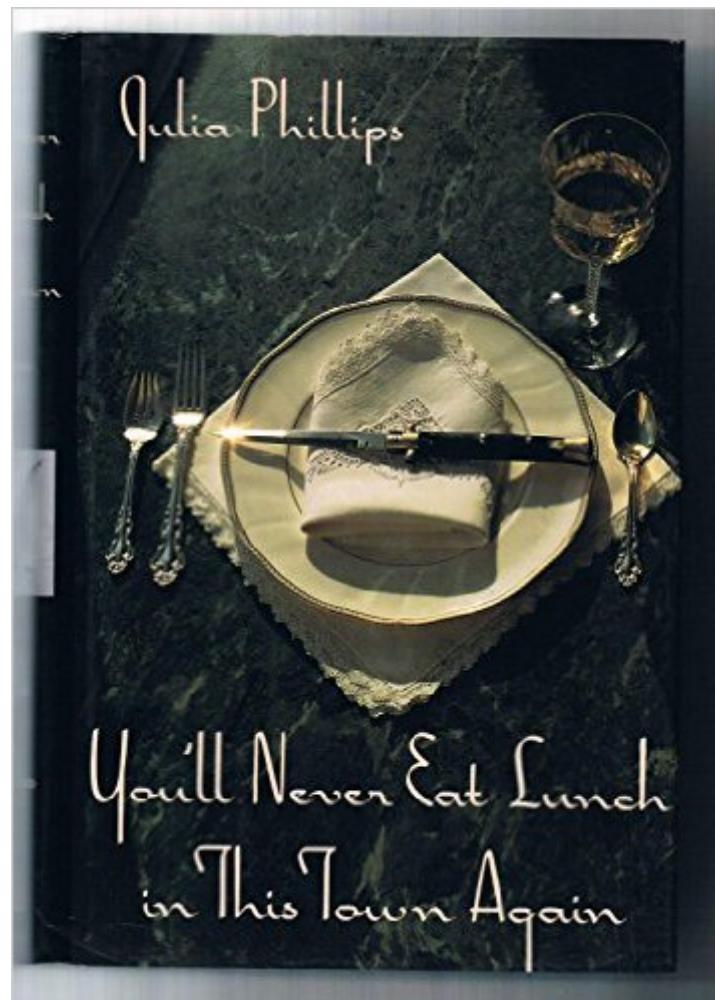


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# You'll Never Eat Lunch In This Town Again



## Synopsis

Oscar-winning producer Julia Phillips's work on *Taxi Driver*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *The Sting*, made her famous. This is the memoir that made her infamous—a downfall chronicle of a private hell that could only have been written by someone with nothing left to lose. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In her Oscar acceptance speech for Best Picture, Julia Phillips described herself as a "nice Jewish girl from Great Neck." Well, she got 2/3 of it right. But nice? No way. This book is one of the greatest acts of literary self-immolation ever published. It's hard not to feel sorry for Phillips at first, suffering as she does from a toxic mother, a workaholic father, insomnia and a Talmudic intellect. But you get over that feeling in a hurry, as Phillips bullies, maneuvers, sleeps and stomps her way to the top, winning an Oscar for *The Sting* at the unheard-of age of 29. Her motto: overcompensate; overachieve. If you can't be best, be first. As she notes, no young person is ever ready for massive success, and her career crashed just as quickly. After being more or less fired from *Close Encounters* by Steven Spielberg, her life became a broken record of drug abuse, failed relationships, financial problems and closed doors gleefully slammed by those she used and abused on the way up. Through it all she makes it all seem like a big game, but the human wreckage strewn across the landscape will give the reader pause. It's hard to know whether Phillips' broadsides at anyone and everyone with whom she had contact are simply through spite, or whether we'd all be better off if Hollywood simply disappeared in the next big quake. Phillips claims

that she's just being honest, but snide remarks about a crewmember's physical deformity make her seem only nasty. Hate it as she did, Phillips revelled in the politics, the backstabbing, the lies and shallowness, the feeling of power that came with the title of Producer. She learned fast ("Always negotiate the height and WIDTH of your [on-screen] credit," she advises, after her on-screen credit for *The Sting* is "willow thin.") Her films (*Taxi Driver*, *The Sting*, *Close Encounters*, among others) were good, though one gets the sense it was in spite of her take-no-prisoners approach. One wishes at the end that Phillips would "get it," but instead she reaps what she sews. There was to be no Hollywood redemption for her. Phillips' death this January was untimely, but no human being could possibly survive for long carrying around so much bile. Very much worth the read, even only as a cautionary tale.

I recently picked up "You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again" at my local store ...after all, I like a change from the fantasy of novel reading, to the fantasy of stars and their satellites. If it's cheap enough. I enjoy the irony of the tales of wealth and excesses of people who have (& abuse) so much, while we mere mortals are stressing over the next rent payment, thankful we aren't among the homeless and hungry. I expected standard Hollywood dirt-dishing. I was unprepared for the vengeful & venomous whining from a woman who'd once set a new standard for women in 'the industry', yet never saw she'd helped create the viper's nest she later exposed in over 600 pages of difficult to read complaining. Yet I read it all. I thought the bitter and mean-spirited texture of the book, with its raw self-revelation/loathing theme, would have some gentler conclusion, message, or lesson learned by the author. It didn't. As tough as Julia Phillips was, she never beat her addiction...to Hollywood. Julia lost sight of the fact that though she was singular in a particular era of film making, she was not unique in the battle with the temptations of self-medication, or the quest for happiness we all make. This "but I'm so special as a woman" sexist vein is the glue that held this book together, and would have been acceptable to the reader if we could feel at the end that Julia ever really "got it". I found the book drew me into the nastiness, though it seemed obvious the fine details of every deal or friendship were written for insiders. Name-dropping as the weapon of choice. We all love the movies; have our favorite actors and directors; we like to believe there really is some impossible magic, and that true artistry will win out and be noticed in a flood of wannabes. Julia tells us that's not the case. One must admire the uncompromising dog-fight honesty of her book, if not the mercenary sour grapes. Last night, watching the 2002 Oscars, I learned that Julia had died. And I saw Robert Redford's moving speech, with his plea for freedom of expression. I hope that is possible; Julia's book makes me fear it's not. Is Sundance still as unsullied as at its

original conception? Julia would not have missed the irony of me finding her book in the [local] store, in barely read condition.

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