

Cole Porter By William McBrien It's a well researched biography of an intriguing blisteringly talented composer with an enigmatic privileged and troubled private life that has become very much part of his public legend. Mr Porter cheerfully mythologised and glamourised his life (that naff 1940s Hollywood bio pic he approved with Cary Grant and Alexis Smith doing their professional best to capture Cole & Linda Porter in scripted cliché characterisations that bore only a passing resemblance to any reality). Yes this biography is packed with gossipy details gleaned from interviews and reminiscences from those close to Porter and his world it's stiff with Countess di Frassos Lady Mendls Monty Woolleys Murphys and the like but then so were Porter's life and works. To learn about Porter's work Citron's Noel & Cole biography might be useful but McBrien's biography takes the reader right into the privileged coterie and hothouse Broadway/Hollywood/High Society to which the Porters aspired and where their glamorous lives sparkled and shone despite the private pains and passions they firmly hid from public scrutiny. There is a lot of information about various social butterflies of the 30s and 40s many of them minor royalty who Porter hung around with none of whom seemed particularly interesting. The book does provide limited insight into the Porter marriage I can see what Porter got out of it (a fig leaf to cover his homosexuality) although it is less obvious what Linda got out of it (perhaps the chance to move in exalted social circles). Linda seems to have spent most of her life preoccupied with various illnesses real and imaginary and they spent so much of their time apart I could see little evidence for the author's assertion that she and Cole were incredibly close. I enjoyed reading of his family history his (wicked Grandfather) his loving mother his forgotten father and his successful years in college but when it came to reading about his continental relationships and friendships with continental minor nobility (The Duke of Lampadusa Well I ask you!) I wish there had been about his show business life and the stars he directed and nurtured OK we get some good story's about Ethel Merman one of his great and enduring stars. I would have liked to have heard about his relationships with the stars like Fred Astaire (Who was Porters favourite interpreter of his words & music) And others like Sinatra (who does get a mention) And those many others who he must have met and who have kept his words and music alive all these years. Some readers have lamented the lack of analysis of the songs; I can't think what they mean as McBrien quotes many of Porter's marvellous lyrics as well as giving us a close look at an often uneasy personal life. Well worth the price! 978-0679727927 very detailed biography and great service! 978-0679727927 In his life and in his music Cole Porter was the topthe pinnacle of wit and sophistication. From the 1910s through the 50s from Yale pep rallies through the Broadway triumphs of Anything Goes and Kiss Me Kate he delighted audiences with a glittering torrent of song: I Get a Kick Out of You. In Cole Porter William McBrien has thoroughly captured the creator of these songs whose life was one not only of wealth and privilege but also of tragedy secrecy and courage. In 1937 at the height of his success he suffered a near fatal riding accident; his last eighteen years were marked by pain drugs and repeated operations on his legs years of physical agony but unstinting artistic achievement,

A lifelong Cole Porter fan I bought this book via online after seeing sharply conflicting customer reviews, 978-0679727927 Going to be in a production of Kiss Me Kate later this year so read this for a bit of background: Enjoyed it on the whole Porter seems quite reminiscent of Sheldon from the Big Bang Theory on some levels with his OCD and fastidiousness, Porter spent most of his adult life consorting with pretty young men on both short and long term bases. Rather lost interest in who these seemingly interchangeable people were too: Anyway interesting and worth a read although finding out about Porter and his social circle didn't do anything to endear any of them to me: 978-0679727927 I found this book quite entertaining but not totally so. It's not a bad book but it is not a great one either: Night and Day Love for Sale and Just One of Those Things, The bright surface of these gemstheir catchy melodies and ingenious lyricsmade them instant pop hits: Their subtle qualities and their musical and emotional depth have made them lasting standards among the greatest glories of the American songbook, A prodigal young man Porter found his aesthetic and emotional anchor in a long loving if sexless marriage while continuing to maintain many discreet

affairs with men. Here is the book that Porters fans have long hoped for a life that informs the great music and lyrics through illuminating glimpses of the hidden complicated private man. This book is a must for students of Cole Porter. Recommended. Having said all that I have said. 978-0679727927  
Splendid. Cole Porter

