


# **It's Good to Be the King: The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks**

*James Robert Parish*

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## **It's Good to Be the King: The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks** James Robert Parish

This book traces the extraordinary life and career of Mel Brooks, who has ridden a wave of show business success perhaps unsurpassed by anyone of his generation. Offering many insights into the wacky world of Brooks and his many collaborators, as well as an intimate look into his successful marriage to the brilliant and beautiful actress Anne Bancroft, *It's Good to Be the King* might just be the most delightful, engaging, and entertaining biography you'll ever read.

## **It's Good to Be the King: The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks Details**

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James Robert Parish**

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# **From Reader Review It's Good to Be the King: The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks for online ebook**

## **Joseph Hageman says**

What a well written and entertaining biography about a really brilliant man.

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## **Brett Bydairk says**

A Well-written biography of the man who gave us some of the funniest movies ever. From his beginnings in the Jewish section of NYC through the TV studios with Sid Caesar to Hollywood and commercial fame and success, the account details his self-doubts, failures, and ultimate success.

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## **Mark Arnold says**

I am reading this as it's the only book about Mel Brooks that includes his entire movie career. I'm not completely satisfied with this author's writing style, but until Brooks writes an autobiography, this is the best one can do.

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## **Marylu Sanok says**

Mel Brooks is insanely funny and thankfully for us, it is catching. His stories show the progression from the hills of the Catskills to Broadway.

He has worked with the funniest people on both sides of the camera. His own productions have a troupe of performers that work with him on many of his works.

This is a laugh out loud book and I recommend it

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## **Marsha says**

I think there was nothing wrong, per se, with this book; it's just not my genre. However, it was great for book club! It got us into speaking about comedy in general and about Mel Brooks in general, and what's wrong with comedy right now overall, and some good sources of watching old comedies, and generally we just discussed some of Mel Brooks's successes and some of his personality quirks and failings. As I say, it was a great book club book. The book itself was "eh", but it led to good discussion. And yes: Mel Brooks is a complex guy with a complex personality. Those aspects were touched on in this book, and you get the idea that they were part of the point of actually writing the book, but the subtitle – *The Seriously Funny Life of Mel Brooks* – points out the humor in his life as opposed to the strangeness. It was okay.

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### **Charles DiFazio says**

The Author does a masterful job of weaving the humor of Mel Brooks with the seriousness of Brook's ambitions and the ups and downs of his very creative life. When I finished reading, I believed that if I met Mel Brooks, I would know his deepest persona. I highly recommend this book for those who have enjoyed Mel Brooks over the years.

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### **Christopher says**

Filled with interesting anecdotes and quotes from Mel Brooks, this book has its definite charms. However, the writing, itself, leaves much to be desired. Parish is clunky, at best, and is one of those authors who insists on using synonyms - sometimes awkward ones - of words he has just used earlier in a paragraph, to avoid repetition. While this is often good practice, in the hands on an unskilled writer it just feels amateurish. I also wish he had used footnotes or endnotes for all of his material.

So, while it's good fun, its not great scholarship.

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### **Vince says**

No doubt is one hard driven complex funny lunatic. Nice revealing book about a complex man. The author touches on the failures as well as the triumphs which makes Brook's life more real.

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### **Jim Aker says**

Not a well written biography. Unfortunately it is the only one available. It reads like a compendium of and then I wrote this or produced that with very little background and only a small amount of input from people who know Mel. It is better then nothing, but not by much.

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### **Andrew says**

Seemed like a pretty thorough chronicle of Mel's life. However, the author seems to have no respect for chronology, as the reader finds himself frequently whipsawed between the 60s to the 80s to the 70s and then back again.

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### **Dennis says**

One glaring omission: How the hell do you write a biography on Mel Brooks and NOT have a chapter (or more) completely dedicated to *Blazing Saddles*, arguably the best in the Brooks oeuvre? There are a few scant sentences peppered throughout the book about the film but nothing else. Yet, *To Be or Not to Be* gets an entire chapter to itself? Brooks's guest shot on "Mad About You" got more ink in this book than *Blazing Saddles*.

Also, from everything I've ever read and heard, *The Odd Couple* by Neil Simon was inspired by Simon's brother Danny and NOT, as the author attests, Mel Brooks.

Three stars for these two reasons. Other than that, pretty good.

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### **Rick Segers says**

This is not the best written book in the world but absent an autobiography from the man himself, a good substitute. If you are a fan of Brooks' work then this is a must read. I got this as a gift from my daughter who can pick them for the old man. Last year an autobiography of June Foray and this one this year.

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### **Sean Curry says**

Reading it now. Pretty interesting. I always like reading the backgrounds of famous comedy legends. So far I've read Steve Martin's autobiography, *Standing Up*, and *Second City Unscripted*, kind of an oral history of Second City in Chicago, told by dozens of people who have been involved with it over the years. And just a couple nights ago I watched *Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work*, which was good. I love talking about and listen to other people talk seriously about comedy. It's fascinating.

But anyway, this book is pretty good and informative so far, though it's a bit... juvenile in tone. The author is a good writer, but he comes off almost a bit too excited to be talking about Mel Brooks. But Mel Brooks is quite a funny and interesting guy, so you easily match that enthusiasm, most of the time.

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### **Bill says**

I didn't realize that Mel Brooks took his work quite so seriously. I also didn't know how hard he had to work to break into show business. I suppose I should have. Most entertainers are only overnight sensations after they put in years of hard work and paying dues.

I learned a few things about screenwriting and writing comedy, in particular. After writing a script in 30 days myself, working mornings and weekends, I thought someone that devoted full time to it would be able to knock one out in a few months. This especially seemed true of Mel Brooks movies, which seem so unrehearsed at times. But no, he took years to write most of them. And he usually did it with a writing partner or two. Comedy is probably easier to write when you have another sense of humor around to fill in your blind spots.

The biographer himself found a good structure for Mel's story and usually writes well. The text is full of attributions, but doesn't come off as a dry academic exercise. The one disappointing spot I found was the very sparse treatment given to developing *Blazing Saddles*. This is especially puzzling given the importance of this work in bringing Mel into the national spotlight. No matter, I recommend this to anyone that wants to learn more about this great talent.

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### **Toni says**

The author mistakenly asserts the Brooks was the inspiration for Neil Simon's "Odd Couple," which isn't true and would have been incredibly easy for the author to check as even IMDB has the accurate story. Instead, he includes a boring, meandering story just to make his little error. And that's pretty much how the entire book goes. The ONLY reason to read this book is because there isn't another Mel Brooks biography, and even then it's a close-run match.

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