

## Dead Celebrities, Living Icons: Tragedy and Fame in the Age of the Multimedia Superstar

John David Ebert



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We know their likes and dislikes, admire their talents, envy them for daring to be what we can't or what we won't. When they are snatched from us, we feel a personal loss and an unwillingness to let go. And so we transform these mere human beings into icons whose stars often shine in death even more brilliantly than in life.

*Dead Celebrities, Living Icons: Tragedy and Fame in the Age of the Multimedia Superstar* explores this phenomenon through a series of essays on 14 men and women who are, arguably, the most famous people of the 20th and early 21st centuries. The book covers the epoch of the celebrity beginning in the 1930s with Howard Hughes and Walt Disney and continues to the present day with the life and death of Michael Jackson. Far more than just a collection of biographies, *Dead Celebrities, Living Icons* documents the philosophical importance and significance of the contemporary cult of the celebrity and analyzes the tragic consequences of a human life lived in the glare of the media spotlight.

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