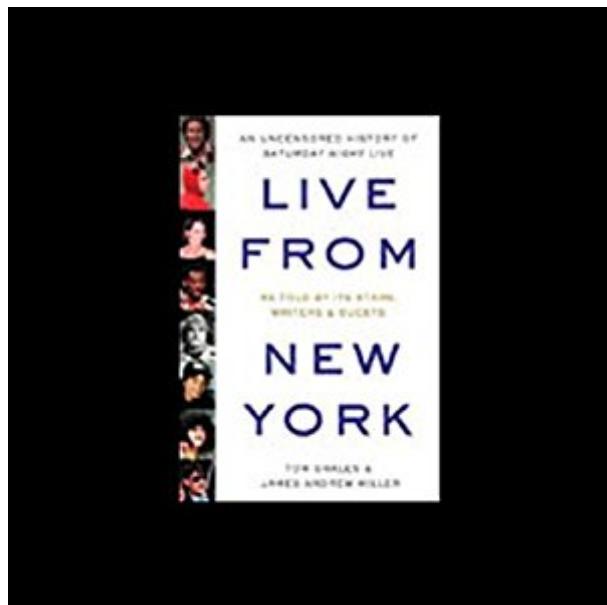


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# Live From New York: An Uncensored History Of Saturday Night Live



## **Synopsis**

Just in time for the 40th anniversary of Saturday Night Live, a rollickingly updated edition of LIVE FROM NEW YORK with nearly 100 new pages covering the past decade. When first published to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Saturday Night Live, LIVE FROM NEW YORK was immediately proclaimed the best book ever produced on the landmark and legendary late-night show. In their own words, unfiltered and uncensored, a dazzling galaxy of trail-blazing talents recalled three turbulent decades of on-camera antics and off-camera escapades. Now a fourth decade has passed---and bestselling authors James Andrew Miller and Tom Shales have returned to Studio 8H. Over more than 100 pages of new material, they raucously and revealingly take the SNL story up to the present, adding a constellation of iconic new stars, surprises, and controversies. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book feels like a reunion of old friends, telling their stories at a dinner party that you are fortunate enough to overhear. There is so much history in the years of SNL that there is an anecdote for every fan, but this book recognizes Loren Michaels as being the true genius behind the creation and development of the show. He's not universally loved by the cast (but also not nearly as despised as Chevy Chase, who seems to be everyone's favorite whipping boy), but his genius is acknowledged by one and all. A lot of favorite skits and characters are discussed, as well as some legendary battles with censors, advertisers and network executives. The mix of radical comedy with revenue conscious TV executives makes for fascinating reading. The chapters dealing with the

deaths of cast members and behind the scene staff members are incredibly poignant, especially Belushi's and Chris Farley's, bit of whom were known to be dancing with trouble. This book also goes a long way to humanizing Chris Rock, who emerges as one of the most thoughtful and career minded members of all SNL casts. His intelligence shines through in his tales of making it by way of the show. There is a great story on almost every page of this book, and having grown up with this show, it made the memories all the more pleasant. This is a great Christmas present for any 30-50 year old who has spent their Saturday night in front of a TV.

The curtain is pulled back on SNL in this book to reveal (not surprisingly) that Lorne Michaels was, is, and always will be the Wizard who always kept SNL ticking. Decades of drug use, debauchery, infighting, sleeping around, desperation, and show-biz chutzpah are related courtesy of first-hand accounts of the writers, stars, agents, TV executives, staff members, and guests of the show. Not all comments are complimentary, and not all that went on behind the scenes was funny. But it all makes for a fascinating read, despite the fact that a few notable surviving cast members chose not to participate in these oral interviews. "Live From New York" is as much a evolutionary history of the business of television over the past three decades as it is an oral history of the show itself. Perhaps SNL isn't as consistently cutting edge and counter-culture as it was in its earliest years. But nowadays the show IS the pop and showbiz culture it lampooned in the past. It cannot ever really return to its fabled glory days of 1975-1979 because the entire showbusiness landscape has changed so dramatically since then. One must credit Michaels for recognizing that and still plodding ahead with the show for most of the years since the days of The Not Ready For Prime Time Players. Read this book to find the origins of many of the standard conventions and favorite moments of the show: why the band always dresses in tuxedos, the inspiration of Danny Aykroyd's buttcrack-exposing refrigerator repairman, the inhuman writing schedule, etc. This is better than an "E! True Hollywood Story" any day.

Shales lets the cast and crew tell their stories in their own words, with minimal editorializing. It's interesting to see how different people remember the same event with skewed perspectives. A hefty, 550+ page book I could barely tear myself away from to go to sleep. Recommended.

This book is chockful of juicy gossip and backstage dish with interviews from cover-to-cover of SNL cast, writers, producers, and hosts. Interviews with SNL insiders are offered in a linear fashion from surviving "Not Ready for Prime Time Players", writers, producers, and hosts to current cast

members and staff. This isn't the authors' take on SNL, but the history of Saturday Night Live from people who lived through it. Tom Shales and James Miller in a smart, smart move chose to have everyone speak for themselves. And how telling it is. :) The editors keep introductions and explanations to a minimum. I was surprised about how candid many of the SNL stars and hosts were about themselves and the show. If you have ever watched Saturday Night Live, you'll enjoy this book. With its insider stories, you'll find this book hard to tear yourself out of. It's apparent that many stories of SNL players' behavior outside of 30 Rockefeller Center are not in this book, but what's there is more than enough. So get your hands on this book-- you'll find it definitely lives up to the hype.

Whether you liked SNL in 1975 or enjoy it now, this book is an amusing romp through the history of the show. Although the years have been filled with amazing talent, it's still surprising to hear from others that it was primarily the genius of Lorne Micheals, the guy behind the scenes, that got the show going and continuing. This is stuff you DON'T see on television. There are too many episodes of outlandish behavior to describe here, but suffice it to say there are things that went on that should have killed most shows. There's lots of gossip, of course, and many of the cast members embarrass themselves while trashing others and many that are a heck of a lot sweeter than you would think (Jane Curtin comes to mind). There is blatant talk of alleged 'racism', 'anti-feminism' (one member refused to do skits written by women) and outrageous drug use during, before and after the shows. In fact, in the beginning, it seems the show needed that edge to survive, or to survive, needed that edge. No matter. This voluminous collection of after-thoughts is entertaining, hilarious and sometimes sad. You can decide where the true talent was, who had the biggest heart or who was the biggest jerk. This book is full of them and I highly recommend it.

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