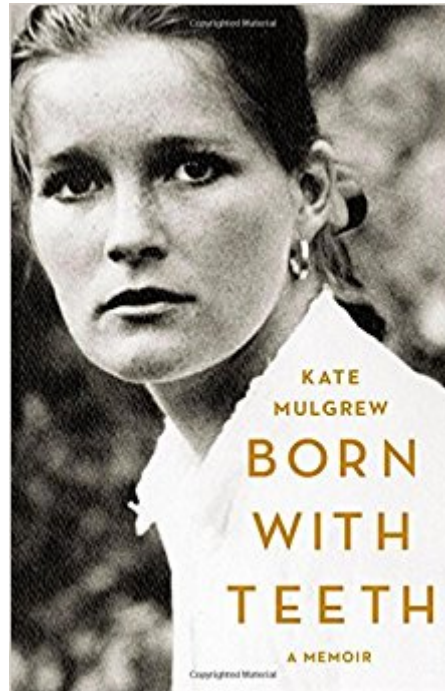




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Born With Teeth: A Memoir



Synopsis

Raised by unconventional Irish Catholics who knew "how to drink, how to dance, how to talk, and how to stir up the devil," Kate Mulgrew grew up with poetry and drama in her bones. But in her mother, a would-be artist burdened by the endless arrival of new babies, young Kate saw the consequences of a dream deferred. Determined to pursue her own no matter the cost, at 18 she left her small Midwestern town for New York, where, studying with the legendary Stella Adler, she learned the lesson that would define her as an actress: "Use it," Adler told her. Whatever disappointment, pain, or anger life throws in your path, channel it into the work. It was a lesson she would need. At twenty-two, just as her career was taking off, she became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter. Having already signed the adoption papers, she was allowed only a fleeting glimpse of her child. As her star continued to rise, her life became increasingly demanding and fulfilling, a whirlwind of passionate love affairs, life-saving friendships, and bone-crunching work. Through it all, Mulgrew remained haunted by the loss of her daughter, until, two decades later, she found the courage to face the past and step into the most challenging role of her life, both on and off screen. We know Kate Mulgrew for the strong women she's played--Captain Janeway on Star Trek; the tough-as-nails "Red" on Orange Is the New Black. Now, we meet the most inspiring and memorable character of all: herself. By turns irreverent and soulful, laugh-out-loud funny and heart-piercingly sad, *BORN WITH TEETH* is the breathtaking memoir of a woman who dares to live life to the fullest, on her own terms.

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Customer Reviews

I was very excited when I heard that actress Kate Mulgrew had written a memoir, *Born With Teeth*. I have been a big fan of her since her days as Mary Ryan on the ABC soap *Ryan's Hope*, through her groundbreaking role as Capt. Janeway on *Star Trek: Voyager*, and in her current role as tough and literate inmate Red on *Orange Is The New Black*. (Red always has a book with her.) She begins her honest, brilliant, heartbreaking memoir by talking about her large Irish Catholic family. Jiki and Ace, as her parents were called, lived in Iowa, and had a typically large brood of children. They lost two of their daughters, one to AIDS, whom four year-old Kate mistakenly believed she had killed, and a teenage daughter who died a slow, painful death. Kate's mother was a steely, artistic, not very affectionate woman who loved books. Books were important to the Mulgrew family, and when Kate decided she wanted to be a poet because she was chosen to read her poem at a school assembly, her mother convinced her to read *The White Cliffs of Dover* after she read her poems, and when the nuns sobbed during her Kate's rendition, she knew she had found her calling: acting. *Born With Teeth* recounts the important events and people in Kate Mulgrew's life. She stated at an appearance to launch her book that it "summed up everything that defined me", and that may be the best way to describe this stunningly written book. If you are looking for a run-of-the-mill celebrity biography, look elsewhere. Fans of *Ryan's Hope* may be disappointed that there is no juicy backstage gossip here. Only producer Claire Labine and Nancy Addison (Jillian Coleridge) are mentioned, and that is because they were good friends of Mulgrew.

Kate Mulgrew is an actor. She has acted on stage, in the movies, and on television. She may be best known as "Admiral Kathryn Janeway" on the TV show *Star Trek: Voyager* in the late 1990's and currently she's in the cast of *Orange is the New Black*. She is one of those actors who always seems to have a part in something, she's always working. But as with any actor, what you see on the stage or the screen is only a piece of the real person. She's now an author, with a memoir, *"Born With Teeth"*, which takes a look at her life, both in public and in private. However, I felt she wrote about herself at a bit of a remove. A "memoir" is not an "autobiography". It's shorter and covers - usually - less time in a person's life. Mulgrew's memoir is a self-selective look at a life-in-progress, with some parts left out or referred to but left unexplained. And that is a small problem - if you think it IS a problem - of Kate Mulgrew's memoir. I enjoyed her book, but, for instance, felt at times a bit "lost" when she would bring up her parents and birth family and refer to certain things - births, deaths (she lost two younger sisters) - but really never came back to them. I assumed her parents had marital problems, but never heard what happened to them. And since she

wrote about them in an interesting fashion, the lack of follow-up left me wondering, what...? If the book wasn't as well-written as it was, I wouldn't care or be interested in others in her life. But the book was well-written and so I did wonder. One subject that Mulgrew seems to write fully about is the birth of her daughter when she was in her early 20's and the subsequent surrender of the child to a closed adoption.

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