madonna 's gay dancers ? with Albright 's name underneath . United States District Court ruled out the lawsuit explaining that stating someone is homosexual does not libel or slander them .

= = 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 birth of her daughter and son are chronicled and her marriage to Guy Ritchie . Madonna includes detailed descriptions of her relationships with people including John F. Kennedy , Jr. and Michael Jackson .

= = Writing and development = =

American journalist and celebrity biographer Andrew Morton is known for his works on Diana , Princess of Wales , Monica Lewinsky and footballer David Beckham and his wife , Victoria . In October 2000 , Morton had hinted that he had American recording artist Madonna as his next project , when he responded to an Independent reader in " You Ask the Questions " section . Asked who he would most like to write a biography of , he said : " I 've always admired Madonna as an intriguing and charismatic character who has been able to stay at the top for 20 years . " A formal announcement was made by Morton 's UK publicist Michael O 'Mara in April 2001 , that Morton had secured access to " those in her [Madonna 's] inner circle , who have never been interviewed before , about her ambitions , lifestyle and relationships . " O 'Mara added the reason for choosing Madonna was because she was " one of the most enigmatic and fascinating women of our time , [and] is the undisputed female icon of the modern age . "

The biography 's American publishing rights were acquired by St. Martin 's Press . President and publisher Sally Richardson described the biography to contain details about Madonna 's ambitions ,

her relationships and her lifestyle . Richardson added that " Andrew loves complicated women , and has a genius for getting into their psyche and telling the world what makes them tick . " Scheduled for release in November 2001 , St. Martin 's Press added that about 500 @, @ 000 copies of the first print were ordered , and Morton received a six figure undisclosed amount as advance for writing the book . Madonna had always wanted to protect her privacy and reports had initially suggested that she was furious that Morton had decided to write the book , and commanded her friends and relatives not to give any interview to him . She added , " I don 't want anyone talking to that snivelling little worm . How dare he invade my privacy ? "

With the BBC , Morton detailed his " detective work " researching Madonna 's life in New York , where she clambered her way up to fame and fortune . " Not only is she an interesting character , but all her friends and those who 've known her are interesting characters too , " he said . Morton had to spend a lot of evenings in bars and clubs in New York chatting to people ? including artists , musicians , directors ? who had an interesting perspective on Madonna and the world . He interviewed about 70 people who had known Madonna since her youth . " I think I 've come up with a very fresh picture , " he said , adding that Dan Gilroy of Breakfast Club , who had introduced Madonna to the music world , had e @-@ mailed him saying the biography had " really captured Madonna 's spirit " .

= = Critical response = =

The book received mixed reviews . Richard Lautens from Toronto Star said that " Madonna is a thorough , if slightly workmanlike , retelling of its namesake 's well @-@ documented slog from lowly Midwestern beginnings to squeaky @-@ voiced sex kitten to professional button @-@ pusher to mother and respected , vaguely Bowie @-@ esque , chameleonic figure , a cultural bloodhound always on the scent of the fresh , cool and credible . " Helen Bushby from BBC commented that " [t] he book is certainly detailed , and will no doubt keep Madonna fanatics happy , although it is perhaps more of a reference book than a page @-@ turner . But Morton is a good businessman , and is canny in his choice of subjects . " Michael Sneed from Chicago Sun @-@ Times gave a negative review of the book and felt that Morton 's previous works had been better . George Rush from New York Daily News commented : " Despite her best efforts to discourage friends from cooperating with him , Andrew Morton has come forth with a book that portrays Madge as an insecure manipulator so ravenous for affection that she scared off some boyfriends , cheated on most of them and made a lot of foolish choices . " In another review , Sherryl Connelly from the same publication was of the opinion that Madonna was mostly similar to J. Randy Taraborrelli 's biography on her , Madonna : An Intimate Biography . She added , " At least , it 's the story made familiar by Madonna , a woman who has always taken for granted the world 's interest in her life . "

Rick Thames , editor of The Charlotte Observer , criticized the book 's packaging calling the cover as " tacky , hot pink @-@ and @-@ acid green sleeves , featuring an unflattering photo of the dished artist . " Barry Didcock from Sunday Herald felt that " Morton [had failed] to find the face of Madonna . " He criticized Morton 's sketchy portrayal of Madonna 's relationship with deceased painter Jean @-@ Michel Basquiat , saying " he commits an error by doing so because , unusually for Madonna , this was a relationship of equals . " Gregg Barrios from Daily Star was critical of the book , saying " The fatal flaw of these quickie knockoffs is that they have no real ending or any way of predicting what the fates have in store for Madonna Louise Penn [Guy Ritchie] nee Ciccone . Once the next Madonna tour , CD , marriage or film appears , their shelf life is cut short . " Barbara Ellen from The Guardian criticized Morton 's writing by saying , " Andrew Morton achieves the implausible : he takes an interesting woman and an astonishing life and makes them both seem incredibly boring in his life of Madonna Once you get used to Morton 's pace (dull plod , with occasional snooze) , it becomes quite amusing joining him on the journey , a bit like watching someone dragging a dead body around , trying to find some place to hide it . Even luminaries such as Madonna exes Sean Penn and Warren Beatty are reduced to flailing around like disenfranchised phantoms in the shallows of Morton 's blandly automatic insight . "

= = Commercial reception = =

Madonna was released in hardback in the United States in November 2001 . It debuted at position 15 on The New York Times Best Seller list , and reached eight the next week , but was present there for only two weeks . It was a commercial disappointment , failing to sell even close to its initial print @-@ run of 500 @,@ 000 . According to Nielsen BookScan , Madonna has sold around 240 @,@ 000 copies in the United States .

Madonna was still livid that Morton wrote the book without her permission , even saying " It 's not a well @-@ written book . We all know he wrote it for financial gain and the truth had little to do with it " , after the book was released . With Jo Whiley from BBC Radio 1 , she added that " [Morton] really went through my Rolodex and that part was really annoying , and I ended up writing him a letter saying , ' I 'm not interested in you writing this book , I don 't want to have anything to do with it ? and please leave my friends alone ' . " The singer said that she had even sent Morton a book of philosophy ? The Power of Kabbalah ? to try to dissuade him from continuing . " It 's a beginner 's crash course in what it 's all about ? that eventually in some way shape or form it would come back round to him , but he either didn 't read it or didn 't care , " Madonna added . During the Drowned World Tour of 2001 , Madonna was asked whether she had really sent the book for Morton 's well @-@ being . She replied sarcastically : " Why yes , I always send bibles and philosophy books to my biographers . " Motioning to her then husband Guy Ritchie she continued , " Just ask my husband , he 'll tell you that my greatest concern these days is not this fucking tour , or him or even our kids , why , it 's Andrew Morton 's spiritual enlightenment of course . " Her publicist Liz Rosenberg released a statement that " None of this [things in the biography] is true . I never saw a groom walk down an aisle with a bigger smile than Guy Ritchie , " adding that Morton 's claims were a retread of " tired old gossip . It 's same old , same old . " Morton remained unabashed , saying that he wrote the book because of his interest in the star , not least because she has made a " difference " to pop culture and modern culture . He added :

" I 'm very proud of the book and I 'm very disappointed at Madonna 's reaction . I think the problem is that she wants control over everything ? that 's one of the themes of the book , and secondly she seems to be almost disowning her past at the moment . She 's reinventing herself as an upper @-@ class , English aristocrat , and the former vegetarian who now goes hunting , fishing and shooting . My door 's always open ? Madonna 's welcome to my house for a cup of tea . She said she wasn 't interested in doing any kind of biography or anything ever , which is a bit of a stern statement from someone who has been so out there . It doesn 't matter whether it 's me , Norman Mailer , whoever . I was disappointed because I felt that we 've only ever seen the caricature , the cartoon version of Madonna and I really wanted to show that she is a considerable artist and that she is more than anything that has been written about her in the past . I think for her it is an opportunity missed . "

= = Lawsuit = =

Madonna faced a lawsuit in 2004 over an image in the book . Titled Amarak Productions , Inc. vs. Morton , Madonna 's former bodyguard and ex @-@ lover Jim Albright brought a defamation case against Morton , based on an incorrect photo caption . The photo had a caption identifying the subject in it as Albright ; it was actually one of Madonna 's homosexual back @-@ up dancers , Jose Gutierrez . Amarak Productions , Inc. had employed Albright as Madonna 's bodyguard in 1992 , and he became romantically involved with her . While writing Madonna , Morton contacted Albright to gather information on their relationship . On discovering the misleading image , the lawsuit was filed by Albright who objected to the caption .

On 30 May 2004 , US District judge Nancy Gertner ruled out the lawsuit explaining that stating someone is homosexual does not libel or slander them , particularly in light of new court decisions granting gays more rights . Gertner first rejected the idea that the mistake in captioning constituted a statement that Albright was gay . She added : " Private biases may be outside the reach of the law , but the law cannot , directly or indirectly give them effect . In this day and age , recent rulings by the Supreme Court and the Supreme Judiciary Court of Massachusetts undermine any suggestion that

a statement implying that an individual is homosexual is defamatory .

= = Publication history = =