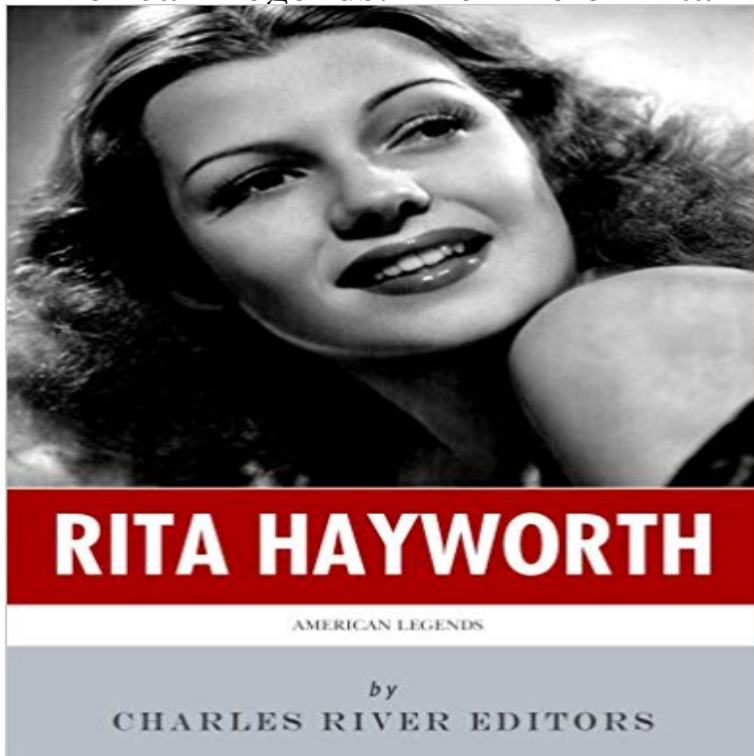


American Legends: The Life of Rita Hayworth



*Includes pictures of important people, places, and events. *Includes Hayworths quotes about her life and career. *Includes a bibliography for further reading. *Includes a table of contents. Ive had a lot of unhappiness in my life and a lot of happiness. Who doesnt? Rita Hayworth A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of historys most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? In Charles River Editors American Legends series, readers can get caught up to speed on the lives of Americas most important men and women in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known. Rita Hayworths life and career remain fascinating to both the general public and avid movie fans alike. Even people with just a casual interest in movies appreciate her performances in films such as Gilda (1946), The Lady from Shanghai (1947), and Salome (1953), and few actresses could rival Hayworths popularity during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Indeed, many of her most famous films are still enjoyed by viewers from around the world even today, and with her acting career spanning nearly 50 years, few viewers are not familiar with at least some of Hayworths films, particularly since she appeared in films of a wide variety of genres. In addition, Hayworth is also famously remembered for her status as one of the premier pin-up girls of World War II, with countless American soldiers who fought overseas carrying pin-up photos of Hayworth with them at all times. Even if she was never awarded an Academy Award, Hayworth remains extremely popular today, and it was no surprise that she was named one of the Top 100 actresses of the 20th century by the American Film Institute in 1999. While Hayworth is still famous today, she is arguably even more significant within the academic community, as the rise of Film

Studies and the subsequent development of Cultural Studies as academic disciplines catapulted Hayworth from a popular actress to a figure worthy of close critical attention. Hayworth is now identified not only for the importance of her films but also as a figure who illuminates and exposes the treatment of race and sexuality during the period known as classical Hollywood cinema. As someone who was relegated to transforming her entire image, including her personal background and physical appearance, Hayworth represents both the height of Hollywood glamour as well as the lengths required of many actors and actresses in order to succeed in a particularly cut-throat environment. If Hollywood promoted the Horatio Alger myth of the rags-to-riches movie star, it is also important to acknowledge the extent to which it forced many stars to essentially erase their personal backgrounds in the interest of achieving this success. Even though it is true that Hayworth was the beneficiary of tremendous fortune throughout her life, her popularity within Cultural Studies curricula reflects the importance of not only her films but also her star image as well. Of course, Rita's personal background is nearly as notorious as her career, since her glamorous performances on the movie set are frequently juxtaposed with the adversity she faced behind the scenes. She was deeply unhappy for much of her life, due to a long string of failed marriages and a battle with alcoholism, and by examining the films in conjunction with her off-screen turmoil, people quickly get a sense of the almost schizophrenic character of Rita Hayworth. Only by looking at Hayworth's life in its different stages and placing emphasis on both her triumphs and hardships can people completely understand her life and career. *American Legends: The Life of Rita Hayworth* examines the life and career of one of Hollywood's most iconic women. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Rita Hayworth like never before, in no time at

all.

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