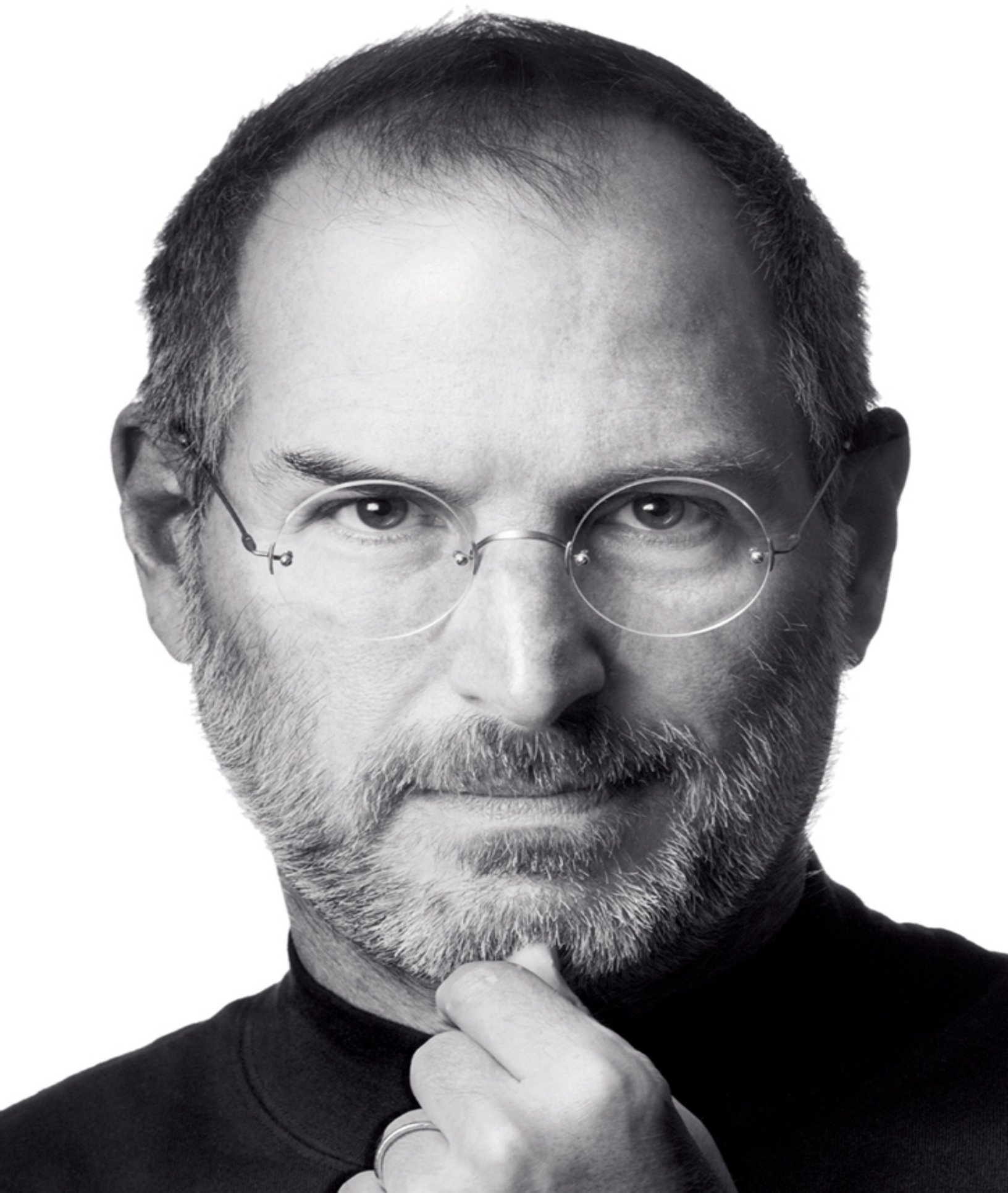
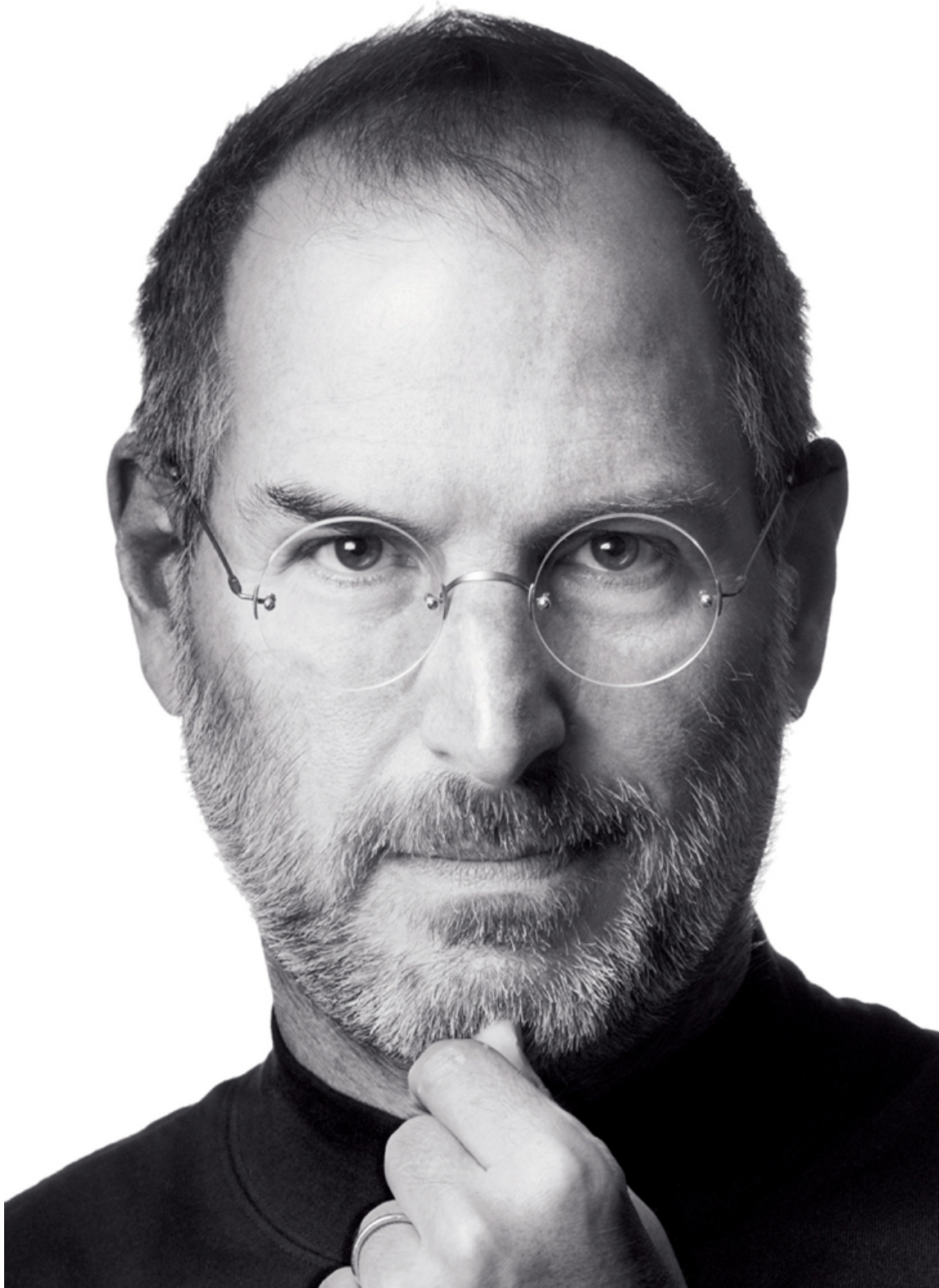


# Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson

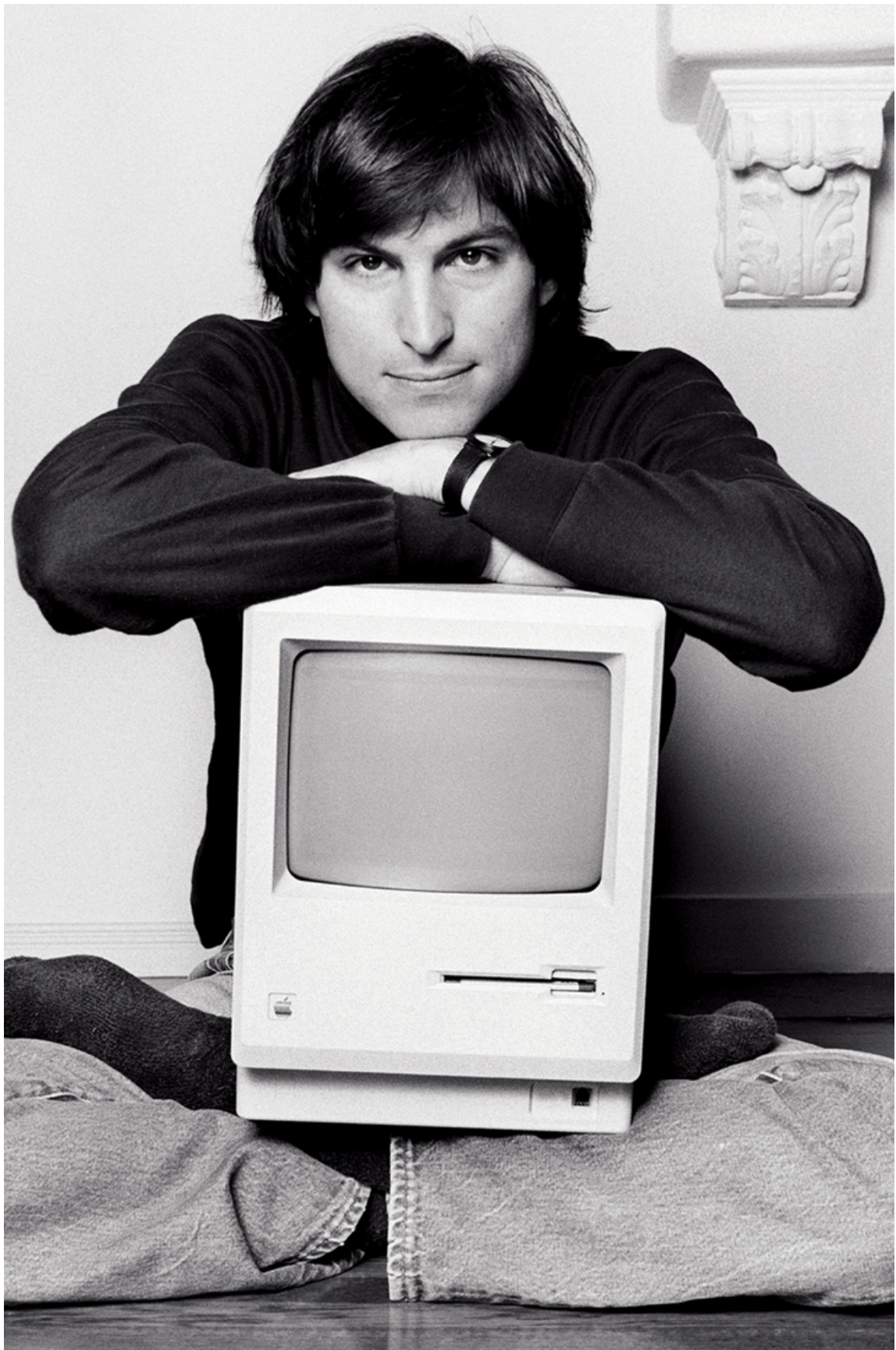


# Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson











**FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE BESTSELLING BIOGRAPHIES OF  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND ALBERT EINSTEIN, THIS IS THE  
EXCLUSIVE BIOGRAPHY OF STEVE JOBS.**

Based on more than forty interviews with Jobs conducted over two years—as well as interviews with more than a hundred family members, friends, adversaries, competitors, and colleagues—Walter Isaacson has written a riveting story of the roller-coaster life and searingly intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing.

At a time when America is seeking ways to sustain its innovative edge, Jobs stands as the ultimate icon of inventiveness and applied imagination. He knew that the best way to create value in the twenty-first century was to connect creativity with technology. He built a company where leaps of the imagination were combined with remarkable feats of engineering.

Although Jobs cooperated with this book, he asked for no control over what was written nor even the right to read it before it was published. He put nothing offlimits. He encouraged the people he knew to speak honestly. And Jobs speaks candidly, sometimes brutally so, about the people he worked with and competed against. His friends, foes, and colleagues provide an unvarnished view of the passions, perfectionism, obsessions, artistry, devilry, and compulsion for control that shaped his approach to business and the innovative products that resulted.

Driven by demons, Jobs could drive those around him to fury and despair. But his personality and products were interrelated, just as Apple's hardware and software tended to be, as if part of an integrated system. His tale is instructive and cautionary, filled with lessons about innovation, character, leadership, and values.



**Walter Isaacson**, the CEO of the Aspen Institute, has been the chairman of CNN and the managing editor of *Time* magazine. He is the author of *Einstein: His Life and Universe*, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*, and *Kissinger: A Biography*, and is the coauthor, with Evan Thomas, of *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made*. He and his wife live in Washington, D.C.

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# STEVE JOBS

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**The people who are crazy enough  
to think they can change  
the world are the ones who do.**

—Apple’s “Think Different” commercial, 1997

# CONTENTS

---

## *Characters*

Introduction: *How This Book Came to Be*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

Childhood: *Abandoned and Chosen*

## **CHAPTER TWO**

Odd Couple: *The Two Steves*

## **CHAPTER THREE**

The Dropout: *Turn On, Tune In . . .*

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

Atari and India: *Zen and the Art of Game Design*

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

The Apple I: *Turn On, Boot Up, Jack In . . .*

## **CHAPTER SIX**

The Apple II: *Dawn of a New Age*

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

Chrisann and Lisa: *He Who Is Abandoned . . .*

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

Xerox and Lisa: *Graphical User Interfaces*

## **CHAPTER NINE**

Going Public: *A Man of Wealth and Fame*

## **CHAPTER TEN**

The Mac Is Born: *You Say You Want a Revolution*

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

The Reality Distortion Field: *Playing by His Own Set of Rules*

**CHAPTER TWELVE**

*The Design: Real Artists Simplify*

**CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

*Building the Mac: The Journey Is the Reward*

**CHAPTER FOURTEEN**

*Enter Sculley: The Pepsi Challenge*

**CHAPTER FIFTEEN**

*The Launch: A Dent in the Universe*

**CHAPTER SIXTEEN**

*Gates and Jobs: When Orbits Intersect*

**CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

*Icarus: What Goes Up . . .*

**CHAPTER EIGHTEEN**

*NeXT: Prometheus Unbound*

**CHAPTER NINETEEN**

*Pixar: Technology Meets Art*

**CHAPTER TWENTY**

*A Regular Guy: Love Is Just a Four-Letter Word*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE**

*Family Man: At Home with the Jobs Clan*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO**

*Toy Story: Buzz and Woody to the Rescue*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE**

*The Second Coming:  
What Rough Beast, Its Hour Come Round at Last . . .*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR**

*The Restoration: The Loser Now Will Be Later to Win*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE**

*Think Different: Jobs as iCEO*



**CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX**

Design Principles: *The Studio of Jobs and Ive*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN**

The iMac: *Hello (Again)*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT**

CEO: *Still Crazy after All These Years*

**CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE**

Apple Stores: *Genius Bars and Siena Sandstone*

**CHAPTER THIRTY**

The Digital Hub: *From iTunes to the iPod*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE**

The iTunes Store: *I'm the Pied Piper*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO**

Music Man: *The Sound Track of His Life*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE**

Pixar's Friends: . . . *and Foes*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR**

Twenty-first-century Macs: *Setting Apple Apart*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE**

Round One: *Memento Mori*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX**

The iPhone: *Three Revolutionary Products in One*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN**

Round Two: *The Cancer Recurs*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT**

The iPad: *Into the Post-PC Era*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE**

New Battles: *And Echoes of Old Ones*

**CHAPTER FORTY**

*To Infinity: The Cloud, the Spaceship, and Beyond*

**CHAPTER FORTY-ONE**

*Round Three: The Twilight Struggle*

**CHAPTER FORTY-TWO**

*Legacy: The Brightest Heaven of Invention*

*Acknowledgments*

*Sources*

*Notes*

*Index*

*Illustration Credits*

*Photos*

## CHARACTERS

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**AL ALCORN.** Chief engineer at Atari, who designed Pong and hired Jobs.

**GIL AMELIO.** Became CEO of Apple in 1996, bought NeXT, bringing Jobs back.

**BILL ATKINSON.** Early Apple employee, developed graphics for the Macintosh.

**CHRISANN BRENNAN.** Jobs's girlfriend at Homestead High, mother of his daughter Lisa.

**LISA BRENNAN-JOBS.** Daughter of Jobs and Chrisann Brennan, born in 1978; became a writer in New York City.

**NOLAN BUSHNELL.** Founder of Atari and entrepreneurial role model for Jobs.

**BILL CAMPBELL.** Apple marketing chief during Jobs's first stint at Apple and board member and confidant after Jobs's return in 1997.

**EDWIN CATMULL.** A cofounder of Pixar and later a Disney executive.

**KOBUN CHINO.** A Soōtoō Zen master in California who became Jobs's spiritual teacher.

**LEE CLOW.** Advertising wizard who created Apple's "1984" ad and worked with Jobs for three decades.

**DEBORAH "DEBI" COLEMAN.** Early Mac team manager who took over Apple manufacturing.

**TIM COOK.** Steady, calm, chief operating officer hired by Jobs in 1998; replaced Jobs as Apple CEO in August 2011.

**EDDY CUE.** Chief of Internet services at Apple, Jobs's wingman in dealing with content companies.

**ANDREA "ANDY" CUNNINGHAM.** Publicist at Regis McKenna's firm who handled Apple in the early Macintosh years.

**MICHAEL EISNER.** Hard-driving Disney CEO who made the Pixar deal, then clashed with Jobs.

**LARRY ELLISON.** CEO of Oracle and personal friend of Jobs.

**TONY FADELL.** Punky engineer brought to Apple in 2001 to develop the iPod.

**SCOTT FORSTALL.** Chief of Apple's mobile device software.

**ROBERT FRIEDLAND.** Reed student, proprietor of an apple farm commune, and spiritual seeker who influenced Jobs, then went on to run a mining company.

**JEAN-LOUIS GASSÉE.** Apple's manager in France, took over the Macintosh division when Jobs was ousted in 1985.

**BILL GATES.** The other computer wunderkind born in 1955.

**ANDY HERTZFELD.** Playful, friendly software engineer and Jobs's pal on the original Mac team.

**JOANNA HOFFMAN.** Original Mac team member with the spirit to stand up to Jobs.

**ELIZABETH HOLMES.** Daniel Kottke's girlfriend at Reed and early Apple employee.

**ROD HOLT.** Chain-smoking Marxist hired by Jobs in 1976 to be the electrical engineer on the Apple II.

**ROBERT IGER.** Succeeded Eisner as Disney CEO in 2005.

**JONATHAN "JONY" IVE.** Chief designer at Apple, became Jobs's partner and confidant.

**ABDULFATTAH "JOHN" JANDALI.** Syrian-born graduate student in Wisconsin who became biological father of Jobs and Mona Simpson, later a food and beverage manager at the Boomtown casino near Reno.

**CLARA HAGOPIAN JOBS.** Daughter of Armenian immigrants, married Paul Jobs in 1946; they adopted Steve soon after his birth in 1955.

**ERIN JOBS.** Middle child of Laurene Powell and Steve Jobs.

**EVE JOBS.** Youngest child of Laurene and Steve.

**PATTY JOBS.** Adopted by Paul and Clara Jobs two years after they adopted Steve.

**PAUL REINHOLD JOBS.** Wisconsin-born Coast Guard seaman who, with his wife, Clara, adopted Steve in 1955.

**REED JOBS.** Oldest child of Steve Jobs and Laurene Powell.

**RON JOHNSON.** Hired by Jobs in 2000 to develop Apple's stores.

**JEFFREY KATZENBERG.** Head of Disney Studios, clashed with Eisner and resigned in 1994 to cofound DreamWorks SKG.

**DANIEL KOTTKE.** Jobs's closest friend at Reed, fellow pilgrim to India, early Apple employee.

**JOHN LASSETER.** Cofounder and creative force at Pixar.

**DAN'L LEWIN.** Marketing exec with Jobs at Apple and then NeXT.



**MIKE MARKKULA.** First big Apple investor and chairman, a father figure to Jobs.

**REGIS MCKENNA.** Publicity whiz who guided Jobs early on and remained a trusted advisor.

**MIKE MURRAY.** Early Macintosh marketing director.

**PAUL OTELLINI.** CEO of Intel who helped switch the Macintosh to Intel chips but did not get the iPhone business.

**LAURENE POWELL.** Savvy and good-humored Penn graduate, went to Goldman Sachs and then Stanford Business School, married Steve Jobs in 1991.

**GEORGE RILEY.** Jobs's Memphis-born friend and lawyer.

**ARTHUR ROCK.** Legendary tech investor, early Apple board member, Jobs's father figure.

**JONATHAN "RUBY" RUBINSTEIN.** Worked with Jobs at NeXT, became chief hardware engineer at Apple in 1997.

**MIKE SCOTT.** Brought in by Markkula to be Apple's president in 1977 to try to manage Jobs.

**JOHN SCULLEY.** Pepsi executive recruited by Jobs in 1983 to be Apple's CEO, clashed with and ousted Jobs in 1985.

**JOANNE SCHIEBLE JANDALI SIMPSON.** Wisconsin-born biological mother of Steve Jobs, whom she put up for adoption, and Mona Simpson, whom she raised.

**MONA SIMPSON.** Biological full sister of Jobs; they discovered their relationship in 1986 and became close. She wrote novels loosely based on her mother Joanne (*Anywhere but Here*), Jobs and his daughter Lisa (*A Regular Guy*), and her father Abdulfattah Jandali (*The Lost Father*).

**ALVY RAY SMITH.** A cofounder of Pixar who clashed with Jobs.

**BURRELL SMITH.** Brilliant, troubled programmer on the original Mac team, afflicted with schizophrenia in the 1990s.

**AVADIS "AVIE" TEVANIAN.** Worked with Jobs and Rubinstein at NeXT, became chief software engineer at Apple in 1997.

**JAMES VINCENT.** A music-loving Brit, the younger partner with Lee Clow and Duncan Milner at the ad agency Apple hired.

**RON WAYNE.** Met Jobs at Atari, became first partner with Jobs and Wozniak at fledgling Apple, but unwisely decided to forgo his equity stake.

**STEPHEN WOZNIAK.** The star electronics geek at Homestead High; Jobs figured out how to package and market his amazing circuit boards and became his partner in founding Apple.

# INTRODUCTION

---

## How This Book Came to Be

In the early summer of 2004, I got a phone call from Steve Jobs. He had been scattershot friendly to me over the years, with occasional bursts of intensity, especially when he was launching a new product that he wanted on the cover of *Time* or featured on CNN, places where I'd worked. But now that I was no longer at either of those places, I hadn't heard from him much. We talked a bit about the Aspen Institute, which I had recently joined, and I invited him to speak at our summer campus in Colorado. He'd be happy to come, he said, but not to be onstage. He wanted instead to take a walk so that we could talk.

That seemed a bit odd. I didn't yet know that taking a long walk was his preferred way to have a serious conversation. It turned out that he wanted me to write a biography of him. I had recently published one on Benjamin Franklin and was writing one about Albert Einstein, and my initial reaction was to wonder, half jokingly, whether he saw himself as the natural successor in that sequence. Because I assumed that he was still in the middle of an oscillating career that had many more ups and downs left, I demurred. Not now, I said. Maybe in a decade or two, when you retire.

I had known him since 1984, when he came to Manhattan to have lunch with *Time*'s editors and extol his new Macintosh. He was petulant even then, attacking a *Time* correspondent for having wounded him with a story that was too revealing. But talking to him afterward, I found myself rather captivated, as so many others have been over the years, by his engaging intensity. We stayed in touch, even after he was ousted from Apple. When he had something to pitch, such as a NeXT computer or Pixar movie, the beam of his charm would suddenly refocus on me, and he would take me to a sushi restaurant in Lower Manhattan to tell me that whatever he was touting was the best thing he had ever produced. I liked him.

When he was restored to the throne at Apple, we put him on the cover of *Time*, and soon thereafter he began offering me his ideas for a series we

were doing on the most influential people of the century. He had launched his “Think Different” campaign, featuring iconic photos of some of the same people we were considering, and he found the endeavor of assessing historic influence fascinating.

After I had deflected his suggestion that I write a biography of him, I heard from him every now and then. At one point I emailed to ask if it was true, as my daughter had told me, that the Apple logo was an homage to Alan Turing, the British computer pioneer who broke the German wartime codes and then committed suicide by biting into a cyanide-laced apple. He replied that he wished he had thought of that, but hadn’t. That started an exchange about the early history of Apple, and I found myself gathering string on the subject, just in case I ever decided to do such a book. When my Einstein biography came out, he came to a book event in Palo Alto and pulled me aside to suggest, again, that he would make a good subject.

His persistence baffled me. He was known to guard his privacy, and I had no reason to believe he’d ever read any of my books. Maybe someday, I continued to say. But in 2009 his wife, Laurene Powell, said bluntly, “If you’re ever going to do a book on Steve, you’d better do it now.” He had just taken a second medical leave. I confessed to her that when he had first raised the idea, I hadn’t known he was sick. Almost nobody knew, she said. He had called me right before he was going to be operated on for cancer, and he was still keeping it a secret, she explained.

I decided then to write this book. Jobs surprised me by readily acknowledging that he would have no control over it or even the right to see it in advance. “It’s your book,” he said. “I won’t even read it.” But later that fall he seemed to have second thoughts about cooperating and, though I didn’t know it, was hit by another round of cancer complications. He stopped returning my calls, and I put the project aside for a while.

Then, unexpectedly, he phoned me late on the afternoon of New Year’s Eve 2009. He was at home in Palo Alto with only his sister, the writer Mona Simpson. His wife and their three children had taken a quick trip to go skiing, but he was not healthy enough to join them. He was in a reflective mood, and we talked for more than an hour. He began by recalling that he had wanted to build a frequency counter when he was twelve, and he was able to look up Bill Hewlett, the founder of HP, in the phone book and call him to get parts. Jobs said that the past twelve years of his life, since his return to Apple, had been his most productive in terms of

creating new products. But his more important goal, he said, was to do what Hewlett and his friend David Packard had done, which was create a company that was so imbued with innovative creativity that it would outlive them.

“I always thought of myself as a humanities person as a kid, but I liked electronics,” he said. “Then I read something that one of my heroes, Edwin Land of Polaroid, said about the importance of people who could stand at the intersection of humanities and sciences, and I decided that’s what I wanted to do.” It was as if he were suggesting themes for his biography (and in this instance, at least, the theme turned out to be valid). The creativity that can occur when a feel for both the humanities and the sciences combine in one strong personality was the topic that most interested me in my biographies of Franklin and Einstein, and I believe that it will be a key to creating innovative economies in the twenty-first century.

I asked Jobs why he wanted me to be the one to write his biography. “I think you’re good at getting people to talk,” he replied. That was an unexpected answer. I knew that I would have to interview scores of people he had fired, abused, abandoned, or otherwise infuriated, and I feared he would not be comfortable with my getting them to talk. And indeed he did turn out to be skittish when word trickled back to him of people that I was interviewing. But after a couple of months, he began encouraging people to talk to me, even foes and former girlfriends. Nor did he try to put anything off-limits. “I’ve done a lot of things I’m not proud of, such as getting my girlfriend pregnant when I was twenty-three and the way I handled that,” he said. “But I don’t have any skeletons in my closet that can’t be allowed out.” He didn’t seek any control over what I wrote, or even ask to read it in advance. His only involvement came when my publisher was choosing the cover art. When he saw an early version of a proposed cover treatment, he disliked it so much that he asked to have input in designing a new version. I was both amused and willing, so I readily assented.

I ended up having more than forty interviews and conversations with him. Some were formal ones in his Palo Alto living room, others were done during long walks and drives or by telephone. During my two years of visits, he became increasingly intimate and revealing, though at times I witnessed what his veteran colleagues at Apple used to call his “reality distortion field.” Sometimes it was the inadvertent misfiring of memory cells that happens to us all; at other times he was spinning his own version

of reality both to me and to himself. To check and flesh out his story, I interviewed more than a hundred friends, relatives, competitors, adversaries, and colleagues.

His wife also did not request any restrictions or control, nor did she ask to see in advance what I would publish. In fact she strongly encouraged me to be honest about his failings as well as his strengths. She is one of the smartest and most grounded people I have ever met. “There are parts of his life and personality that are extremely messy, and that’s the truth,” she told me early on. “You shouldn’t whitewash it. He’s good at spin, but he also has a remarkable story, and I’d like to see that it’s all told truthfully.”

I leave it to the reader to assess whether I have succeeded in this mission. I’m sure there are players in this drama who will remember some of the events differently or think that I sometimes got trapped in Jobs’s distortion field. As happened when I wrote a book about Henry Kissinger, which in some ways was good preparation for this project, I found that people had such strong positive and negative emotions about Jobs that the Rashomon effect was often evident. But I’ve done the best I can to balance conflicting accounts fairly and be transparent about the sources I used.

This is a book about the roller-coaster life and searingly intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing. You might even add a seventh, retail stores, which Jobs did not quite revolutionize but did reimagine. In addition, he opened the way for a new market for digital content based on apps rather than just websites. Along the way he produced not only transforming products but also, on his second try, a lasting company, endowed with his DNA, that is filled with creative designers and daredevil engineers who could carry forward his vision. In August 2011, right before he stepped down as CEO, the enterprise he started in his parents’ garage became the world’s most valuable company.

This is also, I hope, a book about innovation. At a time when the United States is seeking ways to sustain its innovative edge, and when societies around the world are trying to build creative digital-age economies, Jobs stands as the ultimate icon of inventiveness, imagination, and sustained innovation. He knew that the best way to create value in the twenty-first century was to connect creativity with technology, so he built a company where leaps of the imagination were combined with remarkable feats of

engineering. He and his colleagues at Apple were able to think differently: They developed not merely modest product advances based on focus groups, but whole new devices and services that consumers did not yet know they needed.

He was not a model boss or human being, tidily packaged for emulation. Driven by demons, he could drive those around him to fury and despair. But his personality and passions and products were all interrelated, just as Apple's hardware and software tended to be, as if part of an integrated system. His tale is thus both instructive and cautionary, filled with lessons about innovation, character, leadership, and values.

Shakespeare's *Henry V*—the story of a willful and immature prince who becomes a passionate but sensitive, callous but sentimental, inspiring but flawed king—begins with the exhortation “O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend / The brightest heaven of invention.” For Steve Jobs, the ascent to the brightest heaven of invention begins with a tale of two sets of parents, and of growing up in a valley that was just learning how to turn silicon into gold.

# STEVE JOBS

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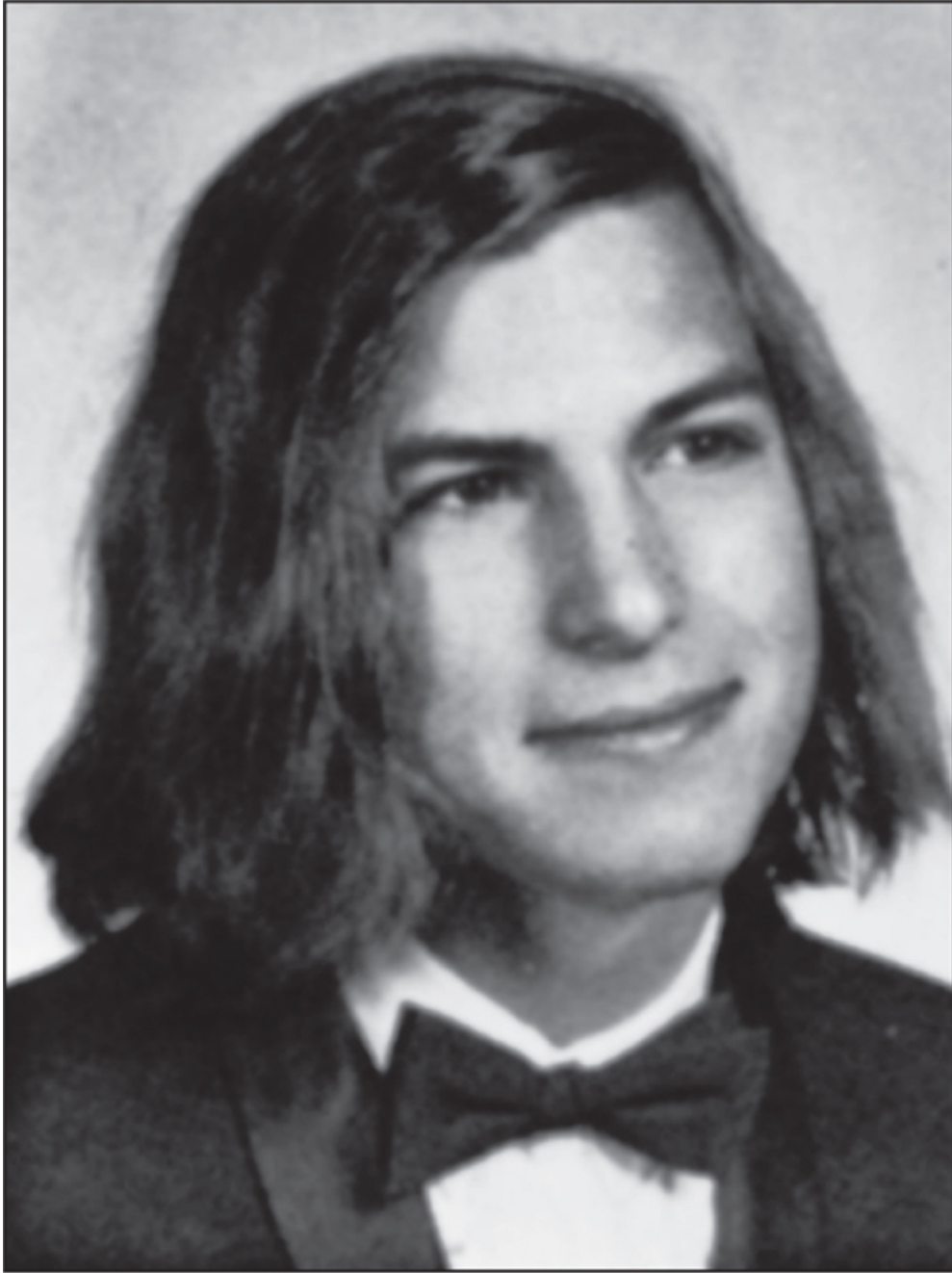




*Paul Jobs with Steve, 1956*



*The Los Altos house with the garage where Apple was born*



*In the Homestead High yearbook, 1972*