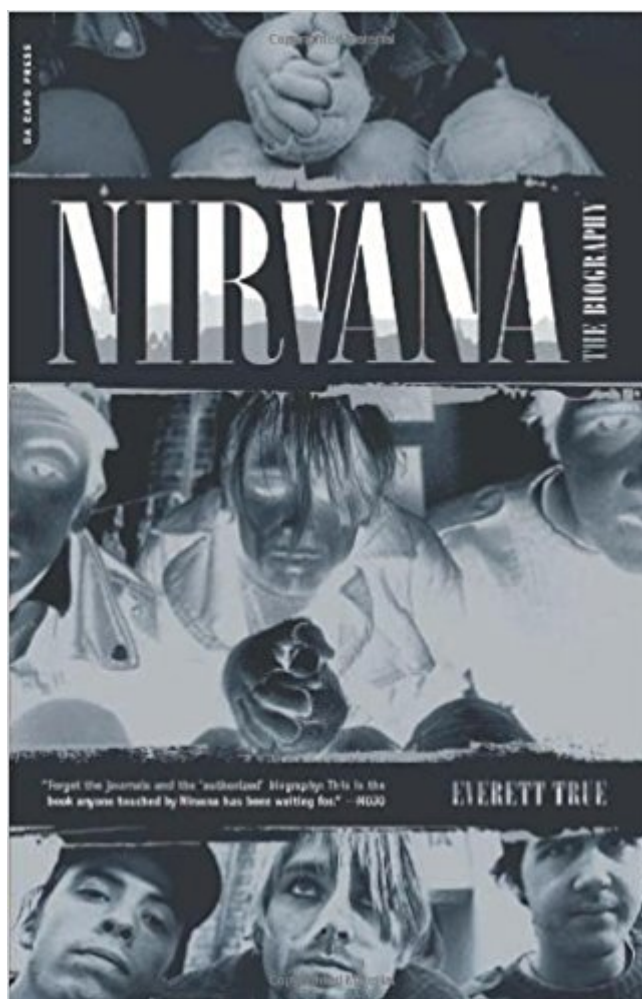


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Nirvana: The Biography



Synopsis

As the assistant editor of *Melody Maker*, Everett True was the first journalist to cover the Seattle music scene in early 1989 and interview Nirvana. He is responsible for bringing Hole, Pavement, Soundgarden, and a host of other bands to international attention. He introduced Kurt Cobain to Courtney Love, performed on stage with Nirvana on numerous occasions, and famously pushed Kurt onto the stage of the Reading Festival in 1992 in a wheelchair. *Nirvana: The Biography* is an honest, moving, incisive, and heartfelt re-evaluation of a band that has been misrepresented time and time again since its tragic demise in April 1994 following Kurt Cobain's suicide. True captures what the band was really like. He also discusses the music scene of the time-the fellow bands, the scenes, the seminars, the countless live dates, the friends and allies and drug dealers. Drawn from hundreds of original interviews, *Nirvana: The Biography* is the final word on Nirvana, Cobain, and Seattle grunge.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

On page 131, our author states, "I used to say that the only goal I ever had with my writing was to make people jealous of me." That doesn't necessarily make our author a likeable character, and pretty much overshadowed my enjoyment of the book for about the first half. The chapter where he met Courtney, is a total waste of space. It has nothing to do with the band and he's just alluding to how close they supposedly got, like he's baiting us to care. Please don't take the 3 star review to mean this is not an enjoyable book. It is. I flew through its nearly 600 pages in a couple days and it was quite the page turner. But all of this "this is how it really was" talk seems kind of hard to believe.

For starters, Mr. True was supposedly drunk all the time so it's hard to really believe he remembers facts from these events so long ago. Also, when Kurt and Courtney hook up, he takes on the annoying practice of referring to them as "Kurtney." The book doesn't mention Dave Grohl much at all, and a lot of his stories DO seem to be only to make you wish you were him. But hearing countless stories of waking up with vomit caked to your clothes, or being wasted everynight, or waking up naked in a strange apartment, really kind of kill that desire. He calls himself "the man who invented grunge" and a Legend.. and I have no love for such arrogance. In the introduction, he constantly gets off topic and then rights himself, saying "This is a book about Nirvana." I wish he did this DURING the book himself. Wasting countless pages on Calvin Johnson, Mudhoney, and Melvins worship. Another problem with the book is the sheer amount of errors of things we could actually prove (events recorded for all to see).

A deeply frustrating read: The journalist with possibly the best access to the band and their contemporaries has royally screwed up a fine opportunity to produce the definitive account of Nirvana. Everett True - a writer with Brit music mag Melody Maker at the time Nirvana broke - is incapable of not placing himself at the centre of events and telling us what HE did, what HIS musical tastes were, how much HE was drinking, the drugs HE did or didn't take ...But I'm not interested in Everett True. I don't care about Everett True. I care about Kurt Cobain. No matter how hard True tries to catch the sprinkling of stardust - and God knows, he doesn't fail through lack of effort - it's obvious from his writing that none of it settled. His tragic lack of self-awareness deludes him into thinking we're interested in the cult of HIS personailty, rather than that of Nirvana and their music. And the book crashes to earth with a depressing jolt each time we're reminded of the author's tedious presence. Which happens a lot. Most pages. Where there is new information or an interview of interest, our fascination quickly becomes lost as True once more bludgeons himself into the story. True perhaps mistakenly thinks that his personal style is what will mark his book out as unique and special. Up to a point he could've been right, but he forgets the old adage that less is more. Instead he seems intent on telling us how unique and special HE is rather than channelling his efforts into the book. There, style spills over into content and what could've been a brilliant book is left fighting for its breath, dying to rise to the surface, but crushed under the weight of the author's ego. The lack of editing is sorely felt.

I found this to be pretty interesting, and without a doubt in-depth bio of the band. Similar to the guy that wrote the Neil Young bio, "Shakey," a couple years back Everett True spends too much time

talking about himself and spewing his own opinions though. We get it man-you drank a bunch back then and forgot what happened at a lot of the shows. You don't have to remind us of this fact every five pages. The book does turn into a Kurt and Courtney bio in the last quarter-which is kinda a bummer since it would have been interesting to learn more about how the Foo Fighters came to be a full-time band and how Pat Smear (who seemed to be closer to Kurt than Dave was towards the end) ended up in the original line-up of the Foos. True didn't get any new direct interviews with surviving band members for this bio, but he does talk with many an insider who certainly give some interesting perspective and dish. There are a ton of footnotes and chapter ending "addendas" which make this bio stray a bit from the usual formula. I think the footnotes could have been bi-passed (especially since they often seem there just to include even more of True's opinions on different bands) but many of the addendas do prove interesting. I dunno, I just wish more music bio writers would just reign in their egos a bit and tell the story of the musicians they're writing about instead of letting us all know their personal opinion on every other band that was releasing records at that time. If you want a couple of good examples of this, read "Our Band Could Be Your Life" by Azzerad, or the Keith Moon bio "Moon" by Tony Fletcher. Those are rock bios done right. I think True's voice also kinda hurts this book because he seems to have kinda fallen out of love with rock and roll.

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