



Gable & Lombard

Warren G. Harris

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Gable & Lombard: A Biography, 1974 BCE, by Warren G. Harris. Hardcover with dust jacket, 190 pages, published by Simon & Schuster.

Gable & Lombard Details

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Birdy says

Hollywood History Book

Based on the careers and relationships around two of hey-day Hollywood's most romantic characters, this book had the potential to bring hours of laughter and tears to any reader. Instead, all events were treated as if this were a high school history text. The vast number of people who brought America through the Depression, WWII, and the new economy through entertainment unmatched since, were mentioned and documented, little more. This book describes.

It should have been ghostwritten by a greater author, one with heart and soul. Now I know the facts; I hope never to be drawn by the subject to read anything by Mr. Harris again.

Graceann says

When I'm reading a biography/history, there are a few rules that, if they are broken, immediately make it fail the "smell test" for me.

1. No conversations that couldn't possibly have been heard. In Gable & Lombard, Warren Harris somehow is able to tell us what Carole Lombard said as her plane was taking off for the final time. Since the plane crashed a few minutes later and there were no survivors. I'd love to know what form of telepathy made this possible. Ditto the private conversations that she and Gable had.
2. Get the basic facts right. There is a touching scene at the end of the book where Gable's body is "lowered into the ground" while folks stand around teary-eyed. Except that he's in a crypt. The next part of the statement, that he's next to Carole, is true, but you'd have to double-check to make sure that the author got that right, since the first part is wrong. Also, England declared war on Germany in September 1939, not October. It was in all the papers, and when a fact so easily retrieved is incorrect, you have to worry about the rest of the facts as they are presented.
3. Gossip isn't fact. Yes, let's please trot out the "Clara Bow slept with the whole USC Football Team" trope again. It's boring, it's unproven and it's not written here as a rumor, but as incontrovertible truth. Yawn.

Clark Gable and Carole Lombard adored each other. That much is attested to by those who knew them. Gable was never the same after Lombard's death, and that's painfully apparent just from looking at any photo of him taken after January 15, 1942. There's plenty of story in their courtship, marriage and in the aftermath of that tragic crash to make a cracking book. If the basic rules of authorship aren't followed, however, it's enough to put anything that might actually be factual in doubt. That's a deep shame, because this story is worth telling well.

Amber says

All questions answered! Great read!

What an awesome and honest tribute to the King and Queen of Hollywood. A beautiful, but very sad story of Hollywood royalty... in the making, to their heart wrenching endings. Thank you!

Leslie Goddard says

Light, easy, entertaining read. Good summer beach reading. Not a huge amount of depth or insight and very respectful of both Gable and Lombard with no closet skeletons. Really well organized — opens with Lombard's death, then goes back and covers each person's childhood/early movie career, then returns to story of their life together.

JacQuelyne says

ENJOYABLE READ

I have been a movie fan since I was about 7 years old when I first saw the Wizard of Oz with my Mom at the Balaban & Katz theatre, The Chicago, with great seats and popcorn. In our home, my brother, parents, and I watched movies on Saturday evenings (always with big bowls of popcorn and pistachio nuts), and early Sunday mornings when there was both the wonderful Flash Gordon series and the Shirley Temple movies (a favorite of my Dad's). As I became older, I spent my allowance and babysitting monies on movie magazines, which were only 25 cents at that time. And as a teenager, it was off to Kroch's and Brentano's (when we had independent booksellers) to find paperback bios of my favorite stars. Five dollars got you a lot of wonderful books.

After seeing Gone with the Wind, I became a big fan of the dashing Clark Gable and the beautiful Vivien Leigh. However, I had never been able to find a book about Gable and Lombard. So when I discovered this book, I thought I would give it a go. Warren G. Harris's biography of these two terrific actors, who were lucky enough to find their soul mates, is a well written, well-documented, enjoyable, and captivating biography. It took me about five to six hours to read (with bathroom breaks and glasses of water) to read this bio. You get another side to these personalities besides their movie careers. Most of all it describes the most important part of all our lives --- love, friendship and companionship. Gable and Lombard were lucky to have found people to love and share their lives, no matter the cost. They were blessed for whatever time they were given to be together.

I think you will enjoy this lovely story.

Jenn says

Another great read by Warren G. Harris! I love the dynamic of the Gable and Lombard team. If you've read their biographies separately, this may seem redundant but a review of their history is necessary to understand how they came to be made for each other. One of my favorite biographies!

William says

A bit choppy at times but never uninteresting. Harris does a good job re-creating the people and events of the narrative. The tidbits he tells of private lives are sometimes so "private" that I believe he should have cited his sources closely instead of just providing a general "acknowledgements."

Diana says

[Also, this was published before Loretta Young's revelation that Clark Gable may have sexually assaulted her, so it still mentions their "affair": <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/...> (hide spoiler)]

Sarah Tregear says

Interesting read on the life and marriage of Gale and Lombard.

amy says

I read this book back in the 70's at my grandma's house--before I even knew anything about their films etc... tragic.

Sarah Smith says

I awarded GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY 4 stars. However, I actually think that GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY only truly deserved a rating of 3.5 stars at best. At the beginning of this biography, I applauded author Warren G. Harris for researching the life of Clark Gable before he met, fell in love with, and married Carole Lombard so well. Because I have been a self-proclaimed DIEHARD Clark Gable FANATIC since I was young, I very much appreciated the way in which Warren G. Harris presented those facts about "The King of Hollywood" to his readers within that one particular chapter. Having said that, though, I must admit that I began to doubt the veracity of Warren G. Harris' telling of this movie star couple's life together in later chapters of GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY. For instance, how in the world could Warren G. Harris, himself, know the exact words used and feelings shared in intimate conversations shared between Clark Gable and Carole Lombard. Throughout this biography, he indicated that he, himself, did not hear any of these private conversations personally, and he indicated that no one else was present with Clark Gable and Carole Lombard at these moments. Thus, those indications caused me to wonder: how on earth could Warren G. Harris possibly share these intimate conversations in GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY? How could he possibly verify if every word of these conversations were true if Clark Gable and Carole Lombard were the only participants? Also, I was disappointed in the way that Warren G. Harris did not verify and/or accredit the research that he presented in GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY. He could have, at the very least, provided footnotes, quotes from magazine articles, newspaper articles, or other books written about Clark Gable and Carole Lombard in order to strengthen his own biography about their relationship. I think GABLE AND LOMBARD: A BIOGRAPHY would have

been a more satisfying, successful work if Warren G. Harris would have researched more carefully and supported his findings more solidly from beginning to end. Overall, the story, itself, of the relationship that Clark Gable found with Carole Lombard that Warren G. Harris put together throughout this biography is interesting, sweet, and tragic.

Karen says

I enjoyed this book. it provided a lot of information about movies and stars in the 30's and 40's.

Hal says

A nicely done bio sketch of the great love match that was Clark Gable and Carol Lombard. Delving into the background on each and proceeding onto how they met and the tragic outcome and aftermath.

It's hard to imagine a more suited pair than these two, primarily in light of their celebrity and how fragile that can be. The pain he suffered on her untimely death is quite sad. It also leaves us wondering how it would have been had they lived on together.

Lloyd G. Kay says

Getting to know two great stars

I love reading this book because I came to know Gable and Lombard as human beings not just stars and to realize what a strong loving relationship they had and how devastating it was when she died in an airplane crash I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in these two stars

Tara says

Alrighty!

I don't believe everything that's in this book. I would have. But the author messed that up at the end when he told me that Gable had an obsession with Blondes due to Lombard's death. Who knows if he did? Gable once said something about a woman is a woman and he didn't believe in soulmates. I think I can believe in that quote more than I can believe a man like Gable had a soulmate.

Well, his life was a doozy. And I enjoy reading about him so much. I know he was a womanizer, but I cannot even call him a jerk. I can't call him a pretty boy. He was all man. All real. All stubborn and selfish and making his way to the top like a Capricorn man does, (even though I know Gable was an Aquarius. I think his dominant sign is Capricorn.) Capricorn men and women work their way to the top, even if they have to step on all the little people.

Anyway, what made me question how believable this book is was the way he described Marilyn Monroe's death. I know she thought of Gable as her daddy and she was a little... (what did Jackie Kennedy say?) "Marilyn was a loose cannon." But I don't believe her suicide was over Gable and I don't even know if she

committed suicide. For all I know she could've been murdered.

Anyway, this biography reads like a romance novel and it's very entertaining and fun to read. He clearly through Marilyn in there to entertain but he should've not done that. It makes the story seem like it's not all fact.

I've learned so much about the death of Lombard that I know by now that Warren G. Harris left a lot of shit out. A lot of good juicy details. I don't remember if he wrote about Gable sitting at a bar getting drunk while they were searching for Lombard's body. I don't think that's in the book.

Anyway, it was a beautiful telling. I adore the Carole of this book and that's the Carole I like so much. I think I liked her before I read this book because I read her quotes.

I think Gable is the original thinker and Lombard (while I'm told she's so intellectual by so many people) wasn't as magnificently brilliant as Gable. I think her ideas were Gable's first and she just agreed with them and told them to some magazine.

However, she threw some great parties and she was a fun, lively person. I like hearing her described as the Queen Of Comedy. An excellent and competent and sharp business woman.

I liked the Desi Arnaz quote that "Carole was so good at comedy that she made you want to go to bed with her." (it went something like that.)

And I like how someone else said something like "Lovely girl, but crazy as a bed bug!"

Lordy, how I adore these two people!

I loved her cursing. and how they had to tell her "Ms. Lombard, there are ladies present."

And I think the sick choke where she arrived on a stretcher to her own party and then sat up laughing and everyone was mad at her and she said something like "What's the matter with you fuckers? Can't you tell a gag?"

She was so wonderful. But she did some stupid things sometimes.

The author was too sympathetic of the stupid things Lombard sometimes did (like breaking into Gable's current wife's house to curse her out and then jump back out the window and drive home laughing.)

Maybe I don't remember all the details exactly as they happened. But if this ain't the truth of the Gable and Lombard relationship, I don't want NO other truth. And I've got to buy this book so I can have my facts straight when I edit this review.
