

## = You 'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again =

Y 'all Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again is an autobiography by Julia Phillips , detailing her career as a film producer and disclosing the power games and debauchery of New Hollywood in the 1970s and 1980s . It was first published in 1991 and became an immediate cause célèbre and bestseller . The book was reissued in 2002 after the author 's death .

## = = Background = =

In partnership with her husband Michael , Julia Phillips was one of the most successful film producers in Hollywood during the 1970s . Their second film , The Sting , grossed almost \$ 160 million and won seven Academy Awards , making Julia the first woman to win a Best Picture Oscar . Their third film , Taxi Driver , brought them a second Oscar nomination and won the Palme d 'Or in 1976 . In 1977 they co -@-@ produced their most financially successful movie , Steven Spielberg 's \$ 300 million @-@ grossing Close Encounters of the Third Kind .

However , Julia had long indulged in a self @-@ destructive lifestyle of excessive drug consumption , and it had begun to affect her work . François Truffaut , one of French cinema 's most iconic directors and a star of Close Encounters , blamed her for that film 's budget difficulties , and she was eventually fired during post @-@ production because of her cocaine dependence .

Phillips , by now divorced , spent the following years on a downward spiral which included , by her own account , spending \$ 120 @,@ 000 on cocaine , before entering therapy to recover from her addiction . Then , in 1988 , having been out of Hollywood for eleven years , she sold all her assets to produce The Beat , about a kid in a tough neighbourhood trying to teach poetry to local gangs . It was a critical and commercial disaster , grossing less than \$ 5 @,@ 000 at the box office , and Phillips turned to penning her scathing memoir to escape her financial difficulties .

## = = Synopsis = =

The book begins by briefly introducing the reader to Phillips in 1989 , before quickly travelling back to her childhood in 1940s Brooklyn . It then covers her early life and first successes in the film industry : she and Michael earned \$ 100 @,@ 000 from their debut feature , Steelyard Blues , moved to Malibu , California , and had a daughter , Kate . The most notorious chapters follow as Phillips enjoys her greatest career successes , perhaps most infamously when she recalls the amalgam of drugs she was under the influence of on the night she won her Oscar ( " a diet pill , a small amount of coke , two joints , six halves of Valium , and a glass and a half of wine " ) . She also reveals the personal peccadillos and vices of the biggest Hollywood A @-@ listers of the day , including Steven Spielberg , Martin Scorsese , Richard Dreyfuss , Goldie Hawn , and David Geffen . Many of these people were pivotal figures in the emergence of New Hollywood in the 1960s and ' 70s , but Phillips disparagingly refers to them as " a rogues ' gallery of nerds " . Later episodes in her life , including freebasing , and her abusive relationship with a violent drug addict which caused her to miss her own mother 's funeral , are also discussed candidly .

Most significant , from Phillips ' own point of view , is her exposé of the " Boys ' Club " in the higher echelons of Hollywood , where she claimed it was her gender that led to her ultimate ostracism . " If I had been a man , they would have closed ranks around me " , she said , referring to her drug addiction . " They hated the woman thing . And I wasn 't even regarded as a woman , I was a girl . " Writing about her in The Independent in 2002 , film critic David Thomson expressed Phillips ' attitude as : " you [ Hollywood ] guys don 't take women seriously ; you like us around ... [ but ] we aren 't allowed to be players " . Those same few men , like " Valley viper " Mike Ovitz who headed the Creative Artists Agency were , in her eyes , responsible for a qualitative decline in standards and the increasing banality of movies since the 1970s .

## = = Reception = =

On its release most critics agreed that the book was both scandalous and career @-@ ending . ( Even with a quarter of the 1 @,@ 000 @-@ page original manuscript excised , it took lawyers at Random House fourteen months to approve it for publication . ) Lewis Cole , in The Nation , described it as being " [ not ] written but spat out , a breakneck , formless performance piece ... propelled by spite and vanity " . Newsweek 's review called it a " 573 @-@ page primal scream " , while one Hollywood producer said it was " the longest suicide note in history " . In the 2003 documentary version of Easy Riders , Raging Bulls , based on Peter Biskind 's 1998 anecdotal history of New Hollywood , Richard Dreyfuss recalled his initial fury at Phillips ' revelations , before more circumspectly listening to " a little voice inside my head [ saying ] ' Richard , Richard , the truth was so much worse ' . " Despite Phillips ' criticisms of Steven Spielberg in the book , Spielberg nevertheless invited her to a 1997 screening of Close Encounters of the Third Kind as a way of " keeping his friends close and his enemies closer . "

After Phillips ' death from cancer in 2002 the book was reissued in paperback by Faber and Faber , and gained renewed attention . Tim Appelo wrote in his Salon.com tribute that it was " mordant , merciless , [ and ] outdid Capote in shrieking truth to decadent power " , while David Thomson praised it as " compulsive , hilarious entertainment " .

Commercially , Phillips ' memoir became an enormous success . It quickly moved to the top of the New York Times Non Fiction Best Seller list and stayed at No. 1 for thirteen weeks . Additionally , several prominent Los Angeles bookstore owners reported it to be the fastest @-@ selling book they had ever seen . But Phillips was excoriated by Hollywood , and her autobiography 's publication cost her the chance to adapt Anne Rice 's Interview with a Vampire with David Geffen . Furthermore , in an example of life imitating art , pre @-@ eminent Los Angeles restaurant Morton 's fulfilled the book 's titular prediction by declining her future patronage .

Shortly before her death , when asked if she had been too cruel in her writing , Phillips replied , " We all have our standards . People behaved in an ugly and despicable fashion towards me . I felt no constraints . Nothing I did in my book is as mean as any of the people I wrote about . " She was similarly unrepentant about her subsequent expatriation , saying " I wasn 't a pariah because I was a drug @-@ addicted , alcoholic , rotten person and not a good mother . I was a pariah because I hit them with a harsh , fluorescent light and rendered them as contemptible as they truly are . "