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# Michael Jackson: King Of Pop (Lives Cut Short)



## Synopsis

This title chronicles the song and dance genius of the King of Pop, whose recent death reinforced the level of his global influence and stardom. While covering controversies and oddities, from the trial on molestation charges to his cosmetic surgeries to his amusement-park house Neverland, the book also details his incredible songs, videos, work habits, childhood, and groundbreaking career. Jackson's music is still popular with young people, especially with the convenience of MP3 downloads and the enthusiasm passed down from older fans. *Lives Cut Short* is a series in Essential Library, an imprint of ABDO Publishing Company.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Though some may find the premise of the *Lives Cut Short* series ghastly, this evenhanded and educational entry proves its worth. Like many bios on the King of Pop, it begins in the middle: Jackson's single-gloved, moonwalking performance at the 1983 Motown TV special. Pratt then backtracks to the gritty days of the Jackson 5 sharing stages with strippers, and traces Jackson through a career that shattered barriers for black artists, the pinnacle that was *Thriller*, and the receding of his accomplishments in the face of controversy. The text is wonderfully readable and focuses on the bigger events (the tours, the milestones, the trials), while sidebars on nearly every page delve into the myth and minutia that so frequently landed in tabloids (his changing face, his souring friendship with Paul McCartney, Martin Bashir's documentary). The chapter on his death—including speculation about his addictions, details on child custody, and the

controversy regarding his burial – is surprisingly complete. Plentiful photos, a time line, and an unfairly abridged “Important Works” page round out the back matter. Grades 5-8.

--Daniel Kraus

Step daughter was reading this book from her school library and inadvertently left it on the porch where it got ruined by rain. As a matter of principle, I ordered a new one on to replace the damaged copy. Book arrived quickly from seller, however, I was a little worried when I found out that although it looked new, it was a former library book with associated stampings (this was not mentioned in description, hence 4 stars). I thought about purchasing another non-marked version, but ended up sending this one to the school librarian. Received a thank you letter from the librarian and all is good. Thanks!

This product was in mint condition better than the seller said. My Daughter was reading this book from her school library and i compared it to that and the only difference was the cover was a little lighter. All in all i am very pleased with the book and i am sure she will be too.

This book is not for Michael Jackson fans. There are no new insights, simply the same stuff that's been out there for over twenty years. In fact, the bibliography is mostly out-of-date sources. For example, the author cites from the 1991 edition of J. Randy Taraborrelli's comprehensive unauthorized biography, when in fact it has been updated twice since then, once in 2004 and again in 2009! Then there are several other books of dubious authorship listed, that are from the early 1990s. That's one of the main reasons why I don't like this book and would not use it to introduce middle-school children to Michael Jackson's legendary contribution to music and culture. In another example, Rolling Stone magazine is cited as having the "essential" Michael Jackson story, when it's a well-known fact that using unreliable, unverified sources, the magazine made the ridiculous claim that Michael's nose fell off in rehearsals. Also, as with most of this kind of shallow authorship that rehashes rumors, insinuations and gossip, there is no mention of how Michael befriended and helped young Ryan White, an Indiana youth who contracted AIDS from a blood transfusion and died at 18 years-old. Or how he helped Dave Dave for over 20 years after Dave had been set on fire as a child by his own father and disfigured for life. There is no mention of the Michael Jackson Scholarship Fund that he endowed over 25 years ago with almost \$2 million to help kids headed to college. That's the kind of reading that is appropriate and inspiring for this age level. And there is so much more that could have been included to inspire youth. Instead, they are fed a tabloid rehash

and gain little or no insight into this artist's genius.

This is an informative look into the King of Pop's life from childhood until death. Mary K. Pratt details the highs and lows of Michael Jackson's life in a tasteful way for middle/high school readers. The small chapter book layout is done nicely with several photographs, easy to follow text, a timeline, and information for further reading or additional material.

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