



Just Kids from the Bronx: Telling It the Way It Was: An Oral History

Arlene Alda

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"A down-to-earth, inspiring book about the American promise fulfilled." -President Bill Clinton

"Fascinating Made me wish I had been born in the Bronx." -Barbara Walters

A touching and provocative collection of memories that evoke the history of one of America's most influential boroughs-the Bronx-through some of its many success stories

The vivid oral histories in Arlene Alda's *Just Kids from the Bronx* reveal what it was like to grow up in the place that bred the influencers in just about every field of endeavor. The Bronx is where Michael Kay, the New York Yankees' play-by-play broadcaster, first experienced baseball; where J. Crew's CEO Millard ("Mickey") Drexler found his ambition; where Neil deGrasse Tyson and Dava Sobel fell in love with science; and where local music making inspired singer-songwriter Dion DiMucci and hip-hop's Grandmaster Melle Mel.

The parks, the pickup games, the tough and tender mothers, the politics, the gangs, the food-for people who grew up in the Bronx, childhood recollections are fresh. Arlene Alda's own Bronx memories were a jumping-off point from which to reminisce with a nun, a police officer, an urban planner, and with Al Pacino, Carl Reiner, Colin Powell, Maira Kalman, Bobby Bonilla, Mary Higgins Clark, and many other leading artists, athletes, scientists, and entrepreneurs-experiences spanning six decades of Bronx living. Alda then arranged these pieces of the past, from looking for violets along the banks of the Bronx River to the wake-up calls from teachers who recognized potential, into one great collective story, a filmlike portrait of the Bronx from the early twentieth century until today.

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