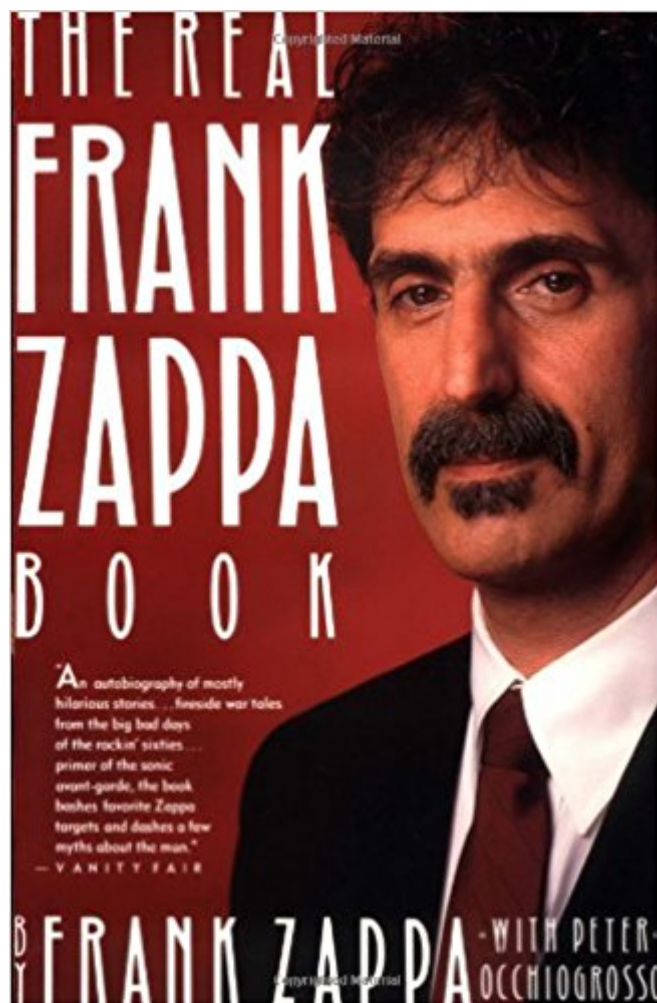


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The Real Frank Zappa Book



Synopsis

The brash and outrageously funny autobiography of music legend Frank Zappa--now in trade paperback. Here is the real story of how he became the state of the art in weirdness, as only he can tell it: wild rock 'n' roll road stories, confrontations with bureaucratic idiocy, and more.

Black-and-white photographs and line drawings throughout.

Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 170 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

This is the second-best way to expose yourself to the particular genius of Frank Zappa (music is the best, after all)--through his own words. In addition to being an idiosyncratic American composer of some degree of controversy, Zappa was an orator of no small ability or scope. He was known for his ability to expound at great length (and to hilarious effect) on any number of topics. The Real Frank Zappa Book faithfully captures this side of its author, composed of essays on everything from his background and upbringing, to politics, capitalism, and raising children. Zappa takes the opportunity to dispel some of the most pervasive rumors that surrounded him right up to (and even persist after) his death in 1993 (no he didn't do drugs, or sleep with all those groupies). If you're familiar with the man, you will be able to hear his distinctive enunciations (aided by the bold-facing of certain words and Zappaisms) as you read the assorted road stories, his views on making music for a living, and scenes from two--count them, two--organized hearings on obscenity in music. Of course, the chapter titles speak for themselves and include such Zappa winners as "All About Schmucks," "Marriage (As a Dada Concept)," and "America Drinks and Goes Marching."

Determined to write a book that had "real stuff in it," the outspoken Zappa, one of the most inventive and controversial artists of the past 20 years, is frank, often disgusting, and always entertaining in describing his life ("How weird am I, anyway?"), his philosophy of music ("Take it or leave it, I now will this to be music"), and art in general ("The most important thing in art is The Frame"). Zappa also relates his opinions about the music performing and recording industries, but then rattles on about a myriad of things: church, drugs, yuppies, politics. The book would have benefited from a discography and a bibliography. Recommended for libraries with large pop culture collections.- Donald W. Maxwell, Carmel Clay P.L., Ind. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Some of it is Frank's own hand penning his life story, some of it is interview transcriptions, and there are some really cool original Frank Zappa drawings and pictures included. I should tell you that I've been a huge fan of Frank and his music since I was 12 (58 now). So I may be little biased. But I absolutely loved this! Some of it, like his opinions about his past musicians who I have held upon a pedestal, was surprising. And I had no idea about the circumstances he grew up under. Then his description of California in the early days of the Mothers was just so classically Frank Zappa. I felt like I was there. Just like in his music, Frank says so much while saying so little. And there's a rhythmic pentameter to his prose to where you can just hear him talking when you read it, especially when he's got his tongue in his cheek. I think most people will like this book, but for Zappa fans, I can't believe you haven't got it yet.

Love! Love! LOVE! Frank, but mostly his music. Therefore, I was really into the book until about page 199. After that, it was more about his political and social insights. Interesting stuff, and I've heard many of them before, but not why I came here. I came here for the music, and 60% of the book does not disappoint. I enjoyed reading a little about the early pre-music years, but once he gets to his building interest in music, I was enraptured. I love the fact that his main love, to begin, was orchestrated music, not rock and roll which was only in its infant stages at the time of Zappa's budding music career. I loved hearing about the forming of his first band the Black-Outs; Studio Z (his run-in with the law as he took work to merely survive); his burgeoning recording skills; his relationship with Don Van Vliet; the Soul Giants and taking over that band to build the Mothers which became Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention. He goes a little bit into post-Mothers material but then it stops There's A LOT! we don't hear about post-mothers: the various band members and their stories, the recording of the music during those later years (basically Waka

Jawaka to the date of the writing of TRFZB). I'm really not that interested in on-the-road stories, what beer does to Americans, schmucks, Porn Wars (very irrelevant with MP3s being popular today), church and state (and it should be titled Evangelical Freud instead, or something to that effect) and so on. But overall, I enjoyed the book quite a bit, thus the four stars. Thanks Frank. RIP, brother.

All of the answers you wanted to your questions about Zappa are here! If you like Zappa's music and humor, I HIGHLY recommend reading his autobiography "The Real Frank Zappa Book". You'll get the real story behind all the ridiculous urban legends you heard about this man. I guarantee you will be laughing your backside off before page 3. I recall the first time I picked this up on a display at a Walden's books. I randomly turned to a page and started to read. It was all about how to deal with militant Islamic jihadiis. I was laughing so hard I was doubled over, convulsing and had tears in my eyes. The store clerks probably thought I was having a stroke. *Learn about what Zappa really likes to eat and what he thought of the food at a Fayetteville North Carolina Holiday Inn buffet. *Read about how his kids used to raid his studio fridge so he inevitably didn't get to eat that stuff he really liked. *Become enlightened to learn that "coffee and cigarettes are food" (no wonder this man died so young) *Discover the secret ingredients of the "Burnt Weenie Sandwich" and how to make your very own burnt weenie sandwich. *Uncover the horrible, disgusting historical facts about those New Yorkers who were willing to climb and writhe around on stage and "Call Any Vegetable". *Revel in the outrageous details of life in that rental home up in Laurel Canyon. *Find out who the weird chick is peering up out of the crypt on Hot Rats. *Discover why Zappa hated England and the Queen. *Get the sordid biological facts about Kenny's little creatures and his disgusting bedroom window. *Find out how a young Zappa nearly blew his "nuts" off with a jar of ping-pong ball filings and a book of matches. Zappa is lovably irreverent from page one all the way to the end. There's lots of interesting pictures including a 3 year-old Zappa in shorts with a cap gun. By the time I finished this book I found myself wondering how someone so incredibly brilliant could also be so stupid and ignorant with respect to basic nutrition and health. In some ways I'm sort of angry he did not take better care of himself and we were robbed of his brilliance at far too young of an age. We really needed Zappa throughout the "W" years.

Interesting and insightful as to Zappa's music career and intellect. Zappa was a unique individual whose creativity in music was at times genius. Very much enjoyed his take on reality in the time period that he lived. Fascinating!

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