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## **Controversy Creates Cash** Eric Bischoff , Jeremy Roberts

Eric Bischoff has been called pro wrestling's most hated man. He's been booed, reviled, and burned in effigy. Fans have hurled everything from beer bottles to fists at him. Industry critics have spewed a tremendous amount of venom about his spectacular rise and stupendous crash at World Championship Wrestling. But even today, Eric Bischoff's revolutionary influence on the pro wrestling industry can be seen on every television show and at every live event. Bischoff has kept quiet while industry "pundits" and other know-it-alls pontificated about what happened during the infamous Monday Night Wars. Basing their accounts on third- and fourth-hand rumors and innuendo, the so-called experts got many more things wrong than right. Now, in "Controversy Creates Cash," Bischoff tells what "really" happened.

Beginning with his days as a salesman for Verne Gagne's American Wrestling Association, Bischoff takes readers behind the scenes of wrestling, writing about the inner workings of the business in a way never before revealed. He demonstrates how controversy helped both WCW and WWE. Eric gives the "real" numbers behind WCW's red ink -- far lower than reported -- and talks about how Turner Broadcasting's merger with Time Warner, and then Time Warner's merger with AOL, devastated not only WCW but many creative and entrepreneurial businesses within the conglomerate. Bischoff has surprisingly kind words for old rivals like Vince McMahon, but pulls no punches with friends and enemies alike.

Among his revelations: How teaming with Mickey Mouse turned WCW into a national brand. Why Hulk Hogan came to WCW. Why he fired Jesse Ventura for sleeping on the job. Why Steve Austin didn't deserve another contract at WCW, and how Bischoff's canning him was the best thing that ever happened to Austin. How Ted Turner decided WCW should go head-to-head against "Raw" on Monday nights. How "Nitro" revolutionized wrestling. Where the New World Order really began. How corporate politics killed WCW. And how he found his inner heel and learned to love being the guy everyone loves to despise.

Bischoff brings a surprisingly personal touch to the story, detailing his rough-and-tumble childhood in Detroit, talking about his family and the things he did to cope with the stress of the high-octane media business. Now a successful entertainment producer as well as a wrestling personality, Bischoff tells how he found contentment after being unceremoniously "sent home" from WCW.

Love him or hate him, readers will never look at a pro wrestling show quite the same way after reading Bischoff's story in "Controversy Creates Cash,"

## **Controversy Creates Cash Details**

Date : Published October 17th 2006 by World Wrestling Entertainment Books (first published 2006)

ISBN : 9781416527299

Author : Eric Bischoff , Jeremy Roberts

Format : Hardcover 389 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Biography, Sports and Games, Sports

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# From Reader Review Controversy Creates Cash for online ebook

## **Pryder says**

To be taken with a pinch of salt in places but a fascinating look inside WCW.

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## **Dan Verarde says**

If you enjoyed the Monday Night Wars in wrestling, this will interest you! I like reading about these very interesting and very creative people! This is actually a great read whether or not you like wrestling!

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## **Solitairerose says**

Obviously ghost-written, and painfully self-serving, it's still nice to get the story of the man who jump-started the wrestling crazy of the 90's, and seems to have no idea why it all fell apart. Pair this with "Who Killed WCW" by the Wrestlecrap buys, and you'll put together the most fascinating story of the business.

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## **Cameron Eittreim says**

This book does a good job of explaining how Eric Bischoff took a small Georgia wrestling promotion and turned it into one of the biggest entertainment companies of all time. World Championship Wrestling became a household name in the 90's and it was all thanks to Eric Bischoff and his out of the box thinking that made pro wrestling what it is today.

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## **Roberto Carlos says**

This book is average, but like most WWE published works, it leaves you wondering how much was ghostwritten and if the "author" really has positive feelings towards the WWE. However, the reading shows an interesting perspective to how WCW crumbled. Since Bischoff has recently joined TNA, I would like to see him write another book so we can see what his true feelings regarding Vince McMahon and the WWE are.

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## **Artiom Karsiuk says**

I had my reservations about reading this book, because even though I admire Eric and wanted to get a breakdown of what went down behind the curtains in WCW, I knew that the publisher was "WWE Books", a subsidiary of his longtime arch-nemesis. I thought they would neuter his book faster than you can say "Brother", brother.

Yet, the book was fascinating. Sure, you have to take everything he's written with a grain of salt - not because he's a liar or this two-faced hypocrite of a man [even though many would argue], but because he's a salesman and a damn good one at that. So, he sells his goods that just happened to be "Eric Bischoff" and "Hulk Hogan". The two main commodities of this one particular salesman. Of course this book offers his personal perspective on everything that's happened and [no doubt] it is very subjective with a strong theme of self-vindication, but he makes some very good points. Many attribute WCW's success solely to Ted Turner's bottomless pockets and love to blame Eric for all of it's failures. Truth be told, I am more of a "Bischoff the TV character" than a "Bischoff the real life authority figure" fan, but I don't hold him responsible for the death of my beloved wrestling company. Not only this book, but also "The Death of WCW" by Bryan Alvarez (which compliments and should go hand-in-hand with this book) provide a detailed explanation of how corporate structure and politics killed WCW. The word "merger(s)" is key here. Turner Broadcasting merged with Time Warner and subsequently Time Warner merged with AOL. The emerging monster conglomerate known as AOL Time Warner is the true murderer, not Easy E or ATM Eric. OK, Bischoff was not the creative genius he makes himself out to be and sure many of his personal relationships with employees as well as wanting to be "one of the boys" hurt many of his decisions on both the creative and business ends of the spectrum, but they were not fatal. Eric simply became the convenient scapegoat for many fans who were bitter after Monday Nitro went off the air. And thanks to his carefully crafted obnoxious/arrogant heel persona, he fit the scapegoat part perfectly. On a completely random note, I wanted to mention that Eric is a self-made millionaire - something I didn't know before reading this book and something I highly respect amongst performers and celebrities from the entertainment business (as opposed to Wall Street criminals).

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### **Christopher Prew says**

Very interesting, but very "bitty". All stories feel very capped and micro-managed, as if, as it was published by WWE books, which he was employed by at the time, he didn't want to say anything in too much detail so as not to upset them!

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### **Luke Koran says**

From a small-time, non-wrestling job position in the famed AWA to an on-screen talent and behind-the-scenes face who made WCW into a national power as their executive producer and president, Eric Bischoff and this tell-all book is a fantastic adventure into the 1990s professional wrestling scene. Though published under the WWE label, I was surprisingly impressed by how straightforward and honest Bischoff was involving WCW's actions in regards to their impact on the WWE in the mid-to-late 1990s. Both this book and all of the WCW related interviews over the years clearly supports the conclusion that WCW was not poaching WWE wrestlers and eager to hurt / put WWE out of business at every turn, but simply that frustrated WWE wrestlers went to WCW in search of a fresh start, better pay, and the hope of being part of the new attitude era. Following reading this book, Bischoff is very convincing in his repeated conclusions in that many of the revolutionary things that made WWE and their own Attitude Era successful, well, they all began in WCW years earlier! If not for the CNN merger with AOL Time Warner and work politics, as well as the hiring of former WWE head writer Vince Russo, Bischoff is certain that WCW would continue to be a force to be reckoned with, if not the only wrestling promotion left standing. Businesses are always best run when there is competition - WCW proved that to be the case when they pushed WWE to the breaking point for 2 years straight, and WWE is proving it now as they really haven't had a ratings competitor to push them

to try new things since WCW's demise in 2001.

This book is really the complete story. Bischoff details plenty of his early professional life while in Minnesota in Verne Gagne's AWA. His personal life regarding his deep devotion to his family, who he spent most of his time with following his ousting at WCW and before his welcome into the WWE as on-screen general manager, is well covered. As long as you are open minded, you can't help but come to highly respect Bischoff's work and accomplishments in this business, and realize he's not nearly as "bad" a person as WWE portrayed him out to be while WCW was beating them in the TV ratings 84 weeks in a row. It would be interesting to see a new book from Bischoff covering his last decade, as he has been involved in other wrestling promotions and activities since last appearing on WWE Raw on a regular basis in 2005. Hopefully, he would publish the book without the watchful eye of WWE, which might allow him to be a little more frank about a few aspects of his time in this profession. However, I still believe he said everything he ever wanted to say in his book, and none more than this: "Without Monday Nitro there would be no Monday Night Raw...without the nWo there would be no DX...and without Eric Aaron Bischoff there would be no Vincent Kennedy McMahon."

And for all those who say this book is "Old News" and that video documentaries are better ... this is ~400 pages of detailed stories regarding WCW President Eric Bischoff's personal life experience, and not just WCW (which is very well-covered, especially the behind the scenes environment at CNN). Show me a documentary that does Bischoff's book justice, or a single interview that does the same. YOU WON'T. And I love watching (and making!) documentaries, don't get me wrong. But every great movie has a great script / screenplay, which are often based from books. Read the book AND the movie!

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### **Optimus says**

Really wanted to read this book for a while. And i really liked it. I loved that Eric talks about wrestling from a marketing perspective which relates to me cause i study marketing. Real fun and intelligent read.

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### **Richard Kelly says**

Here is a book about the wrestling industry that actually has very little to do with wrestling. It is a biography of Eric Bischoff who found himself as the president of WCW just as professional wrestling was moving into a hot streak.

If you like business books and learning about a niche industry this is a great read. There are lots of ideas and business principals that he comes up with that are not as common as those you would read in books like the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.

And, since it has to do with the wrestling industry you learn a lot about handling talent, writing storylines, and even dealing with negativity towards the industry as a whole.

It is interesting to see his progression from young entrepreneur to media executive to his delusions of grandeur. He seems to give himself more credit than he deserves at times and when you get to the end it feels like he wrote the book to convince others of how great his legacy should be viewed.

But, the book was good. The writing is fairly bad. Lots of repetition, some painfully noticeable grammatical errors, and a lack of organization at times, but it doesn't hurt the content.

Decent book and a must read for anyone interested in the industry of professional wrestling. But should be avoided by those who just enjoy the wrestling products they see on television.

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## **Michael says**

Here's the interesting thing about Bischoff's biography. It's not your typical bio, and for some it's exactly what you expect it to be. Not a story of a man's life, but a story about a company called WCW. That's why most of us picked up this book. Hell, it's why I paid 2.99 for it on Kindle. I'm sure Bischoff has lead an interesting life, but Eric himself knows why we're all gathered here to read his book. There are a few interesting notes about his personal life, but the focus here is on his career as the guy who killed WCW. He was the most hated man in professional wrestling and for good reason. I want some dirt, and I want to see pics of Eric hoisting that dirt onto the bodies of his enemies.

Anyway, Controversy is an inside look at what exactly happened with WCW, and how he became the man in charge. From the way he talks, everything just fell into his lap, he never pursued anything. He doesn't dish a lot of dirt which is surprising given how much people have talked about him over the years. His most hated enemies are the dirt sheets, and there's even a bit about Paul Heyman and the legendary ECW. For the most part he details his struggles with management, and how they squashed his vision. This is a guy who made a company great, and then watched it all fall apart before his eyes. If you believe Eric, none of this is his fault. His hands were tied.

If you're a wrestling fan, this is a must read because it gives you the story from Eric's point of view. There's not much here in the way of his life after he begins working for the AWA, but it's exactly what he set out to do and that was simply set the record straight once and for all. Unlike other biographies this isn't the story of a man, but a man and a company. A company he helped make great and then lost. It is a little dry in places, and the swipes you expect toward people he's worked with never happen. He keeps things as honest as he can, and keeps the story about his struggles with others, but never the wrestlers themselves. He's too smart for that and needs to keep that door to wrestling open.

If this wasn't a book sanctioned by the WWE I think it could have been a lot less friendly, and more honest, but as a fan of wrestling, I'll take what I can get. For what it is, it's a great book that focuses less on a man's life and more on a man's journey through a company that ultimately let him down. Finally, the truth about the rise and fall of WCW from the man himself. Interesting and hopefully now Eric can finally get some relief from the fans who thought he killed their favorite wrestling promotion.

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## **Jeff Lynsky says**

I'm just about a third of the way through this book but am so engrossed want to encourage others to buy it before I finish! I've read mainly autobiographies of the wrestlers themselves, so knew this would be different. It is a great insight in the business and its personalities. Eric is honest about his feelings about people he has worked with, and is open about his own mistakes as well as those of others. He doesn't put the

bad mouth on people without backing it up with a reason, and even then, you get the impression he is leaving you to make your own decision about that person. He sets rumours straight, even when the truth is less in his favour than the fiction (his academic qualifications for instance). Contrary to what many people think, he has a lot of respect for his peers, even if he doesn't agree with them. This book is a must read for old and new fans alike.

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### **Taylor McCallister says**

If you're an English Nazi this book probably isn't for you. The editing wasn't done as well as it probably should have been. That is the only reason this isn't a give star review.

If you can get over that -which I did quite easily- and just appreciate the story, it's an excellent read. Of the WWE released books I've read, Bischoff's is amongst my favorites. If you were a wrestling fan during the 90s and the famed Monday Night Wars, it's definitely worth reading.

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### **Amanda Rusk says**

#### **Enjoyable**

It's nice to hear the story of The Monday Night Wars from his point of view. It makes me want to relive the highs of a company that almost put WWE out of business.

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### **Tiara says**

I started really watching wrestling in late 2000 during the Attitude Era when I started dating my boyfriend (now husband) at the time. We were young college kids. Up to that point, I'd only glimpsed wrestling on television. I had a cousin who was big fan of wrestling when we were kids and was convinced that she was going to marry Shawn Michaels. She talked nonstop about him. I knew a little about NWO and Goldberg, but that was the extent of my knowledge. When I started watching wrestling, I was solely watching the WWE product. I was immediately taken by characters like Lita and The Rock. I didn't even give the WCW brand a glance. I was so invested in the stories the WWE was telling that it never even crossed my mind to give the other guys a chance.

On my birthday in 2001, Vince made the announcement on RAW that he'd acquired WCW. I still didn't really know who Eric Bischoff was at that point. However, I started going back, watching old matches and shows from both products. I wanted to know the history of wrestling and its players. I blame my love of history and needing to know the history of things for this. I've always thought that Eric Bischoff was a great heel character once I learned about him, and I never hated the guy. I understand why he is a polarizing character, but I never despised him or felt the same level of antipathy that many fans have for him.

I recently watched every episode of *Monday Night Wars* on the WWE Network, which was fascinating. A fellow wrestling friend gifted me with a few wrestling memoirs to check out after we had some long discussions about the rivalry between the WWE and WCW (Bischoff says it was less a rivalry and more a "rout" during the weeks they reigned supreme). *Controversy Creates Cash* was one of the books in this



treasure trove. Eric Bischoff's book focuses more on the business side of wrestling rather than wrestling. Bischoff was a businessman, and it makes sense that his book focused on the backstage politics and troubles. He does talk about his younger years and other failed ventures that he tried in the beginning, and he jumps around quite a bit on various subjects. Some of these sections felt a bit like filler and unnecessary, especially since they lacked buildup, but perhaps there was a connection that I was missing between these scenes.

Bischoff gives entirely too much book time to his dislike of internet wrestling sites. Mentioning them once or twice would've sufficed. Often his thoughts are mentioned as asides when he discusses certain changes he made or ideas he incorporated and how wrestling sites misconstrued the intent behind these things. He even goes as far as to make disparaging remarks about how these people must be losers in real life. In a portion of his book he accuses Missy Hyatt of being catty, but his own remarks about "dirtsheets" and some of the talent/backstage employees show that he is equally as catty and political as they are. I found it particularly hilarious that he singled out Dave Meltzer who runs *Wrestling Observer*, accusing his paid newsletter of being unedited trash that seemed written by a 5th grader when this book was pretty terribly edited. Even in the lines about Meltzer, the word "wrestler" is spelled wrong. There's some irony there.

Eric Bischoff accuses other wrestling memoirs of being revisionist history meant to paint the author in a more favorable light. However, no matter how straightforward Bischoff believes his own narrative is, he falls into that category as well, seeming to bathe himself in a softer narrative as suits him. Anyone who's ever watched any documentary that Bischoff has been part of, especially the ones centered around the Monday Night Wars, is hardly fooled by this kinder, gentler Bischoff he tried to sell in this book. It's interesting to see how Bischoff's memories of events differ from how the other players view the events. Such as how he felt the WCW did great things with its cruiserweight division versus how people like Chris Jericho (who was part of this cruiserweight push) view those same events, which are often memories filled with frustration on their part.

However, despite the mixed feelings I had about Bischoff's account of things, I can't say that this book isn't compelling. Bischoff admits that during that time he lacked insight and didn't think about the bigger picture of some of his ideas and changes. Reading his version of some events prove there *still* is some lack of insight on his part. Eric talks about Paul Heyman and how he felt that Heyman was so full of shit that he believed his own delusions. That felt like the pot calling the kettle black. Bischoff seems locked in his own mind in portions of this story, choosing to believe his version of events. Do I think Eric Bischoff was the death of WCW? No, I don't. I think he got caught in the whirlwind that is business politics and was dragged along to an inevitable end. I think his assessment of the business side of wrestling as far as perceptions and the problems faced being part of a corporation like Turner/Time Warner are probably the most honest parts of this memoir.

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