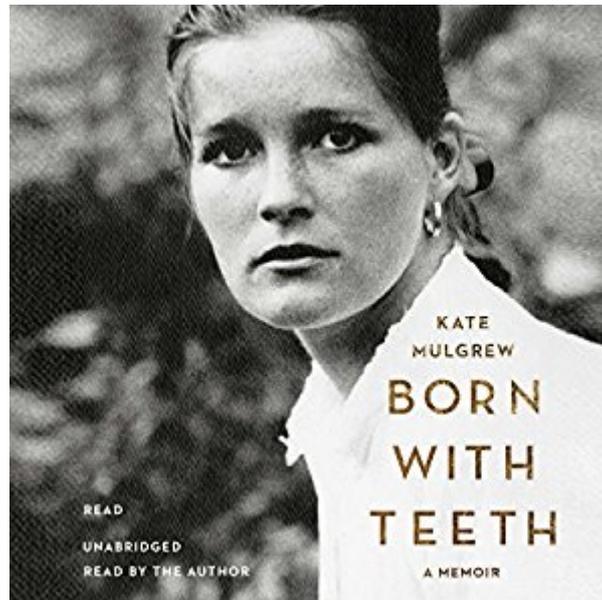


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# Born With Teeth: A Memoir



## Synopsis

Audie Award, Narration by Author, 2016 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 22, 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.

## Book Information

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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 SIDS, 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. When Mulgrew was working on *Ryan's Hope* and just in her early 20s, she became pregnant. She came to the agonizing decision to give her baby up for adoption, and that decision changed and colored her entire life. Mulgrew worked hard at her craft, and the stage was her first love, even though she had huge success on TV. The chapters on working on *Mrs. Columbo* (and how she got that job after turning it down) and *Star Trek: Voyager* give an insider's look at the incredibly long days and hard work it takes to be a major TV actress. She wasn't as lucky in love though. After meeting a wealthy Italian man and giving up her career to be with him, she fell in love with a man in Seattle who worked on the play in which she was cast. The love of her life came later, in Ireland, where she met a man for whom she fell head-over-heels in love. Mulgrew and her husband had two sons in two years, and trying to be a working mother and spend time with her children was a struggle, one that many women will be able to relate to. There is a chapter where she takes her sons to the *Star Trek* premiere, and their behavior embarrasses her, that will make any mother cringe. *Born With Teeth* is so beautifully written, and so honest. Mulgrew doesn't shy away from her mistakes and her flaws. She comes from an Irish family, where stoicism was the watchword, so this makes it even more remarkable. She is not afraid to portray her warts, whether as a woman or a mother, and I find that refreshing. It

feels like each word is so carefully chosen, yet it also feels like it sprang full-blown from her head, ready to publish. The Irish are known for their eloquence, and Mulgrew clearly inherited that from her ancestors. I know we will see her again as an actress (season three of *Orange Is The New Black* will be available on Netflix on June 12 and season 4 will be filming soon), I hope that we will hear again soon from author Kate Mulgrew as well.

There is apparently some part of actress Kate Mulgrew that she brings to her roles. Even though her very extreme role as Red on *Orange Is The New Black* has some of her portrayer's gutsy-ness. This is a funny and at times poignant account of an Irish Catholic kid from Iowa who wanted to be an actress, landed in NYC, and became a soap icon in extremely short order. However, that was only for starters. In this memoir she lays everything out including a daughter that she reluctantly gave away for adoption and the account of finding her daughter decades later, stage acting with Richard Burton, marriage, two sons, divorce, a *Star Trek* spinoff, an interesting spinoff of *Columbo* where Peter Falk remains unseen, and eventually more fame and another new following as the unique Red. I liked this book a lot and no small part was Mulgrew herself. It is written with an honesty and openness that is rare. When I read this I could hear her distinctive voice and I could feel her elation as well as her pain. When she discussed her daughter and her relationship with her baby's father, it was one of those life changing events that she might have ignored altogether working from the assumption that the media had been kind and had not hinted that a written in soap pregnancy coincided with her real life pregnancy. Was this book fun? It was so honest, funny, and loving that this was a delightful and easy read due in part to Mulgrew's non-diva working actress persona. End shot? This is a lovely account of talented and charming lady on the way to fame and critical acclaim who quite fortunately sees things realistically.

Kate Mulgrew's new memoir left me wanting more, more, more of her amazing writing and equally amazing life. I've always admired her as an actress, but her writing is the surprising talent she never had a chance to showcase before. She opens her own and her family's secret closets with honesty and courage and make the reader fall in love with them all despite their flaws and follies. The characters she reveals scintillate and fascinate and few are the expected television/movie/Hollywood "usual suspects." She has a very light touch as a storyteller, giving you the essentials of those around her with tiny, exquisitely wrought images that bring each individual to vivid life in just a phrase. She's also wonderfully self-effacing--no diva moments in this autobiography, just clear-eyed narrative that spares herself and those around her little, yet manages

to be gentle and loving with those who deserve it. I pray there's a sequel in the works.

Mulgrew paints a varied picture in her lifestory that is from the heart, and not a ghostwriter. I found her childhood of interest, her struggles to succeed and her plain joy at performing theater above all other mediums. There are some lingering questions for Star Trek Voyager fans: She doesn't explain whether she achieved lasting peace with Species 8472, whether Janeway's first season hair was made to resemble the bow of the ship, or whether Chakotay's tattoo was actually a map for the way home. Maybe for volume two. Also I would have liked to have read more of her filming of Remo Williams, but that just shows the scattered image I have of her career, from Remo to Voyager. Read this book to find out the real story of the real person!

The only thing better than reading Kate Mulgrew's new book "Born with Teeth", is having it read to you by the author! No she doesn't read it she acts it! the first three chapters on disc 1 went by in a flash! her delicious voice caressing each scene with love and memories! Kate Mulgrew has a delightful command of the English language! she doesn't talk down to her audience, she doesn't need to! we know and expect her to teach us and entertain us as well!

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