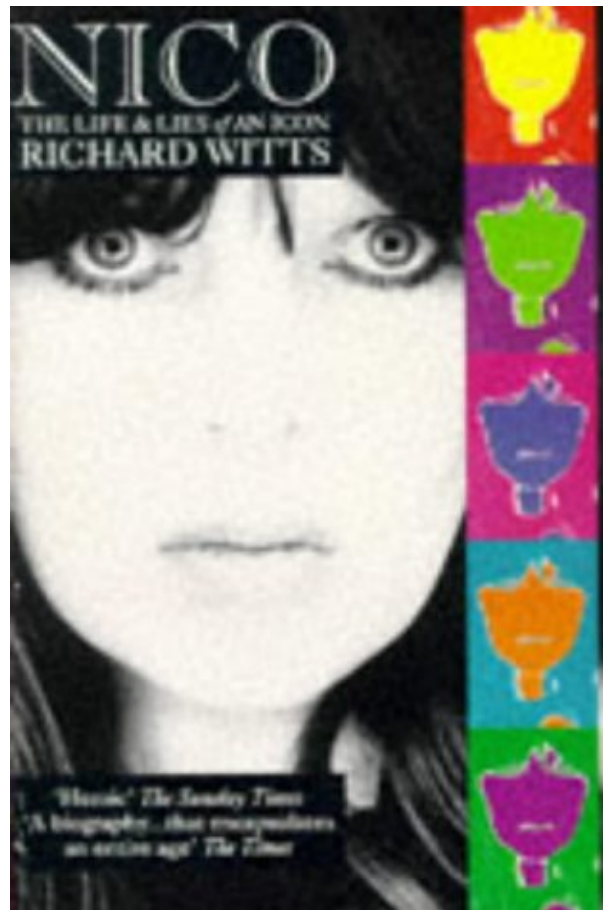
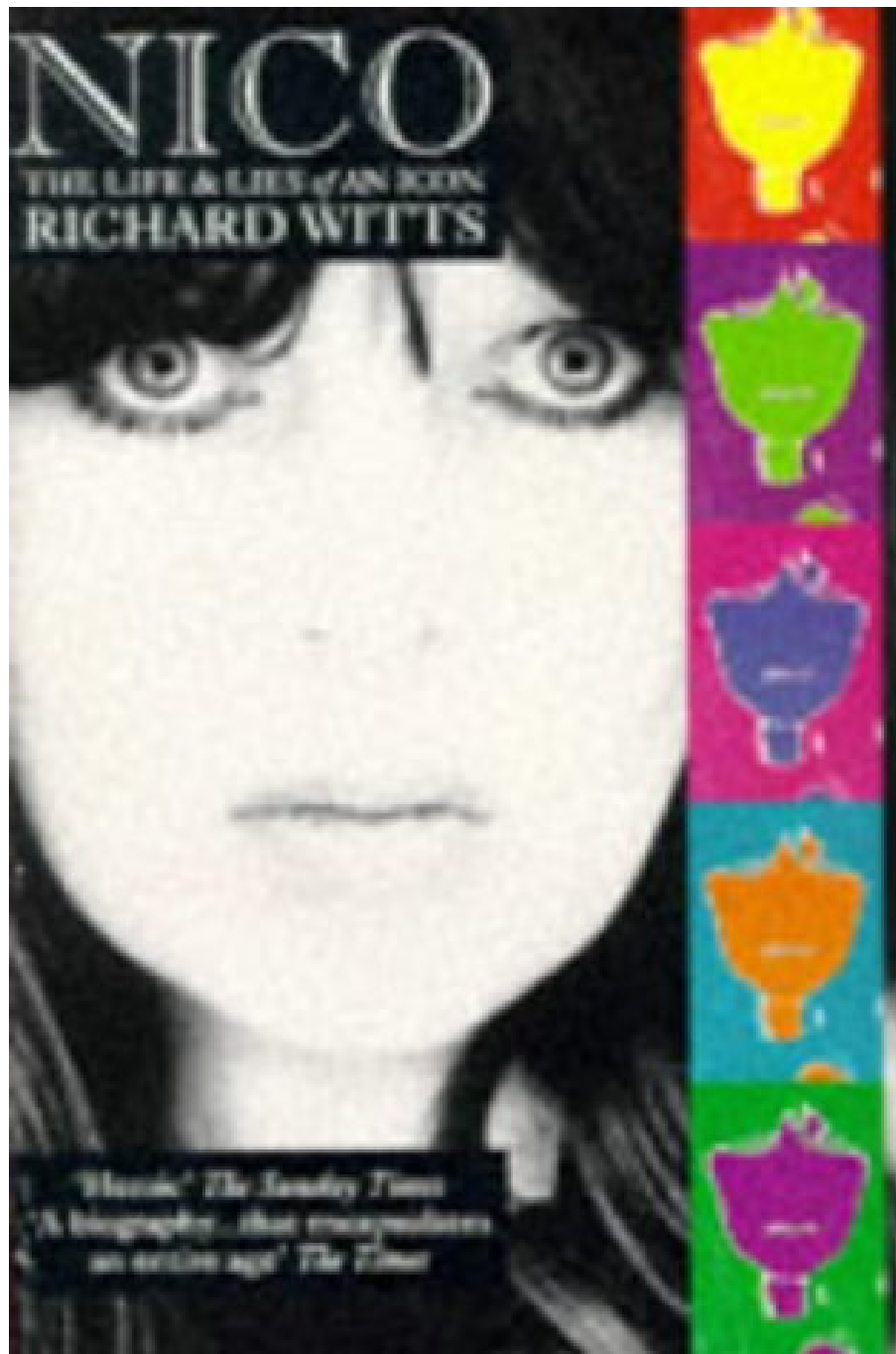


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NICO: THE LIFE AND LIES OF AN ICON BY RICHARD WITTS PDF

This is the biography of Nico, the cover girl of the fifties, siren of the sixties and the female face of punk in the eighties. Written shortly before her death, it explores her fight to assert her independence as a performer, her tormented mother and troubled son.

- Sales Rank: #133853 in Books
- Published on: 1995-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x 5.25" w x 1.25" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 334 pages

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19 of 21 people found the following review helpful.

Fascinating, despite some flaws

By GG

Most books on Nico and The Velvet Underground have presented her as a talentless junkie prepared to live endlessly on the tarnished glories of yore in order to feed her various addictions. All of which is probably true but seems to miss the point entirely. As the title of this lengthy biography suggests, Nico was an iconic figure rooted firmly in the era of her greatest fame. To dwell on the person after that glamour has faded is really for grave robbers and National Enquirer readers only.

Witt's book concentrates instead on Nico during the '60's, when the girl from Cologne became a film star, a rock star and a lover of so many famous people that it is frequently impossible to keep track. The author ("a close personal friend") is naturally biased towards her but doesn't refrain from the odd piece of gossip, like Nico's alleged habit of rubbing heroin on her baby son's gums just to shut him up.

The real problem with Life and Lies is Witt's admission that a lot of it is probably untrue. This is partly to do with Nico's own frail grasp of reality but mostly because of the author's cod-psychological contention that the singer's life was an endless mirage of deceit and bluff. In a lesser book such rigmarole would be irrelevant, but Witts has gone to such lengths interviewing first-hand witnesses, including John Cale, Iggy Pop, and Federico Fellini, that it seems a downright shame to ultimately cloud the issue with modish B.S. Flawed but still fascinating.

13 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

What a sad, pathetic (but unique) creature!

By tjs001

An extraordinary life - an extraordinary misfit. Richard Witts is a very learned man and has done an amazing lot of research to create a classy bio of this totally spoilt, self-centred and, inevitably, tragic creature. His style may be a bit too much for the reviewer below, but don't be put off - this is an absorbing read. It will, inevitably, reach about as few people as her music did, so I salute Mr Witts for taking on this task. By the

way, James Young's book "Songs They Never Play On The Radio" documents his time playing with Nico in the eighties. While it is not in the same class as this book, it complements it as Mr Witts has, understandably, focussed on the more important earlier years.

5 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

this book captures the life, and time of one of punk's pioneer

By A Customer

Nico was an icon to the underground world of art, and music. She became a model at 16, and joined up with Andy Warhol's Velvet Underground in her 20's. She strayed solo, and released some of the best albums of our time. Chelsea Girls, Marble Index, Desert Shore, The End, Hanging Gardens. The live album Do or Die illustrates the toll heroin had on her which is clearly heard in the music. Nico died in 1988 from an impact to the head falling off the back of a motorcycle on an island.

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