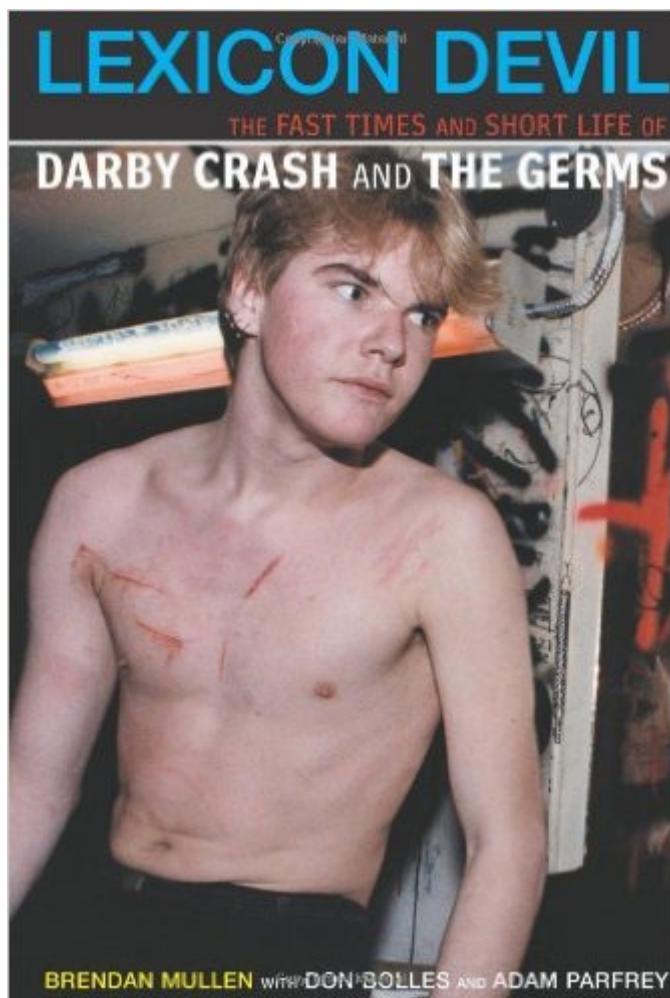


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Lexicon Devil: The Fast Times And Short Life Of Darby Crash And The Germs



Synopsis

"Lexicon Devil is, pure and simple, the finest volume on punk to have seen the light of print. (Yes, folks: that includes Please Kill Me.) Great book!"â "Richard MeltzerProduction has started on the documentary feature based on the book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Anyone that has any passing interest in LA/American punk has heard the names Darby Crash and the Germs. The songs of the Germs (Darby Crash/Pat Smear/Lorna Doom/Don Bolles) have been heard for almost 25 years. The image of Darby and the Germs live in the film Decline of the Western Civilization has been visible for almost as long. In the years since his death in 1980, many tales have been told about Darby and the life he led. This book attempts to clear up some of the confusion and offer the story of Darby from people who were there with him. Band members, family members, hanger on's, hustlers, and scene makers all contribute in this recount of the life of Darby Crash. The charm and allure of this book is that it is not a one-sided biography of Darby. Lexicon Devil is not presented as a "this is how it was" history. Instead, the three co-authors Adam Parfrey(Feral House founder), Brendan Mullen(founder of the Masque) and Don Bolles(drummer for the Germs, Vox Pop, 45 Grave and Celebrity Skin) compile a huge number of recollections and piece them together in chronological order. Lexicon Devil shows how a young man transformed himself from Paul Beahm to Bobby Pyn to Darby Crash and finally to death. This approach bears spectacular results. It allows the reader to see the same occurrences through multiple eyes and

perspectives. And while this approach may not be the norm in the world of biographies, it is a style that works in this case; Darby Crash didn't live a life that can be pinned down in a one-dimensional conventional biography. So was Darby a Manson like cult of personality? Was he a David Bowie glam rock wannabe? Was he a troubled genius? Was he a drunk? Was he a junkie? Was he gay? Was he a suicidal mess? Was he a hustler looking for a handout?

I have the "old version" of this book so I'm not sure what might have been censored or changed from the new. Is it 100% truth? I would have no way of knowing since I wasn't there - I was a punk a couple years after Darby died, and many states away in an area that took longer to pick up on these things than LA did. And also, I know from dealing with the bands for whom I was "there" that there's usually between 3 and 23 sides to every story of "what happened". It doesn't really matter because I didn't pick up this book either to learn the entire perfect truth about Darby and the Germs, or to pass judgment on anybody for what happened. Nor did I think anybody in the book came off looking like a bad person or the villain of the piece or the reason Darby ended up dead, or any of that. No doubt, people who were there will see things and implications that I do not see, because if it was a book about a band I was in/ was friends with/ dated somebody in/ managed etc. I would also be able to pick up on a lot of innuendo and mythologizing and "The Public Image". As it is, for me this is just a book about LA punk at a certain time. Probably to be taken with a grain of salt in any event because most everybody in it is busy having fun and being drunk/ stoned through much of it, so you know, "if you can remember, then you weren't there." Even if it's not 100% dead-on accurate, it seems to capture the vibe pretty well, and the people I know who had a nodding acquaintance with SoCal punk at that time agree. This book seems to pick up where "Please Kill Me" left off and describe the next branch that sprouted up on the punkweed vine.

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