



Hell's Angel: The Autobiography Of Sonny Barger

By Ralph "Sonny" Barger, Keith Zimmerman, Kent Zimmerman

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Narrated by the visionary founding member, *Hell's Angel* provides a fascinating all-access pass to the secret world of the notorious Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club. Sonny Barger recounts the birth of the original Oakland Hell's Angels and the four turbulent decades that followed. *Hell's Angel* also chronicles the way the HAMC revolutionized the look of the Harley-Davidson motorcycle and built what has become a worldwide bike-riding fraternity, a beacon for freedom-seekers the world over.

Dozens of photos, including many from private collections and from noted photographers, provide visual documentation to this extraordinary tale. Never simply a story about motorcycles, colorful characters, and high-speed thrills, *Hell's Angel* is the ultimate outlaw's tale of loyalty and betrayal, subcultures and brotherhood, and the real price of freedom.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

In this most intriguing and insightful look into the highly controversial, five-decade-old Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club (HAMC), Barger chronicles the formation, history, and colorful events that have led to the mystique and outlaw image of this free-thinking organization. In 1957, Barger (a technical consultant on several biker films, including *Hell's Angels on Wheels* and *Hell's Angels '69*) formed the Oakland chapter, which would become the foundation and serve as headquarters for the entire club. In his own words, Barger shares stories of pool hall fights, motorcycle runs, the importance of loyalty and honor, and relentless battles against the government efforts to destroy the HAMC. He also tells his side of the infamous 1969 Rolling Stones concert at Altamont Raceway. The many photos provide additional glimpses into this wild and dangerous American subculture. A most interesting book that is recommended for popular culture collections. DTim Delaney, Canisius Coll., Buffalo, NY

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From [Booklist](#)

Barger, king of the chopper pilots, road variety, is an American icon, and his life story is a history of the biker lifestyle. As president of the Oakland chapter of the Hell's Angels, he has seen and survived hassles with the police, peaceniks, and the Rolling Stones, with their "prissy clothes and makeup" --all of which he recounts. He notes fine points, such as the fact that it was Emmett Grogan, of the radical egalitarian Diggers, who suggested that the Angels work security at the Stones' ill-fated free show at Altamont, California. He nonchalantly admits to criminal acts, such as pulling a gun on Keith Richards onstage. Withal, however, he includes only somewhat more sex and violence in his life story than one encounters in most contemporary biographies. Certainly, specific expressions of Barger's biker attitudes may scandalize the squeamish; for instance, his explanation of why women engaged in group sex with bikers: "For a certain kind of chick, it was an honor to get fucked by a bunch of Hell's Angels." Even if such sentiments prove too straightforward and earthy for some, the book is a dandy cultural document. Barger paints an engrossing picture of a distinctive subculture that receives precious little literary attention. Yet bikers probably live in many a library's community. So read up on them, organize a booktalk on Hell's Angels, and some of them may well offer to bring the refreshments, not to mention some invaluable diversity. *Mike Tribby*

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Review

"The hombre who gave you motorcycle culture...The biker style that Barger originated remains timeless."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Espitia:

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Connie Hockaday:

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