

THE RAT PACK

*Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr.:
their lives, music and how they became the hottest act in 1950s Las Vegas.*

An illustrated lecture presented by Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

‘The Rat Pack’ brings to mind three 1950s Las Vegas performers: Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr. ... but the whole story is not as clear-cut!

Although these three great performers formed the core of an infamous group of Las Vegas entertainers, the original ‘Rat Pack’ was conjured up in the early 1950s by Hollywood legends Humphrey Bogart and wife Lauren Bacall (who came up with the name) and included famous actors, comedians, song-writers and singers, such as Katherine Hepburn, Tony Curtis, Sammy Cahn, Judy Garland, George Raft, Burt Lancaster and Clark Gable.

The late-50s Sinatra/Martin/Davis incarnation of The Rat Pack also had ‘peripheral members’, such as Hollywood B-list actor Peter Lawford and nightclub entertainer Joey Bishop. Lawford was included for his marital connection to then senator John F. Kennedy and Bishop served as onstage host. Even the great Shirley MacLaine reveled in the status of her association with these bad-boys of entertainment.

Although the volatile Sinatra never approved of the name ‘Rat Pack’, as ‘Chairman of the Board’, he regularly fell out - then in again - with his fellow performers. Sinatra’s ‘Summits’ (his preferred name for their stage-show) became a highly successful – and often controversial – act, based at a legendary entertainment center on the Strip: The Copa Room at *The Sands Hotel & Casino*.

Various ‘Associates’ (as Sinatra called Rat Pack hangers-on), also appeared in a series of Sinatra-funded movies, the most successful of which was *Ocean’s Eleven* of 1960. That decade saw the rise of new styles of popular music and the changing tastes of Las Vegas audiences resulted in a decline in the appeal of the improvised frat-like stage-show for which The Rat Pack was (in)famous.

This presentation outlines the history of the formation and personnel of The Rat Pack and includes the great songs of Sinatra, Martin and Davis ... singing along is encouraged ☺

DURATION: c1 hour

FEE: \$275.00

EXPENSES: a contribution toward travel costs is appreciated.

Thank you for considering my proposal and please contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

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REFERENCES, RECOMMENDATIONS & REVIEWS

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