

Joan Crawford – No More Wire Hangers

Perfect Face, Perfect Body

Chewed gum because it firmed her jaw and drain toxins.

Splash her face 25 times with ice cold water. [1](#) [2](#)

Now approaching 50, she was drinking heavily. Her beauty depended increasingly on elaborate foundation garments and heavy make-up, and she became increasingly fearful of being eclipsed by younger actresses. [3](#)

Personal Symbolism

A quote from the film *Mommie Dearest*:

*"No... wire... hangers. What's wire hangers doing in this closet when I told you: no wire hangers EVER? I work and work 'till I'm half-dead, and I hear people saying, "She's getting old." And what do I get? A daughter... who cares as much about the beautiful dresses I give her... as she cares about me. What's wire hangers doing in this closet? Answer me. **I buy you beautiful dresses, and you treat them like they were some dishrag. You do. Three-hundred dollar dress on a wire hanger.** We'll see how many you've got if they're hidden somewhere. We'll see... we'll see. Get out of that bed. All of this is coming out. Out. Out. Out. Out. Out. Out. You've got any more? We're gonna see how many wire hangers you've got in your closet. Wire hangers, why? Why? Christina, get out of that bed. Get out of that bed. You live in the most beautiful house in Brentwood and you don't care if your clothes are stretched out from wire hangers. **And your room looks like some two-dollar-a-week furnished room in some two-bit back street town in Oklahoma.** Get up. Get up. Clean up this mess." [4](#)*

Wire hangers seemed to remind Joan Crawford of her humble upbringing. Wire hangers symbolized all that Joan had overcome and to see a person whom she raised to be better than that outraged her.

Icons and Idols/ Stardom and Royalty

A brief history of Joan from Princeton.edu: Joan Crawford (March 23, ca. 1904[1] – May 10, 1977), born Lucille Fay LeSueur, was an American actress in film, television and theatre.

Starting as a dancer in traveling theatrical companies before debuting as a chorine on Broadway, Crawford was signed to a motion picture contract by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1925. Initially frustrated by the size and quality of her parts, Crawford began a campaign of self-publicity and became nationally known as a flapper by the end of the 1920s. In the 1930s, Crawford's fame rivaled, and later outlasted, MGM colleagues Norma Shearer and Greta Garbo. Crawford often played hardworking young women who find romance and success. These "rags-to-riches" stories were well received by Depression-era audiences and were popular with women. Crawford became one of Hollywood's most prominent movie stars and one of the highest paid women in the United States, but her films began losing money and by the end of the 1930s she was labeled "Box Office Poison". But her career gradually improved in the early 1940s, and she made a major comeback in 1945 by starring in *Mildred Pierce*, for which she won the Academy Award for Best Actress.

In 1955, she became involved with the Pepsi-Cola Company through her marriage to company Chairman Alfred Steele. After his death in 1959, Crawford was elected to fill his vacancy on the board of directors but was forcibly retired in 1973. She continued acting in film and television regularly through the 1960s, when her performances became fewer; after the release of the British horror film *Trog* in 1970, Crawford retired from the screen. Following a public appearance in 1974, after which unflattering photographs were published, Crawford withdrew from public life and became increasingly reclusive until her death in 1977.

Crawford married four times. Her first three marriages ended in divorce; the last ended with the death of husband Alfred Steele. She adopted five children, one of whom was reclaimed by his birth mother. Crawford's relationships with her two older children, Christina and Christopher, were acrimonious. Crawford disinherited the two and, after Crawford's death, Christina wrote a "tell-all" memoir, *Mommie Dearest*, in which she alleged a lifelong pattern of physical and emotional abuse perpetrated by Crawford.

Joan Crawford was voted the tenth greatest female star in the history of American cinema by the American Film Institute. [5](#)