



This Is a Call: The Life and Times of Dave Grohl

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This Is a Call, the first in-depth, definitive biography of Dave Grohl, tells the epic story of a singular career that includes Nirvana, Foo Fighters, Queens of the Stone Age, and Them Crooked Vultures. Based on ten years of original, exclusive interviews with the man himself and conversations with a legion of musical associates like Queens of the Stone Age frontman Josh Homme, DC punk legend Ian MacKaye, and *Nevermind* producer Butch Vig, this is Grohl's story. He speaks candidly and honestly about Kurt Cobain, the arguments that almost tore Nirvana apart, the feuds that threatened to derail the Foo Fighters's global success, and the dark days that almost caused him to quit music for good. Dave Grohl has emerged as one of the most recognizable and respected musicians in the world. He is the last true hero to emerge from the American underground. *This Is a Call* vividly recounts this incredible rock 'n' roll journey.

This Is a Call: The Life and Times of Dave Grohl Details

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Author : Paul Brannigan

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From Reader Review This Is a Call: The Life and Times of Dave Grohl for online ebook

Krista McCracken says

This is a Call was an interesting read, and did provide bits of inside into the life of Dave Grohl. However, it is clear that this is not an authorized biography, the book is packed with 'filler.' Brannigan describes at lengths the development of the US punk-rock scene, which though interesting doesn't directly focus on Grohl. Sometime it seems as though only a few lines in a single chapter actually relate to the person the biography is about (eg. The introduction of Nirvana in the book). Overall, the book wasn't a bad read -- but it felt more like bits of rock journalism stitched together, than an in-depth biography.

Greg says

I'm a big Dave Grohl fan (I have a picture of him hanging in my hallway and asked the wife if 'Grohl' could be our young son's middle name. She didn't think I was serious) and received this book as a present from the aforementioned missus.

I read a bit, but initially found it a bit smug and kind of 'I know Dave', 'one time Dave said to me' and 'I think that Dave' blah, blah, blah. I put it down and consigned it to the doom of being tucked 'just under the bed'. Then, one day, I treated myself to a soaky bath and wanted something to read while I shrivelled. So I grabbed this book and continued from where I left off.

As I said, I'm a Dave Grohl fan. As well as following his career since Nirvana as closely as possible (including seeing the Foos some 7 or 8 times live), I've also read numerous books on Nirvana, Kurt Cobain, the Foos and Dave himself, as well as Wikipedia entries and so on.

Where this book differs, for me, is that because it is written by a journalist, it answers the 5 Ws all journalists should answer (Who did What, Where, When and Why) and it adds in How too. And so rather than just say, Dave decided he liked punk and then he decided to play drums and then he got in a group and then got in Nirvana, this tells us more about why that happened. The music scene around where he grew up, the characters that went with it and the other people along the way.

Yes it diverts off at some length about this band or that, or this person and them, and they have seemingly little relevance to the Dave Grohl of today, but the truth is they had an impact on him then and helped him on the course that fans of him today find him.

Having made my way through what is a rather lengthy tale, I find that I have pretty much followed his entire life - surely the purpose of a biography - until present(ish) day.

Yes, the actual contribution from Dave Grohl himself in terms of quotes is limited, but the research, additional quotes and contributions from others helps to tell the story.

Those who have read this will remember that Dave is quoted therein stating that he doesn't want to put his whole self on display. "I want to save a bit of me for me," he is quoted as saying. Therefore, we're highly unlikely to ever see an autobiography or maybe even an 'authorised' biography of him.

As substitutes go, *This Is A Call: The Life And Times Of Dave Grohl* is an exceptional alternative.

Denny says

Paul Brannigan states early in the book that it is not an authorized biography of Dave Grohl, and he means it.

If you're looking for an actual biography of Dave Grohl, look elsewhere or wait for the authorized bio.

This Is a Call is the history of the rise of punk/hardcore/metal rock music as only a journalist who's spent a lifetime chronicling it can tell it. It just happens to have plenty of quotes from and biographical anecdotes about the gifted, hard-working, and highly talented Dave Grohl and the parts that he and the various bands of which he's been a member have played in that history.

I checked *This Is a Call* out because I thought it was a Dave Grohl biography; I have been a fan of his since the first Foo Fighters album came out and have only grown to like and respect him more as his career developed. I so like Dave & the Foo Fighters that I recently took my 12-year old daughter to see them in concert, her first, and it was a wonderful evening for us.

Despite it not being a real biography, though, I was not at all disappointed in the book. It is well-written, interesting, entertaining, and compelling, at times even hard to put down. And I found very few typos & grammatical errors, which always makes me happy. If you're into punk/metal/hardcore music and are interested in its history, you'll definitely like *This Is a Call*. The Dave Grohl bits are simply a bonus.

Michael says

A book about Dave Grohl (even an unauthorized book about Dave Grohl) should not be this plodding and dull. Grohl is one of the feel-good rockers of this generation, and he deserves a lively biography. But Brannigan's insistence on filling pages with a peripheral history of punk rock stops this story dead in its tracks and takes the focus (far) off Grohl.

Colleen says

I've been stalled for a month now. I seriously skipped a chunk of the history of punk rock. Don't get me wrong, I like punk rock and music in general, but I kinda wanted to read about Dave Grohl. I get that he likes music, but do I need to understand how some band in DC formed to understand that Dave liked them and went to see them in concert?

Brad Sorensen says

I love the Foo Fighters, Nirvana, and Dave Grohl. I can't get enough. I was excited when I heard about this book. The first 100 pages were a disappointment as the authors just name drops every punk band that ever existed and there is next to nothing about Dave Grohl, even though it is allegedly a biography. But then it gets good. The Nirvana section is captivating. And the Foo Fighters section goes album by album with in-depth information and reviews. It was great for a junkie like me. My only quibble is the author's assertion that One by One is the weakest Foo Fighters album. Hogwash! It's in the top three without question.

Librariasaurus says

Starts out really slow and is totally cluttered by all the DC punk scene history, this is one of the better unauthorized music bios I have read.

Dave Grohl is a pleasure to read about simply because he rocks. He's not the typical rockstar but at the same time can still express modesty at being labelled the nicest guy in rock.

There were moments in this book where I found myself laughing out loud at Dave's fan boy antics when meeting members of the bands he loved growing up and also moments where I thought "wow, this guy is actually human, just a regular dude who happens to front one of music's biggest contemporary acts"

I recommend this to Foo fans, Nirvana fans, punk fans and music fans in general. This is a bio you simply cannot go past.

I had anticipated a deluge of Nirvana, with this bring an unauthorized bio, but Brannigan has managed to pepper the right amount throughout. The closing lines of the book were fantastic, truly bringing the book home and showing the Dave really is still just a punk from Virginia.

VegasGal says

It's unfortunate when a book gets so bogged down with other unnecessary information it gets to be a chore to read... and it clearly doesn't have enough stories about the original purpose to sustain an entire book so it needed to rely on other stories to attempt to dazzle the reader. I normally don't rate books I couldn't finish, but this particular book wasn't all that good in the 58% of it that I did manage to trudge through, so I thought it needed a rating. If you don't mind minimal facts/stories about Grohl himself, and lots more about the punk scene, Cobain and various other stuff, then read this book, otherwise it's probably best to hold your ponies for another Grohl bio and skip this one.

Sharon Burgin says

Paul Brannigan was the renowned editor of Kerrang! magazine between 2005 and 2009. He then went on to write a short book on sayings from Lemmy of Motorhead. This is probably where Paul Brannigan should stay - writing short articles and books.

Although only 353 pages long, this book seemed to drag on. It was more of a history to punk and music from the early 90's to today, than an autobiography of Dave Grohl.

It was very interesting to read about the music industry, but it seems that Paul cannot get out of the editorial mode by listing every artist, in every group (name dropping as much as possible) and then giving the history behind lyrics in every song on every record.

He had the habit of getting side tracked into some music trivia and then realising that he had to get back to the biography. By which time a couple of years may have passed and you end up jumping backwards and forwards in time. I thought that I had missed a couple of pages when Paul started talking about Dave going on stage with his wife and daughter on the sidelines. It wasn't until the next chapter that you were told about him getting married.

This book can probably be recommended for hard core Nirvana or Foo Fighter fans, who will wallow in all of the trivia.

If Paul had stuck to the biography and told Dave's story alone, I feel that it would have pulled together better and would not have felt like a chore to finish.

Trisha says

This was a nice present from my brother and his wife for Christmas, and I finally got around to reading it!! Though I loved what I was reading, it still took me a fair while to get it done, which seems strange. But anyway...this is not the kind of book you should read if you're not interested in music. Maybe you're interested in Dave Grohl, maybe you've got a little crush on the purported "nicest man in rock" (though the man himself disputes he's this ALL of the time)...but if you're wanting to read 400 pages about Dave, this isn't the book for you. This is definitely a good read for anyone who loves rock music and is interested in the history of certain genres in America (and elsewhere, for that matter).

The book has a great focus on the punk/hardcore scene of Washington D.C., since that's what Dave Grohl grew up on so to speak. It also touches on other areas like, naturally, grunge, and also the underground (or overground in the case of Metallica) metal scene. It does tell Dave's story, from humble beginnings to where he is today. And it was news to me that Foo Fighters had had such dramatic moments in their history. I guess I've lost the desire to stay totally on the pulse with my favourite musicians' personal lives - I was really into that as a teenager, but the phase has passed me by - so I didn't pay attention to any of this stuff while it was actually happening. One thing that Dave Grohl hasn't lost, it seems, is his utter enthusiasm for life, for music, etc. He's gotta be just a little bit ADD, surely? hehe

I loved how the book ended, with that scene with Dave, Pat Smear and Krist Novoselic revisiting some "mouldy oldies". What I would have given to be in or near that room while that particular jam session was going on! Anyway, in conclusion this is a great read for anyone who's enthusiastic about music in general. Not just Dave Grohl. But it does help if you're interested in his story! And yes, Kurt is mentioned a lot. For other people apparently this was a problem, but for me, who hasn't read any Nirvana or Kurt biographies (or hardly any biographies at all, really), it wasn't a bother at all.

Lise says

This book really needed some editing. It's a dogs breakfast, jumping backwards and forwards in time and reading like the author just put every single fact about Dave Grohl on the page as soon as it appeared in his head. Much better article in the Good Weekend a year or so ago. Disappointed. Just glad I waited and got it from the library and didn't buy it.

Clint says

I really had nothing against this book, the first half was really great about growing up in the American early 80s punk scene, which is my favorite, more than the 70s in New York or the British scene. I never knew Dave Grohl was such a fucking rocker! However, not being a really huge fan of Nirvana or Foo Fighters, there was a lot of stuff in the last half of the book I didn't know enough about, like particular albums and songs, and the drama of the Foo Fighters in-fighting, etc. And the writer is a LITTLE too worshipful, like falling all over himself about some lyric that seems pretty normal to me. If I had written this book I would have gone apeshit over Probot and the energetic live shows (did anyone see that show in Austin recently where "Kiss Guy" got on stage and just ripped it apart on Dave's guitar? It's on youtube, watch it, it's pretty

badass.)

Lani says

I made it to 10%...

This read like a really long magazine article instead of the unauthorized biography it was meant to be. I learned more about the type of music and bands Dave Grohl liked than anything interesting about him.

I'll just keep my fingers crossed that he writes his own book. For some reason Foo Fighters hate Tampa, well Florida in general, so I will never see them live! Am I bitter about that? Yeah, but they still remain my #1.

Carla Coulston says

Hubby and I were slightly deflated to discover this was an 'unauthorised' biography; however, the disappointment was short-lived as it became evident the depth of personal insight Paul Brannigan has into the mind and heart of one of our favourite rock identities... not to mention his iron grasp of the nuances of rock history in general.

More than just an insight into Dave Grohl, this book more than ANY other single rock biography I've read (and I've read MANY) gave a unique overview of the alternative/ punk/rock music scene through the 80's-00's. It's like Brannigan stands on top of a stack of amps and gives you a bird's eye view of how all our favourite bands - from Metallica to Mudhoney, Pixies to Sonic Youth, Aerosmith to ACDC - all interconnect. Through this book I "got" the geneology of it all like never before: who influenced who; how hardcore birthed heavy metal, birthed rock, birthed punk, birthed grunge, and how the whole thing comes full circle again.

A really, really engaging book which left me with a lot of respect both for Dave as an artist and Brannigan as a peerless rock writer.

Phil Simon says

I agree with another reviewer's three-star rating of this book. While well written and researched, I really wish that the book contained more of an inside peek into Grohl's motivations. Also, as previously pointed out, the book starts out slowly and tends to gloss over the last five years of Foo Fighters' history.

I agree that Nirvana is an important band and I enjoyed learning more about Grohl's role in it. Still, Grohl has spent more than five times as long in FF as he did in Nirvana. I feel as if the emphasis of the book should have been less about Grohl's environs and more about the man himself.

This is an interesting read and I blew threw it in four days. It's just that a book with this title should primarily focus on the man, not on the DC punk scene and the inner workings of Nirvana, a band whose history has been well documented in other books.
