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Trouble Boys: The True Story Of The Replacements



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Synopsis

Based on all-new interviews, Trouble Boys: The True Story of the Replacements is the definitive "boigraphy" of one of the last great rock ’n’ roll bands of the 20th century. Written with the participation of the group’s key members, including reclusive singer-songwriter Paul Westerberg, bassist Tommy Stinson, and the family of late guitarist Bob Stinson, Trouble Boys is a deeply intimate and nuanced portrait, exposing the primal factors and forces - addiction, abuse, fear - that would shape one of the most brilliant and notoriously self-destructive bands of all time. Based on a decade of research and reporting and hundreds of interviews (with family, friends, managers, producers, and musical colleagues) as well as full access to the Replacements’ archives at Twin/Tone and Warner Bros. Records, author Bob Mehr has fashioned something far more compelling than a conventional band bio. A roaring rock ’n’ roll adventure, a heartrending family drama, and a cautionary showbiz tale, Trouble Boys is a penetrating work of biography and a major addition to the rock book canon.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Unbelievably great, revealing, inspiring and at times utterly heartbreaking. I’ve followed The Replacements and Paul and Tommy solo for 20 years. They were the first band that I heard that immediately made me think "this is the band I’ve been looking for all my life." I’d been an obsessive music fan since I was a child, but nothing spoke to me the way their music and lyrics did. Finding out about there insecurities, self destructiveness in general underdog status in life only made me

feel more connected to the material. Fact that Bob Stinson died on my 18th birthday was also a strange connection. My point being that I have followed the band, poured through the Skyway newsletters / mailing list, newsgroups and every article I could find on the internet over the years. I've seen the documentary and the two books that have come out previously (3 if you include Our Band Could be Your Life) and halfway through the book I still don't feel like "i already knew this stuff." Even hearing anecdotes you've heard over the years feel different when told from the perspective of the people that were actually there as opposed to bystanders, latchers on and the general random people quoted in the previous 2 books. This is the first and only book that has it straight from the horse's mouths. A true warts and all, sometimes painful, sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes inspiring and always real. This is the one we've been waiting for I never thought we would get. Enjoy it and pass it along. I only hope thousands and thousands more that make music or art in general will be inspired by what these people did and what it took for them to make it. We love them and we couldn't imagine a world without them. Ladies and gentlemen The Replacements.

Sometimes biographical books can be written so well you really enjoy them even if you don't care about the person or persons being written about. "Trouble Boys" is undoubtedly one of the best researched and well written biographical books in recent memory, and while it can be a bit exaggerating at times, especially about the supposed fame and impact of this band, there is still the argument to be made that the Replacements were very unique. I do beg to differ that they were alternative pioneers, same as I do with any post-punk and hardcore bands, including Husker Du, Soul Asylum, the roster of SST bands, and a few others that were much more the spirit of real rock and roll in an age of synthesizers and hair metal. No, alternative was much weaker, homogenized and strictly for commercial purposes, hence the incredible mediocrity of so many of them. If nothing else, The Replacements were not mediocre in any sense of the word. Besides their early punk inspired salvos that made up the first handful of albums, they were one of the most self destructive, childish, naive and ill behaved brats to ever be in a band, on stage or in a helpless van or touring bus together. Substance abuse, especially alcohol was rampant and the tales of incredible amounts of booze they ingested would have killed most people sooner than later. Add a truly mentally ill lead guitarist in Bob Stinson, who was horribly abused as a boy and suffered greatly from it, culminating in every kind of abuse imaginable and several trips in and out of institutions, a very young teenager on bass, a nihilistic lead singer/guitarist front man and a drummer who usually behaved a little better, and you had a band that confounded itself, managers who tried to deal with them, labels, and other music biz people by shooting themselves in the proverbial feet whenever an influential person

or persons showed up to watch them live by playing as horrible as possible and behaving even worse in off stage antics. The potential for greater glory alongside friends like REM was there - the energy though was focused in every possibly wrong way you could think of. By the release of "Let It Be", considered by many the ultimate Replacement album where Paul Westerberg truly matured at least artistically into a very good songwriter, with songs like "I Will Dare" and "Sixteen Blue", the pressures of signing with a major label started appearing, and "Tim", the major label debut on Sire is the other indispensable album, and probably about half of the followup "Pleased to Meet Me", especially "I Can't Wait", proved to be the great shot that never quite got out of the gun barrel, as personal problems, addictions and just plain horrible behavior hung around their necks as they could not achieve the balance between raw talent and vulgar lifestyles. Of course most bands were and are not squeaky clean, and the book offers a lot of insight from the band members, the original line-up and um, replacement players. It has horrible tragedy, recklessness and hopefully redemption all wrapped up in one very good book. They will never achieve the status of the megabands sales wise, but their influence still rings out today. For those interested in the band and the time period, it's a very good read.

This is the best biography of the Replacements. It tells their tale thoroughly and puts excellent context on the personalities involved--Chris Mars' lack of participation is noticeable but not a deal killer. Mehr covers three decades of history, which presents crucial character timelines and arcs for a band who largely was known for its immaturity and drinking problems.Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson come off as unrepentant, mean, and troubled for much of the book; Mehr is somewhat sympathetic but even by the end, cannot pin salvation through artistry to the band's bad deeds. The happy endings seem few.Mehr excels at describing the record making process in laymen's terms, and in particular his deft way of interweaving the origins and inspirations of Westerberg's songs. More than anything, we see Westerberg confront his muses and artistic development in the context of the band's bad reputation, a conflict that troubled Westerberg virtually his whole career.The band's history is a tragedy--they were always the little band that could but seemed more intent going off the rails.

I'm a Minnesota native and have heard many of the stories of the Replacements. This book certainly filled in a lot of the holes in their story. I've read dozens of rock biographies and I would put Mehr's book in the top 5 for sure. I read it in three days. It's hard to put down. Mehr's research must have been exhausting. Just his detective work in finding many of those people who were important in this

story is remarkable as many lived then and now on the fringes of society. I went to high school with Ray Reigstad who became friends with Bob Stinson during his post 'Mats days. It was cool to read Ray's quotes and stories. I'd love to see Mr. Mehr take on another project soon.

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