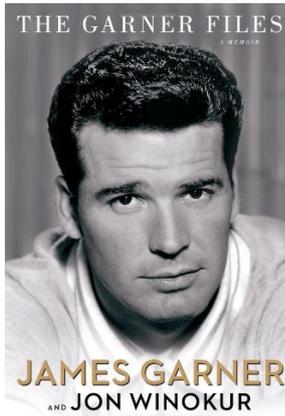


The Garner Files - A Behind the Scenes Book from a Hollywood Icon

Written by The Projectionist

Thursday, 29 December 2011 11:17 - Last Updated Sunday, 08 January 2012 21:53



I am blessed with a wife who actually listens to me as I rave about certain actresses, actors, or movies in general. She knows what I like, and actually puts some thought into Christmas presents for me.

This Christmas she gave me a book that I enjoyed immensely. It's James Garner's autobiography, "[The Garner Files](#)".

I have been a James Garner fan ever since I was a child and saw reruns of "Rawhide" on our black and white television. He's an "actor's actor". Try as you might, you never "see him acting" on screen. He's just that good.

As far as I'm concerned, one of the best light comedies ever made is "Support Your Local Sheriff". Garner plays a drifter "just passing through on my way to Australia" who becomes the town's unconventional sheriff.

"Grand Prix", while a soap opera at heart, is a complete cinematic gem, and Garner does a great job in his role as a disgraced race driver trying to redeem himself. The cinematography on

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this film is amazing. Do yourself a favor and buy the DVD or even better yet, the Blu-Ray of this lengthy epic. You'll invest almost 3 hours in the film, but you will be pleased.

Garner, with his co-author Jon Winokur, tells his life story with aplomb and grace. He appears to leave nothing out, including his childhood as a poor kid during the Depression. He tells of the abuse of his brother and himself by his step-mother, which eventually led to his "hitting the road" as a teenager. The road that led him to his career in Hollywood.

Garner tells about the Studio Contract Player era, which he was a part of during his early years in the business. (During the first few years starring in the top ten television series "Maverick", Garner received less of a salary than a worker at McDonalds would make today.)

He reveals with great candidness his views on war, race relations, and anything else he can think of. The man has lead an interesting life, and it shows.

The book is not entirely from Garners point of view though, an entire chapter is full of stories from friends, family, and co-workers. All of which serve to flesh out the already full story of Garners life.

Garner is not self-serving (much) in regaling the reader with his story, acknowledging his flaws and foibles. (The things he misses, the aforementioned "friends and family" chapter fills in.)

This book is full of stories about Garner, his family, and his friends and co-stars in the business. Garner sounds like someone you'd want to sit down and have a beer with. That's the greatest compliment I know of.

If you're a fan of Hollywood biographies, this is the read for you.

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