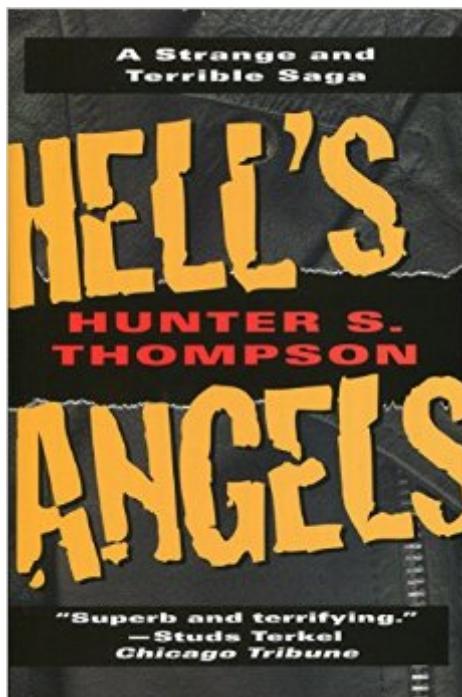


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Hell's Angels: A Strange And Terrible Saga



Synopsis

Gonzo journalist and literary roustabout Hunter S. Thompson flies with the angelsâ "Hellâ ™s Angels, that isâ "in this short work of nonfiction. â œCalifornia, Labor Day weekend . . . early, with ocean fog still in the streets, outlaw motorcyclists wearing chains, shades and greasy Levis roll out from damp garages, all-night diners and cast-off one-night pads in Frisco, Hollywood, Berdoo and East Oakland, heading for the Monterey peninsula, north of Big Sur. . . The Menace is loose again.â • Thus begins Hunter S. Thompsonâ ™s vivid account of his experiences with Californiaâ ™s most notorious motorcycle gang, the Hellâ ™s Angels. In the mid-1960s, Thompson spent almost two years living with the controversial Angels, cycling up and down the coast, reveling in the anarchic spirit of their clan, and, as befits their name, raising hell. His book successfully captures a singular moment in American history, when the biker lifestyle was first defined, and when such countercultural movements were electrifying and horrifying America. Thompson, the creator of Gonzo journalism, writes with his usual bravado, energy, and brutal honesty, and with a nuanced and incisive eye; as *The New Yorker* pointed out, â œFor all its uninhibited and sardonic humor, Thompsonâ ™s book is a thoughtful piece of work.â • As illuminating now as when originally published in 1967, Hellâ ™s Angels is a gripping portrait, and the best account we have of the truth behind an American legend. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Having read Hell's Angels, A Strange and Terrible saga at least eight times starting in 1968, I never

cease to be amazed at the criticisms leveled against it in the ensuing years, the major one being that it's not a Fear and Loathing book. I'm pretty sure it was originally a (very) long article written for The Nation magazine. The Nation ain't Rolling Stone, kids. If you are coming to this book expecting Hunter's usual blend of fact, fiction, and hallucinations, you will be sorely disappointed. "Gonzo journalist" though he is, the operative part there was journalist. He had, after all, developed a rather strong food habit since birth, and had no desire to kick it. He explores the Angels' mystique by letting them provide the history, their then current attitudes, and their lives as outlaws outside the system. He then blends research and his observations gleaned from riding with them for the better part of a year into the mix, producing a riveting book. Since the recent death of Marlon Brando, his movie The Wild One has gained a new audience; it is in fact based on an incident Hunter chronicles in this book, the Rape of Hollister. Oddly, nothing remotely similar to the movie happened there, and some other legendary "motorcycle riots" such as the one at Laconia, New Hampshire, weren't initially riots at all, and certainly didn't involve the Angels, though the media portrayed these events as the brink of Armageddon and gave middle America yet another "dangerous group running wild in their midst," something else to freak over in addition to Communists hiding under every rock. The Angels became, over time, what people expected them to be.

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