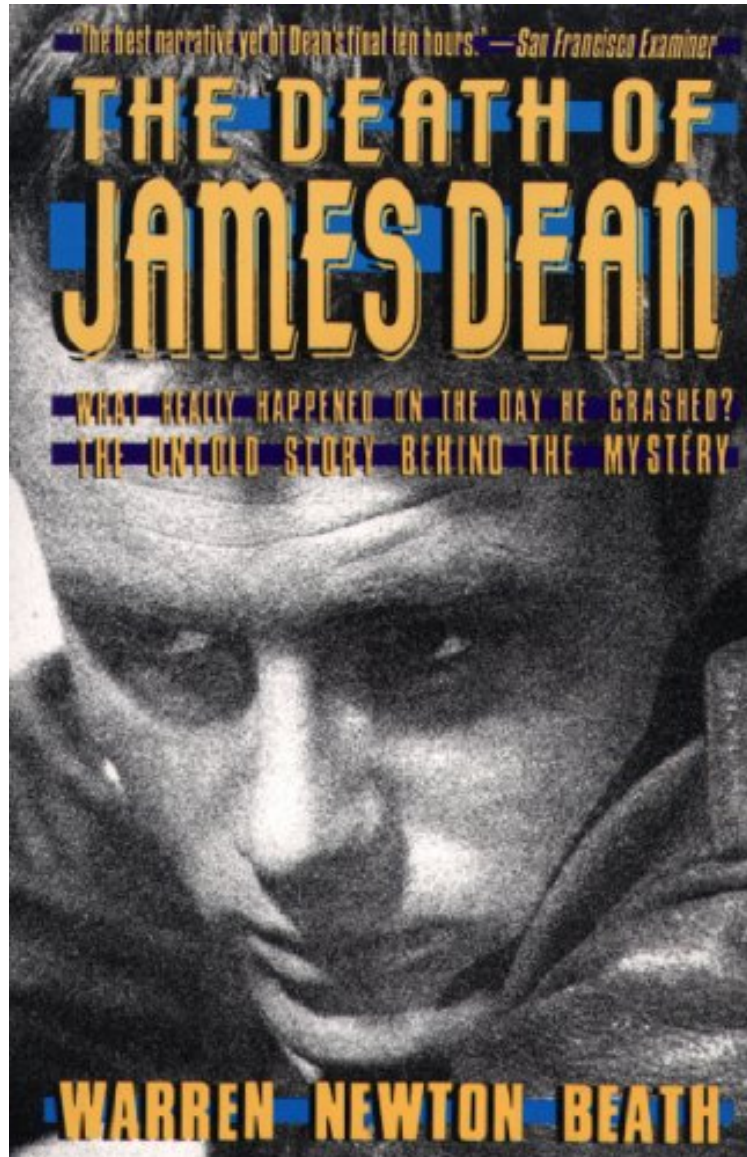


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The Death of James Dean

Warren N. Beath

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Warren N. Beath : The Death of James Dean before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of James Dean:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent wealth of InformationBy Terry CoxI just finished the book and I have to say I am very impressed in the details of the death of James Dean. The author Warren Beath absolutely puts you right there with the wealth of information . Witness accounts, law enforcement facts, the inquest all tie it together.I have always wondered about many of the very things he uncovered and laid out in this book. Many of the questions he had are remarkable...like why for so long did people assume Dean was careening at a high velocity, and

that the other driver was cautious and careful? The facts show things that make you take a whole new look at the accident. The second part of the book is mind blowing as you get caught up in the intensity and sheer drive of the search for pieces of the whole story. The story of what happened that early Autumn evening in a rural part of California that ended the life of young Jimmy Dean. As you read how it unfolded you really start to feel the passion, the excitement and sometimes setbacks of the revelation of what really transpired that fateful day. I am very much appreciative of the author's bulldog determination to put it all together and present it to us readers the whole scope of James Dean's final hours and the sequence of events that led to the awful loss of a great talent. You read it and realize that so many small things that could have happened to alter history that day....but yet know what is coming as fate has its way. Excellent book!! Highly recommended to anyone seeking the sad but whole view of the death of the great James Dean. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very Concise! By RJI really enjoyed reading this book. I think I go over it 2 or 3 times. It has been very refreshing to see the different point Warren makes in it. I have bought 4 of these books for friends including CW and Kim. I think that too many authors sometimes work too quickly and over reach their target. Warren has focused on The "Death" element of James Dean in a sensitive but critical approach. We are all grateful for this work of genius. It goes into great detail of what JD was doing the day he died, who he met and what he ate... Suffice it to say that if you are a James Dean compatriot, you will truly understand fact from fiction by reading this book. I don't like going into details because it spoils the "ride" but with the judgement of 4 good friends and 2 of whom knew James Dean, they are very satisfied with it. Thank you! 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Raw Obsession under the Guise of True Crime By Cynthia In the first half of his book Beath lays out the facts of where when, how and a sprinkling of why James Dean died in 1955. He does a good job of tying together Dean's acting rolls with his risk taking, hard living, dare and death addicted young life. He methodically includes the police work of the car accident including their exhibits and photos and those of Dean's own photographer who was in a car a few miles behind his. This felt like the 'just facts' part of the book. In the second part of the book the both the author's and other people's obsession with Dean becomes clearer. Even after his death some of Dean's Hollywood crowd and car aficionado friends continue to define themselves in large part through Dean's huge presence. This is understandable; after all they'd had a common history and shared passions. Then Beath outlines Dean's fans only one of whose real name he reveals. Howard Matson is the fan we get to know best. It's eerie how much time and money Matson devotes to his Dean fixation. He and his wife have one young child with another on the way and rely solely on his salary so money isn't ample yet he spends what seems like a disproportionate amount of money on Dean collectibles, and maybe even worse, is the time away from the family though his wife does go with him on many of his Dean related rituals. Matson, in 1981, does uncover unheard witnesses and unique angles on old and new facts however. For instance it's always assumed that Dean caused his own death with his reckless speeding driving. Matson questions this and backs it with some compelling facts. Also, why didn't the coroner question more of the witnesses and emergency and police who worked the scene? Was Dean really at fault? Ultimately this book says as much about the obsessors than about Dean and his death. Certainly almost everyone has found something or someone in their lives they fixated on if only in adolescence or for a short period but Beath and his cast stay in that place which leads me to wonder what it says about me that I kept reading even after the facts half of the book. If anything I flipped the pages even faster towards the end. I was right there riding their obsessed coattails. 3.5/5

Just before sunset on September 20, 1955, James Byron Dean's Porsche 550 Spyder collided with Donald Gene Turnupseed's Ford Tudor on California Highway 46. At age twenty-four, America's newest screen idol was dead. What really happened? Drawing on the inquest manuscript and other previously unpublished material, Warren Beath cuts through the welter of conflicting reports and rumors to provide a taut reconstruction of Dean's final hours. In addition, Beath has explored every nook and cranny of the Dean legend, and his book is studded with fascinating asides: Elvis Presley's worship of Dean, Dean's strange friendship with Maila Nurmi; TV's Vampyra and star of the gloriously execrable Plan 9 From Outer Space; Hitchcock's use of Highway 46 in the famous crop-dusting scene in North by Northwest; death threats against Giant director George Stevens if he dared excise so much as a single frame of Deans' performance. Beath's definitive account of James Dean's death concludes with a memorable portrait of the James Dean cult, a strangely moving record of his posthumous life in the hearts of his adoring fans.