



## Paul Newman: A Life

By Shawn Levy

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Paul Newman, the Oscar-winning actor with the legendary blue eyes, achieved superstar status by playing charismatic renegades, broken heroes, and winsome antiheroes in such revered films as *The Hustler*, *Cool Hand Luke*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *The Verdict*, *The Color of Money*, and *Nobody's Fool*. But Newman was also an oddity in Hollywood: the rare box-office titan who cared about the craft of acting, the sexy leading man known for the staying power of his marriage, and the humble celebrity who made philanthropy his calling card long before it was cool.

The son of a successful entrepreneur, Newman grew up in a prosperous Cleveland suburb. Despite fears that he would fail to live up to his father's expectations, Newman bypassed the family sporting goods business to pursue an acting career. After struggling as a theater and television actor, Newman saw his star rise in a tragic twist of fate, landing the role of boxer Rocky Graziano in *Somebody Up There Likes Me* when James Dean was killed in a car accident. Though he would joke about instances of "Newman's luck" throughout his career, he refused to coast on his stunning boyish looks and impish charm. Part of the original Actors Studio generation, Newman demanded a high level of rigor and clarity from every project. The artistic battles that nearly derailed his early movie career would pay off handsomely at the box office and earn him critical acclaim.

He applied that tenacity to every endeavor both on and off the set. The outspoken Newman used his celebrity to call attention to political causes dear to his heart, including civil rights and nuclear proliferation. Taking up auto racing in midlife, Newman became the oldest driver to ever win a major professional auto race. A food enthusiast who would dress his own salads in restaurants, he launched the Newman's Own brand dedicated to fresh ingredients, a nonprofit juggernaut that has generated more than \$250 million for charity.

In *Paul Newman: A Life*, film critic and pop culture historian Shawn Levy gives readers the ultimate behind-the-scenes examination of the actor's life, from his merry pranks on the set to his lasting romance with Joanne Woodward to the devastating impact of his son's death from a drug overdose. This definitive biography is a fascinating portrait of an extraordinarily gifted man who gave back as much as he got out of life and just happened to be one of the most

celebrated movie stars of the twentieth century.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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# Paul Newman: A Life

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## **Paul Newman: A Life** By Shawn Levy

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## **Paul Newman: A Life** By Shawn Levy Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Film critic and biographer Levy (*Rat Pack Confidential*) embarks on a respectful, thoroughgoing survey of Newman's long life (1925–2008) and massive film career without lingering on emotional and psychological factors. A kind of accidental hero, Newman recognized that his blue-eyed good looks would open doors for him, but by sheer determination and work ethic he muscled his way to the Olympian heights of America's finest actors. Born to middle-class Jewish parents in Shaker Heights, Ohio, he eventually enlisted in the navy then attended Kenyon College on the GI Bill; his early first marriage and dabbling in theater seemed to be a way to avoid having to return home and take over his father's sporting-goods store. He enrolled in Yale's drama department, then in 1952 gave himself a year in New York to prove himself: he hustled small, paying parts and gradually became a part of the Actors Studio, where he claimed to have learned everything he knew about acting. From then on, using his connections shrewdly, he moved from success on Broadway (*Picnic*, where he met Joanne Woodward, whom he married in 1958) to TV (*Our Town*) and Hollywood (*Somebody Up There Likes Me*). From there, the professional accolades began piling up, while Levy also chronicles Newman's stunning success as a race-car driver, entrepreneur and philanthropist. Levy doesn't shy from discussing Newman's shortcomings as a father and husband, yet he leaves a glowing assessment of this legend's career. (*May*)

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From [Booklist](#)

As many diverse roles as Paul Newman played on the silver screen, he occupied nearly as many roles in his real life. Levy, in this for-the-record biography, shows us Newman as the hungry New York actor, the guilt-ridden divorcé, the matinee idol, the grieving father, the business philanthropist—and many more. Newman thought of himself as essentially two people: the public actor and the private man. Levy shows us that, in fact, Newman had many different identities within those two primary delineations. As the public performer, he was a consummate professional (and, of course, glamorous beyond compare). In this context, he wore not only the hat of leading man but also those of director, fund-raiser, promoter, and stage performer. In his private life, Newman proved just as supple, inhabiting the roles of loyal son and brother, supportive husband (to actress Joanne Woodward) and responsible provider for his six children. But he had his faults. Levy delicately documents Newman's extramarital dalliances as well as his fatherly failings. Ultimately, the author reveals how Newman was able to blend his many components and become a man of great integrity who was successful at almost everything he tried—including his charitable pursuits. Levy's representation of the many Newmans will leave readers feeling that they have somehow slipped through the security gate and gotten to know a movie star who was famously guarded about his private life. --Jerry Eberle

Review

### Praise for *Paul Newman*

“Shawn Levy's absorbing, affectionate portrait manages to bring [Newman] back to us.... PAUL NEWMAN: A LIFE leaves readers with a suprisingly cheering message. If the rest of us can't aspire to having Newman's life, we can at least take inspiration from the way he lived his. We can play the cards we're dealt—with guts, grace and generosity.”

—*The Washington Post*

“Eloquent and perceptive....Levy's meticulously researched biography is as revealing a portrait as one could hope for....By the time Levy details Newman's last recorded words, you may find yourself blotting the ink

on the final page.”

—*Christian Science Monitor*

“[A] sweeping tribute to Newman....Levy offers reportage as impressive as his critical analysis. PAUL NEWMAN: A LIFE is a layered and absorbing portrait.”

—Time.com

“A graceful tribute to a one-of-a-kind man.”

—*Seattle Times*

“A rich, serious, yet thoroughly readable biography of a major American movie icon....Fascinating.”

—*Portland Oregonian*

“[A] very readable accounting of Newman’s life. Levy reveals the chinks...while still deeply appreciating the man.”

—*People* (featured review, 3 ½ stars)

“[R]ichly researched....Shawn Levy, a film critic at Portland's *Oregonian*, has done his homework....Being able to bask in Newman's Own insights is enough to bring this one-of-a-kind star back to life, however briefly. And to miss him terribly again when the final page is turned.”

—*USA Today*

“An illuminating look at one of the true greats, full of humor and intelligent analysis—highly recommended.”

—*Kirkus*, starred review

“Levy’s unique representation...will leave readers feeling that they have somehow slipped through the security gate and gotten to know a movie star who was famously guarded about his private life.”

—*Booklist*

“Respectful, thoroughgoing....Levy doesn’t shy from discussing Newman’s shortcomings as a father and husband, yet he leaves a glowing assessment of this legend’s career.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

### **Praise for Shawn Levy**

#### *The Last Playboy*

“[Levy is] a bulldog researcher, and many of his judgments are astute...an entertaining, informative book.”

—Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post*

#### *Ready, Steady, Go!*

“Nimble and exciting . . . Levy’s writing is more smashing than an Austin Powers movie.”

—*Entertainment Weekly*

#### *Rat Pack Confidential*

“An excellent book, not only in its depictions of the Pack’s carryings-on but in its portrayal of the dark turns each life took.”

—*Boston Sunday Globe*

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **William Phillips:**

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in each and every way. By being competitive now, people have to do something to make these people survive, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to remain than other is high. In your case who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you this kind of Paul Newman: A Life book as beginner and daily reading book. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

#### **Matthew Wallace:**

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#### **Betty Patton:**

A number of people said that they feel uninterested when they reading a publication. They are directly felt the item when they get a half areas of the book. You can choose often the book Paul Newman: A Life to make your current reading is interesting. Your current skill of reading ability is developing when you like reading. Try to choose easy book to make you enjoy to learn it and mingle the idea about book and examining especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to start a book and examine it. Beside that the publication Paul Newman: A Life can to be your friend when you're experience alone and confuse in doing what must you're doing of the time.

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