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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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More Frey Fallout From "Larry King"

James Frey's limp appearance on "Larry King" -- and especially Oprah's surprise phone call at the finale -- seems to be winning him support. The traditional media describes Oprah as backing Frey, but in fact she pointedly didn't. Oprah said she was disappointed by the controversy, but she stood by the book because it was still powerful. I wouldn't look for Frey to come back on her show anytime soon. Larry King, of course, failed to ask a point blank question: Did you ever brawl with a cop? Did you ever assault a priest? Frey was probably thrilled.

[Publishers Weekly](#) covers the uproar in the book world, with some people saying they don't care as long as the book sells. But most, like acclaimed memoirist Mary Karr, are furious both with Frey and for his publisher acting as if it's no big deal to take a novel offered as fiction and market it as someone's true life story.

Frey didn't change certain details about the most dramatic and shocking events in his life: he made them all up! The string of arrests, the brawl with police (which figures prominently as a recurring motif), the pummeling of an Italian priest who made a clumsy pass, the claim that cops were investigating him as a drug lord -- all of it is apparently a lie.

He didn't exaggerate or change some details. He *made them up*. They never happened. And there is no definition of a memoir that includes major events that never happened. A dull, everyday DUI arrest is turned into a titanic brawl with cops? A half open bottle of beer is turned into crack cocaine? That's not embellishment. That's lying.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 1:21 PM



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