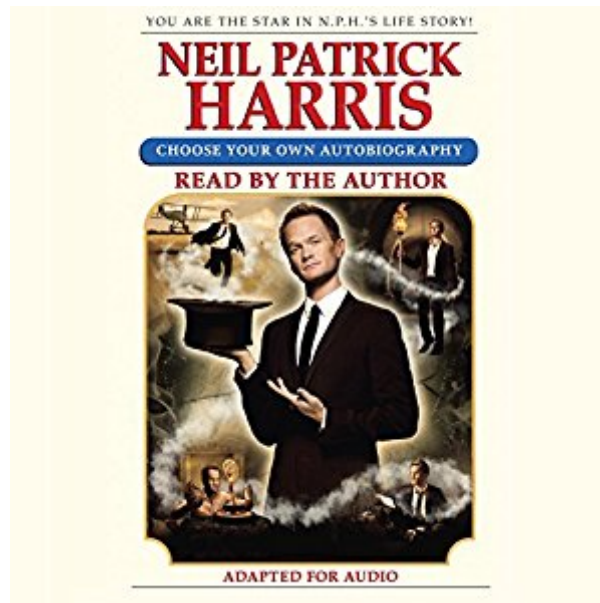




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# Neil Patrick Harris: Choose Your Own Autobiography



## Synopsis

You've already made a great choice by picking up the audio edition of Neil Patrick Harris' Choose Your Own Autobiography. This hilarious book has been adapted especially for the audiobook edition so you'll hear all of the same fun and humor from the printed version but you don't have to make any decisions or jump around - just kick back, relax, and listen. Plus, it features exclusive bonus audio of young Neil delivering an adorable speech! That's audio you won't hear in any version of this book other than the audiobook!

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours 15 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 14, 2014

Language: English

ASIN: B00O4GRDBA

Best Sellers Rank: #39 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor > Essays #51 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Entertainers & Celebrities #108 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Essays

## Customer Reviews

The below is a review of the unabridged CD audiobook version of this work (not the printed version) Any review of the CD audiobook version of this work would have to very strongly emphasize that the printed version of this book does not lend itself to an audioformat. In the book, you can end up with an infinite number of permutations of Neil Patrick Harris' biography by choosing different events in his life. For example, the reader has 3 choices of to what type of parents he can be born to (wealthy, poor or middle class). After that the reader can then choose what type, among many, of upbringings he can have, etc. In the book this is made easy because the reader is told what pages he/she can forward to for that specific choose. Unfortunately in the audiobook there is no chose given, going forward, as what sound tracks coorespond to what future choices. For example, if you choose born to midle class white parents, and you want to choose "lived in the circus as a teenager" what track would you pick on the CD? As a result of not having this information available, the reader ends up picking nonsensical permutations (for example, born to middle class parents, going to

harvard and then living life as teenager in a circus). Just does not work, as a result, in the CD version. This could easily have been prevented assuming that the listener is provided the appropriate CD track to go forward to (analogous to the page number in the book that the reader is told to go to for such and such a selection). On the bright side the audiobook is read by Neil Patrick Harris himself and is quite well read (not monotonous and humorous tone). Unfortunately does not make up for the problems mentioned above.

When this originally came out, I really wanted to pick it up, but despite seeing a bunch of levitating pics on Twitter around the release date I never did end up getting one. Then, my local library did this neat thing where after filling out a long questionnaire, one of the librarians would give me a list of book recommendations. This was one of the several books on that list so I decided to finally pick up a copy! Neil Patrick Harris is an amazing man. I remember watching Doogie Howser, M.D. when I was a kid; I've seen all of How I Met Your Mother and all three Harold & Kumar films; I've seen each of Tony Awards that he's hosted; I follow him on Twitter so I know about David and Gideon and Harper; but I knew there had to be a lot behind NPH that this book would show me. To read what I liked about this book, go to paragraph A. To read what I didn't like, go to paragraph C. To read about some frustrating parts, go to paragraph B. A) The book is clever in its concept. Who hasn't read a bunch of those Choose Your Own Adventure stories in their childhood? When using this concept with an autobiography, you get to choose what part of the life you want to go to. I did my best to avoid the ending for a while (while at the same time sometimes going down dead ends to get some of the quick "bad" endings out of the way) but I used a pencil to mark off pages I read (I'm a bit OCD so I wanted to make sure I read everything). In classic CYOA mode, I often kept my finger in the book so I could flip back if I chose a bad path. B) Because my OCD tendencies had me mark off each page as I read them, when I got near the end, I was able to go back and check which paths I didn't follow (to make sure I read everything). Unfortunately, I found five "chapters" that I couldn't get to. Two of these chapters were meant to be "hidden" (e.g. they mentioned how no other page led to this one). Two of them I think were impossible to get to because of typos. The final chapter was an option in one of the two typo chapters (I think the first option on page 23 should reference page 38, not page 39 and the third option on page 110 should reference page 191, not page 194). One other minor frustration was the Cryptic Crossword on page 150. There were several chapters that gave you a chance to flex your mind, but I've never been that good with Cryptic Crosswords. I'm surprised there weren't any instructions (since Cryptic Crosswords are more well known in the UK and aren't too popular in the US) but luckily I've seen them before. While reading

the book, I was only able to get about three of the answers. After finishing the book, I had to spend about an hour really attacking the clues to complete the list. But then, when I tried placing the answers into the crossword grid, I found that there was one too few spaces! Technically two of the 4-letter answers could fit in the same part of the grid (neither having any impact on the final answer) but still it's weird to create a puzzle without one unique solution. C) There were some parts of the story I felt were rushed through just because none of the chapters could really be more than a half dozen or so pages. I would have liked more than a short chapter about the Magic Castle (maybe because I'm lucky enough to have gotten inside it, I would have loved to hear more about what he does as President). Also, I think it would have been better as a traditional chronological biography. As I read the book jumping back and forth it was hard to get too invested in his life. NPH is a decent writer (although several chapters were ghost- or obviously-written by friends) but the gimmick was sort of played out after a few chapters. I'm glad I read it, and I won't hold it against my librarian (after all I did want to read it so it wasn't a bad suggestion, just a slightly disappointing one).

I was going to title this review with a synonymous magic-trick-like or quasi-thumbtack/nail-like, or Neil-like aka NPH secret code-word, like Kungaloosh or Schlotzsky's Options, but then realized that nobody but Neil Patrick Harris & myself might know, at the start, what we were talking about & I would probably trip over my intent (on some dimly lit stage with an unfamiliar proscenium of trust) to make a mystic point to a world-wide (reading) audience, however in the dark. As I attempt to recommend that everyone should read the NPH autobiography entitled, Neil Patrick Harris: Choose Your Own Autobiography. He has certainly come a long way from his iconic American TV role in 1989 as Doogie Howser, which is how I will always remember him, much the same as Ron Howard, the film director will always be Opie on The Andy Griffith Show in the 1960s, or Henry Thomas as Elliott in the 1982 movie, E.T. ~ the Extra-Terrestrial. Since, as a matter of fact, they were all so very good, and represented a domestic ideal of sorts in our culture, which lingers still. However, back to NPH's book because it is so very good, in my opinion. His writing style is crystal clear, comprehensible & occasionally covetous, or should I say somewhat envious yet frequently plausible, still altogether separate from what I do on a daily basis. However, Neil is nothing if not considerate & courteous & constantly self-aware of his stately surroundings with an often realistic mindset about his life, as something apparently apart from the basic reality of many of his readers. Neil commonly uses the 2nd person pronoun throughout his story, as an objective & droll reference to himself. At first, I was uncertain who was talking about their story (him or me), but I soon figured it out & learned to like the assertive master-of-ceremonies narrator, so

much more for his frank attempt at persuasive honesty about Neil Patrick Harris. Although, I had some anxiety following NPH's fun-loving attempt at creating my own version of his life, by clicking one of the many "ego-here" options, to track a different prognosis in his story line, but only because I was reading his eBook on my cell phone & was afraid I would miss something. So, at the end of whatever incomplete version I had arbitrarily selected, I went back to the beginning & scrolled through every page to be sure I should read the entire book without distractions. And that's how I found out about the Kingdom of Kungaloosh! Not to mention several food-porn recipes, or how-to mix much-loved drinks & learned some magic tricks along the way, but that's only a small part of the set-design along the NPH road trip about his life, thus far. And Doogie Howser is only 40-something, for Papa's sake. There will certainly need to be follow-up volumes in the next 60 years. In a slight-of-hand, I was going to tell you beforehand what I didn't like (about the book?) but it really doesn't matter now; for instance, NPH's bombastic character portrayal of Barney Stinson in the current-century TV sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*, which rubs somewhat against the grain of my cockeyed, aristocratic sensibilities. Also, the outrageous drag personification of NPH's gender-bending character in the 2014 Broadway rock-musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. But that's enough about me! I like that he knows what he loves & I love that he does it so well ~ because his "spherical assistants" are presumably bigger than mine! NPH is a brilliant man, in my opinion, certainly smarter than most & can do whatever he likes (and choose whatever character he wants to perform) with more assurance in his little finger than I think I have in my entire mainframe. Actually, my favorite NPH role (of the handful I've seen) is his sensitive & smart, but cleverly disingenuous almost to the point of innocence, by virtue of a sympathetic portrayal of the ignorance-is-bliss syndrome, whenever in the midst of his compassionate family, who just couldn't believe that he might be on the state's most-wanted list as a serial arsonist, in the 1995 TV movie *Not Our Son*. My other favorite NPH role is that of family-man together with his husband, David Burtka & their twin kids! As Neil relentlessly reminds us to focus on our destiny with the insightful line, "The 'truth' about a person's sexual preference is often revealed through a long journey of tiny steps, and acceptance is one of the last ones. It's an individual story for every person. But you will get there. Sure, you're a little afraid right now. The

thing/activity/career path you're considering doing may seem a little frightening. But it's also the path to growth and self-discovery. So, pluck up your courage and take that risk! It is still all about preparation, precision, commitment, and artifice. So says NPH, but then suddenly he wonders, "Where's the bathroom?" Highly recommended for the mindful & cautious demographic of gay kids at-risk! By Jack Dunsmoor, author of the book, OK2BG

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