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Whitney Houston: Recording Artist & Actress (Lives Cut Short)



Synopsis

This informative title highlights the life of Whitney Houston. Readers will learn about Houston's childhood in Newark, New Jersey including her strong family life and her beginnings as a singer at New Hope Baptist Church. Houston's musical work is discussed from her days as a backup singer for Chaka Kahn, Jermaine Jackson and the Neville Brothers and her collaboration with cousin Dionne Warwick and aunt Aretha Franklin through her superstardom as a solo act with the hits Saving All My Love For You, How Will I know, I Wanna Dance With Somebody, and her soundtrack to The Bodyguard featuring Dolly Parton's I Will Always Love You. Houston's courtship with Bobby Brown is included, as is their marriage and the birth of their daughter Bobbi Kristina and their eventual divorce. Houston's descent into drug addiction is included, leading to her death at age 48 while in the midst of a reemerging career. This book includes details of Houston's life and covers the controversies surrounding her life and death. Aligned to Common Core Standards and correlated to state standards. Essential Library is an imprint of Abdo Publishing, a division of ABDO.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 7-10-These books trace the lives of pop-culture notables from childhood to their sudden deaths, and the personal and professional triumphs and troubles in between. The opening chapters detail a specific performance by the celebrity. This career highpoint exemplifies the individual's qualities and abilities that were admired, generated sales, and attracted legions of fans. The chapters conclude

with a statement that tells when the person died, piquing readers' interest to discover how the star had gone from one of the brightest moments to such a tragic ending. The narrative history has an informative tone, balancing opinions and quotes from the subjects and insiders close to them, and critics' views, along with important facts and milestones. The books convey a sense of what made these performers legendary, how they influenced others, and why their legacies endure. The authors provide helpful context to the eras in which they lived, such as the common practice of prescribing sleeping pills and amphetamines. Large color, captioned photographs appear throughout, and sidebars supply helpful background material. These up-to-date biographies should find an audience in middle and high school collections. While the books maintain that the tragic ends do not diminish their subjects' accomplishments, the authors neither romanticize nor glamorize these lifestyles marred by substance abuse. --June Shimonishi, Torrance Public Library, CA (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

The dependable Lives Cut Short series adds another four titles featuring celebrities who died prematurely. Each begins with a poignant quote from the late celeb. The books use many other first-person quotes as well as comments from people who knew the subject. Freed from the risk of libel, the authors generally treat their biographees with a mix of admiration for their achievements and honesty about the mistakes they made, as in this line about Whitney Houston: "She was a real person, a girl from New Jersey who had weaknesses as well as strengths, just like anybody else." Whitney Houston builds a nicely rounded picture of the singer and actress, making excellent use of sidebars to explain and extend the information, with well-chosen photographs. Given the subject, it's a bit macabre to say it, but this is one series worth continuing. Grades 7-10. --Susan Dove Lempke

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