

Lydia Criss #2

Lydia Criss Question and Answer Part 2

Mainline asks…. Hi Lydia I’d just like to say ‘thankyou’ for a great book, you’ve received some nasty and harsh criticism in some quarters from fans about postage costs etc and I thought you responded very well to them, What final word would you like to say to those people who seem intent no matter what you say with their continued and unnecessary comments.

Mainline.....I am so glad you brought this up. First I want to say, I do not sit at home and think of ways to rip the KISS fans off. For the fans that are not familiar with this incident, there was a guy that said that I charged him \$2.00 more for shipping the book than I should have. It is a really long story so I will try to keep it brief. My warehouse shipped his book United Parcel Service (UPS) when they were supposed to ship it United States Postal Service (USPS) Priority Mail. The bottom line is that it actually cost me \$.02 more to ship his book the way I did. Before he accused me of overcharging he should have done his homework. He was not aware that the USPS has a Priority Mail Flat Rate Box for \$8.10, no matter how heavy it is and no matter where you ship it to in the USA. It is also a FREE box, where I had to pay for the box that was used to ship his book UPS. When shipping my book to Australia, it cost me \$36.90 and I charge \$35.00. By the time PayPal takes their fee, I am really losing money on the shipping, so I really resent being accused of ripping off fans.

The thing that pissed me off most is that he put e-mails between one of my staff members, me & himself on KISS FAQ. This is slander! I do not go on these sites, and I feel that most of the fans that do bad mouth people are wimps that hide behind phony names. They have no life, and I wish they would stay out of mine. End of Story!

Cat O’ Nine tails asks…. Lydia you have appeared at a few conventions to promote your book, what has the response been like from the fans at these conventions?

Cat O’ Nine tails.....I have attended only two KISS Expos where I promoted my book Sealed With A KISS. At the first one in Allentown, Pennsylvania I didn’t even have the book for sale. I only had my copy of the book, so I let the fans look through it. Some fans didn’t even want to look at it, they wanted to be surprised when they bought it and digest it all by themselves. The other Expo in Chicago, Illinois, was great. All the fans were so nice and everyone loved the book.

Demonseed asks…. Hi Lydia I’d like to know did you approach all the big publishing companies before you went ahead with the book and have any main stream publishing houses approached you about taking on your book since then and if not, would you be open to the idea if the chance happened to come along somewhere down the line.

Demonseed.....In 2003 I signed a one-year contract with a literary agent group. I really don’t know just how hard they shopped my book, but I do know that I only received three rejections and they were from some of the big publishing houses. They are listed in the front of my book, and one of them actually said the reason they didn’t want to do a book on KISS was because Gene Simmons had flooded the market with KISS books. No publishing houses have approached me, because my book is not in the stores and they don’t have access to it. I am always open to ideas.

Ayers Rock asks…. Lydia have you ever visited Australia, and do have you any plans to visit Australia in the near future to promote your book?

Ayers Rock.....No, unfortunately I have never been to Australia. KISS was supposed to go there after Japan, but it never happened. I was really disappointed. I would love to come to Australia with my boyfriend, Richie Fontana. He lived there for almost 4 months and he loved it. He was there promoting & touring with his band The Skatt Bros. They had a hit single back in the early 1980’s called “Life At The Outpost”. We both want to go there together, but at the present time, we do not have any plans.

The Wall asks…. Lydia you’ve produced an awesome book no doubt about that, but for the average fan the cost is very prohibitive, have you any plans to perhaps condense the book into Volume I and II so that price wise at least it could be within reach for those fans.

The Wall.....Unfortunately no. I know that it is an expensive book, especially with the postage, but very soon we are going to offer cheaper postage. Only thing is that the book will be shipped by boat and take longer to receive. Maybe somewhere down the line I will get a distribution deal, and that will put it in stores, but there are no immediate plans for that.

Popeye asks….Lydia your book as some absolutely awesome pics, have you ever done a major photo exhibition tour?

Popeye.....No, anyone want to organize it?

Radio Waves asks….Lydia congratulations on the book, in every publication I’ve read on KISS its obvious that you supported Peter in a huge way in the early years and it must have been very tough in those formative years, after your split with Peter he was quoted as saying that you weren’t ‘’growing with him and you were holding him back’’ just how hurtful was that? Knowing that you’d been there for him all that time.

Radio Waves.....Thank you! I know the interview that you are talking about and believe me that is probably the one comment from Peter that hurt me the most. As far as growing, Peter had nothing else to say. He was cheating on me and he had to put the blame on me to make himself look good. Yeah, I wasn't growing, I wasn't growing into a drug addict like he was. It is obvious that I have grown, or I would not have been able to take on such a huge project as this book was. I knew nothing about the book or publishing industry in the summer of 2005 when I started this project. I learned as I went along and I did this book with the help of 5 guys that live all around the USA. I think that this book says enough to prove that I have grown. What has Peter done in the past 5 years?

Brooklyn Roads asks…. Lydia have you heard any feedback or comment from Gene, Paul, Ace or Peter on your great book?

Brooklyn Roads.....No, I have not heard any comments directly from any of them. I have heard (from a friend) that Ace loves it, Paul had something negative to say about it, but that was before he bought it. Peter saw it briefly (a fan showed it to him) at a Chiller Convention in October, 2006. I heard he said it looked really nice from the little he saw, and I really don’t know if Gene has seen it. Tommy Thayer bought it, e-mailed me and said I did a Fantastic Job. I guess that answers my doubts whether Gene has seen it or not. Ha! Ha!

Irakli asks….Hey Lydia, I was wondering how long did it actually take for you to put this whole book together. Did you have to go and search all of the photos of the band throughout the years? Also, are you planning for a follow up book sometime in the future?

Thanks,
Irakli

Irakli.....I actually gathered up ALL of my KISS memorabilia, including photos. I researched and photo copied everything in the summer of 1997. I then went over to my publisher at the time with about three boxes of stuff. I handed everything over to this publisher, and started the manuscript at the end of 1997. At the time I was still working full-time and managed to finish the manuscript by May 1, 1999. In the mean time, the publisher had a lot of my stuff scanned and photographed. Everything seemed to take forever. By early 2002 my publisher went bankrupt. It took me until that spring to get all of my things back. Not knowing what to do, I looked for a Literary Agent. I finally signed with a group of agents in the middle of 2003. By 2004 my contract had expired and was given back my freedom to do whatever I wanted. I was approached by an Auctioneer “BackStage Auctions” and decided to sell my entire KISS collection in order to finance this book. It cost me twice what I originally thought it was going to cost, but I wanted to do it right. My biggest fear, was the fact that I had not a clue of how to publish a book. I didn’t even know where to start to look for people to help me, let alone a printer. I learned everything as I went along. We started the actual design in October 10, 2005 and the book was finally finished and delivered to me in America October 10, 2006, one year to the day. It took over 9 years to make, but I really only worked on it for 3-4 years. Aren’t you sorry you asked that question? I do plan to do another book, but not on KISS. It will be on my Rock Photos, and then possible a children’s book.

Thanks for giving me the chance to answer some of the questions that a lot of the American fans do get to ask me at Expos. Since you are so far away, this will have to suffice for now, but I am trying to figure out how I can go over to Australia in the near future.

Cheers!!

Lydia Criss
Conducted by "Acejendell" for TheKissArmy in February, 2007