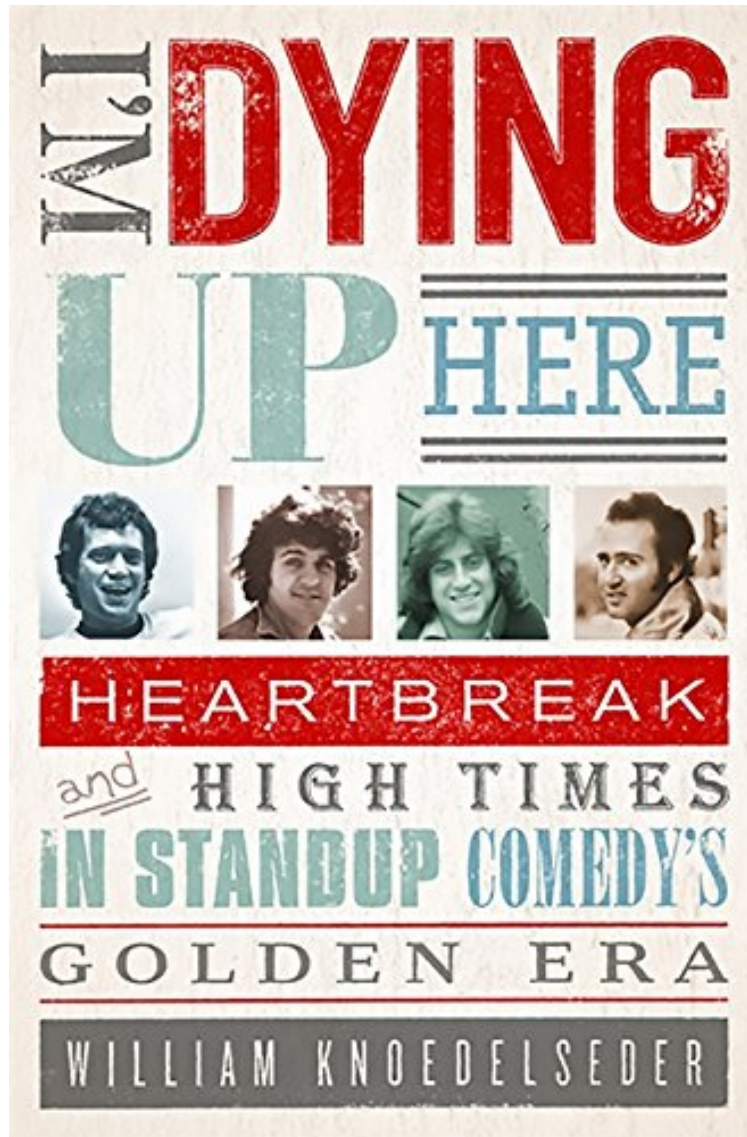


I'm Dying Up Here: Heartbreak and High Times in Stand-Up Comedy's Golden Era

William Knoedelseder

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#666601 in Books PublicAffairs 2010-07-27 2010-07-27Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .75 x 6.131, .80 #File Name: 1586488961304 pages | File size: 21.Mb

William Knoedelseder : I'm Dying Up Here: Heartbreak and High Times in Stand-Up Comedy's Golden Era before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I'm Dying Up Here: Heartbreak and High Times in Stand-Up Comedy's Golden Era:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Really Good Look At An Important Time In The History of

ComedyBy Geoffrey KleinmanThis is the book that the Shotime series of the same name is based on. That series is a fictionalization of the book, but the book is actually non-fiction and it tells the story of the comedy explosion of the 70's and 80's. The book is well written and flows between narrative and oral history really well. The first half of the book is the stronger half as it follows many of the threads that lead to the careers of Jay Leno, David Letterman, Richard Pryor, Robin Williams and especially Richard Lewis. If the book were to really have a main character it's Richard Lewis and his story really intersects with many of the different branches of what happened in NY and LA at the Improv and Comedy Store. The second half of the book gets really caught up with the quazi-union of comedians and their struggle with Mitzy Shore and the Comedy Store. The conflict is important, but it dominates the narrative so strongly it eclipses many of the individual comics narratives. I listened to the Audiobook version of this book, which is well narrated by William Dufres, who does a good job keeping the comic timing from the sections of the book which are taken from the oral history. If you are interested in this topic, I solidly recommend this book0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Laughing to Keep from Crying One of the best narratives of comedy in the seventiesBy Peter DollardLaughing to Keep from CryingOne of the best narratives of comedy in the seventies. It walks the perfect line when everyone one was living for the day and the next hour yet pursuing a truly dangerous career(names are simply not necessary in this case): A novel brought to life; the golden Svengali promising fabulous wealth and fame, endless verbose brilliance delivered by the downtrodden,, oppressed, depressed, and distressed. The complete freedom to fail on stage and by that very act able to carve out a name for yourself. The story line in this work is very well connected and filled with little vignettes of all the successful comics from Williams to Leno. The off stage Letterman surprised me more than anything, He was so dare I say it kind and it illustrates the bankrupt nature of having your persona on TV being the only real knowledge anyone has of you. A very strong five stars.... I wished it had gone on farther but really this was the story...0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well told true tale of comedy's Camelot period.By EdgeA true account of those golden times when the best comedians had some homes where they could hone their craft. The results can be seen today in the likes of Leno, Letterman and Lewis. It also shows how such a laboratory could not sustain. Lighting in a bottle.

In the mid-1970s, Jay Leno, David Letterman, Andy Kaufman, Richard Lewis, Robin Williams, Elayne Boosler, Tom Dreesen, and several hundred other shameless showoffs and incorrigible cutups from all across the country migrated en masse to Los Angeles, the new home of Johnny Carson's Tonight Show. There, in a late-night world of sex, drugs, dreams and laughter, they created an artistic community unlike any before or since. It was Comedy Camelotbut it couldn't last. William Knoedelseder, then a cub reporter covering the scene for the Los Angeles Times, was there when the comedianswho were not paid for performingtried to change the system and incidentally tore apart their own close-knit community. In I'm Dying Up Here he tells the whole story of that golden age, of the strike that ended it, and of how those days still resonate in the lives of those who were there.

From Publishers WeeklyStarred . In 1978, Knoedelseder (Stiffed: A True Story of MCA, the Music Business, and the Mafia) was a journalist assigned to cover newcomers transforming the comedy clubs: For the next two years, I had stage-side seats at the best show in show business.... I met and wrote about Jay Leno, David Letterman and Richard Lewis before the world knew who they were. Mitzi Shore, recently labeled the Norma Desmond of Comedy by the Los Angeles Times, took over L.A.'s Comedy Store in 1973 with a no-pay policy because she saw it as a training ground, a workshop, a college. It became a focal point for local comics, including Lewis, his friend Steve Lubetkin, Elayne Boosler, Tom Dreesen, Letterman, Leno and many more. Some were in desperate circumstances, surviving by living in their cars and eating bar condiments. Driving a silver Jaguar to her massive, cash-generating laugh factory, Shore was seen as cunningly manipulative, and her unfair payment policies led to an organized strike in 1979 by the CFC (Comedians for Compensation). This confrontation of comics vs. club owner (Not... one... red... fucking... cent) is the core of the book, with the suicide of Lubetkin taking the tone from comedy to tragedy. Filmmakers will eye this as a potential property similar to Bill Carter's The Late Shift (1996), about Letterman and Leno. Knoedelseder skillfully layers powerful dramatic details, and readers will shelve the book alongside those other key classics on comedy: Steve Allen's The Funny Men and Janet Coleman's The Compass. (Aug. 24) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Knoedelseder skillfully layers powerful dramatic details." ---Publishers Weekly Starred Publishers Weekly,STARRED review Knoedelseder skillfully layers powerful dramatic details, and readers will shelve the book alongside those other key classics on comedy. Shelf Awareness A revealing and entertaining look at the 1970s Los Angeles comedy scene and the labor dispute that ended its most glorious era. Booklist Fact-packed, highly readable history peppered with plenty of portraits of struggling young comics, some destined for national fame, others headed to obscurity and, in a few cases, early death. Buffalo News One of the most eye-opening and informative books ever written about standup comedyOne of the books of the year for any student of American television and pop cultureA little-known story has now been told very well in perfect context. And when you finish the book you may feel as if you finally understand every comedian you see on TV for the first time. Daily Variety A lively new bookKnoedelseder reminds us that comedy is a dicey calling. New York

Times Book Illuminating Irish TimesKnoedelseder, who was around in those days as a reporter on the Los Angeles Times, interweaves the fascinating stories of the tragic, unknown Lubetkin and the performers who were to become household names, set against the basic contradictions of working the Comedy Store. Dallas Morning NewsWritten with a journalist's strong narrative sense, I'm Dying Up Here chronicles the tight-knit community of artists who cracked open the world of funny entertainment and the event that shattered their camaraderie...Knoedelseder's ability to sniff out the human stories behind the headlines is what makes this rowdy chapter in stand-up such a good read. It's a bittersweet tale told with humor and economy. DigitalCity.comIm Dying Up Here lays bare the bad and the ugly of Hollywood; from what good there was, like primordial muck, emerged the funniest guys and gals around.