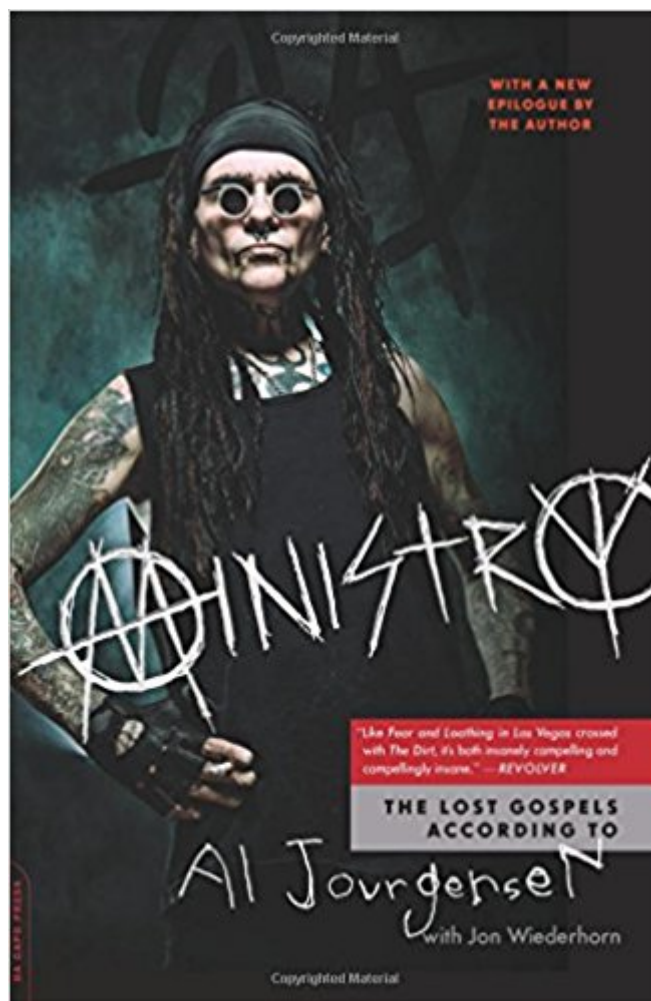


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Ministry: The Lost Gospels According To Al Jourgensen



Synopsis

Ministry: The Lost Gospels is both ugly and captivating, revealing a character who has lived a hard life his way, without compromise. Jourgensen, one of the most innovative and prolific artists ever to pick up a guitar, mandolin, harmonica, or banjo, wanted to be a musician, yet became a rock star. And fame and fortune almost killed him. An IV drug abuser from the age of fifteen, Jourgensen delved deeper into heroin, cocaine, methadone, and alcohol for twenty-two years before cleaning up, straightening out, and finding new reasons to live. Filled with humor, heart, decadence, and tragedy, Ministry depicts the epic life of a renegade iconoclast.

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Customer Reviews

I don't normally read biographies of famous musicians. I've never subscribed to the belief that their lives are somehow more interesting just because they're famous, nor am I enough of a sycophant to really give a s*** how the other half lives. However, this proved an exception. Jourgensen's long had a reputation for being a larger-than-life, out-of-control, nihilistic, and completely self-destructive drug addict; which, granted, probably describes about 80% of all musicians with any degree of notoriety. However, his antics are the stuff of legend - aliens, Spielberg, ostriches - yeah. They're sufficiently outrageous that other musicians who've crossed paths with him get dragged into on-camera interviews and questioned about them. So I was curious. I glanced through the preview pages, read enough to know that I had to have it, and pre-ordered it - something I never do - and even put down the book I was in the middle of reading to give this one priority. It didn't disappoint. Folks, this is

riveting s***. I won't lie; the depravity in this thing is off the charts. I've currently burned through about 2/3 of it (I'm at the Gibby Haynes "Intervention"), and I feel like I need a shower and there isn't enough soap in the world. It's outrageous, depraved, and at times absolutely horrifying, but it's also laugh-out-loud funny.

Here's the skinny: Is this book funny? Yes. Does it have the most over-the-top rock star studio/tour stories ever written? Yes. Is it at times disgusting, depraved, and disappointing? Yes. If you're the type who loves books by washed up rockers recounting their glory days of groupies, drugs, and groupies and drugs, then you'll no doubt love this book. I'll confess, that I did laugh out loud more than once. But, for true Ministry fans, this is a let down. There is absolutely no information about the creation of any of their albums. Nothing about Al's songwriting/production partner Paul Barker. Nothing about classic albums like, "Rape and Honey," "The Mind," or "Psalm 69." In fact, Al admits he hates all of his albums, and what's-more - his fans. Ironically, Al and his co-author readily admit that Al couldn't remember studio sessions and touring cycles because of his decades long drug addiction. Really? That's kinda weird, considering he remembers all the details of the drug and alcohol induced debauchery. But, nope, he can't remember anything about the inspiration behind the many classic albums he created. Don't tell me about you and Gibby Haynes smoking crack and running from the cops in Austin, TX and then have the nerve to tell me, "I don't remember much about the making of Psalm 69, but I hate that record." C'mon, dude. Al bashes almost every single past collaborator/band member, short of his BFF, the late/great Mike Scaccia. Yep, Uncle Al officially enters Billy Corgan territory. Go ahead and tell me that those guys contributions were blown out of proportion. But, the fact remains, the best music you ever made was with those guys.

I happened to work at a hotel that had a reputation for accommodating those in the entertainment - particularly the music industry - during the 90's Wax Trax, original Lolla, Oz Fest, Lillith era. "Mr. J" (as I called him) stayed at at our hotel several times during my tenure there - often for months at a time while recording. Knowing about his "reputation" during this time, as the person whose job it was to book specialty reservations and work with their managers or producers on required amenities, I think it's reasonable to say that I was a bit nervous when I booked Al's stay with us. I had NO idea what to expect, what he was going to ask of us or how he was going to conduct himself. Although most musicians who stayed with us were nothing but respectful, we were no stranger to the occasional rowdy newbie, over zealous groupie, or obnoxious "friend" of the band from time to time, but I expected Al to be on a totally different level of that which we had become

accustom to. I have to say, with complete and utter honesty, he was nothing but a complete gentleman and an ideal hotel guest the whole two months he was with us. He was friendly to every hotel employee from the front desk to the maids. He graciously stopped to talk to the occasional guest who happened to recognize him walking through the hotel halls or lobby. He never asked for anything that was considered "wacky" or out of line...and believe me, we were asked for a lot of things that fit those descriptions from a lot of people. He simply needed a microwave and a VCR - both of which we were happy to fulfill. There were no drug dealers coming in and out of the hotel, no "bi-polar" or "schizo" meltdowns or mood swings that we were warned about. He was absolutely lovely.

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