

# Being Elvis A Lonely Life

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## BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Ray Connolly
- Pages : 384 Pages
- Publisher : Liveright
- Language : English
- ISBN : 1631492802

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## BOOK SYNOPSIS

On the fortieth anniversary of Elvis Presley's death comes this rocking biography of an iconic artist who fundamentally transformed American culture. Elvis Presley is a giant figure in American popular culture, a man whose talent and fame were matched only by his later excesses and tragic end. A godlike entity in the history of rock and roll, this twentieth-century icon with a dazzling voice blended gospel and traditionally black rhythm and blues with country to create a completely new kind of music and new way of expressing male sexuality, which simply blew the doors off a staid and repressed 1950s America. In *Being Elvis* veteran rock journalist Ray Connolly takes a fresh look at the career of the world's most loved singer, placing him, forty years after his death, not exhaustively in the garish neon lights of Las Vegas but back in his mid-twentieth-century, distinctly southern world. For new and seasoned fans alike, Connolly, who interviewed Elvis in 1969, re-creates a man who sprang from poverty in Tupelo, Mississippi, to unprecedented overnight fame, eclipsing Frank Sinatra and then inspiring the Beatles along the way. Juxtaposing the music, the songs, and the incendiary live concerts with a personal life that would later careen wildly out of control, Connolly demonstrates that Elvis's amphetamine use began as early as his touring days of hysteria in the late 1950s, and that the financial needs that drove him in the beginning would return to plague him at the very end. With a narrative informed by interviews over many years with John Lennon, Bob Dylan, B. B. King, Sam Phillips, and Roy Orbison, among many others, Connolly creates one of the most nuanced and mature portraits of this cultural phenomenon to date. What distinguishes *Being Elvis* beyond the narrative itself is Connolly's more subtle examinations of white poverty, class aspirations, and the prison that is extreme fame. As we reach the end of this poignant account, Elvis's death at forty-two takes on the hue of a profoundly American tragedy. The creator of an American sound that resonates today, Elvis remains frozen in time, an enduring American icon who could "seamlessly soar into a falsetto of pleading and yearning" and capture an inner emotion, perhaps of eternal yearning, to which all of us can still relate. Intimate and unsparing, *Being Elvis* explores the extravagance and irrationality inherent in the Elvis mythology, ultimately offering a thoughtful celebration of an immortal life.

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