



Born to Be Wild: A History of the American Biker and Bikes 1947-2002

Paul Garson

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Take an exhilarating ride through the history of the American bike, biker, and the biker nation in this fascinating and comprehensive chronicle of the biker era and today's ever-expanding legion of motorcycle enthusiasts. Impassioned, idiosyncratic, and razor sharp, *Born to Be Wild* traces a century's worth of the culture, the bikers, and the bikes themselves.

Who are these bikers? Are they those hard-living, leather-clad, tattooed guys often associated with images of the Hells Angels and Satan's Sinners? Or are they those clean-cut, suit-and-tie wearing riders with the sporty helmets you pass on your daily commute? In fact, they are both, for what began as a subculture of misfits and outlaws has grown into a flourishing society of men and women who celebrate the freedom of the open road and the brotherhood they find among bike enthusiasts of all stripes.

Today's biker has evolved from the rough-and-tumble antihero to a vast and vibrant biker culture populated by a new breed of rider including the RUBs, or Rich Urban Bikers, and championed by everyone from titans of industry like the late Malcolm Forbes to media celebrities like Jay Leno. And while elements of rebellion still remain intrinsic to the biker mystique, the culture has in fact expanded to include a plethora of riders from the American mainstream -- doctors, lawyers, and executives -- who love the freedom they find on their bikes and the camaraderie they find with their fellow devotees. It is also a multibillion-dollar industry that draws hundreds of thousands of participants and spectators to its annual events.

Born to Be Wild, written by motorcycle journalist Paul Garson and the editors of *Easyriders* magazine, captures as never before the spirit and evolution of the biker era. Beginning in 1895, *Born to Be Wild* traces the development of the modern bike, with special attention to Harley-Davidson's supreme contributions to the quality of the machines as well as the aesthetics of biker society. Featuring numerous fascinating sidebars that highlight the particular characteristics of the culture, the book also explores the socio-political events that have culminated in the great biker nation that we know today.

With more than two hundred photographs of bikes and bikers across the decades, *Born to Be Wild* is a definitive work that will open readers' eyes to a thriving society, one whose celebration of freedom and the open road precisely reflects what is best about our country as a whole.

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