

Model Woman: Eileen Ford and the Business of Beauty

Robert Lacey

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ROBERT LACEY

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Robert Lacey : Model Woman: Eileen Ford and the Business of Beauty before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Model Woman: Eileen Ford and the Business of Beauty:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Interesting look at how the agency got started; but leaves you wanting more!By Reading RocksThis book is an Eileen Ford bio combined; how the Ford Modeling Agency started; how the agency dealt with the changing times of modeling agencies. I've read lots of other books by Robert Lacey (primarily about England's Royals) so I knew that I would like his writing style - and I did with this book.The book gets into great detail on her bio + how the agency got started and how it functioned in its first 5-10 years. The detail wanes off when the author gets into the 1960's and beyond. It leaves the reader really wanting more than what is

written. The reader learns about how the Ford Agency tried to quash Casablancas from opening in New York and in Paris. The Ford Agency really stomped on anybody trying to open a modeling agency and for the longest time, the Ford Agency was a monopoly. Then ultimately, Casablancas - as did many others - did open an agency in both places. What this book lacked - and what I thought it would include - was more interesting information and details about the models that the agency worked with. Details about how the bookers worked, how they coordinated a model's schedule, a week-at-a-glance or day-at-a-glance of a model's typical schedule....and of course, more stories about the models. There's a few sentences about a booker at Ford whom Eileen considered the best in the business who left to work for Casablancas' agency Elite. But no back story about why she was the best booker that Ford had other than she handled Cindy Crawford. There are some stories in the book about Christy Turlington and Naomi Campbell, Cheryl Tiegs, Christie Brinkley, and some others -- but just to whet your appetite. Towards the end it covers Jerry's death, the sale of the agency, and then Eileen's death really quickly. It was like "Jerry didn't feel good, went to the hospital, then died a couple of weeks later..." The last 1-2 chapters is a skim-through -- kind of like the author just wanted to get it over with. I guess I was expecting more "logistical" information about modeling and with the stable of models that Ford had during its heyday, I thought there'd be more model-stories. The book still is interesting and offers a glimpse into the steel-iness of Eileen Ford which was balanced by her behind-the-scenes husband Jerry. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A success but maybe not a role model... By Michelle B. Braverman Thumbs up to Robert Lacey's breezy writing style, though I spotted one annoying typo ("Conde Nash instead of Conde Nast") and one glaring one (photographer Milton Greene, not Milton Green as written). When I find those it makes me wonder what other facts were unchecked, but this may just be me. Lacey did a great job with Eileen's background and history. His research of the time and places where she grew up was fascinating. I never knew about Great Neck being the "Hollywood of the East"! That she changed her name and dropped references to her half-Jewish background was not surprising for the era, especially as her Jewish father became a Quaker, and her mother was a good Roman Catholic. I agree with another reviewer who missed reading more on the agency's workings and the models themselves. I felt like the author didn't like Eileen very much, though he often defended her abrasive personality with quotes from supporters. In the end I confess I didn't like Eileen much myself. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Eileen and Jerry Ford gave me a fantastic opportunity that opened the doors to a multi-faceted and ... By Susan McGraw Keber I'm biased... I was signed with FORD MODELS as a 14 year old. Eileen and Jerry Ford gave me a fantastic opportunity that opened the doors to a multi-faceted and life long career in the fashion / publishing / acting business. Today I am still in the business and have had tremendous success as a Classic print and commercial model. There will never be another Eileen and Jerry Ford. I feel honored and blessed to have been a part of their agency. True to the author's account, Mrs. Ford was indeed a lioness and protective of her young charges both personally and professionally. I met with her toward the end of her life and we chatted about the first time we met... I recalled her tweezing my full eyebrows and how it hurt... we had a good laugh. Forever grateful to the iconic Eileen and Jerry... I'll always be proud to have been a FORD MODEL.

A revealing, no-holds-barred portrait of the legendary Eileen Ford—the entrepreneur who transformed the business of modeling and helped invent the celebrity supermodel. Working with her husband, Jerry, Eileen Ford created the twentieth century's largest and most successful modeling agency, representing some of the fashion world's most famous names—Suzy Parker, Carmen Dellorsquo;Orefice, Lauren Hutton, Rene Russo, Christie Brinkley, Jerry Hall, Christy Turlington, and Naomi Campbell. Her relentless ambition turned the business of modeling into one of the most glamorous and desired professions, helping to convert her stable of beautiful faces into millionaire superstars. *Model Woman* chronicles the Ford Modeling Agency's meteoric rise to the top of the fashion and beauty business, and paints a vibrant portrait of the uncompromising woman at its helm in all her glittering, tyrannical brilliance. Outspoken and controversial, Ford was never afraid to offend in defense of her stringent standards. When she chose, she could deliver hauteur in the grand tradition of fashion's battle-axes, from Coco Chanel to Diana Vreeland—just ask John Casablancas or Janice Dickinson. But she was also a shrewd businesswoman with a keen eye for talent and a passion for serving her clients. Drawing on more than four years of intensive interviews with Ford and her intimates, associates, and rivals, as well as exclusive access to agency documents and memorabilia, Robert Lacey weaves an unforgettable tale of a determined entrepreneur and the empire she built—a story of beauty, ambition, business, and popular culture as powerful and complex as the woman at its center.

"As glamorous and gossipy as one could wish." (Slate) "Ford's status as a controversial, demanding figure isn't ignored in Lacey's portrait of one of the hardest working women in fashion. The juicy details of a tell-all are met with the nuance of a memoir in this portrait of the woman he recalls as the 'matriarch of modeling.'" (New York Observer) "A high-powered page-turner." (Daily Beast) "Unputdownable ... left me not only full of admiration for her achievements but also rather liking her.... Lacey weaves riveting narratives into his account of the life of Ford ... with an eye for detail and juicy

anecdotes.” (Financial Times) “Exhaustively and painstakingly researched, yielding a biography that serves as a testament both to this woman’s professional prowess as well as her personal life.” In the world of fashion related biographies, this surely ranks up there with some of the best.” (New York Journal of Books) “A fascinating look at the woman who, perhaps more than anyone, shaped our ideas of what it means to be a sophisticated American beauty.” (People) “Culled from countless hours of interviews... Lacey diligently maps the agency’s explosive success and skillfully intertwines the glitz and cutthroat melodrama of the modeling world with Ford’s shrewd, intimidating business strategies, uncanny vision, and ability to merge beauty with fame.” (Kirkus) “In the fascinating *Model Woman*, author Robert Lacey paints Ford as an intriguing paradox.” A wholly entertaining, insightful and slightly bitchy look inside the moneyed world of modeling.” (BookPage) “An intensive look at a highly competitive business, with fabulous turf battles and clashing egos among the biggest names in fashion.... A compelling portrait of a savvy businesswoman who transformed the modeling business.” (Booklist) From the Back Cover A revealing, no-holds-barred portrait of Eileen Ford—the legendary entrepreneur who transformed the business of modeling and helped invent the celebrity supermodel. Eileen Ford, working with her husband, Jerry, created the twentieth century’s largest and most successful modeling agency, representing some of the fashion world’s most famous names—Suzy Parker, Carmen Dell’Orefice, Lauren Hutton, Rene Russo, Christie Brinkley, Jerry Hall, Christy Turlington, and Naomi Campbell. Her relentless ambition turned the business of modeling into one of the most glamorous and desired professions, helping to convert her stable of beautiful faces into millionaire superstars. *Model Woman* chronicles the Ford Modeling Agency’s meteoric rise to the top of the fashion and beauty business, and paints a vibrant portrait of the uncompromising woman at its helm in all her glittering, tyrannical brilliance. Outspoken and controversial, Ford was never afraid to offend in defense of her stringent standards. When she chose, she could deliver haute couture in the grand tradition of fashion’s battle-axes, from Coco Chanel to Diana Vreeland—just ask John Casablancas or Janice Dickinson. But she was also a shrewd businesswoman with a keen eye for talent and a passion for serving her clients. Drawing on more than four years of intensive interviews with Ford and her intimates, associates, and rivals, as well as exclusive access to agency documents and memorabilia, Robert Lacey weaves an unforgettable tale of a determined entrepreneur and the empire she built—a story of beauty, ambition, business, and popular culture as powerful and complex as the woman at its center. About the Author Robert Lacey is the New York Times bestselling author of twenty books, including *The Queen*; *Ford: The Men and the Machine*; *The Year 1000*; and *Inside the Kingdom*. He lives in London.