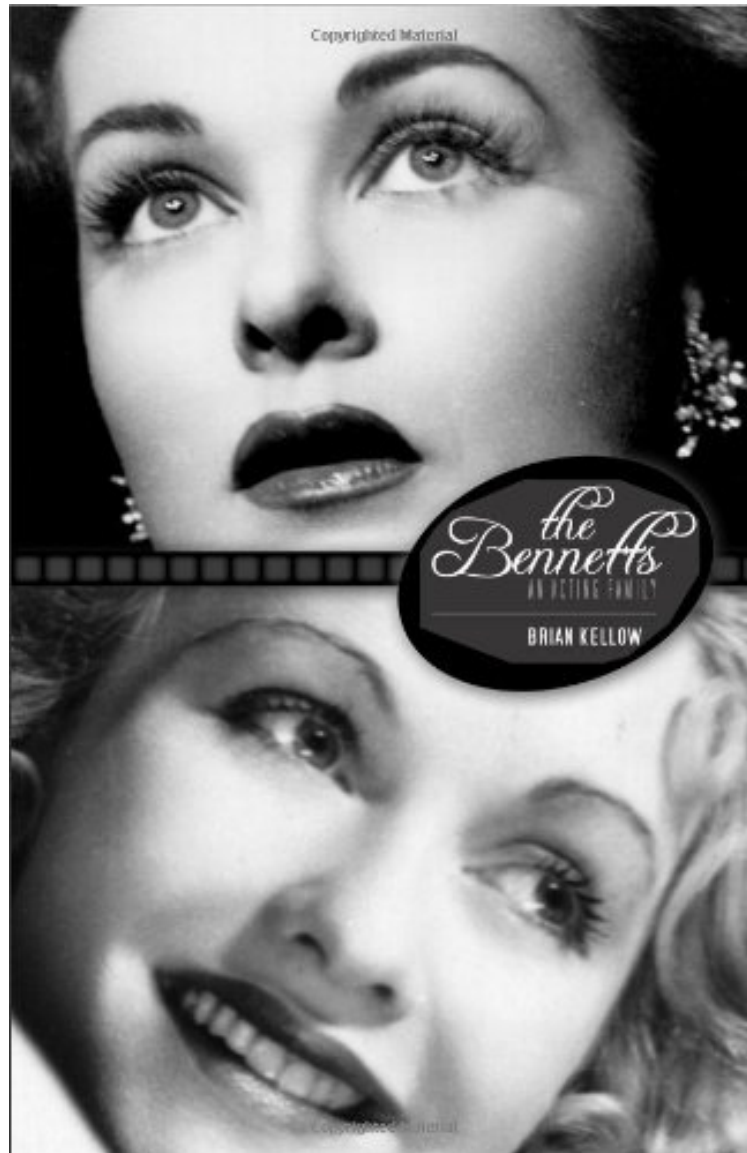


[Get free] The Bennetts: An Acting Family

The Bennetts: An Acting Family

Brian Kellow

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Brian Kellow : The Bennetts: An Acting Family before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Bennetts: An Acting Family:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very good bookBy sheila kelleyI chose this book because it describes and intertwines a family of actors. Lots of history. A smooth read. I would recommend this book to old

movie fans. 31 of 31 people found the following review helpful. A daughter reviewing a book about her family
By Diana Anderson
It's a little difficult to be objective about not only a family book but a book you helped contribute to.
Brian Kellow was a delight to work with. He listened carefully to my cousin Peter Plants' comments and used the information with discretion. His mother Constance Bennett was much more complicated than my mother Joan. In fact we were all rather intimidated by Constance and I think she rather liked it that way. My mother Joan was always the shy one except when it came to her children. She didn't hesitate to correct bad manners and worked very hard to see that we all received a good education. We may have had our differences in my early years but my admiration only grew as I grew older and raised a family of five children of my own. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.
Absorbing saga of an Acting Dynasty
By JRA
From the first page you travel the road of an incredibly, and often overlooked, Dynasty of stage and screen - from stage and early film screen star Richard Bennett to his fascinating daughters. It's all here...from the pragmatic and shrewd Constance Bennett, the mousy sister Joan who would become one of the most acclaimed actresses of her era. To the bittersweet Barbara, whose brief, unnoticed acting career would end in sadness. It's all here, warts and all...must read for all film buffs. Who needs Hollywood tripe when the unvarnished saga is at your fingertips? A must-have for any serious scholar... One of the best!

" The Bennetts: An Acting Family is a chronicle of one of the royal families of stage and screen. The saga begins with Richard Bennett, a small-town Indiana roughneck who grew up to be one of the bright lights of the New York stage during the early twentieth century. In time, however, Richard's fame was eclipsed by that of his daughters, Constance and Joan, who went to Hollywood in the 1920s and found major success there. Constance became the highest-paid actress of the early 1930s, earning as much as \$30,000 a week in melodramas. Later she reinvented herself as a comedienne in the classic comedy *Topper*, with Cary Grant.. After a slow start as a blonde ingenue, Joan dyed her hair black and became one of the screen's great temptresses in films such as *Scarlet Street*. She also starred in such lighter fare as *Father of the Bride*. In the 1960s, Joan gained a new generation of fans when she appeared in the gothic daytime television serial *Dark Shadows*. The Bennetts is also the story of another Bennett sister, Barbara, whose promising beginnings as a dancer gave way to a turbulent marriage to singer Morton Downey and a steady decline into alcoholism. Constance and Joan were among Hollywood's biggest stars, but their personal lives were anything but serene. In 1943, Constance became entangled in a highly publicized court battle with the family of her millionaire ex-husband, and in 1951, Joan's husband, producer Walter Wanger, shot her lover in broad daylight, sparking one of the biggest Hollywood scandals of the 1950s. Brian Kellow, features editor of *Opera News* magazine, is the coauthor of *Can't Help Singing: The Life of Eileen Farrell*. He lives in New York and Connecticut.

From Publishers Weekly
For a while in the early 1930s, Constance Bennett was the highest paid actress in Hollywood; younger sister Joan was an equally prominent star who worked with A-list directors like George Cukor and Fritz Lang. Though the two are not as widely remembered today as other film stars of the period, Kellow (*Can't Help Singing: The Life of Eileen Farrell*) goes a long way toward addressing the oversight, beginning with their father, Richard, one of the most respected theater actors of the early 20th century and an early proponent of Eugene O'Neill. The family biography also reveals the life of the forgotten middle sister, Barbara, who never made it in show business and slid into acute alcoholism. Kellow's closely critical evaluations of their performances can verge on the cruel, as in the comparison of Constance to "a seasoned drag queen" in her final film appearance, and his judgmental tone occasionally extends to the characters' personal lives, though admirably less so than in other celebrity biographies. In most ways, Kellow is a respectfully restrained biographer, addressing even the most potentially lurid scandals like Joan's husband shooting her agent because he suspected them of having an affair with a sense of his subjects' dignity. 32 pages of bw photos. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "A reliable, straightforward biographical study of a prominent acting family that might, perhaps, be compared to the Barrymores." *Anthony Slide* "A particular strength of this book is Kellow's discussion of the Bennett family within the changing contours of American theater and the motion picture industry." *Choice* "A fascinating book, the perfect summer read." *Gay City News* "An engrossing new page turner. . . . Theater people don't get more interesting, and it's a true tale well told." *Hollywood Reporter* "Does justice to all the aspects of their lives, which is about all you can ask from such an accomplished and pleasurable family biography." *Las Vegas Sun* "Kellow, a diligent researcher and a perceptive, graceful writer, covers their careers and sometimes tumultuous private lives. . . . A terrific read." *Los Angeles Times* "A fabulously written page-turner about one of the most glamorous acting families of the 20th century by a writer who knows how to pen a compelling narrative while dishing the dirt." *Next Magazine* "A splendid bio." *Playbill* "Though the two [Bennetts] are not as widely remembered today as other film stars of the period, Kellow goes a long way toward addressing the oversight. . . . In most ways, Kellow is a respectfully restrained biographer, addressing even the most potentially lurid scandals" *Publishers Weekly* "Serious film historians will want to examine *The Bennetts*. . . . Bliss for buffs." *Toronto Globe and Mail* About the Author Brian Kellow, features editor of *Opera News* magazine, is the coauthor of *Can't Help Singing: The Life of Eileen Farrell*. He lives in New York and

Connecticut.