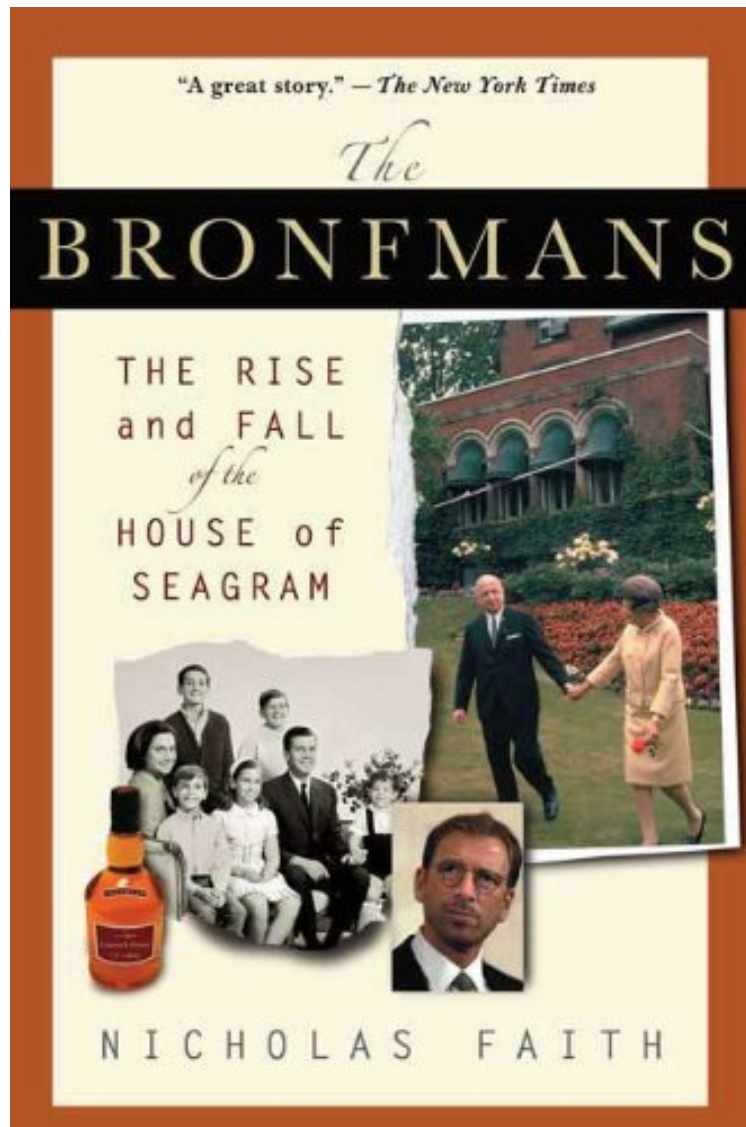


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The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram

Nicholas Faith

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Nicholas Faith : The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sam the Seagram ManBy PM Bluesa very chitty chatty book about the olden days and not too specific on up front news from 1920's to 30' extensive detail of Sams magic. Trying to get on down the road with this book, not impressed with writing style of this author but no doubt is chock full of lots of booze details and more of a look from the outside in, not what I thought the book would be like- only 1/2 thru and hope the rest is better when it comes to Edgar and Charles.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five

StarsBy Customerbook as expected - haven't read yet.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Group...These Bronfman'sBy JP CzarI came to read this book via my expanding library on the liquor industry and all things Scottish. This book doesn't delve too deeply into the Seagram's group involvement in Scotland...but nevermind. The book is well written and covers numerous generations of the family....including the numb-skull son who pissed it all away.Enjoy....

The story of the Bronfman family is a fascinating and improbable saga. It is dominated by "Mr. Sam," the single greatest figure in the history of the liquor business, the man who made drinking whiskey respectable in the United States and who in the 1950s and 1960s built Seagram into the first worldwide empire in wine and spirits. After Sam's death in 1971, his oldest son, Edgar, maintained the business, though he was distracted by his matrimonial problems. Nevertheless, in the 1980s he masterminded a major coup when he translated a small investment in oil made by his father into a 25 percent stake in the mighty DuPont company. But in the 1990s, Edgar allowed his second son, Edgar Jr., to indulge his ambition to become a media tycoon. The stake in DuPont was sold, and the money reinvested in Universal, the film and theme-park empire. Edgar Jr. then paid more than \$10 billion to buy Polygram Records and thus fulfill his fancy to be king of the world's music business. But at the same time, he remained in charge of the liquor business, which started to stagnate;indeed, to fall apart. Then came the final disaster when the increasingly divided family sold out to Jean-Marie Messier, overreaching empire builder of Vivendi, the French conglomerate. But the story of this amazing family over the past century is about more than booze and business. The Bronfmans is a spectacular account that details the larger-than-life personalities and bitter rivalries that have made the family so famous and, sometimes, so infamous.

From Publishers WeeklyA sweeping look at the post-prohibition history of the liquor industry as seen from the living- and boardroom of one of its (once) leading families, journalist and former Economist editor Faith's volume begins with Sam Bronfman, known as Mr. Sam, whose post-prohibition business acumen set the stage for Seagram's rise to international prominence. The company would soon be known for both its products-blended whiskies like 7 Crown and Chivas Regal-and its mid-1930s advertising campaign promoting moderate drinking (the latter, Faith argues, is one of Seagram's most important and lasting contributions). Following Mr. Sam's death in 1971, son Edgar takes the helm and watches Seagram's liquor business stagnate, before his "finest hour": parlaying Seagram's interest in oil company Texas Pacific into over 20 percent ownership of DuPont. Edgar's son, Edgar, Jr., in keeping with a generational trend toward neglecting Seagram's core liquor business, sells Seagram's piece of DuPont to finance the acquisition of MCA/Universal and Polygram Records, which were, in short order, sold off to Vivendi, the French media group, in a sale that "destroyed the Seagram empire, resulting in one of the biggest losses ever sustained by a single family." Amazingly, Faith is as comfortable discussing the distilling process as discussing French pay-TV network CanalPlus; as many strange turns as the Seagram's story takes, the author's versatility is indispensable. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "The Bronfmans is a wonderful addition to the library of family biographies, and in particular to the small shelf on the Canadian-grown Seagram whiskey empire. Splendidly written and researched--particularly on the alcoholic beverage side, of which Nicholas Faith is a distinguished expert--this book is a rollicking good story, a perceptive analysis of the Bronfmans' stunning business success, a tribute to their hard work and acumen--and a cautionary tale about what can happen, even to the greatest." --Michael R. Marrus, author of Samuel Bronfman: The Life and Times of Mr. Sam; "The Bronfmans is an intriguing odyssey of a fabled and star-crossed celebrity family, filled with engrossing tales of the secrets of the international booze business, backroom billion-dollar shenanigans, dilettante playboys and rakes, rediscovered Jewish heritage, and an unusual champion of human rights." --Selwyn Raab, bestselling author of Five Families: The Rise, Decline, and Resurgence of America's Most Powerful Mafia Empires; Praise for Nicholas Faith's Other Books; The Winemakers of Bordeaux; "Anyone wanting an introduction to this inexhaustible subject will be delighted by Mr. Faith, who knows how to tell a story with vivacity." --Theodore Zeldin, author of An Intimate History of Humanity; "An absorbing book." --Frank Prial, The New York Times; Safety in Numbers; "An interesting dossier on assorted bad judgment, chicanery, and loose practices." --John Kenneth Galbraith; "Investigative journalism of the highest order." --Barron's; "Useful and readable tour through the dark side of Swiss banking." --BusinessWeek