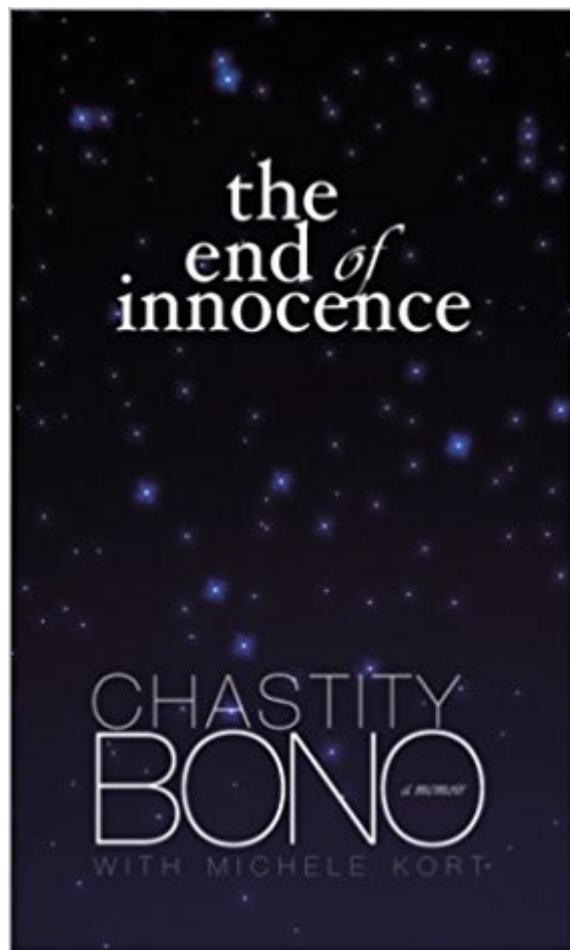


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# The End Of Innocence: A Memoir



## Synopsis

Chastity Bono has faced her share of battles as a spokesperson for gay and lesbian rights, both as the controversial former entertainment and media director for GLAAD, and before that in the early '90s when a national tabloid maliciously outed her. In this riveting memoir she recounts a story of love, commitment, and tragedy lived out beyond the glare of the cameras. At 23, Chastity was well on her way to establishing her own life separate from her superstar parents, Cher and Sonny Bono. Geffen Records had just signed her band, Ceremony, and she was poised for musical stardom. And best of all, a love affair began to blossom with Joan Stephens, one of Cher's friends whom Chastity had known all her life. In what began as an unlikely relationship, Chastity and Joan found and nurtured the sort of tender, loving partnership they had both been seeking. But Chastity's aspirations for a life in music were soon thwarted by internal struggles and record company machinations that threatened to destroy Ceremony. These problems, however, paled in comparison with the devastating news of Joan's diagnosis with life-threatening non-Hodgkins lymphoma. As Joan fiercely battled her illness, Chastity's musical career imploded. Chastity became both caretaker and lover, discovering a depth and beauty that intensified the feeling of loss as Joan succumbed to the ravages of cancer. A story of love won and lost, of dreams fulfilled and destroyed, Joan is a coming-of-age story that provides a deeply personal look into the private struggles of a very public and courageous woman.

**Marketing Plans:** National media campaign to include NPR, TV Morning Shows, Afternoon Talk Shows, national newspaper and magazine coverage

**Advance Reader Copies:** National Advertising: The Advocate

**Author Appearances:** New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Atlanta, Washington, DC, Houston

Chastity Bono is the former Entertainment and Media Director for GLAAD a former reporter at large for The Advocate. She is also the author of *Family Outing*. Michele Kort is a freelance writer whose writing has appeared in the Los Angeles Times Magazine, L.A. Weekly, Shape, Redbook, Self, iv>

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If Bono's story doesn't end up as a Lifetime TV movie, it will at least merit an episode of E! Hollywood True Story. The lesbian daughter of Sonny and Cher follows up her excellent coming out guide, *Family Outing* (1998), with a slim, honest memoir covering her turbulent life in the years between 1988 and '93. Bono and her girlfriend, Rachel, formed a band, hoping that performing together would revitalize their waning relationship but things didn't work out that way. The Star tabloid outed Bono shortly after she and Rachel signed a record deal with Geffen Records. The two novices stayed closeted while they tried to record a CD and deal with Rachel's alcoholism and the fact that Bono had fallen in love with Joan, a beautiful, 40-something friend of the family who had just been diagnosed with cancer. Bono's fear of confrontation drags out the misery for this love triangle (and the reader) during the book's middle section, which sometimes plays like an overwrought episode of MTV's *Real World*. Oddly, the recording-studio scenes lack passion, and with no discussion of lyrics or orchestrations, Bono seems like an outsider in her own musical group; it's hard for the reader to feel much empathy when their single tanks. The last half of the book, when Bono commits to Joan just as her health begins to deteriorate, packs an emotional punch with brutally frank depictions of loving and living with a person with a terminal illness. Bono spares no one, including herself, with a wrenching and exhausting finish. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

This is no *Mommie Dearest*. It's not even a biography of Chastity Bono, daughter of Sonny and Cher. Rather, this is a memoir of the time Chastity spent with her lover Joan Stephens, a friend of Cher's, someone Chastity had been attracted to since she was 13. Chastity, in her early twenties, and Joan got together after Joan was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. As the duo got closer, the illness progressed, until Joan died after a long, painful battle with cancer. Unlike *Drescher's Cancer Shmancer* (see below), there's no upbeat tone here. Bono's chronicle of Stephens' illness is detailed and depressing. The überstory, Bono's coming-of-age saga, also encompasses her coming out, career problems, and other relationships, but the focus is on what it's like to be a caregiver to a dying loved one. Bono (and writer Kort) offer a vivid piece although

readers may wonder how she kicks the prescription drug habit she acquired during Stephens' illness. Chastity will be on the talk-show circuit, so maybe that question will be answered there. Ilene Cooper  
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What a wonderful book. It was so straight forward with the sharing of time in her young life. Parts were funny and others tearful. She certainly is a strong person, very talented and very mature. This is a must read for all.

i was so depressed closing this book it was unreal. i found her honesty admirable, but i also found too subtle and not so subtle self pity in most of her narrative of situations....the book was or could be somewhat confusing, and overwhelming, with the doe si doe recital of the lesbian history starting from her grandmothers time. chastity bono was a young woman, yes, but talk about a stunted childhood, or slow on the uptake maturing....she constantly put one girls needs (manipulations) before her own and let it affect her relationship with her true love, and she was just unanchored, flailing, weak. also, the graphic descriptions of joans illness? please, way too much information. horrible. real, yes. reality, sure, but did we need to hear explicit descriptions of every tube, every failing orifice, to get the points? NO WAY. perhaps being a breast cancer survivor colored my reaction to her detailed account of joans physical deterioration, but i found it very sad she felt it had to be that graphic. honesty is honesty but c'mon, couldn't she let the love of her life keep ANY of her DIGNITY even in death? NO. i felt she wrote all this just to show what SHE suffered through with joans suffering of cancer... i sure won't buy her 3rd book about her drug use. and am glad i got this copy of "loss of....total empathetic discretion".... for less than original price.

I haven't finished it yet. But its excellent. I'm supposed to write between 75 and 300 words. But I prefer to make reviews short, and sweet.

This is a book that explains how a young girls sexual abuse led her to a life as a lesbian. It is very sad because she never really knew anything else from puberty. I think her having a sex change is a serious mistake.

**THIS REVIEW WAS WRITTEN IN 2002 BEFORE CHASTITY BECAME CHAZ BONO.**  
PRONOUNS REFLECT THE WOMAN WHO WROTE IT. If Bono's story doesn't end up as a Lifetime TV movie, it will at least merit an episode of E! Hollywood True Story. The lesbian daughter

of Sonny and Cher follows up her excellent coming out guide, *Family Outing* (1998), with a slim, honest memoir covering her turbulent life in the years between 1988 and '93. Bono and her girlfriend, Rachel, formed a band, hoping that performing together would revitalize their waning relationship but things didn't work out that way. The *Star* tabloid outed Bono shortly after she and Rachel signed a record deal with Geffen Records. The two novices stayed closeted while they tried to record a CD and deal with Rachel's alcoholism and the fact that Bono had fallen in love with Joan, a beautiful, 40-something friend of the family who had just been diagnosed with cancer. Bono's fear of confrontation drags out the misery for this love triangle (and the reader) during the book's middle section, which sometimes plays like an overwrought episode of MTV's *Real World*. Oddly, the recording-studio scenes lack passion, and with no discussion of lyrics or orchestrations, Bono seems like an outsider in her own musical group; it's hard for the reader to feel much empathy when their single tanks. The last half of the book, when Bono commits to Joan just as her health begins to deteriorate, packs an emotional punch with brutally frank depictions of loving and living with a person with a terminal illness. Bono spares no one, including herself, with a wrenching and exhausting finish.

I think the only thing that could ruin this book is wrong expectations. I came into it thinking "Ooh a book by Cher's daughter! Cher is God so I should read it!" and when I found out it was about her lover Joan's battle with cancer I was like, "Aw, sad! This is gonna be depressing!" neither expectation proved true! By the end of the book I not only did I have a deep respect for Chastity Bono as her own person, not just Cher's daughter, but I was deeply inspired by the story and life of Joan! The book is really a very inspiring tale of love and life and everyday, universal struggles (despite the fact its mainly about fame, the music industry, battles with cancer, and the struggles of lesbians). Its really a very triumphant book whose only fault is the fact that it was written by someone so young so the ending comes all too soon. I hope for a sequel!

*The End Of Innocence* is the personal memoir of Chastity Bono, the daughter of the famous entertainment celebrities Cher and Sonny Bono. With the literary assistance of Journalist Michele Kort, Chastity Bono recounts her lesbian love and partnership with Joan Stephens, as well as the horror of watching the woman she loved succumb to non-Hodgkins lymphoma. *The End Of Innocence* is strongly recommended reading as deeply personal autobiography of great love, loss, grief, courage, and the will to live one's own life on one's own terms.

No better way to find out who Chastity Bono is than to read her story in her own words, written in her own way. It's not sugar coated and painted as a pretty picture. It doesn't focus on her Mother, and her life wasn't a fairy tail sort of life. Hers was a life full of struggles. A major one her relationship with Joan. Anyone else ever take care of someone with a terminal illness? All when she was very young. The cancer patient gets the Morphine to dull their pain, and the shot to help them sleep, but their friend in the cot next to them gets nothing to dull their pain and fears, and nothing to help them through their many sleepless nights. At home, they give the shots and clean the bed sheets. The sad part is many do not get so much as a thank you, and the patient gets the flowers. That is not meant to take away from the patients suffering. But, what her book brings out is the fact that many times the care takers and loved ones are suffering because it is a hard and emotionally draining job, and for them there is no relief. How else to give you a sense of who she was, other than to tell exactly what she was going through and how she felt, and ultimately how she dealt with it all. It is not a feel good book. It's just an honest story and a quick read.

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