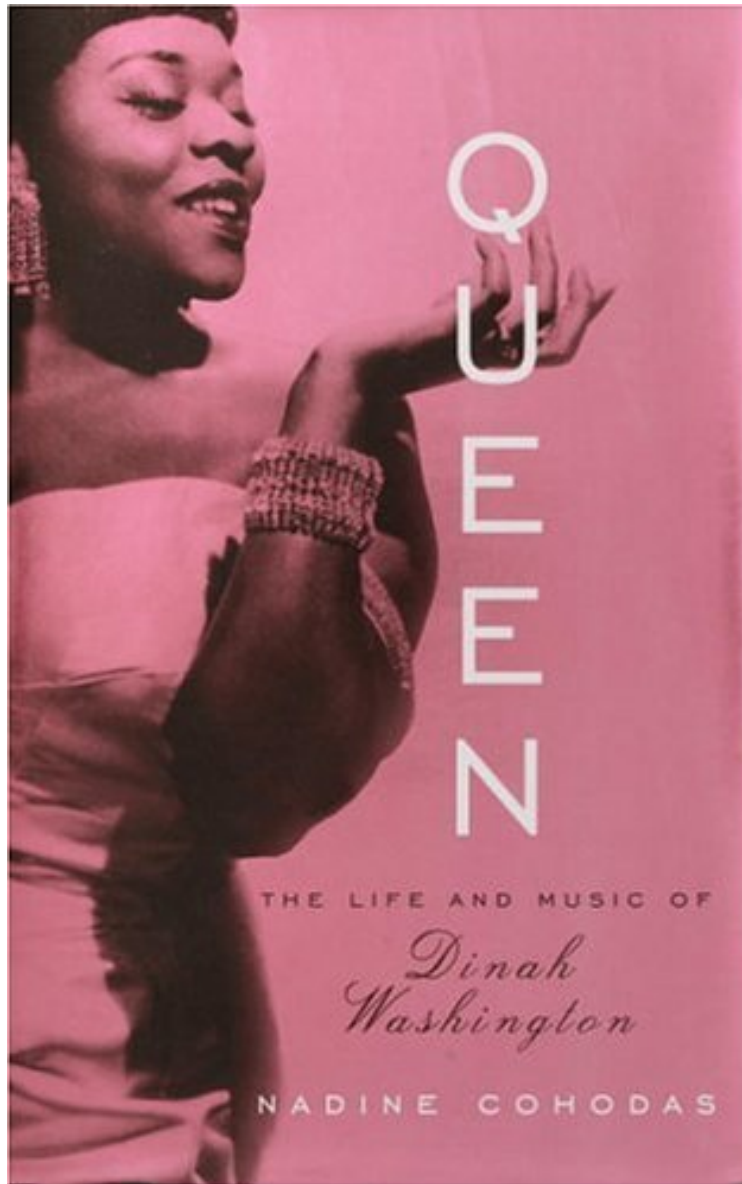


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## Queen: The Life and Music of Dinah Washington

Von Nadine Cohodas

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**Von Nadine Cohodas : Queen: The Life and Music of Dinah Washington** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Queen: The Life and Music of Dinah Washington:

Kurzbeschreibung Queen is the landmark biography of the brief, intensely lived life and soulful music of the great Dinah Washington. A gospel star at fifteen, she was discovered by jazz great Lionel Hampton at eighteen, and for the rest of her life was on the road, playing clubs, or singing in the studio--making music one way or another. Dinah's tart and heartfelt voice quickly became her trademark; she was a distinctive stylist, crossing over from the "race" music category to the pop and jazz charts. Known in her day as Queen of the Blues and Queen of the Juke Boxes, Dinah was regarded as that rare "first take" artist, her studio recordings reflecting the same passionate energy she brought to the stage. As Nadine Cohodas shows us, Dinah suffered her share of heartbreak in her personal life, but she thrived on the growing audience response that greeted her signature tunes: "What a Difference a Day Makes," "Evil Gal Blues," and "Baby (You've Got What It Takes)," with Brook Benton. She made every song she sang her own. Dinah lives large in these pages, with her seven marriages; her penchant for clothes, cars, furs, and diets; and her famously feisty personality--testy one moment and generous the next. This biography, meticulously researched and gracefully written, is the first to draw on extensive interviews with family members and newly discovered documents. It is a revelation of Dinah's work and her life. Cohodas captures the Queen in all her contradictions, and we hear in this book the voice of a natural star, born to entertain and to be loved. From Publishers Weekly A significant blues and jazz diva, Washington rivaled Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith with her soulful singing and her tempestuous ways. Once known as "Queen of the Blues and Queen of the Juke Boxes," Washington lived a tumultuous life, ascending to early fame with Lionel Hampton's band and flirting with all the temptations of a musician's life on the road. Drawing on archival materials and interviews with the singer's fellow musicians, Cohodas (*Spinning Blues into Gold*; Strom Thurmond and the Politics of Southern Change) provides a much-needed portrait of Washington. Born Ruth Jones in Tuscaloosa, Ala., in 1924, the young singer and her family soon moved to Chicago, where Jones left school to pursue a singing career. By the time she was 18, Washington was singing with Hampton's band at the Apollo Theater. In a few years she had made such a name for herself that she left Hampton for her own solo career, recording an album almost every year for the next 20 years until her death in 1963. Cohodas provides a detailed chronological account of Washington's turbulent life and career, including her seven marriages. Although Cohodas swamps the reader with a mass of exhausting details and her interpretations of Washington's music sometimes lack depth, she has written the definitive biography of this important singer. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist When Dinah Washington (1924-63) died, she seemed poised to become the female Nat Cole--the first black woman to be America's favorite pop singer. Her career had already spanned more than 20 years, and she had become first the queen of the blues, sophisticated big-band variety, and then a premier jazz singer before turning to the orchestrated pop treatments of "This Bitter Earth" and "What a Difference a Day Makes" that began making her a household name. This exhaustive biography-- Cohodas seems to have found every scrap of writing about her and talked to every living soul who knew her--shows that no one worked harder for her success than Washington herself. Indeed, she probably overworked herself, and what Cohodas characterizes as her premonitory sense of her image--that is, her determination, before thinness became an American obsession, to be remarkably svelte at all costs--indubitably killed her. Although it doesn't include enough appreciation of her honey-and-vinegar voice and her recorded legacy to please Dinah devotees, this is an invaluable document. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved