

[PDF] Uncle Mame: The Life Of Patrick Dennis

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly If Dennis is remembered at all today, it is as the author of Auntie Mame. But in the late 1950s and early '60s, Edward Everett Tanner III (who published under the pseudonyms Patrick Dennis and Virginia Rowans) was a phenomenally popular novelist. Myers's literate, impeccably researched and entertaining biography resurrects this outrageous author of social satires who almost singlehandedly introduced "camp" into mainstream American culture. In 1955, Tanner wrote several short stories about an irreverent, fabulous woman that were turned down by 19 publishers until an editor at Vanguard Press suggested he turn them into a novel. Auntie Mame made Tanner a millionaire (during the novel's 112-week stint on the New York Times bestseller list, he became the first author to have three books on the Times list at once, when he published *Guestward Ho!* and *The Loving Couple* in 1956). Tanner was at his career peak in late

1962, when his *Little Me* opened on Broadway. But a week after he was profiled in *Life*, he attempted suicide and was committed to a mental hospital for eight months. After years of leading a double life as a gay man while married with two kids, he had fallen in love with another man and decided he had to leave his family. By the early '70s, his novels were out of fashion and he had spent (or drunk) most of the money he had made. He later reentered the milieu he'd previously enjoyed by becoming a butler to the rich and famous (including McDonald's founder Ray Kroc). The name Patrick Dennis has faded from most readers' memories, but that of Auntie Mame lives on (1998's *But Darling, I'm Your Auntie Mame* tracked her incarnations from book to stage to screen). So the reference to Mame in the title, along with the fetching "Playbill"-style book jacket, should compensate for Dennis's current obscurity, and help draw theater fans to this well-told tale. (Nov.)
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Review "Raises a glass to Patrick Dennis, the divine social satirist who introduced America to Auntie Mame." -- *Vanity Fair*

"The book you have to read." -- *Entertainment Weekly*

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