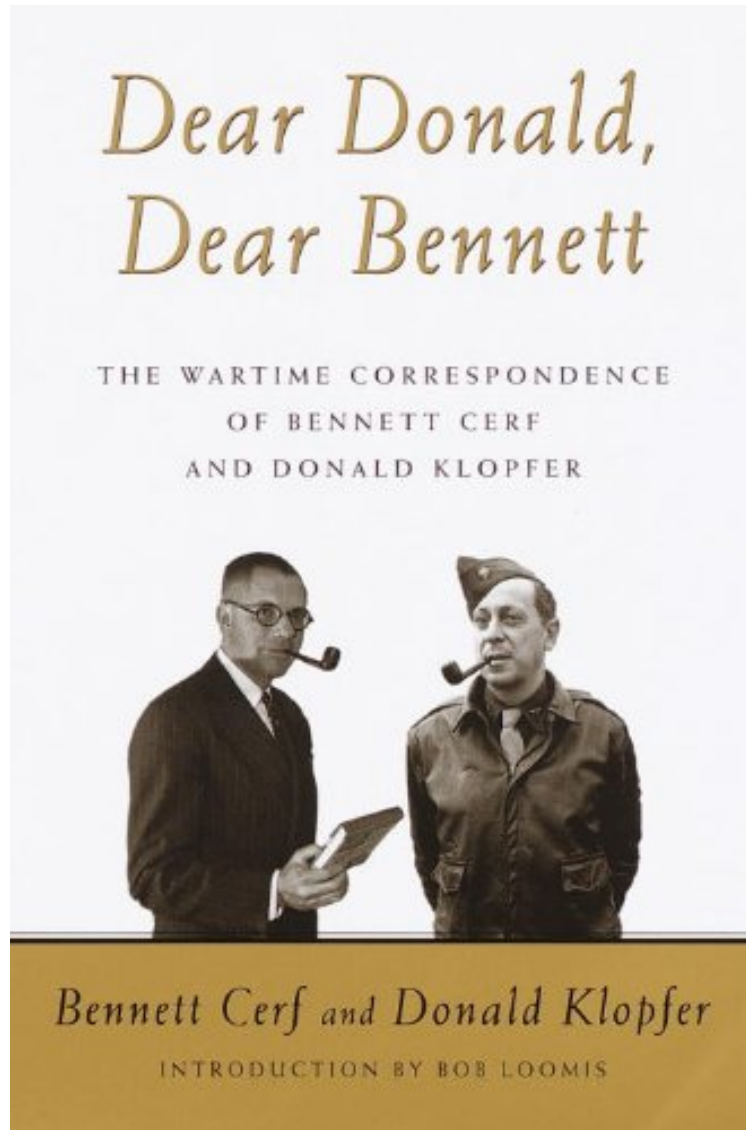


Dear Donald, Dear Bennett: The War Time Letters of Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer

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Bennett Cerf, Donald Klopfer : Dear Donald, Dear Bennett: The War Time Letters of Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dear Donald, Dear Bennett: The War Time Letters of Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. For hardcore Cerf fans.By William B. ArledgeI waited for a few months for this book to come out, and was truly not disappointed. Of course, I believe that you must be a hardcore Bennett Cerf fan to enjoy it. If you are not a Cerf fan, the book is still an interesting capsule of the World War II era.

My obsession with Mr. Cerf began with "What's My Line", I have since obtained most of his books. I recommend reading "At Random", Bennett's recollections of working at Random House Publishing. When you know the story behind these two gentlemen, you will appreciate this book more. Mr. Cerf ran in several circles, and it shows in the book. It would be an interesting contrast to have this go against a modern day publishing house letter exchange. Reading this gives the feel of the day. It seemed that the business world, even though still busy, was much more laid back. The letters these two friends mailed back and forth really show the value of personal written communication, a waning part of relationships. 12 of 15 people found the following review helpful. My, How the Publishing Business Has Changed! By Chris Meesey Food Czar Before browsing through Dear Donald, Dear Bennett, the reader should immediately peruse a copy of At Random, Bennett Cerf's memoirs, so he has a chance of understanding what he is reading in this book. I can't believe Random House would treat the personal letters of their founders in such a shabby fashion. Virtually no footnotes, no annotation, no index--nothing. They might as well be putting out the memoirs of Anna Nicole Smith, rather than the keepers of one of the great literary storehouses of the twentieth century. Before spending any money assembling this volume for publication (if indeed they spent any at all!), the editors should have acquired a copy of The Noel Coward Diaries and followed it religiously as a guide. In that volume, Graham Payne and Sheridan Morely obviously spent months poring over every inch of copy, meticulously footnoting each and every name and archaic reference so that upon completion, the reader would easily be able to tell the difference between Bob Menzies and Bobby Andrews, the Duke of Kent from the Duke of Windsor, and easily tell whether Sir Noel was writing about Elizabeth Taylor the film star, Elizabeth Taylor the English novelist, or Elizabeth Taylor the non-celebrity dear friend to Coward's inner circle. Here, the editors (who are unnamed and rightly so) merely say that Saxe Commins was a senior editor at Random House and Robert Haas a partner without further definition. (More time is spent discussing the typeface of this volume than virtually anything else.) Most readers of these letters would be interested in the details such annotation would provide. Yes, the letters do paint a wonderful picture of the day-to-day operations of the company, the trials and tribulations of America at war, and the deep affection between the two men. It's a shame the present-day editors at Random House did not see fit to put together a better tribute of their founding fathers.

Donald Klopfer and Bennett Cerf had been partners in Random House for seventeen years, but Donald decided that he had to become a part of an even greater endeavor--the defeat of Nazi Germany. Not long after Pearl Harbor, Donald, who was then forty years old, took a leave from Random House and joined the United States Army Air Forces. He served for two and a half years, finally becoming an intelligence major in a B-24 group in England. Donald and Bennett wrote to each other regularly all during that period. Bennett sent Donald long newsy letters about the book business--authors, sales, publishing gossip--as well as about what was happening in New York. Donald reacted in his wise, serene way to Bennett's letters, and conveyed news of what was going on in the war, though sometimes censorship took its toll. This is nostalgia with substance, and because these letters were never intended to be read by anyone else, they reveal, in a convincing and wonderful way, just how special these two men were and how that specialness was reflected in the company they founded. From the Hardcover edition.

From Library Journal Published to celebrate Random's 75th anniversary, this book collects the correspondence between Random cofounders Klopfer who joined the air force in 1941 and relates the horrors of war and Cerf whose letters document Random's growing business. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Between 1942 and 1945, Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer, founding partners of Random House publishing company, enjoyed a lively, witty, and intelligent brand of correspondence. After Klopfer enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces, Cerf kept the publishing wheels grinding while keeping his cherished friend and business associate well informed as to the ensuing literary happenings and mishaps on the home front. Klopfer, an intelligence officer stationed in a B-24 group flying out of England, relayed his wartime experiences and kept his finger in the book business by offering his own opinions, commentaries, and advice to Cerf. The almost daily correspondence that flourished between these two dedicated bibliophiles provides a fascinating overview of a unique partnership, a firsthand glimpse into a glamorous bygone era of publishing, and an intimate portrait of two respected giants of the literary world. Margaret Flanagan Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "My lucky star is a house--and an imaginary one at that. Rockwell Kent drew it, one day, sitting in my office, and it was adopted forthwith as a trade mark for our publishing firm. We called it Random House because we said we were going to publish anything under the sun that came along--if we liked it well enough. That was in 1928. We're trying to make the star burn a little brighter each year." --Bennett Cerf