

SURVIVING AS SINATRA

SI-NAAHHH-TRA. Swarthier than Elvis, more dangerous than the Beatles, younger-looking than the Stones. America's top broad-hustlin', chick-slayin' hepcat. A man with so much talent, so much class, it's repulsive.

There are two kinds of people on this earth: 1) Frank Sinatra and 2) the other six billion petty, two-bit Clydes like you and me. Frank is God's favorite Catholic.

He's had nine lives, all of them better than anything we could ever hope for.

In December, Frank will be 75, but his ever-creeping age hasn't stopped him one bit. He's still killing them nationwide with a Sinatra/Don Rickles song-and-insult tour (imagine Elvis onstage at 75). Frank may have an old man's body, but he still has a teenager's balls.

The advent of yet another birthday means that Sinatra has been famous longer than the nuclear bomb. He sang for a generation which prized comfort over art. Fix a martini, crank the air conditioner, play "That's Life," sit on a vibrating chair, and tell me he's not God.

And don't even talk about sex appeal. Frank's shish kebab was coveted by ten million war brides. His voice induced countless vaginal conniptions. It slid over pounding arrangements, leaving nothing in its wake but broken promises. Besides sperm, Sinatra's voice may be the chief cause of post-WWII pregnancies. Egged on by his glandular magnetism, the U.S. dropped the record needle and got busy.

He never learned to play the gee-tar, never used dry ice or exploding flashpots, never sang in front of a pulsating liquid slide show. His concerts don't feature twelve-foot ogres and inflatable penises. You won't see Frank Sinatra in eyeliner fondling a boa constrictor. When you're gifted, you don't need gimmicks. Sinatra works his magic with only an amplifier and an attitude.

Jerry may be funnier, Dino may be slicker, and Wayne may pick a better banjo. But they all fade from memory when Frank takes the spotlight, because Frank'll entertain the hell out of a crowd. He has a flair for overkill, an intestinal drive which dwarfs all others. Frank takes a song and beats it like a punching

bag. He's Rocky Balboa without biceps. All along, he knew an ant could move a rubber-tree plant.

He's not arrogant enough to claim he's bigger than Jesus, like that Yoko guy did, but he probably is. Frank knows he isn't better than others, only more important. The dichotomy of his essence is amazing, and clearly visible, even in the spelling of his surname. A Scrabble player could use the letters in "Sinatra" to spell either "Saint" or "Satan."

To the public, he is more the former than the latter. Frank chose to become Saint Francis of Hoboken, spreading goodwill among the world's needy chipmunks. When Frank reads about a tragedy, you can bet the check's already in the mail. Frank gives and gives and gives. Go ahead, lose a leg—don't be surprised if Frank sends you a new one, postage-paid. He's that generous.

Despite tabloid rumors of cancer and Alzheimer's, he continues to breathe. The ruthless crooner teams into indiscriminate duets, trios, and quartets, belching up bubbly ballads for the colostomy crowd. Trombones toot behind him like a thousand brass sphincters. Busloads of widows turn up their hearing aids and reminisce. After Ronald Reagan, he's the country's premier postmenopausal stud. These days, even New Kids on the Block offer more sexual stamina. To his critics, Frank

Sinatra is American machismo with fake hair and a blown wad. But to a septuagenarian boner's softened glories—salud! Frankie's the ultimate show-biz survivor. He has been up, down, over, out, and possibly into a few dimensions we're not able to perceive.

He survived... CAREER SLUMPS.

Insiders have written him off before, but Frank always gets the last laugh. His career first slumped in the late 1940s and early 50s. Record sales and film offers shriveled up. In 1951, he stooped to what many consider his nadir, a yipping novelty single, "Mama Will Bark," recorded with the proto-bimbo Dagmar. Nobody

bought it. Frank's marriage to busty, fat-lipped Ava Gardner soured. Some prattled that he had slashed his wrists and was seeing a shrink. No problem—he shaved off his moustache, starred in *From Here to Eternity*, bagged an Oscar, and the babes were back on his jock.

His manhood intact, Frank skewered Hollywood starlets like a bull moose on Spanish fly. These were "The Capitol Years," a time of tender love songs and hydraulic sexuality. Frank was a master of turnin' 'em out and turnin' 'em loose. Swing, Frankie, swing!

As he swung, he helped define a distinctly American concept—"entertainment." Sinatra's the only performer who can be taken literally when he says he "killed" an audience. He understands the role of entertainer as enforcer. Anybody could be an entertainer; you needn't know how to dance, act, tell jokes, or even sing. You simply had to wear a tuxedo, hire some bodyguards, and make off-color remarks.

Naturally, Frank became The World's Greatest Entertainer. He plowed through Vegas, Tahoe, and Atlantic City. He played only the swankest joints, the ones with shag carpets and mirrors and everything. Frank liked high rollers, and they liked him. It seemed that wherever there were cheap slots and 99-cent shrimp cocktails, there was Frank.

He survived... HIS IMMENSELY TALENTED SON'S KIDNAPPING.

A quiet man, he suffers quietly. Everyone remembers when they first heard the news on that dark day late in '63. I refer not to the Kennedy assassination, but to the kidnapping of Frank Sinatra, Jr. His captors demanded a cool quarter million. Not used to dealing with criminal types, Frank Sr. sprung for the ransom. Little Frank emerged from an automobile trunk, and the rest is entertainment history. The three thugs who kidnapped him were quickly nailed. Cynics said the affair was a publicity stunt, which tore Frank's heart out. This was his seedling—his bambino, for Christ's sake—and they were making fun of the whole thing.

He survived...A NEAR DROWNING.

Ever drown? Frank almost did. In 1964, while filming *None But the Brave* in Hawaii, a playful Frank hit the waves. The waves hit back. Helpless as a jellyfish against strong tides, the charismatic balladeer was nearly sucked into the Pacific. Actor Brad Dexter fetched Frank from the brine and applied mouth-to-mouth. A co-star's wet, salty lips saved Sinatra's lungs for a new generation. Out with the bad air, in with the good.

He survived...KITTY KELLEY.

Long before Sean Penn could hold a rattle, Frank was grabbin'-'n'-smashin' photographers' cameras. Even with the threat of violence, some journalists tried to paint a picture. Through the years, they have concocted horrible stories about this innocent, lamblike soul. I mean, lies out of nowhere. Take Kitty Kelley, who wrote a Sinatra "biography" a few years back. Does she seriously expect us to believe that Frank's a testosterone-injected abortionist's son who eats ham and eggs off of prostitutes' teats? Could the real reason behind her venom be that Ms. Kelley has never had a hit single herself? She's bitter. Frank rises above her untouched—a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful (beautiful) man.

He survived... THE SIXTIES.

While defending his character, Frank struggled to rescue popular music. It was gurgling down the toilet. Rock "musicians" blathered about smoking banana peels and interplanetary unity. And they weren't even wearing ties! The new groups ate acid, bennies, and psychedelic mushrooms, but not Frank. He decided to skip Woodstock. Frank thumbed his nose at that muddy fiasco with 1969's *My Way* LP. Then came *A Man Alone*, with words and music by Rod McKuen, the greatest poet who ever lived.

He survived... RETIREMENT.

By 1971, however, Frank was pooped. He released *Sinatra & Company*, featuring songs by Peter, Paul & Mary and John Denver. Still, Frank felt itchy. He knew something was wrong. Fed up with the youth brigades, he retired. At leisure, he male-bonded with Spiro Agnew, testified before a congressional crime committee, and shuffled between charity banquets. Without Frank's voice, America went bonkers. Flags were burned, communes were formed, and jogging packs of "streakers" exposed their flapping genitals in the



Sinatra portrait by Jim Blanchard

streets. Within two years, Frank began to see that a world without Sinatra was like a zeppole without powdered sugar. He released *Ol' Blue Eyes is Back* to hysterical public adulation.

Frank was back onstage, too, netting \$400,000 a week at Caesars. Doozh! Bah-duh-bing! Skiddly-be-bop-yah!

He's weathered the freaky, dippy changes in music, the losers and weirdos who vainly try to snatch his title. Frank's too smooth for that. He tips his hat, swings a jacket over his shoulder, and stamps them out like cigarette butts. A hundred years from now, will anyone remember Jim Morrison or "LA Woman"? In 1984, while maggots gnawed on the Lizard King's rib cage, Sinatra cut the infinitely more danceable "LA is My Lady." Elvis and Sid Vicious both tackled "My Way," and look what happened to them. These punk upstarts don't understand two rules: you never stick your cock in a meat grinder, and you never mess with Frank Sinatra.

He survived...INFERIOR TOMATO SAUCES.

But singing "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown" wasn't enough for him. Neither was acting in *Johnny Concho*, *Ocean's Eleven*, and *Dirty Dingus Magee*. He enters the nineties with perhaps his crowning achievement, a zesty new line of "Sinatra" pasta sauces. Couples who used to dance, tongue-kiss and hump to Frank can now eat him, too. Mangia! (ain't it a kick?). And believe me, as I wipe his Sugo Da Tavola from my jowls, Frank's got the recipe, goombah. He's indestructible. Untouchable. Invincible.

HOW THE FUCK DOES HE SURVIVE?

I put the question to 75 people, little human candles on Frank's birthday cake. We love you, Frankie, and although ya ain't dead yet, we miss you already. Here, according to those who know Frank (or just think about him a lot), is "The Unauthorized Sinatra Plan for Show-Biz Survival."

SURVIVAL RULE NUMBER ONE: LIVE A REALLY LONG TIME

"Why has he survived so long? He's nasty! (laughs) No. I really like him, He's a friend. You see, now, after those terrible things happened to me, you really see the first (persecuted star) was Sinatra. And you know, he was picking up so much bad press for so many years. I like him. I really like him. He's a gutsy guy."

—Zsa Zsa Gabor

"He has bridged a gap forty years ago to today. He's had a great ongoing love affair with his audience, and I think it'll last until he wants to quit.

—Milton Berle

"He's outlived some people, I suppose."

—Leonard Feather, *Los Angeles Times* music critic

"Oh, fuck him. He's lucky he reached that (75).

I worked for Frank fifty years ago. We've been friends ever since. I've been his friend—he's not mine. He's really a good soul.

"He does a lot of benefits, but you see him with a lot of guys from another 'world' that he shouldn't get a rap for. I did that in nightclubs. I sat with hoodlums all the time. I worked in a nightclub (in New Jersey), the Lido Venice. The boss used to stab me goodnight. Even the checkroom girl's name was Rocco. So I was trusted by those guys. They liked me, luckily. They came in every night to see the show.

"Frank went into a nightclub on 7th Street, the first one he ever

AS FRANK SINATRA'S 75TH BIRTHDAY APPROACHED, I ASKED 75 PEOPLE TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD'S AMAZING SURVIVAL SKILLS.

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played. He went in alone. He was a big hit, and he's done pretty good ever since.

But I really love him, because he's really a good soul. You need him? My daughter Marilyn was very sick once. I was with Frank in Vegas with the Rat Pack in those days. And he said, 'Let's call Marilyn.' They all called my daughter. I would have done it for him. His wife Barbara's a great girl.

(The great comic is once again asked the main question.)

"Because he's got talent. The man's very talented. He's got charisma. It's got something to do with your genes, I guess, or his parents, or not giving up. Or staying active. Sinatra gets on planes, he's like me—I do banquets, sales meetings, trade shows, conventions—I do all these things...Frank is a survivor. I guess we're all survivors at our age."

—Henny Youngman (the only star to call collect, saving himself \$4.66)

"Frank Sinatra has survived for so long because he's been doing the right thing. I know, because I've been doing it longer."

—George Burns, 94

**RULE NUMBER TWO:
BE TALENTED, NUMBSKULL.**

"Because he's the perfect talent."

—Telly Savalas

"Because he's the greatest pop singer who ever lived, that's why."

—Phyllis Diller

"Because he's the greatest entertainer I've seen."

—Tony "The Neat One" Randall

"Because he sings the songs the people want to hear and certainly appears to enjoy himself doing it."

—Johnny Cash

"It's because he's a fabulous singer—nobody has a voice like him. He's the consummate performer. Truly brilliant."

—Jackie Mason, who allegedly once had his nose broken by Frank's buddies

"Frank was always well-known, and when he sang, he came right to your pipek (Yiddish for 'belly button.') There's nothing dirty about it. He came right to your pipek, yes he did."

—Philadelphia judge Emil Goldhaber, who was a member of Philly's Golden Slipper Square Club when it gave Frank their Unity award way back in 1944

"I was starting in a show called Bloomer Girl on Broadway, at the Shubert Theater. He was opening at the Paramount across the street. And I came in for one of the matinees one day when it first opened, and you couldn't get down the street. I thought it was a riot. It was the first time I had ever seen the bobby-sox syndrome. It was like an atomic bomb had hit, it was just a mob, a feeding frenzy... I think that he is that rare combination of everything that you need to make it in our business or any business. The first thing that he has is an absolute native gut genius for knowing how to promote himself. The second thing he has is absolute instinct, really a true genius as to how, and to whom and when to spread his charm. And then comes the thing that makes it all work: an extraordinary talent. A gifted talent. A lot of people in our business make it with one or two of those things, but he has survived because of those three, plus a few other things. It's really incredible."

—Nanette Fabray

- 1) "Has great style and represents a unique style.
- 2) "Makes meaningful music for his audience, which grows, because he is classic.
- 3) "Has an excellent sense of humor."

—Tom Jones

"That's very easy. He loves what he's doing, and he's very good at it. I never got to know Frank very well, but I once taught his daughter Tina how to sail when she was very young. She was very good at it. I think she was a pupil at my sister Vilna's dancing school in Pacific Palisades. He's a very fine performer. I mean, he's top of his field. I have great respect for him as a performer."

—Buddy "Jed Clampett" Ebsen

"When he sings a song, it stays sung."

—Bobby Sherman

"Well, it's that voice. Have you heard that voice? I heard it in his last concert, and it's as good as you want it to be. How can you not survive with a voice like that. On top of that, he likes Jack Daniels. If you don't like Sinatra, you've gotta be a traitor, an American traitor."

—George Christy, Columnist, The Hollywood Reporter

"In order to survive in show business or whenever, one must have a strong, secure feeling about themselves so that no matter what happens, they still remain the talent that they are."

—Dennis Woodruff, Hollywood's driven, poster-plastering, self-promotion king

"Number one, he's arguably the greatest entertainer of our generation. Number two, he's got more charm and charisma than any one person should be allowed to have. And aside from all these things, he's always been a thorough, complete and dedicated professional."

—Jan Murray

"Aside from him being a very sensational talent, he's just a very nice guy. People just love him. When he walks out on the stage, you can really feel the affection he has for the audience."

—Norm Crosby

"From my point of view, the reason for Frank Sinatra's longevity is because of his pure musicianship, his sensitivity to making the songs come to life with his perspective while retaining the integrity of the songwriter."

—Gloria Loring, soap opera actress

"The man's talent, good bones, longevity (Frank Sinatra always said that he would outlive his enemies, and he has), and a wee smidgen of intimidation...I wish him a very happy birthday."

—Kitty Kelley, author of the Sinatra-bashing His Way: The Unauthorized Biography of Frank Sinatra

"In the final analysis, it was his talent. We have an expression in show business: 'Talent will out.'"

—Frank "The Riddler" Gorshin

**RULE NUMBER THREE:
BE AN UNBELIEVABLY NOBLE HUMAN BEING**

"I can sum it up in one word: greatness."

—Angie Dickinson

"I may not see Frank for years at a time, but I know that if I ever needed anything, he'd be there for me. He's a very, very loyal friend."

—Jack "The Sloppy One" Klugman

"I am proud to say that as an individual, he has brought an enormous amount of joy to me. He makes me see sunshine even when it rains. Each time he sings or speaks, my life lights up. Mr. Sinatra, I thank you for the earthly joy that I get hearing your voice. God bless you, Frankie."

—J.C. Morgom, self-described "World's Greatest Sinatra Fan"

Mr. Sinatra has been a hero of mine since I can remember. His song 'Only the Lonely' has kept me company through many a lonely night. Frank Sinatra is the ultimate mood vocalist."

—David Coverdale, lead singer, Whitesnake

"What he does is sing a ballad like no one else. Listen to his recording of 'Willow, Weep for Me,' and if you close your eyes, you can actually visualize the leaves softly sobbing. Or 'Summer Wind,' and you vividly relive your first summer romance. He was and is the best. Humanitarian? Let me tell you—because of my relationship with the world's largest children's charity, I am in a position to attest to his unlimited charitable endeavors. I know the 'rags' won't print it, but thousands of children will be eternally grateful for his largesse. His giving matches his singing. He is *sui generis* (Latin, meaning 'one of a kind')."

—Ric Roman, past president of the Variety Club of Southern California and brother of the late William B. Williams, who dubbed Frank "The Chairman of the Board"

"He's complex and brilliant. He's an artist and a leader."

—Norman Fell (Mr. Roper on Three's Company)

"The public image is of a guy who is tough and uncaring and uninvolved. And I think Frank Sinatra is totally the opposite. He grew up tough, certainly, but he's one of the more quietly caring people I know or know about, and his charitable works are quietly done, but massive in terms of contributions. And I think he touches people not only with his talent, which is unmatched, but he touches people with his good works."

—Brian Greenspun, president, Las Vegas Sun

"In 1973, the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation honored Frank Sinatra with its Jack Benny Memorial Award for his contribution to the entertainment industry and his efforts in helping each baby born to be born healthy. Tonight, we salute him again for sharing with all of us the magic of his talents and the generosity of his heart."

—Prepared statement read over the phone by a stubborn March of Dimes representative, who refused to offer any spontaneous opinions concerning Frank's longevity

"There are very few people that are legends. Frank Sinatra certainly is one of them. I personally love him, and I have to say that, because he has my aunt tied up in the Bronx."

—Don Rickles

RULE NUMBER FOUR: GO ONE STEP FURTHER—BE SUPERHUMAN

"Frank Sinatra is an incredible singing machine who always knows great songs and how to interpret them. I think the public believes Frank Sinatra. If he's singing it, he's been there."

—Tony Orlando

"There's certain stuff about these people who become literally bigger than life, that are total institutions. Bob Hope, for instance. Frank Sinatra is so much more than a human being....Why do I think Frank Sinatra has managed to survive for so long? Because institutions of historic significance have a way of doing that, OK? I mean, it's true. The man is much more than a human being. He's a totally huge, monolithic slab that we could play Also Sprach Zarathustra to."

—Comedian Bill "Jose Jimenez" Dana

"Because he's the greatest. He's a special kind of man, and I think he'll probably live forever. . . I remember the first day we were doing a picture called Sergeants 3. We were up in Kanab, Utah. We flew up ahead of him, and we were shooting some second-unit stuff. And we had this big dinner, the night (before) getting ready to start the picture the next day. And Frank said to me, 'I'd love to see the film that you guys shot before I got here.' Well, obviously, it had gone back to LA to be processed. I said, 'Frank, that's impossible.' And he said to me, 'Howard, that word impossible is not in my vocabulary.' We made some phone calls, and got some airplanes, and the film was there the next morning. But it's interesting that I've never used that word since—'impossible.' It's the way to do everything or anything."

—Film producer Howard W. Koch

"Frank Sinatra can endure as long as he wants. He is by far the greatest artist in show business and has transcended all changes in the music and entertainment industry."

—Lee Salter, Frank's former publicist



"He's unique and he did his homework. He knows how to dance, he knows how to sing, and he knows how to act. He's one of a kind."

—Ernest Borgnine

"He's managed to put across the image of a romantic bad boy who sings fabulously. Sometimes volatile, but he created an aura of excitement that has transcended various musical fads."

—Jack Jones

"The reason Sinatra has survived generation after generation is the reason Jolson, Cagney, Crosby, Liberace, Caruso, etc., all survived. Beyond their artistic gifts, they each possessed an unknown extra quality that can neither be learned, taught, or bottled, but which is capable of capturing the hearts and imaginations of millions."

—The Amazing Kreskin, psychic

"Some people have it, some people haven't. And this is a piece of electricity which passes through his system and communicates with an audience, and it is eternal. That's all I can say."

—Stanley Kramer, who directed Frank in Not as a Stranger (55) and The Pride and the Passion (57)

"Because everybody in the world and God wants him to live that long."

—Comedian Shecky Greene, allegedly once attacked by Sinatra's bodyguards

"I'm at Caesar's Palace, I finished my show boom! I shot right around backstage to sit on a corner. I opened up a curtain and I had my own chair there where I could watch Frank, and I'm watching him. And I saw the magic. I'm mesmerized by him. He had people from all over the world following him. He had fan clubs. That's what I saw and went, 'Jesus Christ, he's got it.' He's got that charisma. When you see a singer like Julio Iglesias, they're all fine, whatever, but when you're seeing Sinatra, you're seeing history...just listen to his music. Period."

—Comedian Charlie Callas

"Desire, determination, and destiny."

—Engelbert Humperdinck

"He is one of the most extraordinary talents, I believe, in the history of show business. I've been around show business since I was ten years old, and I can tell you anything you want to know about show business if you want to test me. So I tell you that no performer in the history of show business has for so long been so tenacious in capturing the attention of not just America, but the world. I just think that he's-maybe you could say the Lord touched his shoulder. It's a career that's beyond explaining. This man at 75 years of age is still getting top dollar. Still drawing people..."

"I was in the Royal Albert Hall in London. He walked on the stage and got such a reception that even he, who doesn't easily step back, stepped back. This was about ten years ago. Now, recently, at the Radio City Music Hall, the same thing happened. He just walks on the stage, and the show was over. Y'see, it's beyond our dialogue. Beyond your questions and my answers. It's something beyond belief. . . I think what you're doing is reporting on a miracle."

—Lyricist Sammy Cahn, author of many of Frank's hits, including "Come Fly With Me" and "All of Me"

"Why has he survived for so long? Because in actuality, he is an automaton bulk by a scientist living underground in Las Vegas. Also because he's probably the toughest motherfucker around."

—RJ Smith, LA Weekly music critic

**RULE NUMBER FIVE:
BE SEXY**

"All those (alleged) orgies over the years have kept him as virile as a young stallion. He's the greatest. He's awesome."
—*The Poorman, amiable KROQ-FM DJ and XDOC-TV video jock*

"I was one of those teenaged kids that used to sit in the Chicago Theater from, like, ten o'clock in the morning 'til seven or eight at night to watch him for three or four shows. We were those girls that yelled. He's been in my world my whole life. Now he lives around the corner from me. About a mile, a mile and a half. Can't get in there. I even played on his golf course, and I tried to hit a ball over there so I could have an excuse to go in. But that didn't work either. I think he lives a very secluded life over there with his friends. At 75, don't you think he deserves it? He just hangs on because he sings a song to women the way we want to hear it."
—*Rancho Mirage, CA, resident Donna Corboy*

"How much better you gonna get than the absolute best? Man, if I could choose to live my life as somebody else, I'd certainly wanna be Frank Sinatra. I just think he's fantastic. He's got it all. He's got stage presence, he's got the best voice in the world, he's very good-looking, he's a foxy guy. Jesus, I mean, how many things can you get in this world?"
—*Bill Gazzarri, Sunset Strip's "Godfather of Rock & Roll"*

"When he sings, you see pictures. You are immediately transported to the wee, small hours of the morning. He's got that indefinable 'it' quality that has transcended five decades. Old people like him, young people like him, and everyone in between. And how many 75-year-olds do you know that are sexy?"
—*Suzanne Somers*

"I used to cut Frank's hair when he came into Atlantic City. He would put his toupee on a wig stand....He's a great guy."
—*Philadelphia barber Joe Cirello*

**RULE NUMBER SIX:
BE A FIGHTER**

"Frank Sinatra is a little different from Elvis, youknowhamsayin'? Frank doesn't have a whole structure holdin' him up. Frank Sinatra's kind of a fighter, youknowhamsayin'?"
—*Public Enemy's Chuck D*

"He's got the constitution of a bull. Who the fuck would want to sing at 75? I wouldn't."
—*Ozzy Osbourne*

"I was always told not to ask any questions, and I didn't. He can be very, very sharp and he can be rude. I don't know whether they're mood swings or whatever, if it's bad timing, but the guy can be extremely explosive. I have witnessed it first hand. He just goes off. I mean, his eyes bug out. Sinatra can be very unkind. You don't want to get shot."
—*Patrick Taylor, who claims to have once chauffeured Phyllis McGuire and mobster Sam Giancana to a plane chartered for Frank's Palm Springs home*

**RULE NUMBER SEVEN:
BE CAREFUL HOW YOU PHRASE THINGS**

"Number one, he's the greatest phraseologist that ever lived. When he

hits a stage, the charisma that comes from this man, he doesn't have to open his mouth or say a word, and the people would applaud, just keep on going forever, until he stopped them."
—*Nick Edenetti, a Sinatra impersonator who claims to be the only person in the world licensed to use Sinatra's name*

"He's developed, over the years, a style in his phrasing, in his music, that is rather unique and has been admired by everybody in the music and entertainment industry, and it's really so unique that it's only associated with him. There have been many who have tried to imitate that style and that phrasing, but really are unable to do it, because there's only one Sinatra."
—*Chuck Moses, another of Frank's former publicists*

"Frank is probably the greatest phraser of all time. There's no question about it. Will Frank go to heaven? In my opinion, of course. And why? Because his good deeds have outdone his bad deeds."
—*John Francis, member of the Friar's Club*

"To the people who remember him when he started out, they are filled with nostalgia. To the people of today, they still enjoy his tremendous voice, and particularly the way he phrases his lyrics."
—*Buddy Arnold, writer, producer, and also a Friar*



"The first time I worked with Sinatra was in 1944. I was doing a radio show at that time, and he came on as a guest star, and he was at the height of his popularity. And there was swooning and yelling and hollering and screaming and chants bracelets jingling, and it was some kind of a phenomenon. Sinatra always sings songs to women the way we all wish we could. He kind of has a way of phrasing and dealing with male-female relationships in the way when I was a young man, we all wished that we could sing like Sinatra to tell our girlfriends what we thought about 'em. You know? And I think that the same thing applies to women—I think they have the same reaction to him. That's the way they wish that men would talk to them. Because he's always been able to phrase a song better than anybody. And I think that's probably what it still is—that residual effect still pertains. Because I was talking the other night, we were listening to an album of his, and a bunch of people were sitting around, and I said to somebody, 'I wonder what people are going to do twenty years from now who sit around some night and say, "Let's listen to Motley Crue."' So there's a part of that that I think has to do with it. Anyway. And he's tough. You know, he's done it his way."
—*Richard Crenna, actor*

"If there's a core thing aside from what everybody's written about his phrasing... I think it's the kick he gets out of singing. He knows when it's workin'."
—*Chuck Southcott, DJ at KMPC-AM Angeles, which airs "The Sounds of Sinatra" on Sunday evenings*

**RULE NUMBER EIGHT:
SURROUND YOURSELF WITH
GOOD PEOPLE**

"Sinatra's power lies in his ability to always choose the best songs by the best songwriters. And as one of those songwriters, it's great to have a specific image to write for. In fact, 'You and Me (We Wanted it All)' is the only song I've ever written for a particular artist."
—*Peter Allen*

"Mafia connections."
—*LA Times music crate Jonathan Gold*

"Everything I've witnessed about him was on the good side. But I know that many, if not most, of the derogatory things about him are probably true. Particularly the gangster thing. I have never seen him with anybody except people that looked like gangsters.

He had a thing about cleanliness. Oh my God, he used to wash his hands constantly. He carried only fresh, brand-new, \$100 bills. I know, because I've seen him buy things. I've seen him unfold those things, and it was clean. If anybody had clean money, it was this guy. His money was laundered in the literal sense.

I remember when they opened up the Sands Hotel in Vegas. Hell, I was taking pictures there. And he was on the stand singing, and some drunken son-of-a-bitch from like Oklahoma or Texas hollered out, 'Get that spade off that bandstand.' It was a black drummer. It was a mixed group with a black drummer. 'Get that coon spade off that...' Sinatra literally jumped off the stage—it was like a three-foot drop—and he went over to this guy, and grabbed his collar, like squishing his neck, you know, 'You stupid son-of-a-bitch,' and he gave this two sentence lecture on racism and tolerance that was a classic.

Frank Sinatra was born not in a hospital, but in a home, in his home in New Jersey. And a midwife, doctor and/or midwife, I'm not sure, delivered him, he was a breech baby. He was blue, barely breathing, when they had to use some kind of instruments to pull him out, because of being a breech baby, you know, it doesn't come normally through the womb. They had to pull him out. He was a bloody mess and blue. And he was given up for dead. He didn't breathe, and there was all this pandemonium going on, and the grandmother grabbed the bloody little lump of flesh and brought him to the sink and ran alternate hot and cold water, or something like that—God knows what peasant women do—and brought the breath of life back to this kid, this infant. Well, anybody who can survive that, my God, they can survive anything."
—*Phil Stern, photographer*

"His mafia ties and his money. I think that when you have all that money, you can pretty much buy success. Or certainly prolong it."
—*Kenny K, who insisted that his relationship to the music industry not be revealed*

"Because he's Italian. What the hell else? Spaghetti!"
—*Mike Luciano, film editor on the Frank 'n' Dino vehicle Four for Texas (1964)*

**RULE NUMBER NINE:
FRIGHTEN PEOPLE**

"I have no comment; I think that if you don't have something good to say about someone, you shouldn't say anything at all."
—*Elvira, Mistress of the Dark*

"I don't have any intention of talking to anybody about Sinatra about anything. I do not want to be quoted on anything. I have no intention of talking to anybody about it."
—*Former Hollywood columnist Kendis Rochlen*

"I can't answer that. We never answer calls like this."
—*Receptionist as Somerset Distributors, Inc., a Sinatra-owned beer-distribution company in Lang Beach, CA*



"I have no comment on it. Thank you for asking."
—*Duke Hazlett, star of "Reflections of Sinatra" at Vegas World*

"I really don't have an opinion. I know nothing more than you know. Just because I have the same name doesn't give me any insight. I really don't have any comment one way or the other."
—*Frank Sinatra III, an unrelated LA. lawyer*

"We don't do quotes."
—*Secretary for Michael Kamer, Frank's dog trainer*

"I don't have any connections there that I'd want to have in publication."
—*Dr. Sammy Ayres, who gave Frank his hair transplants*

"Not even interested. I don't mean to be rude about it, but I would rather watch paint peel than bother to comment on that man. Is that cool? (He is told this quote will be used.) No, no, no, no, no, no. Don't use any quote. What I said was, 'I have nothing to say.' Jesus, I mean, I don't want to be in the article. I don't want to have anything to do with it. Can't you honor that? (Reporter is intransigent.) Little did I realize when I picked up the phone in all innocence was that you were going to do that. Now. I have nothing to say, there is no quote, I have given you no quote, and I would just appreciate you leaving me out of it."
—*Writer Harlan Ellison. who reportedly once squabbled verbally with Frank*

"I'm not interested in saying anything about him. OK? First place. I'm not really too wild about your magazine, to be honest with you. OK? People have things that they really don't want to be said, and I'm gonna keep it to myself, OK?"
—*Jim Petrozelli, son of Skelly' Petrozelli, Frank's former singing partner*

"Because he's minded his business and he doesn't spend his time answering dumb questions."
—*Cesar "The Original Joker" Romero*

"I'm sorry. Not speak English."
—*Saba A. Sinatra, a North Bergen, NJ, designer*

**RULE NUMBER TEN:
BE FRANK**

"If I knew why my music has been so well-received through the years. I'd bottle it."
—*Frank Sinatra, 75-year-old legend*