ForeWord Reviews
**Clarion Review**

AUTOBIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

**Confessions: A Memoir**
Jodie Rhodes
CreateSpace
978-0-9838797-0-1
Four Stars (out of Five)

Like many motivated people, Jodie Rhodes is a gifted individual and far from ordinary. Her experiences are a manifestation of the intelligence and drive that propelled her.

*Confessions: A Memoir* is an illuminating look at the life of a top literary agent and the dramatized story of her childhood, her personal and professional relationships, as well as her prior career in advertising. Fascinating, funny, and sometimes shocking, this candid page-turner reveals a woman who endured extreme highs and lows. Those inclined to be envious of Rhodes' accomplishments and lifestyle should realize that she has suffered more than average to achieve more than average.

The author feels as though her cold, rather austere parents did not love her as a child, but she attracted friends and acquaintances as an adult, and eventually, countless dates. Her memorable path to the literary agency she established is filled with elation and tragedy—pronounced contrasts that grab a reader's attention.

In her advertising days, first impressions with a colleague exude youth and a surreal sense of reality: "I was totally dazzled by New York City and Norman was kind enough to take time from the convention and show me around. The convention itself overwhelmed me. I'd never seen so many people in one room in my life and the intricately decorated booths dazzled the eyes. At night, a band played in a huge ballroom that had little tables set up around the walls where waitresses served drinks and meals."

As time passed, the glitter of success faded into difficult encounters with ambitious men. Emotionally unstable and under significant pressure after a breakup, one ex-lover committed suicide: "Even after all these years, this is so hard for me to write. How could a man change like that? What had happened to him? The police arrived almost instantly and practically broke down the door coming in as the loud sound of the gun going off reverberated in the room."

The book's cover, which is nondescript with white lettering against a pink background, may be misleading. This is definitely *not* a behind-the-scenes stroll through the world of

publishing; only a small portion of this autobiography is devoted to the business. Also featured in the packaging is an unusual and somewhat inelegant element, a literary contest to draw attention to Rhodes' publishing company. She admits that a "stigma" remains attached to self-published books.

A published novelist and creative writing instructor, Rhodes is the former vice-president and media director at the N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency. She is now president of the Jodie Rhodes Literary Agency, which currently represents seventy-four clients.

This enlightening and blatantly honest memoir's weakness is the tendency to inflict a somber and somewhat morose tone that doesn't seem an accurate reflection of the life of a woman who is now a powerful influence in publishing. Mesmerizing and informative, *Confessions* is a valuable contribution to the industry and will likely attract writers, agents, and editors.

*Julia Ann Charpentier*