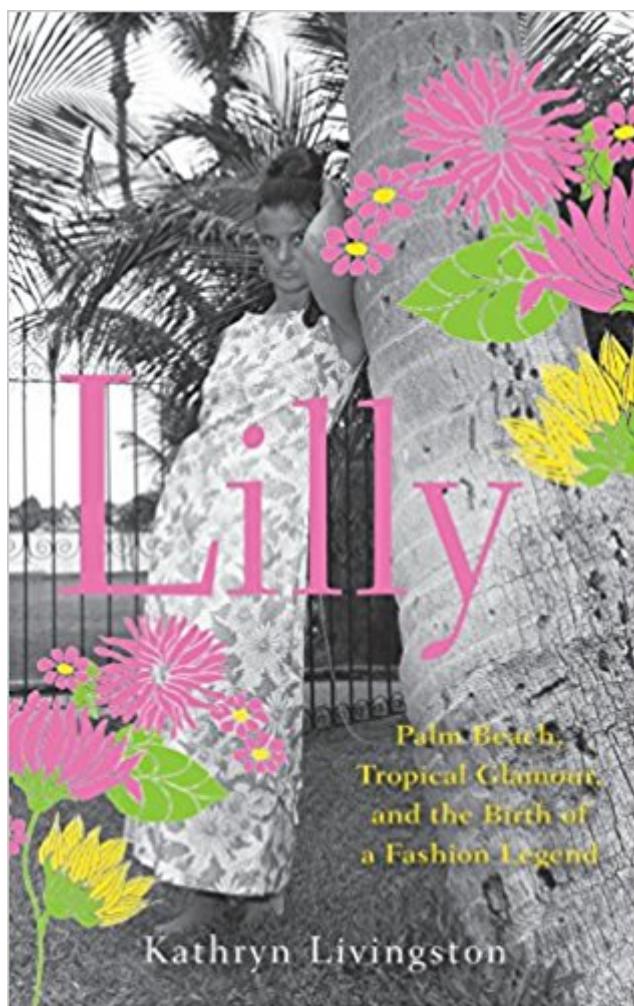


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# Lilly: Palm Beach, Tropical Glamour, And The Birth Of A Fashion Legend



## Synopsis

The real story behind a very private American fashion icon—Lilly PulitzerToday, Lilly Pulitzer's iconic brand of clean-cut, vibrantly printed clothes called ""Lillys"" can be spotted everywhere. What began decades ago as a snob uniform in Palm Beach became a general fashion craze and, later, an American classic. In contrast to the high visibility of her brand, Lilly Pulitzer has largely kept her tumultuous personal story to herself. Bursting forth into glossy fame from a protected low-key world of great wealth and high society, through heartbreaks, treacheries, scandals, and losses, her life, told in detail here for the first time, is every bit as colorful and exciting as her designs. Offers a close-up of Palm Beach society, replete with tropical mischief, reckless indulgences and blatant infidelities as well as fascinating stories about the Pulitzer and Phipps families and their world of eccentrics, high achievers, intermarriages, and glamorous trendsetters. Takes a fresh look at the Roxanne Pulitzer scandal and the atmosphere that fed it, and other episodes involving Lilly Pulitzer's family and social circle. Traces the many ups-and-downs in Lilly Pulitzer's personal life as well as her business, which suffered a decline in the 1980s before its resurgent transformation into the thriving success it is today. Includes 25 black-and-white photographs that bring Lilly Pulitzer's world to life. Lilly is a must read not only for fans of Lilly Pulitzer and her Lilly brand, but for anyone interested in a journey through the world of privilege and the life of a true American original.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

\* You see them every summer: floridly bright and dazzlingly patterned shifts worn by country club ladies and girls of all ages. Back in style again (though in some quarters they never went out), Lilly

Pulitzer dresses rank among the icons of 20th century American fashion. Their eponymous creator was a native of the upper crust — born Lillian Lee McKim, she went to Chapin as a classmate of Jacqueline Bouvier's — and her marriage to Peter Pulitzer was vaguely scandalous because of his Jewish roots and the young couple's plan to live in Florida (Lilly was ""Palm Beach royalty"" via her stepfather, Ogden Phipps) year-round. Her dress business began in a juice stand (the Pulitzers owned groves); before long, the Lilly, an easy-to-wear shift in colorful cotton, became more popular than the juices. Livingston, a journalist covering the resort beat, tells Pulitzer's story with admiration and a keen eye for luxury. Relentlessly peppy and fueled by gossip, the book can read like a particularly long society-page dispatch — or a publicity notice for the clothing brand — but at times it's great fun, as when Pulitzer responds to a retailer asking her to make fall or winter clothing: ""Oh, but you don't understand, it's always summer somewhere." (Boston Globe, December 2012) Some women brood on their dullness like Chekhov characters staring out windows. What's interesting about Lilly Pulitzer is that she confesses it cheerfully and by so doing persuades us that it might not be true. The case for it can be made, however — she was never known for working the fashion shows with a chrome-steel attitude or swanning around with Paris couturiers. Winter and summer, she liked being in Palm Beach, Fla., where her clothing was a sort of folk art of the very rich, summer clothes for a world where, as she said, ""it's always summer somewhere." Now, at 80, a Palm Beach homebody, she is the subject of a short, airy biography by Kathryn Livingston, ""Lilly: Palm Beach, Tropical Glamour, and the Birth of a Fashion Legend." To my surprise, I learned that I kind of like her. Surprise because I grew up with my nose pressed to the window of Lilly Land, but I was looking out, not in, seeking freedom from Connecticut cocktail hours, rich people complaining that they were broke (""totally stoners""), mixed doubles in tennis, and porch parties where women wore hair pulled back as tight as the silk on Christmas-tree balls. Once in a while a man would wear a necktie as a belt, a Brooks Brothers buccaneer. (Wall Street Journal, December 2012)

Born into a legendary family surrounded by wealth and privilege, Lilly Pulitzer is an iconoclast who has become a fashion icon. Lilly's trademark colorful shift dresses defined high-society casual chic in the 1960s, and her brand continues to delight and enchant a whole new generation of women today. With Lilly, set against the glittering background of Palm Beach, Kathryn Livingston presents the first biography of this fascinating, complex, remarkable woman. Always one to opt for the unconventional, Lilly dropped out of college after one semester to become a nurse's aide in Appalachia, then eloped with publishing heir Peter Pulitzer at age twenty and moved full-time to

Palm Beach, one of America's most notorious enclaves for the very rich. Peter worked in the orange-growing industry, and Lilly began her career by setting up a fruit juice stand on the famously upscale Worth Avenue. Lilly started designing and wearing simple, colorful dresses to provide comfort while she worked under the hot Florida sun. The exuberant patterns of her shifts, known as Lillys, soon caught the attention of her wealthy patrons. Lillys became the Palm Beach snob uniform and were quickly adopted by her neighbors and socialite customers from all over who wintered in Palm Beach. After Lilly's former schoolmate First Lady Jackie Kennedy was photographed with her family wearing a Lilly in Hyannis Port, seemingly every woman in America wanted to have one. Lilly Pulitzer is an intensely private person, and her often tumultuous personal life has been touched by more than its share of tragedy and scandal. Lilly examines in depth the many struggles Lilly has endured in her life. Lilly and Peter seemed to be the picture of domestic bliss but Peter's infidelities (revealed during the divorce from his second wife, Roxanne) and constant traveling tore Lilly and Peter apart. After her divorce, Lilly found new love with her second husband, Enrique, a patrician Cuban-American, and they enjoyed several years of happiness, but he died too soon. Lilly is the story of a devoted mother who worked hard and created a thriving business at a time when most mothers, especially wealthy ones, didn't work. It is a story about exceptional luxury, love, betrayal, despair, and triumph. Featuring rare photos that reveal the guarded world of Lilly Pulitzer and her family and friends, Lilly combines a richly textured true tale of fashion magic and business success with a riveting tour of the lifestyles of the richest and most celebrated people in the spectacular resort known as Palm Beach. Lilly is a uniquely American story.

Lilly Pulitzer had an interesting life. However, I learned more about her from Google than from this biography. It bounced back and forth, with innumerable side tracks about the pedigrees of other people. Livingston made several references to her fun loving life style and escapades at boarding school. But there was not a single anecdote to back up the statements. I didn't feel like I knew her any better than a list of facts about her life. It was one long name dropping bore.

I don't usually write reviews for my Kindle books but this book is so awful I had to share my feelings. If I could request a refund I would because at only 30% of the book read I really couldn't summarize what I read if I had to. I had to stop the agony. As a lover of fashion and nonfiction, I thought it would be interesting to learn about Lilly. And that part of the book, as sporadic as it is, is good. But the author jumps around so much telling stories within stories and side stories I couldn't keep track and found myself lost, confused, frustrated and annoyed.

The cover of the book makes you want to run out and buy it. However, except for all the black and white photographs which were great, the rest of the book is just ok. The author writes about her research about Lilly but you don't really get a great deal of information about Lilly. Much of the book gives you a lot of background knowledge about the social world she lived in. But if you don't know anything at all about Lilly Pulitzer, then this book will give you some information about her.

Fun book if you winter in Palm Beach ..... Great recall of the making of Lilly line. Interesting story for a clothes junkie to read ... easy reading

Some interesting background information but this book read more like a press release for the company and a history of Palm Springs. Lilly Pulitzer was an amazing business woman, mother, hostess, and friend but I wanted to know more about the development of her brand.

Good read

I bought this book for my daughter...and had to read it first! Lilly was an amazing woman and role model. Lilly overcame some hardships like depression and a bad marriage to become a successful business woman. We met Lilly once in Palm Beach, and she was very friendly and down to earth..very interested in what my daughter and her friend were interested in...It was not all about her! There is quite a lot to learn from/about Lilly in business and life!

I bought this book for my almost 90 year old mother and she is loving every word, mostly because of all the memories of south Florida when she was a young woman. She remembers all the stores on and near Worth Avenue in Palm Beach and reading this book is like going back in time.

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