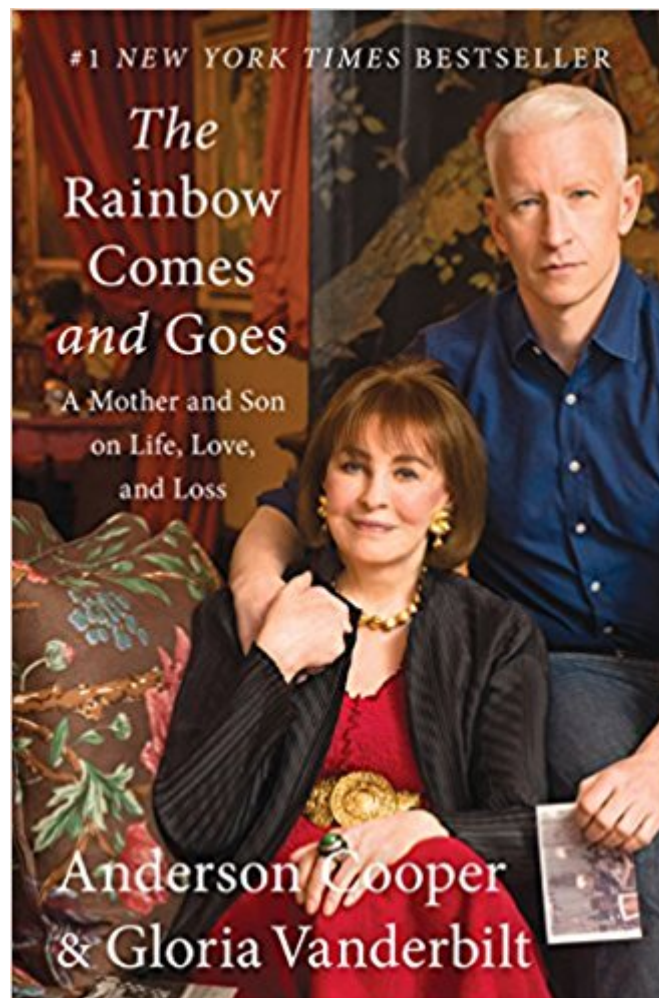




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# The Rainbow Comes And Goes: A Mother And Son On Life, Love, And Loss



## Synopsis

#1 New York Times Bestseller A touching and intimate correspondence between Anderson Cooper and his mother, Gloria Vanderbilt, offering timeless wisdom and a revealing glimpse into their lives. Though Anderson Cooper has always considered himself close to his mother, his intensely busy career as a journalist for CNN and CBS affords him little time to spend with her. After she suffers a brief but serious illness at the age of ninety-one, they resolve to change their relationship by beginning a year-long conversation unlike any they had ever had before. The result is a correspondence of surprising honesty and depth in which they discuss their lives, the things that matter to them, and what they still want to learn about each other. Both a son's love letter to his mother and an unconventional mom's life lessons for her grown son, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* offers a rare window into their close relationship and fascinating life stories, including their tragedies and triumphs. In these often humorous and moving exchanges, they share their most private thoughts and the hard-earned truths they've learned along the way. In their words their distinctive personalities shine through. • Anderson's journalistic outlook on the world is a sharp contrast to his mother's idealism and unwavering optimism. An appealing memoir with inspirational advice, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* is a beautiful and affectionate celebration of the universal bond between a parent and a child, and a thoughtful reflection on life, reminding us of the precious insight that remains to be shared, no matter our age.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Harper; 1 edition (April 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062454943

ISBN-13: 978-0062454942

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 2,360 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #17,626 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Letters #10 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Relationships > Parent & Adult Child #23 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Parenting > Parenting Boys

## Customer Reviews

“Intriguing| an ideal Mother’s/Father’s Day gift, with the opening, “Let’s get to know each other better” Affectionate, heartfelt, inspirational, and sometimes hilarious, the book’s message is that it is never too late to cultivate a new relationship with your family and break down those walls of silence.” (Bay Area Reporter) “A beautiful book that will resonate for all generations, especially mothers and their sons . . . riveting, touching, dishy, funny, and surprising.” (Andy Cohen) “Fascinating, forthright, philosophical, and inspiring, these mother-and-son musings on family, life, death, forgiveness, fame, and perseverance are at once uniquely personal and deeply human.” (Booklist (starred review)) “[A] touching story. . . . Through greater openness, Cooper and Vanderbilt achieve a new closeness, demonstrating in this intimate and lively read that it’s never too late to have a rich relationship with family.” (Publishers Weekly) “A layered mix of reminiscences, heart-rending revelations and apologia, all captured with unsparing candor. . . . Rainbows may in fact come and go, but this revealing take on the forces that shaped two dynamic lives promises to have real staying power.” (AARP Magazine) “A remarkably frank and tender undertaking.” (New York Times) “Meaningful, revealing...” (Wall Street Journal) “This is a book like no other I have ever read|if any two people have lived through way more than their share of crises, singly and collectively, it is Anderson Cooper and Gloria Vanderbilt. Their brave engagement with what they confront so staunchly in this extraordinary dialogue leaves me quite simply awestruck.” (Washington Times) “Memoir readers (and Hollywood fans) will appreciate this book, especially those interested in relationships between mothers and sons. A perfect Mother’s Day read.” (Library Journal) “Entertaining and thoughtful moments exchanged between a mother and son who have spent much of their lives in the spotlight.” (Kirkus) “Through greater openness, Cooper and Vanderbilt achieve a new closeness, demonstrating in this intimate and lively read that it’s never too late to have a rich relationship with family.” (Publishers Weekly)

Though Anderson Cooper has always considered himself close to his mother, his intensely busy career as a journalist for CNN and CBS affords him little time to spend with her. After she suffers a brief but serious illness at the age of ninety-one, they resolve to change their relationship by beginning a year-long conversation unlike any they had ever had before. The result is a correspondence of surprising honesty and depth in which they discuss their lives, the things that

matter to them, and what they still want to learn about each other. Both a son and a mother learn life lessons for her grown son, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* offers a rare window into their close relationship and fascinating life stories, including their tragedies and triumphs. In these often humorous and moving exchanges, they share their most private thoughts and the hard-earned truths they've learned along the way. In their words their distinctive personalities shine through. Anderson's journalistic outlook on the world is a sharp contrast to his mother's idealism and unwavering optimism. An appealing memoir with inspirational advice, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* is a beautiful and affectionate celebration of the universal bond between a parent and a child, and a thoughtful reflection on life, reminding us of the precious insight that remains to be shared, no matter our age.

This is not a book about a famous journalist, nor is it a book about a famous family. *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* is a story about a mother and her son, and their desire to know more about each. The two live in very different worlds, and have different world views. It's only slightly relevant that the correspondence took place via email. It doesn't really matter so much. Anderson asks mom questions about her childhood, and the people she knew, and mom gives detailed answers. Some of the questions are startling--questions about death. Anderson asks, "Do you think about death a lot? Over the years you have talked to me about dying many times." Gloria then gives frank answers about her thoughts on dying, and asks Anderson a favor: "I'd like you to place a handful of my ashes in your father's grave." The fact that both people are world famous is not so much relevant in this book--at least in most cases. One big exception is the terrible experience of the custody battle over little Gloria. There are long accounts of the fight, with Anderson asking his mother why it happened, "Why do you think she fought for custody?" Not surprisingly, a lot of money was involved, all about who gets custody of a little, scared girl. "Lawyers were hired, a trial date was set, and both sides began preparing for a court fight unlike any the country had ever seen." Anderson's grandmother started a court fight, "for custody of a child she barely knew." I thought the most interesting question in *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* was Anderson's question, "Do you have any regrets?" Gloria admits that yes, there is a very long list: "For me the list of regrets is so long I wouldn't know where to begin or to end." Gloria then shares a very personal letter "I would write to myself at age seventeen." In looking over her life, Gloria mentions her recent exhibits of her paintings. Gloria is ever hopeful, ever the optimist: "The phone can ring, and your whole life can change in a blank." She recounts the words of the poet Wordsworth, "The rainbow comes and goes.

Enjoy it while it lasts. Don't be surprised by its departure, and rejoice when it returns."All in all, I found *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* a bittersweet book. There are lots of very touching, very personal remembrances. *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* is really most valuable to the mother and her son, but I appreciate their willingness to share such poignant memories with the world.

WOW. What a great book and is worth a read. It's sincere and everything that you would hope it would be. There are two aspects to this book, one is a candid conversation between a mother and a son, and the other is, well, a lot of the family gossip. It mirrors the conversations that many people hope that they have once in their lifetime with their own eldest family member, when they themselves are adults. It is a conversation, but done in the style of Anderson Cooper, almost being his own investigative journalist regarding his own family. However, unlike situations in which Cooper simply asks questions and keeps moving, he discusses his own responses, his own feelings, and explores elements from his own background and experiences. A great example is Cooper mentioning how he was afraid to tell his mom he was gay because of being afraid of how she would react because of the rumors that her own mother was gay. Instead the mother essentially responds with, "Yeah, I knew, all your friends were gay," and does the motherly thing of refocusing on the question of her son regarding her own mother and discusses her mother's sexuality and her own views on sexuality, which have changed over the years and views that it is fluid. There is also some really unique insights into the different family members, providing a history of each one as Anderson asks, going so far as to describe houses and ways that money was made. There is also a slight element of mother's give a damn being broken at 91 and even letting her son know about sex and the first time she no longer had to fake an orgasm, which was one of the attractive aspects of who she dated. This is also couched in the context on reflections of her own insecurities being a young girl and growing up, as well as why she stayed in some horrible marriages. The writing style of this book is easy and fluid. There are interjections in-between conversations that give a quick and easy reference to the backstory of a particular family member or some occasions of the family in general. There are also points where Cooper mentions that he watches a YouTube video that has a family member, or his mother, and it's actually quite easy to look up that information and follow along. The responses of Cooper are often shorter, but pull in normal colloquialisms, something that shows a bit of a generational divide the two, such as YouTube; whereas his mother may respond with a quote, or just simply go off of the comment mentioned. Vanderbilt's responses are much more elaborate, detailed, and a bit of

a train of thought around an initial point Cooper asks and that his mother makes a winding way in telling a story, but this is for the best because it is in this portion you can see a lot of recollections about her life, where she has been, and her understanding in hindsight. There is a lot of brutal honesty as well, such as her own insecurities early in life, acknowledgement she probably was not the best parent, recognition that she and Cooper probably would have been closer if he was a daughter, the death of her husband (Cooper's father), and later the death of Coopers brother, Carter (her son). A great book all around, it gives insight into the family's meeting of one another, Coopers own father, and clarifications on his own understanding of family gossip from years of growing up. There is a lot that may mirror experiences that some adults have been fortunate enough to have snippets of with a family member, but is the extended version of insight into a family that probably has a lot more gossip and rumors surrounding it than one's own and a few more trips to Europe on whims than most people experience in a lifetime.

No matter how close we are to our parents (as I was to my father who passed away last year at 98) there are still things not said and subjects not fully probed. For example my father had an older brother who like Rosemary Kennedy was born retarded due to a birth accident and also like her was lobotomized and placed in a facility. Although I was nine when he died I never met him and my father and I never really talked about it (though it was always on his mind). After almost losing his very famous (and very illustrious) mother Gloria Vanderbilt just before her 91st birthday, news anchor Anderson Cooper embarks on his toughest interview via a year-long email exchange. They discuss everything (sometimes to the point of exhaustion): her very tough childhood (including the famous custody trial); her four marriages (Anderson was her last child by her last husband); his father's sudden and tragic death when Anderson was 10 and how he and his mother began the process of forming a long-overdue mother-son relationship; Anderson's sexuality (a subject totally missing from his original memoir); and most tragically his older brother's suicide. I recommend this book with reservations. While touted as an unscripted email exchange it does not read that way. Gloria tends to explain events with so much background (many of which were already covered in her many autobiographies) that one wonders why Anderson Cooper, an award-winning newsman, did not already know about them. Plus there is so much repetitive detail that you really need a prior interest in both Gloria and Anderson to get through it. But many will find its unique approach both interesting and perhaps cathartic. Personally I wished I had this same exchange with my father.

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