



## Super Freak: The Life of Rick James

By Peter Benjaminson

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### Super Freak: The Life of Rick James By Peter Benjaminson

Few American superstar stories are richer, wilder, or more excessive than Rick James's. He played in a band with Neil Young, spent years in jail, produced his first album (which was then picked up by Motown) with money from shadowy sources, crossed rock and funk to come up with one of the best-selling albums of the 1980s, became one of the biggest pop star of the era, turned a young white woman named Teena Marie into an R&B superstar, displayed an outrageously sex and drug-filled lifestyle, was tried and found guilty of assaulting and imprisoning a young woman, went on to record new music that was compared to the Beatles' White Album, and ended his life as a punch line for Dave Chappelle. And along the way, he scored a large number of major hits, sold tens of millions of albums and became intimate with dozens of big-name celebrities.

Rick James attempted to tell his own story—in two different books—but left out many incidents that showed what he was really like. Nobody has written the full truth about his life. Now, based on court records, newspaper archives, and extensive interviews with dozens of family members, band members, friends, and lovers, here is the definitive biography of Motown's most controversial superstar.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“An unapologetic, no-holds-barred biography of a flamboyant and controversial artist.” —Booklist Online

“Benjaminson (Mary Wells: The Tumultuous Life of Motown's First Superstar, 2012, etc.) delivers a matter-of-fact biography of a musician whose extremes—both the highs and the lows—defy belief.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

“Rick James was one of the biggest musical stars of the 1980s, and his life was a roller-coaster of moods, musical styles, triumph, and failure. He was definitely a Super Freak, and this book will tell you why.”  
—*Library Journal*

#### About the Author

Peter Benjaminson is the author of *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard*; *Mary Wells: The Tumultuous Life of Motown's First Superstar*; *The Story of Motown*; and, with David Anderson, *Investigative Reporting*. He has written numerous stories for the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and other publications. He lives in New York City.

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