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Biographies and Autobiographies of Famous and Influential Californians

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Ansel Adams an Autobiography by Ansel Adams

Read by Lynn Smith

16 hours, 12 minutes

The master photographer, who was awarded the Medal of Freedom, died in 1984. This life story describes his boyhood discovery of California's Yosemite and High Sierra, a land he loved and photographed. There are lively accounts of his conservation work and relationships he had with such colleagues as Steiglitz, Steichen, and Georgia O'Keeffe.

[Download from BARD: Ansel Adams an Autobiography](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB024546

The World of William Saroyan by Nona Balakian

Read by Terence Aselford

12 hours, 10 minutes

Traces William Saroyan's Armenian youth, his years in California, and the development in his writings from an emphasis on ethnicity to an identification with the "American character." Describes his innovations in poetry, storytelling, and theater; reconstructs the literary climate of the 1930s-and-later decades in which he wrote.

[Download from BARD: The World of William Saroyan](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB048184

Inventing L.A. the Chandlers and Their Times by Bill Boyarsky

Read by Barry Bernson

4 hours, 59 minutes

A veteran Los Angeles Times reporter chronicles the history of the paper and its founding family, the Chandlers. Discusses the politics, fortunes, and feuds of multiple Chandler generations and explores their influence on Southern California since the arrival of patriarch Harrison Gray Otis in 1882. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Inventing L.A. The Chandlers and Their Times](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070724

Lips Unsealed a Memoir by Belinda Carlisle

Read by Theresa Conkin

9 hours, 49 minutes

Autobiography of lead singer from the 1980s all-girl group the Go-Gos. Carlisle describes enduring a troubled childhood in California, discovering punk rock, forming the chart-topping band, marrying and having a son, and recovering in 2005 from her longtime addiction to cocaine and alcohol. Some strong language. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Lips Unsealed a Memoir](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072292

Fire on Ice Autobiography of a Champion Figure Skater by Sasha Cohen

Read by Kristin Allison

3 hours, 29 minutes

Olympic Silver Medal-winning figure skater from California (born 1984) chronicles her career from the age of seven through the 2006 winter games in Torino, Italy. Highlights the hard work, injuries, and adversities she overcame to achieve success in her field. For junior and senior high readers. 2005.

[Download from BARD: Fire on Ice Autobiography of a Champion Figure...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB063785

Joe DiMaggio the Hero's Life by Richard Ben Cramer

Read by Roy Avers

22 hours, 41 minutes

Muckraking biography of sports legend Joe DiMaggio, who rose from his Sicilian working-class background in San Francisco to become an American icon.

Explores his pivotal games and business decisions, his obsession--and fights--with Marilyn Monroe, his dubious mob acquaintances, his life after baseball, and his lonely death in Florida. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2000.

[Download from BARD: Joe Dimaggio the Hero's Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB050881

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR12805](#)

Also available in braille BR012805

American Son My Story by Oscar De La Hoya

Read by Mark Delgado

7 hours, 5 minutes

Boxing's "golden boy" De La Hoya relates his professional experiences and his successes in the ring, where he won six world championships and an Olympic gold medal. He also recounts the triumphs and failings in his personal life. 2008.

[Download from BARD: American Son My Story](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067784

Towers of Gold How One Jewish Immigrant Named Isaias Hellman Created California by Frances Dinkelspiel

Read by Barry Bernson

14 hours, 16 minutes

Great-great-granddaughter of Isaias Hellman, California's premier financier of the nineteenth century, uses primary sources to trace Hellman's 1859 immigration to Los Angeles and role in spurring the city's and state's development. Discusses Hellman's leadership, from opening his first bank to investing in transportation, education, land development, utilities, and wine. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Towers of Gold How One Jewish Immigrant...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068746

American Rebel the Life of Clint Eastwood by Marc Eliot

Read by Ray Foushee

11 hours, 56 minutes

Film historian's biography of the Academy Award-winning actor, producer, and director. Discusses Eastwood's five decades of work, his personal life as the father of seven children with five different women, the palimony lawsuit against him, and his stint as mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Some strong language. 2009.

[Download from BARD: American Rebel the Life of Clint Eastwood](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070691

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18823](#)

Also available in braille BR018823

Wishful Drinking by Carrie Fisher

Read by Susan McInerney

2 hours, 50 minutes

Memoir of novelist and actress Fisher--the daughter of stars Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher--in which she describes her tangled Hollywood family.

Discusses her marriage to musician Paul Simon, her role as Princess Leia in Star Wars, and her addictions and manic depression. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Wishful Drinking](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068419

Wallace Stegner and the American West by Philip L. Fradkin

Read by Robert Sams

14 hours, 35 minutes

Biography of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, professor, and environmentalist Wallace Stegner (1909-1993). Fradkin portrays Stegner as a "quintessential westerner" who became dismayed by what he saw as the destruction of the natural world. Depicts Stegner as being profoundly influenced by his impoverished childhood on the frontier during the Great Depression. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Wallace Stegner and the American West](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067599

Public Cowboy No. 1 the Life and Times of Gene Autry by Holly George-Warren

Read by Robert Sams

20 hours, 57 minutes

Author of *How Hollywood Invented the Wild West* (DB 63035) chronicles the life of Gene Autry (1907-1998), who rose from an impoverished Texas childhood to become a yodeling cowboy, actor, and multimillionaire owner of radio and television stations, rodeos, real estate, and the California Angels. 2007.

[Download from BARD: Public Cowboy No. 1 the Life and Times of...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067593

Mary Austin and the American West by Susan Goodman

Read by Kristin Allison

13 hours, 38 minutes

Biography of author, poet, and scientist Mary Austin (1868-1934), who left Illinois for California with her family at age twenty. Discusses the 1903 publication of Austin's book *The Land of Little Rain* (DB 73448), which portrays the West's desert and peoples. Covers her lifelong environmental and social concerns. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Mary Austin and the American West](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072474

Junípero Serra California's Founding Father by Steven W. Hackel

Read by Mark Ashby

12 hours

Biography of Franciscan priest Junípero Serra (1713-1784), born on the Spanish-owned island of Mallorca. Traces Serra's career as an educator and his migration to Mexico, where he enforced the Inquisition. Chronicles his efforts to build missions in California and convert the natives to Catholicism. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Junipero Serra California's Founding Father](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077478

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20273](#)

Also available in braille BR020273

Red My Uncensored Life in Rock by Sammy Hagar

Read by Mike Stefanelli

7 hours, 26 minutes

Autobiography of Sammy "the Red Rocker" Hagar (born 1947) begins with his childhood and early bands in Fontana, California. Discusses his work in the 1970s with the rock group Montrose, solo career, years with Van Halen--including their 2004 reunion tour--and his Mexican tequila business. Strong language. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Red My Uncensored Life in Rock](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073204

Wolf the Lives of Jack London by James L. Haley

Read by Michael Kramer

14 hours, 41 minutes

Biography of adventurer Jack London (1876-1916), author of *The Call of the Wild* (DB 49486). Chronicles London's impoverished childhood as the illegitimate son of a spiritualist medium in San Francisco, his menial jobs and itinerant life, turn to socialism, and literary success. Spur Award. 2010.

[Download from BARD: The Wolf Lives of Jack London](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074705

Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson

Read by Mark Delgado

21 hours, 3 minutes

Biography of entrepreneur Steve Jobs (1955-2011) chronicles his childhood, education, entry-level jobs in California's Silicon Valley, 1976 cofounding of Apple computer in his parents' garage, and leadership in spearheading the iPod, iPhone, and iPad. Discusses Jobs's personal and professional relationships and his 2003 cancer diagnosis. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Steve Jobs](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073682

George Lucas a Life by Brian Jay Jones

Read by Jay Snyder

18 hours, 20 minutes

Biographer and author of Jim Henson (DB 82632) tackles the subject of the legendary filmmaker famous for creating the Star Wars franchise. Profiles not only his creative side, but also the business acumen that changed Hollywood as much as his movies did. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2016.

[Download from BARD: George Lucas a Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB086868

Pauline Kael a Life in the Dark by Brian Kellow

Read by Catherine Byers

19 hours, 36 minutes

Biography of film critic Pauline Kael (1919-2001). Covers her childhood in rural California, early years establishing herself as a writer, and 1968-1991 stint with the New Yorker. Draws on interviews with family members and close associates in the film industry. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Pauline Kael a Life in the Dark](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074516

Beneath the Underdog His World as Composed by Mingus by Charles Mingus

Read by Chuck Young

10 hours, 1 minute

Jazz musician and composer Charles Mingus (1922-1979) recounts his life, from his rough beginnings in Watts, California, where he learned about jazz, women, and crime, to his music career in New York. Describes his feelings, his appetites, and his music. Strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. 1971.

[Download from BARD: Beneath the Underdog His World as Composed...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB063336

The Chief the Life of William Randolph Hearst by David Nasaw

Read by Bill Wallace

28 hours, 21 minutes

An account of publishing-heir Hearst's childhood as the wealthy son of a California gold miner, his own family with five sons, life with his mistress Marion Davies, his acquisition of fabulous homes and artifacts, as well as his political views and use of power. 2000.

[Download from BARD: The Chief the Life of William Randolph Hearst](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB051959

Justice for All Earl Warren and the Nation He Made by Jim Newton

Read by Bill Wallace

31 hours, 51 minutes

Award-winning journalist uses archives and personal interviews to portray former chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Earl Warren (1891-1974). Details Warren's rise in California politics to the governorship and 1948 Republican Party vice presidential nomination. Highlights Warren's 1953 appointment to the bench and his legal opinions. Bestseller. 2006.

[Download from BARD: Justice for All Earl Warren and the Nation He...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB063759

The Memoirs of Richard Nixon by Richard M. Nixon

Read by Bob Butz

47 hours, 22 minutes

Autobiography of the thirty-seventh president of the United States includes recollections of a rural California boyhood and continues through his resignation and departure from the White House. Provides insight into the complexities of the modern presidency. Some strong language.

[Download from BARD: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB011756

John Steinbeck a Biography by Jay Parini

Read by John Stratton

19 hours, 18 minutes

Portrait of the American writer best known for the depression-era classic *The Grapes of Wrath* (DB 21574). Convinced of his talent and unashamed to work at menial jobs, if necessary, to support his calling, Steinbeck was not always respected by the literary world even though he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962, but his novels were popular worldwide. The author assesses Steinbeck's work and probes his paradoxical character.

[Download from BARD: John Steinbeck a Biography](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB041413

My Father at 100 by Ron Reagan

Read by L.J. Ganser

8 hours, 25 minutes

Ronald Reagan's youngest child seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the fortieth president, who would have turned one hundred on February 6, 2011. Shares experiences from his father's past and his own family memories. Posits that memory lapses his father experienced while in office foreshadowed his Alzheimer's diagnosis. 2011.

[Download from BARD: My Father at 100](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072920

Unstoppable from Underdog to Undefeated: How I Became a Champion by Anthony Robles

Read by Bob Moore

5 hours, 6 minutes

Autobiography of NCAA wrestling champion Anthony Robles from California, who was born with one leg. Highlights the support from family and coaches that enabled him to achieve athletic success. Discusses his winning matches and his career as a motivational speaker and ESPN analyst. Young adult appeal. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Unstoppable from Underdog to Undefeated How...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076138

Do You Dream in Color? Insights From a Girl Without Sight by Laurie Rubin

Read by Kristin Allison

8 hours, 18 minutes

Rubin, a blind mezzo-soprano opera singer born with perfect pitch and Leber's Amaurosis--a disease that prevents the retina from developing--recounts her idyllic California childhood learning to read braille, use a cane, and ski and taking voice lessons. Highlights her struggles getting roles because of her disability. Young adult appeal. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Do You Dream in Color? Insights from a Girl...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075761

Surpassing Expectations My Life Without Sight by Lawrence Scadden

Read by Bill Wallace

9 hours, 24 minutes

Autobiography of California-born (1939) Scadden, who was blinded at age five. Describes his career as a research psychologist with a doctorate degree. Discusses his work in developing assistive technology for visually impaired people and promoting science education. Examines the effects of blindness, Scadden's personal development, and his experiences abroad. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Surpassing Expectations My Life Without Sight](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068883

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18597](#)

Also available in braille BR018597

Total Recall My Unbelievably True Life Story by Arnold Schwarzenegger

Read by Jack Fox

21 hours, 50 minutes

Austria-born Schwarzenegger describes winning six Mr. Olympia titles, starring in such movies as the Conan and Terminator series and Total Recall, marrying and raising children with Maria Shriver, and being the Republican governor of California. Discusses his return to acting and his marital woes. Strong language. Bestseller. 2012

[Download from BARD: Total Recall My Unbelievably True Life Story](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075560

Begin Again a Biography of John Cage by Kenneth Silverman

Read by Joe Peck

19 hour, 32 minutes

Author of *Lightning Man* (DB 63038) examines the life and work of avant-garde poet, musician, and composer John Cage (1912-1992). Chronicles his early years and musical influences. Details his romantic relationships, professional partnerships, and role in the development of modern dance. Strong language. 2010.

[Download from BARD: *Begin Again a Biography of John Cage*](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077443

Raymond Carver a Writer's Life by Carol Sklenicka

Read by Jon Huffman

29 hours, 29 minutes

Biography of short-story author Raymond Carver (1938-1988). Examines his relationships with others, including his initial editor; fellow authors; first wife, Maryann Burk; and second wife, poet Tess Gallagher. Discusses his struggles with alcohol and financial solvency and explores his gift for writing about ordinary people. 2009.

[Download from BARD: *Raymond Carver a Writer's Life*](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076835

Dearie the Remarkable Life of Julia Child by Bob Spitz

Read by Kerry Dukin

26 hours, 32 minutes

Biography of Julia Child (1912-2004), who introduced America to French cooking through books and PBS shows. Examines her childhood in Pasadena, California, and her relationship with her husband Paul. Discusses the effects the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s had on the television icon. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2012.

[Download from BARD: *Dearie the Remarkable Life of Julia Child*](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075317

Straw: Finding My Way by Darryl Strawberry

Read by Bob Moore

8 hours 31 minutes

Autobiography of former all-star baseball pitcher drafted to the New York Mets in 1980 after graduating from Los Angeles sports-powerhouse Crenshaw High. Recovering addict Strawberry describes his rise to fame and his substance abuse, trouble with the law, and cancer. Credits his turnaround to a newfound faith in God. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Straw: Finding My Way](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069188

The Opposite of Fate Memories of a Writing Life by Amy Tan

Read by Gabriella Cavallero

11 hours, 20 minutes

Autobiographical musings by the author of *The Joy Luck Club* (DB 29021). One entry describes Tan's escape from dangerous mud slides near Lake Tahoe. Another details frightening symptoms she endured for years without satisfactory medical explanation--and the eventual diagnosis of persistent neurological Lyme disease. Some strong language. 2003.

[Download from BARD: The Opposite of Fate Memoirs of a Writing Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067944

The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe by J. Randy Taraborrelli

Read by Ray Hagen

21 hours, 50 minutes

Biographer Taraborrelli, author of *Elizabeth* (DB 63718), uses records and interviews with family and friends to reconstruct the life of actress Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962). Examines Monroe's relationships with the women who raised her and later with the Kennedy clan. Discusses her mother Gladys Baker's mental illness and Monroe's suicide. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069558

Boots on the Ground by Dusk my Tribute to Pat Tillman by Mary Tillman

Read by Jill Ferris

13 hours, 47 minutes

The mother of the late NFL football player and U.S. Army Ranger Pat Tillman describes her search for the truth about her son's April 22, 2004, death from "friendly fire" in Afghanistan. Relates the army's apparent mishandling of Pat's death notification after his mission went awry. Some strong language. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Boots on the Ground by Dusk my Tribute to...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067736

Bob Dylan in America by Sean Wilentz

Read by Richard Davidson

17 hours, 53 minutes

Traces the jagged arc of Dylan's career while placing the mercurial artist's music in its wider historical and artistic contexts. Discusses his innovations and influences on his work. Analyzes Dylan's art, distinguishing it from his carefully crafted and continually changing public image. Some strong language. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Bob Dylan in America](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072429

The Happiest Man in the World: An Account of the Life of Poppa Neutrino by Alec Wilkinson

Read by Gary Roan

9 hours, 4 minutes

Writer portrays David Pearlman, a.k.a. Poppa Neutrino (born 1933), a nomadic philosopher and occasional street musician who finds happiness in following his deepest desires. Recounts the California native's adventures in pursuit of his dreams of marketing a revolutionary football play and sailing a homemade raft across the Pacific Ocean. 2007.

[Download from BARD: The Happiest Man in the World: an Account of ...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067142