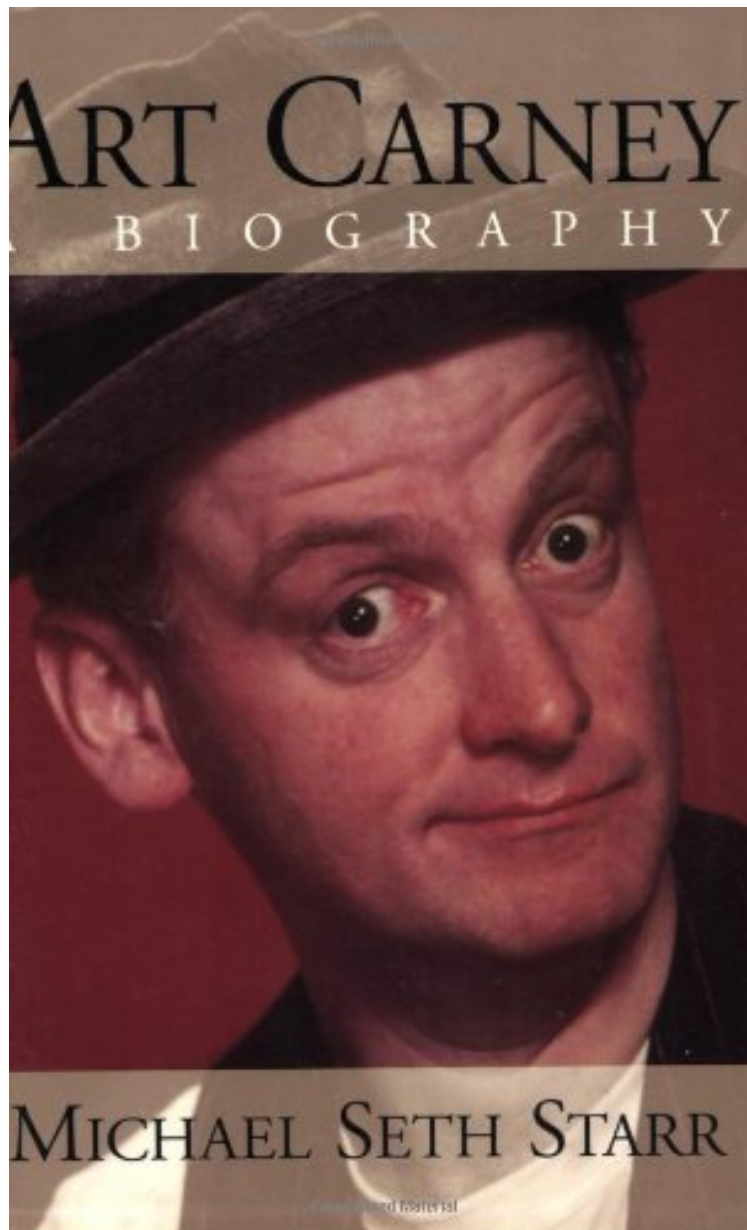


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## Art Carney: A Biography (Applause Books)

*Michael Seth Starr*

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**Michael Seth Starr : Art Carney: A Biography (Applause Books)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Art Carney: A Biography (Applause Books):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. NOT Just a Honeymooner... Not By a Long ShotBy Gary SA truly

wonderful book, describing the life and career of a truly wonderful man, and a fine actor and comedian. With all respect to his memory; if you want to see the depth of what Art Carney was capable of - the *Honeymooners* is not the first stop. I highly recommend the *Twilight Zone* episode, "Night of the Meek". It rated little more than a footnote in the book - his career is so vast, I'm not surprised - but I first saw the episode over 50 years ago, and when I saw it on DVD, it was just as fresh and wonderful as the first time. If you like a background book on a career, a biography, or any other history with a lot of information, a lot of honesty, and very little hyperbole; sit back someplace comfortable, and enjoy this. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A bit disappointed By anniei ordered this book from because i like to read and thought it would be interesting but it didn't really tell much of the happy stuff. it more dragged on about his drinking and depression. And the author kind of in a round about way was actually kinda making fun of him. I thought it was a bit mean at times. He should not have said that his hearing aid, glasses, limp, etc were what made him look really old. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Underrated Comic Genius By M. Shea Art Carney is so much more than just a foil for Jackie Gleason's Ralph Cramden. Without reading the biography of Art Carney, you would pass over the ability he had to make Gleason look good. The fact that he seems to be without an ego is the whole reason that those skits were so successful. He was the "wind beneath Gleason's wings". And who would ever have thought that a "second banana" would ever win an Academy Award?

(Applause Books). "A clear and well-written portrait of a superb performer and a wonderful human being, with emphasis on the word 'human.'" - The New York Times Book Review He was one of the most beloved stars of television's golden age. Together with his legendary partner Jackie Gleason, Art Carney helped create some of the most dazzling and unforgettable comedy ever presented on the small screen. Carney was an agile, rubber-limbed dancer and comedian whose sweetness and unassuming nature concealed the passion and power of a brilliant, often underappreciated, actor. The partnership formed by Carney and Gleason, as Brooklyn bus driver Ralph Kramden and his dim-witted pal, sewer worker Norton, remains to this day the most powerful and memorable comedic union ever conceived for television. How this song-and-dance man and show business recluse began his career, as well as the detours, lucky breaks, triumphs and heartbreaks Carney encountered along the way, is the subject of this fascinating, in-depth biography by author and New York Post editor Michael Seth Starr. ART CARNEY tells the story of a complex man and an enduring television legend who gave the world the most extraordinary gift of all: the gift of laughter.

.com Capering into fame as Jackie Gleason's sidekick in *The Honeymooners*, Art Carney proved later that he was no mere television personality but a real actor. He originated the part of neurotic Felix in Neil Simon's 1965 Broadway smash *The Odd Couple*, and his dual role in Brian Friel's *Lovers* garnered a 1968 Tony nomination; he won an Academy Award in 1974 for his poignant performance in *Harry and Tonto*. Michael Seth Starr traces this varied career with perception and empathy, revealing a hard-drinking, introverted, extremely private man totally unlike the blithely goofy Ed Norton. From Booklist The story of Carney's career as a funnyman overlaps the story of his battle against alcoholism. Starr's workmanlike account of Carney's dual life adopts a friendly tone that jibes with Carney's comfy-old-shoe acting persona, which so well fit his role as a great second banana to Jackie Gleason that people were surprised when he became a star in his own right. Starr dismisses rumors that Gleason plotted to deny Carney recognition--indeed, dismisses them so often that you start to wonder. Carney's battle with the bottle furnishes a better clue to why proper recognition eluded him. Then again, even with the alcoholism, he won six Emmies fairly early in his career and later an Oscar and a Tony nomination. Because he created three classic comic characters--Ed Norton while with Gleason, *The Odd Couple's* Felix Unger, and Harry Combes in *Harry and Tonto* Carney demands a good biography. Starr's fills the bill very adequately, though not flashily. Mike Tribby From Kirkus sTV's beloved "Ed Norton" finally gets his due in a breezy, often incisive biography. Considering the fact that Art Carney's creation in *The Honeymooners* shows no signs of diminishing popularity more than 40 years after his debut, and that his work outside the series has shown extraordinary range from low comedy to darkest tragedy, peaking in his Oscar-winning performance in *Harry and Tonto*, it's startling to realize that no book on his life has been published until now. Perhaps it was the actor's own shy and reclusive nature that prevented other attempts. But Carney is fortunate to have found his biographer in Starr, TV columnist for the New York Post. This is a brief book by current standards but so densely packed with information that it's hard to imagine what might have been missed. Starr traces Carney's professional career from his days as an impressionist and radio actor, to stardom on *The Jackie Gleason Show*, and on to his emergence from Gleason's shadow into a remarkable solo career. Starr also turns a sensitive eye to Carney's rockier personal life: Public triumphs were constantly undermined by alcoholism and bouts of deep depression. Starr appears to have talked to virtually everyone who ever knew or worked with Carney (though not Carney himself), and he wisely lets these friends and acquaintances tell their own stories. He keeps his own voice clear but refreshingly impartial. Art Carney emerges from these pages as a kind, gentle man who, tragically, has seldom found the love for himself that his millions of fans give him without qualification. Starr's perceptive biography presents its subject as a man who became legendary, not through hype or self-promotion, but through the sheer force of his talent. (16 pages bw photos, not

seen) -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.