



# Live Fast, Die Young: The Wild Ride of Making Rebel Without a Cause

*Lawrence Frascella, Al Weisel*

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When it was released in 1955, the film *Rebel Without a Cause* had a revolutionary impact on moviemaking and youth culture, virtually giving birth to our concept of the American teenager. For the first time, *Live Fast, Die Young* tells the complete story of the explosive making of *Rebel*, a film that has rocked every generation since its release. Set against a backdrop of the Atomic Age and an old Hollywood studio system on the verge of collapse, it vividly evokes the cataclysmic, immensely influential meeting of four of Hollywood's most passionate artists.

When James Dean, Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo, and director Nicholas Ray converged, each was at a crucial point in his or her career. The young actors were grappling with fame, their burgeoning sexuality, and increasingly reckless behavior. As Ray engaged his cast in physical melees and psychosexual seductions of startling intensity, the on- and off-set relationships between his ambitious young actors ignited, sending a shock wave through the film.

Through interviews with the surviving members of the cast and crew and firsthand access to both personal and studio archives, Lawrence Frascella and Al Weisel reveal *Rebel's* true drama -- the director's affair with sixteen-year-old Wood, his tempestuous "spiritual marriage" with Dean, and his role in awakening the latent homosexuality of Mineo, who would become the first gay teenager to appear on film.

Complete with thirty photographs, including ten never-before-seen photos by famed Dean photographer Dennis Stock, *Live Fast, Die Young* tells the absorbing inside story of an unforgettable and absolutely essential American film -- a story that is, in many ways, as provocative as the film itself.

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