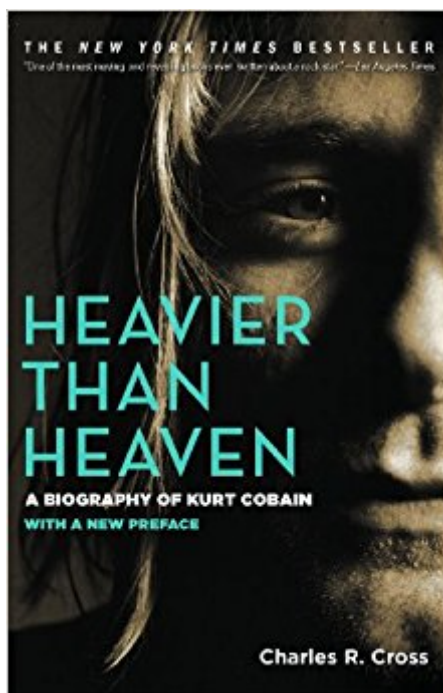


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# Heavier Than Heaven: A Biography Of Kurt Cobain



## Synopsis

It has been twenty years since Kurt Cobain died by his own hand in April 1994; it was an act of will that typified his short, angry, inspired life. Veteran music journalist Charles R. Cross fuses his intimate knowledge of the Seattle music scene with his deep compassion for his subject in this extraordinary story of artistic brilliance and the pain that extinguished it. Based on more than four hundred interviews; four years of research; exclusive access to Cobain's unpublished diaries, lyrics, and family photos; and a wealth of documentation, *Heavier Than Heaven* traces Cobain's life from his early days in a double-wide trailer outside of Aberdeen, Washington, to his rise to fame, success, and the adulation of a generation. Charles Cross has written a preface for this new edition, in which he recounts some of the events regarding Kurt Cobain and this book in the past two decades since his death.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The art of Nirvana's Kurt Cobain was all about his private life, but written in a code as obscure as T.S. Eliot's. Now Charles Cross has cracked the code in the definitive biography *Heavier Than Heaven*, an all-access pass to Cobain's heart and mind. It reveals many secrets, thanks to 400-plus interviews, and even quotes Cobain's diaries and suicide notes and reveals an unreleased Nirvana masterpiece. At last we know how he created, how lies helped him die, how his family and love life entwined his art--plus, what the heck "Smells Like Teen Spirit" really means. (It was graffiti by Bikini Kill's Kathleen Hanna after a double date with Dave Grohl, Cobain, and the "over-bored and self-assured" Tobi Vail, who wore Teen Spirit perfume; Hanna wrote it to taunt the emotionally clingy

Cobain for wearing Vail's scent after sex--a violation of the no-strings-attached dating ethos of the Olympia, Washington, "outcast teen" underground. Cobain's stomach-churning passion for Vail erupted in six or so hit tunes like "Aneurysm" and "Drain You.") Cross uncovers plenty of news, mostly grim and gripping. As a teen, Cobain said he had "suicide genes," and his clan was peculiarly defiant: one of his suicidal relatives stabbed his own belly in front of his family, then ripped apart the wound in the hospital. Cobain was contradictory: a sweet, popular teen athlete and sinister berserker, a kid who rescued injured pigeons and laughingly killed a cat, a talented yet astoundingly morbid visual artist. He grew up to be a millionaire who slept in cars (and stole one), a fiercely loyal man who ruthlessly screwed his oldest, best friends. In fact, his essence was contradictions barely contained. Cross, the coauthor of *Nevermind: Nirvana*, the definitive book about the making of the classic album, puts numerous Cobain-generated myths to rest. (Cobain never lived under a bridge--that Aberdeen bridge immortalized in the 12th song on *Nevermind* was a tidal slough, so nobody could sleep under it.) He gives the fullest account yet of what it was like to be, or love, Kurt Cobain. *Heavier Than Heaven* outshines the also indispensable *Come As You Are*. It's the deepest book about pop's darkest falling star. --Tim Appelo --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"And there had never quite been a rock star like Kurt Cobain," Cross eulogizes in this celebrity biography. Unfortunately, Cross, former editor of the *Rocket*, a Northwestern music and entertainment weekly, never proves his claim. Instead, Cobain's story, culled from more than 400 interviews with friends, family and colleagues and exclusive access to Cobain's unpublished diaries, sounds wholly ordinary, from boilerplate adolescent bitterness about his parents' divorce ("I hate Mom, I hate Dad. Dad hates Mom, Mom hates Dad. It simply makes you want to be so sad") and malt liquor, punk rock-adorned angst to the tawdry details of his drug addiction. "Even in this early stage of his career, Kurt had already begun the process of retelling his own story in a manner that formed a separate self," writes Cross as he carefully dispels some of Cobain's self-made myths, including claims of living under a bridge, "tales... about his constant abuse at the hands of Aberdeen's rednecks" and harboring an aversion to fame. The many unenlightening observations are often painted thick with sensationalism; other times, Cross trawls the bottom for sources whose credibility and relevance are dubious at best. (For instance, he interviews Cobain's drug-addicted ex-babysitter, Cali, and some of her girlfriends, yielding a depressing she-said-he-said of Kurt's final days.) Conspiracy theorists will speculate about the conditions under which Cross gained access to Cobain's private journals. Complete with gossip and meticulous references, the biography will catch

the devotees, though, like junk food, it may leave them feeling unnourished. 16 pages b&w photos. (Aug. 15) Forecast: Released on the 10th anniversary of Come As You Are and with radio giveaways, this book will sell well. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Reads like a mediocre rock magazine. Lots of purple prose and cliches. If you're looking for a work of scholarship on Cobain this is not the place to go.

Very good book! Learned much on a subject that I thot I KNEW much about. I was around when it all happened. Great but ultimitely sad. Highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn more about Kurt! Very happy customer!

Bought this for a girlfriend who is in a state prison. Already bought her journals & montage of heck. She is a fan of Nirvana & loved this book.

This is a comprehensive and definitive biography of Kurt Cobain, the sensitive, conflicted and brilliant leader of the band Nirvana, chronicling his 27 year life in intimate detail from the psychological to the financial aided by the author's extensive research conducted in the Pacific Northwest where he interviewed a large number of people who crossed paths with his subject. Cobain was an incredibly talented musician whose message and music reached millions but he was also a fascinating person who came from an obscure logging community, grew up in a broken home, and was afflicted by an addiction to drugs. Cross admirably dispels the myths about Cobain, many of which were spread by Cobain himself, like the story of him living under a bridge, or the accidental nature of Nirvana's success, but in getting to the truth Cross only makes Cobain that much more fascinating as a subject for this biography as he lays bare the contradictions of Cobain's personality and the way he presented himself and was depicted by the media. The book builds up to a minute by minute account of Cobain's last days and a description of the vigil and funerals that followed his death in April of 1994. It was a media sensation at the time, characterized as the funeral for the spokesman of Generation X, but Cross presents an intimate behind-the-scenes description of the way it affected Kurt's family, adding new details from his research, and he avoids describing its cultural importance, focusing instead on the personal details that make this such a rich and informative biography while leaving it to Nirvana's manager to hint at the great impact Cobain had outside of the small town he

came from with this quote: "Kurt came from a town that no one had ever heard of, and he went on to change the world." With thorough research and great psychological depth this biography proves worthy of its subject, one of the greatest rock musicians of all time. Kurt Cobain left an astounding musical legacy and this biography is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand where he came from and what he means.

Excellent book, fast shipping, book arrived undamaged

This book gave a great insight into the troubled soul of Kurt Cobain. I found it very revealing, funny at times but mostly sad. It's hard to imagine that someone with so much talent could have that much internal conflict and pain. The authors take on Kurt's relationship with Courtney Love gave me a newfound respect for her. She really seemed to work her ass off to get him clean while continuing to battle her own demon's. Great read!!

I need to have a good cry - finishing this book about ten minutes ago. The writing is fairly straightforward: this is the story of a man who most of us knew as a musical genius; someone who made the world better because he made music that was better and a rising tide lifts all boats. But Kurt Cobain wasn't a rising tide; he was someone who wanted to end the pain in his body (and I think that chronic pain really did make living ALMOST - but not quite - unbearable . . .) and end the pain of having to navigate through life. It's strange. In most accounts of famous people who died badly, there is at least - usually - a small part of their life when their fame, or their new found financial security or an exciting love affair or a much wanted child - serves as an oasis for the reader. No matter the end, we could see the interlude where the person "had Paris." But what amazed me was Kurt's almost uninterrupted death march. There are a few happy moments with Courtney and Francis; a very few good times playing and creating; and of course those first seven or so years before the Cobain's (Kurt's parents) split and most of the sickness in both sides of the family was given free reign to poison what was good or pleasurable. But it's all the same. The crappiness of Kurt's life from seven to early twenties - before fame - was just startling in its crappiness. But his life after becoming KURT COBAIN - really wasn't that different. Cobain spent a lot of time in pain, using, living in filth, alienating any one who tried to come near - before and after . So Kurt was doomed. He did have the suicide gene and that's just a legacy so sad I can't even write about it. But what's even sadder is that when we learned the world lost Kurt - he had been gone for years. He was already lost. (And he took Courtney , who he loved, down with him. Good luck to you Frances.) This is a very

well written book and I think I started to say - the writing is pretty straightforward, but every once in a while, especially toward's the end, you can see the author was very emotionally affected by the experienc of writing the book. That he lets his feelings peek out from the research only occasionally make it very very affecting when he does.

I have always been a fan of Dave Grohl but never really into Nirvana. Then we moved to Seattle and visited the EMP museum and I decided to read up more on Cobain, someone I thought was greatly overrated. The book is raw and emotional. The author did an amazing job with research and interviews. I actually found myself crying at the end. Dave wasn't mentioned very much in this book, however the friendship between Kurt and Krist was highlighted a lot and I have so much respect for Krist and his musical abilities. I definitely have been listening to Nirvana a lot more since reading and listening more to the lyrics than the sound because of this book. I plan on buying the physical copy, which I only do when I really enjoy the book. I recommend even if you aren't a fan. I wasn't, but now I have a better understanding of who Kurt is.

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