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# Hijacking The Runway: How Celebrities Are Stealing The Spotlight From Fashion Designers



## Synopsis

Hollywood stars have always furthered fashion's cause of seducing the masses into buying designers' clothes by acting as living billboards. Now, red carpet celebrities are no longer content to just advertise and are putting their names on labels that reflect the image they - or their stylists - created. Jessica Simpson, Jennifer Lopez, Sarah Jessica Parker, Sean Combs, and a host of pop, sports, and reality-show stars of the moment are leveraging the power of their celebrity to become the face of their own fashion brands. And a few celebrities - like the Olsen Twins and Victoria Beckham - have gone all the way and reinvented themselves as bona fide designers. Teri Agins charts this strange new terrain with wit and insight and an insider's access to the fascinating struggles of the bold-type names and their jealousies, insecurities, and triumphs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When I saw that fashion journalist Teri Agins, author of *The End of Fashion*, had written a new book I was excited to read it. I have always been a devoted follower of fashion but Agins first book, *The End of Fashion*, made me realize I could come at fashion with a slightly more academic approach, something that appealed to my intellectual side and spawned personal undergraduate work in the same area. This book did not fail my high expectations. As a devoted follower of the fashion industry in all its aspects, much of what she wrote about wasn't brand new to me, however the connections she made among brands and lines put the significance of the celebrity in fashion in a new perspective for me. There were definitely chapters I knew nothing about, for example I had

previously only had cursory knowledge about Kanye's fashion snafus. The only negative comment I have was that the book did not include a bibliography, which may be an editor's choice, but to leave out a bibliography even though Agins cites many sources seems to only reinforce the stereotype that fashion journalism not be taken seriously. Overall this was worth my purchase, especially since I rarely buy books "new", and is a text I plan on keeping on my shelf and enjoying returning to.

If you love fashion, you have to read this book. It's a dishy account of what happens behind the scenes of all those celebrity fashion endorsements. We all knew that most of them weren't doing their own work, but I enjoyed finding out the specifics. The author names names, so you don't have to waste time guessing. It was a nice escape to the world of glitz and glamour, and gave me some interesting anecdotes to share with my friends over brunch.

For a reader raised wearing clothes ordered from the Sears & Roebuck catalog this was a book which took me to the magic land of high fashion. The author people's her narrative with characters I'm familiar with like Kanye West and stars like Jennifer Lopez and Britney Spears and revealed a formerly unknown and fascinating side of them. Kept me turning pages all the way through.

Whether it's exposing the origins of such elusive brands as Antonio Melani and The Row, unearthing the minutiae of licensing agreements that front Hollywood stars as either creative masters or alluring muses, or simply lifting the veil of perception that too often shrouds reality, renowned Wall Street Journal fashion reporter and columnist Teri Agins serves up a thorough assessment of the industry in her second book, "Hijacking the Runway: How Celebrities Are Stealing the Spotlight from Fashion Designers" (Gotham Books, 2014). The resulting narrative, jarringly at variance with what celebrity publicists and their clients want us to believe, plays out sumptuously before the reader's eyes. Classic case studies of celebrity-designer transitions gone tragically awry (Kanye stalking Rucci, Lohan tainting Ungaro, RHWOA Sheree channeling a designer version of herself), offer moments of scintillating comic escapism. Without the slightest tug of guilt or inhibition, we are compelled to follow Agins wherever she takes us; not in spite of the palpable foreboding the author creates (a train wreck is about to happen, oh no!), but precisely because of it (a train wreck is about to happen, oh my...). Not every entertainer designer comes across as honorary member of the Theater of the Absurd, however. Jessica Simpson, the Olsen twins, Victoria Beckham...each trumps establishment expectations by mastering business fundamentals and making strategically sound decisions from the outset of their ever expanding

apparel ventures. And this is perhaps where the author's own credentials at the Journal, where she covered the business of fashion over two decades, are most relevant and distinct. Striking a perfectly measured tone, as effective in exposing the details of a celebrity tantrum as elucidating a multibillion dollar M&A deal, Agins reminds us that the rag trade remains immovably unforgiving, no matter what offering or artifice is laid at her feet. And that although "Fake it 'til you make it" may govern as a self-fulfilling prophecy in many areas of the marketplace, when it comes to fashion, it turns out to be a self-effacing one.

I absolutely loved *Hijacking the Runway*. It is such a pleasure to read Teri Agins's words. Her research and in-depth knowledge of the industry is so impressive. This is a must read for anyone and everyone in the fashion industry, as Teri Agins is a legendary icon in New York's fashion scene.

Teri Agins channels her unique expertise, contacts, perspective and style to create a brilliant account of the rise of celebrity dominance in the fashion industry. With 20+ years as a first-rate reporter for the Wall Street Journal, Teri's "nose for news" enables her to leverage her knowledge, experience and contacts to compile well-researched facts and draw well-supported conclusions. The result is a high-energy tale sure to inform and entertain not only fashionistas, but anyone with interest in business, celebrities or just brilliant writing.

This is an important book if you ever wonder how an apparel is being created in the first place! No celebrities are designing with a couple of exceptions, their own brands help drive sales of merchandise created in partnership with manufacturers through licensing and equity arrangements. Don't try to start an apparel business without first reading this book.

What a fun, fast paced romp on the celebrity fashion scene viewed through the sharp witted writing and lens of Teri Agins. I couldn't put the book down and it was a totally wicked read. I found Kanye West's drubbing by the French at his first runway show (held in Paris) fascinating. The book is worth its price just for Ralph Rucci's takedown on West.

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