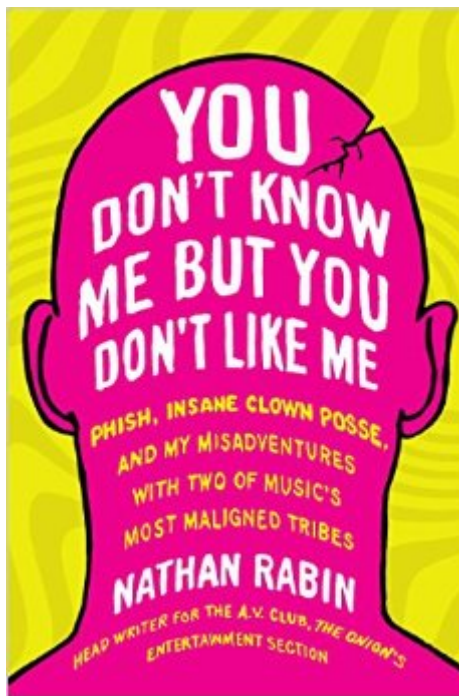


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You Don't Know Me But You Don't Like Me: Phish, Insane Clown Posse, And My Misadventures With Two Of Music's Most Maligned Tribes



Synopsis

One of Rolling Stone's 20 Best Music Books of 2013 When memoirist and head writer for The A.V. Club Nathan Rabin first set out to write about obsessed music fans, he had no idea the journey would take him to the deepest recesses of both the pop culture universe and his own mind. For two very curious years, Rabin, who Mindy Kaling called "a smart and funny" in The New Yorker, hit the road with two of music's most well-established fanbases: Phish's hippie fans and Insane Clown Posse's notorious "Juggalos." Musically or style-wise, these two groups could not be more different from each other, and Rabin, admittedly, was a cynic about both bands. But once he gets deep below the surface, past the caricatures and into the essence of their collective cultures, he discovers that both groups have tapped into the human need for community. Rabin also grapples with his own mental well-being "he discovers that he is bipolar" and his journey is both a prism for cultural analysis and a deeply personal exploration, equal parts humor and heart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book caught my interest when I read about it in the back of a Rolling Stone magazine. Being a Phish fan I naturally wanted to check it out as anything about my favorite band sparks my interest. However, the thought of mashing ICP with Phish seemed appalling. I have to admit I've had zero interest in ICP - if anything I've been snobby and judgmental towards them. My knowledge of them has been the tidbits I've heard in the media. After reading this book I have respect for ICP and realized that I'm simply guilty of judging a book by its cover. Judging ICP and their fans is like

judging Phish heads for what they do w/o fully understanding why they do what they do. Fact is when music touches you and you find your 'people' it truly is the gift of a lifetime and no one has the right to judge that. I think the line that really hit me hard was when the author and his girlfriend were standing in line to see ICP and a man with a scar on his face turned around and mentioned that this is the only place where he doesn't feel like a freak. That really hit me because even free thinking people can become jaded and judgmental. Though I don't consider myself a juggalo and probably won't go see ICP my eyes are open and I have respect for them and their tribe. The Phish portions were great as I feel like the author maintained a presence in the audience/crowd vs. got in the inside. I've been seeing Phish for almost 20 years now and during that time I've bumped into them in the lot, hotels, etc... Each time I found myself with nothing to say. There's something mystique about Phish and sometimes I wonder if meeting the band would ruin it. That's what I found cool about this book is it kind of maintained that aspect and kept it real. Anyhow - I rec'd picking this one up its a good one. P.S. As messed up as your life was during the course of events while writing this book - it seems fitting much like a Phish song. Perhaps like Antelope - starts out normal, gets crazy, then finds itself again to land everyone home peacefully. ;-)

I hate that I can't finish this book. I usually finish everything, but I'm going to go with the "life's too short to waste on boring books" philosophy for this one. It seems like the author (and he admits this) is just trying to fill pages. Very repetitive (how many times can you write that a show was a good time? (Answer: 257 pages of times)). He admits to being anxious that he wouldn't be able to fill a book and the reader can tell. Also, there is no mention of his mental illness... just all of a sudden, one day, he is "falling apart" by his own definition. However, there is no evidence of this behaviorally, no explanation of how it came on, if it's ever happened in the past, is he used to it or is this something totally new, it's confusing to the reader. We get 4 chapters of normal mental acuity and then all of a sudden, there are a few pages saying he's crazy. Since it's so out of nowhere, and doesn't have much to back it up, it seems kind of... I hate to say this but... self-indulgent. (For the record, I have a mental illness and I also treat people with MI. I don't look down on it. I just don't think he writes about his experience very convincingly.) The main topic of the book (the author's experience following two very different bands) is such a weird concept that the writing would have to be really tight and focused to pull that off and it wasn't. It could have been a great book, but he let it slip away. The author rambles and seems lost in his writing. It's one thing to be emotionally lost and write about it, while it's another to have lost your focus and subject matter completely. I don't give reviews that often and I don't enjoy giving bad ones but I really had to put this book down after

giving it a couple of weeks of tries.

I loved the idea of this book. Maybe I was projecting too much of what I wanted it to be. An anthropological look at ICP and Phish fans through the lens of a funny pop culture writer? Sounds like a great read. Too bad that's not what this book is. I think the author started out with this intention, but halfway through, he admits that his vision for it had changed. Instead it would be a love letter to his Phish-fan girlfriend. Then again, the book didn't turn out to be that, either. Lacking vision, it becomes a druggy travelogue. Basically the author tells his drug stories, which later in the book he admits aren't very interesting if you aren't the one experiencing them. Exactly. It's a real shame, because I really would like to learn more about ICP fans and Phish fans. I'd like to hear their stories and what motivates them to follow these bands. There's maybe three or four pages in the book that talks about it in a quick summation. The rest of the book is about the author doing drugs and talking about his mental breakdown. The mental breakdown is supposed to be the arc of the story, but it doesn't really work because we're really not invested in the author. The author does seem to have interesting back story, but since it's only hinted at, I don't really know him or care, and therefore really don't care about his mental breakdown. The writing is hard to follow and changes direction often. When he does talk about certain fans, they're forgotten sentences later as the direction shifts yet again. I wonder if this is more a function of the author being hazy and under the influence during most of the encounters. The only good thing I'd say about the book is it would make a good beach read -- you know, when the material is light, you can look away often to check out the surf and other beachgoers, and return to it without having to really worry about where you last left off.

Self-indulgent rambling drug-use anecdotes do not a good book make. Unique subject matter in terms of the bands, but not the protagonist. His self-awareness of his poor writing didn't help either. Would not recommend except out of morbid curiosity. The drug stories weren't even that good, but at least I know how to score Molly at my next concert.

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