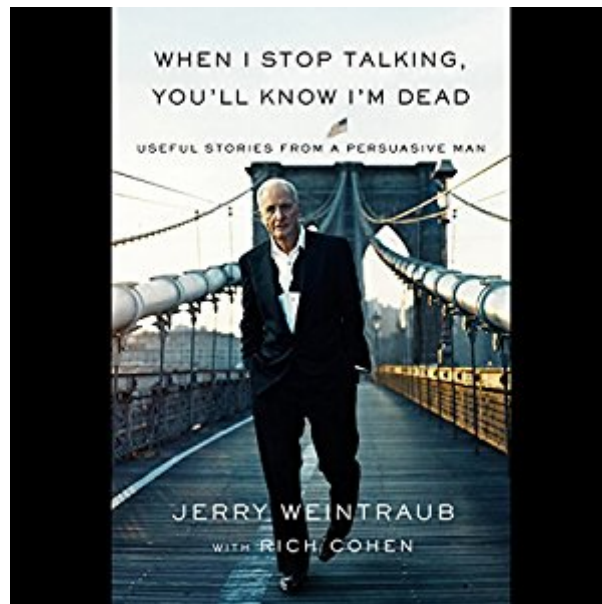


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# When I Stop Talking, You'll Know I'm Dead: Useful Stories From A Persuasive Man



## Synopsis

Here is the story of Jerry Weintraub: the self-made, Brooklyn-born, Bronx-raised impresario, Hollywood producer, legendary deal maker, and friend of politicians and stars. No matter where nature has placed him--the club rooms of Brooklyn, the Mafia dives of New York's Lower East Side, the wilds of Alaska, or the hills of Hollywood--he has found a way to put on a show and sell tickets at the door. "All life was a theater and I wanted to put it up on a stage," he writes. "I wanted to set the world under a marquee that read: 'Jerry Weintraub Presents.'" In *WHEN I STOP TALKING, YOU'LL KNOW I'M DEAD*, we follow Weintraub from his first great success at age twenty-six with Elvis Presley, whom he took on the road; to the immortal days with Sinatra and Rat Pack glory; to his crowning hits as a movie producer, starting with Robert Altman and Nashville, continuing with *Oh, God!*, *The Karate Kid* movies, and *Diner*, among others, and summing with Steven Soderbergh and *Ocean's Eleven*, *Twelve*, and *Thirteen*. Along the way, we'll watch as Jerry moves from the poker tables of Palm Springs, to the power rooms of Hollywood, to the halls of the White House, to Red Square in Moscow--all the while counseling potentates, poets, and kings, with clients and confidants like George Clooney, Bruce Willis, George H. W. Bush, Armand Hammer, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin, John Denver, Bobby Fischer . . . well, the list goes on. And of course, the story is not yet over . . . As Weintraub says, "When I stop talking, you'll know I'm dead." --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rich Cohen--I've been reading him for ten years--is one of the country's best writers. Jerry Weintraub--film producer, musician manager, deal maker--is one of the nation's best liars. (Mention an event, a celebrity, the man has a story.) Cohen can write anything; Weintraub has done nearly everything. Which is what makes this book such a perfect match. Weintraub is the real deal--came up without money or the helping hands that can do the work of money; produced the three "Ocean's Eleven" pictures, also "Nashville" and "Diner" (two decades' great classics), also managed Elvis, also Sinatra, also the chess-champion Bobby Fischer at Reykjavik. It's an amazing story. Weintraub goes everywhere and does everything; he heads someplace, arrives, finds himself at the center. A gift, which he discovers in himself and develops. He found a way to take Elvis on the road at 26, to bring Sinatra's career back at 35; when he's watching the Fischer chess championship on TV, he just buys a ticket, flies to Iceland, and more or less enters the screen himself. (That's one lesson Weintraub teaches from his kind of life. Find what you love, trust it. Then act.) The story is filled with advice, plus advice-by-example: hustling in the beginning, finding the angle, picking your allies--"If you work with people you love, which, of course, is not always possible, the hard times become an epic adventure"--then getting to a place where your own work functions as an ad, as the attraction: "I did not have to hustle quite as much. Once you've established yourself, you can, to some extent, let business find you. You become a beacon, a door into a better life." Weintraub's own life swings into the rat pack and Sinatra (first call to Weintraub: "Look, kid, when I say I want to meet that means now"), the White House, Hollywood, Palm Desert: the five great gambling cities (Peking, Moscow, Las Vegas, Washington, Hollywood). Because of his gifts, Weintraub goes everywhere and does everything. His story is a chronicle, a great life, one giant path through the last fifty years. And Cohen, who loves to write lives like this (the corporate big shoulders in "Sweet and Low," the resistance fighters in "The Avengers") helps him tell this story. An incredible mix: Weintraub's friendships, destinations, experiences, lessons, voice, advice; Cohen's speed, words, eye. You feel you're there, which is the first requirement of any writing, and still the hardest one to bring off. You live Weintraub's incredible life alongside him. So the thing reads like a great Saul Bellow novel that also happens to be true--the skinny kid who chucks home, finds the center, makes it big. And there's the great thought that somehow, on some reclining chair with a phone at his ear and some big pending deal and expensive view, Weintraub is living the next chapter. A great mix, a great read. As Sinatra might say, You don't read it; you breathe it.

Based upon Harvey Levin's description of this as a "Great Book" on TMZ, I bought a copy.

Unfortunately, it is not, for the following reasons: 1. The book was ghost-written by Rich Cohn and

lacks the immediacy and integrity it would have had if Mr. Weintraub had written it himself;2. There is an endless parade of all the important people Mr. Weintraub has run into during his life;3. Mr. Weintraub uncritically fawns all over said important people; and4. Mr. Weintraub tells us about all of his successes, but none of his failures. In other words, the reader comes away with the impression that the book is dishonest. For example, Mr. Weintraub spends a good deal of time eulogizing Elvis Presley's manager, "Colonel" Tom Parker, a bilious bag of gas who took far more than the traditional 10% of Elvis's earnings (reaching 50% by the end of Presley's life). After Elvis's death in 1977, Parker became embroiled in legal claims with Elvis's estate for overreaching, eventually agreeing to sell masters of some of Elvis's major recordings for \$2 million and to drop any claims he might have against the estate. It was also later discovered that he was not a U.S. citizen (he was born in the Netherlands) a fact that many believe caused him not to seek concert opportunities for Presley abroad. Even his assumed title of "Colonel" was phony; he was, at best, a "Kentucky Colonel." But Mr. Weintraub discusses none of this in his extensive descriptions of his relationship with Mr. Parker. There is no question that Mr. Weintraub has the experience to write a great book about the entertainment industry. This is not it.

Heard the CD version of WHEN I STOP TALKING, YOU'LL KNOW I'M DEAD--written and read by Jerry Weintraub. He's the legendary Hollywood producer, deal maker, and friend of politicians and stars . . . as he notes: \* All life was a theater, and I wanted to put it up on stage. I wanted to set the world under a marquee that read: "Jerry Weintraub Presents." And present he did, beginning at age 26 with Elvis Presley, whom he took on the road with Colonel Tom Parker's help . . . through his days with Frank Sinatra when he was at the height of his career . . . and including his role in such hits as OH, GOD!, THE KARATE KID, DINER, and OCEAN'S ELEVEN, TWELVE AND THIRTEEN. Along the way, the author shares his experience with such other personalities as George Clooney, Bruce Willis, George W. Bush, Brad Pitt, Bob Dylan, John Denver, Bobby Fischer and a whole host of others too numerous to name . . . but you don't get the feeling that he's merely name-dropping; rather, it almost feels like you are having a one-on-one conversation with Weintraub. I also liked the advice that he shared throughout the book, including: \* People will pay you to make their lives easier. \* Never get paid one when you can get paid twice. \* Every 10 years, something new is coming . . . a big hand comes down and pushes the dishes off the table. \* An idea is only crazy until somebody pulls it off. \* To be successful, you need to have a certain "screw 'em" attitude . . . in politics, entertainment, sports, etc. There were some great stories, too . . . one I especially remembered involved Weintraub having difficulty selling Presley scarves; i.e., until he got Elvis to ask

all those in the concert to wave their scarves he could see them better . . . the scarves sold like crazy during an intermission.

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