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## Bob Crane: The Definitive Biography

*Carol M. Ford, Dee Young, Linda J. Groundwater*  
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**Carol M. Ford, Dee Young, Linda J. Groundwater : Bob Crane: The Definitive Biography** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bob Crane: The Definitive Biography:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. This book is clearly a labor of love and presents a lot of interesting informationBy Midwest-ReviewerThis book is clearly a labor of love and brings out the best of Bob Crane's

life and career. The authors put a lot of time into it and pulled together a lot of information that was previously unknown or forgotten due to Crane's tragic murder. I was glad to read information about "The Bob Crane Show", his short-lived NBC comedy series, which I watched in the Spring of 1975 and enjoyed very much (and keep wishing there was a DVD release of the 13 episodes). It was also good to read that Bob's (un-broadcast) appearance on "Celebrity Cooks" was nothing like it was portrayed in the dreadful "Autofocus" movie, or in Robert Graysmith's book either. There are many interesting photos I haven't seen before. And reading Bob's "good luck" letters to the Hogan's Heroes cast members when the show was cancelled shows just what a classy guy he was. There's a lot of great information about Bob that all fans will be interested in learning. This book could have been titled "Bob Crane: Refocused" (a turn on the "Autofocus" movie title). The authors focus mostly on the good in Bob's life, and that's wonderful to see. However, by doing so, this is not quite an all-encompassing biography, as some major subjects are avoided, and the authors sometimes lose focus and stray off into left field, so to speak. I was disappointed that: 1)-This full-scale biography on Bob Crane completely ignores his lengthy and important friendship with John Carpenter, as if he didn't exist in Bob Crane's life. Carpenter is barely mentioned in the book - only on 7 pages of the 650 page paperback version. I am sure that other readers expected much more as well, considering that Carpenter was suspected and later acquitted of Crane's murder and is recognized as being his close personal friend. 2)-There are only a few pages about Bob's murder (a total of 3-1/2 pages, if you include Victoria Berry's recollections; then 4-1/2 pages of family and associates remembering how they learned of his murder or making general comments). This biography is 650 pages in length (at least the paperback version I purchased) and the "elephant in the room" is ignored. Nothing is going to change the fact that Bob Crane's life and legacy will always now be identified by "Hogan's Heroes" and his murder, despite the attempts of the authors to re-focus on other parts of his life. Just as JFK is remembered mostly for his murder and highlights of his brief presidency. It was a mistake to present so little information about his murder in this book. 3)-Information in this book about his murder is there was writing and/or paintings on the walls made in Bob's blood, ritualistic in nature. I have read a lot of published information about Bob Crane's murder but I have NEVER heard about this before, which begs additional followup information to further explain this. WHAT was written or "painted" on the walls, and why this has not been reported elsewhere in the past? I did an internet search attempting to find information about the writing and painting in Bob's blood and cannot find anything regarding the writing or paintings. 4)-There are pages and pages of interviews with people who worked on the "Celebrity Cooks" show in early 1978 when Bob made his guest appearance. While that's of some interest, reforming the portrayal of Bob making blatantly sexually offensive comments in "Autofocus", it is a minor issue and unnecessary to include all these pages regarding Bob's participation in a single day's television shoot. This needed editing. 5)-"Clinical Perspectives on Bob Crane's Sex Addiction". The authors "interviewed several health care professionals", who never met Bob Crane but nevertheless explained and diagnosed Bob's psycho-sexual issues. When I saw this section of the book I groaned and then wondered why these "professionals" would engage in speculation for publication, feel qualified to make these statements, and whether this is even ethical. Certainly people in the medical field can have opinions based on information given them by third parties, but publishing their conjecture and guesswork as diagnoses in a biography is another error in judgment. Those are the main problems I found with the book. But despite the book's deficiencies, in general I found a lot of good information in this book and would quickly recommend it to other Bob Crane fans. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Extensive biography, but needed better editing. By Virgo04 Being originally from CT and old enough to remember Hogan's Heroes, I was always proud that Bob Crane came from my area and wanted to find a book that honestly dealt with his positives and negatives. This book, while extensive, is repetitive, often contradicts itself, and offers amateur analysis as to Bob Crane's sexual addiction. If the intention of the authors wasn't to focus on the murder or his addiction, but on his many gifts, why include analysis which is based on conjecture by those that never met the man? The authors aren't mental health professionals. Most of the interviews offer repetitive information, were done 30+ years after events with people being barely able to remember any events at all connected with Bob. but wanting desperately to say something "nice" about him after being prodded by the authors. As another reviewer said, I started skimming over them due to the repetitive, poorly edited info that offered no new insights per interview. There was also conflicting information on Crane's relationship with his biological family, particularly his father, in one part of the book Crane is depicted as being close to his father and crushed by his passing, and in another part of the book the authors basically give all of the blame on the Crane Family's strictness and religion as being the seed of Crane's sexual addiction, and Bob being painted as the "black sheep", thus the views of his family contradict each other. Another thing that got my blood boiling is another conjecture the authors have about Crane's addiction, stating that Bob just started looking at pornography but would only go so far but finally responded to the "challenge of a woman" who said, "put up or shut up". Thus, Crane's sexual addiction wasn't his responsibility, but the result of a woman challenging him. This is total conjecture on the authors' part, not based in any fact, or interview and is very misogynistic. It is great to celebrate the man's talents and mourn his tragic passing at a relatively young age, but to pass off the responsibility of his addiction onto others is inexcusable. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great biography. By noir fan I really enjoyed this book. I am a huge fan of Hogan's Heroes, but knew little about Bob Crane except for his sad end. This book doesn't cover his murder except briefly. Instead it

focuses on the life Crane led, talking about his intense desire to succeed. I gained a new respect for the man I knew only as Colonel Hogan. An added bonus is the pictures included in the book. Not only are there lots of them but they also add a great deal to the story of Bob Crane's life.

Since his untimely death on June 29, 1978, Bob Crane's unofficial biography has become akin to a broken record. Like a skip in the acetate, his murder and the scandal that grew from it have been the repeated focus of attention, to the exclusion of nearly everything else. Over time, the line between fact and fiction blurred, and his life story became distorted. All perspective on Bob Crane as a human being was lost, and he became nothing more than a two-dimensional cartoon character without depth, understanding, or definition. Now, nearly two hundred people who knew the Hogan's Heroes star personally and better than most (family; friends as far back as elementary school; colleagues in radio, television, theatre, and film) have spoken out on Bob Crane's behalf, and in many instances, for the first time. Within the pages of this book, they share their memories and thoughts about a man whom they knew as an exceptional and talented musician, a genius in radio, a sharp-witted comedian, a gifted actor and director, a man driven to success, a doting and loving father, a loyal friend, and a kind and gentle spirit with a sunny personality, a man who, while not perfect, was vastly different from how he has been presented over the decades. Bob Crane: The Definitive Biography balances the scales and sets the record straight, providing a full and complete history of Bob Crane, clarifying who he really was, and just as importantly, who he was

not.~~~~~Deluxe, expanded hardcover edition contains: Exclusive, never-before released historical documents chronicling Bob Crane's life and career. More than 200 family and professional photographs, many exclusive, courtesy of Bob Crane's family, friends, and colleagues. 660 pages containing first-hand accounts from nearly 200 people from Bob Crane's life. A pre-print of Bob Crane's original signature.

Bob Crane was a broadcasting pioneer who made landmark contributions to the industry on both coasts. Ford et al. delve into Crane's radio career like never before. What they have discovered...is nothing short of amazing.--Danny Lyons, WICC/WEBE operations manager, Bridgeport, CT