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I'm With The Band: Confessions Of A Groupie



Synopsis

The stylish, exuberant, and remarkably sweet confession of one of the most famous groupies of the 1960s and 70s is back in print in this new edition that includes an afterword on the author's last 15 years of adventures. As soon as she graduated from high school, Pamela Des Barres headed for the Sunset Strip, where she knocked on rock stars' backstage doors and immersed herself in the drugs, danger, and ecstasy of the freewheeling 1960s. Over the next 10 years she had affairs with Mick Jagger, Jimmy Page, Keith Moon, Waylon Jennings, Chris Hillman, Noel Redding, and Jim Morrison, among others. She traveled with Led Zeppelin; lived in sin with Don Johnson; turned down a date with Elvis Presley; and was close friends with Robert Plant, Gram Parsons, Ray Davies, and Frank Zappa. As a member of the GTO's, a girl group masterminded by Frank Zappa, she was in the thick of the most revolutionary renaissance in the history of modern popular music. Warm, witty, and sexy, this kiss-and-tell¹⁵⁰ all stands out as the perfect chronicle of one of rock 'n' roll's most thrilling eras.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an infamous book, and as I worked in the concert business for awhile, I've been interested in reading it for some time. I finally did, and now I'm kind of sorry. The book isn't really that revelatory or even titillating; it's mostly just kind of sad. Because far from being a story of female empowerment, it's about a woman who is cripplingly insecure and lets that insecurity guide her life and choices. Pamela Des Barres claims she was "the original groupie" back in the late 1960s/early 1970s. I have to say, if that is true, I had a completely different idea of what a "groupie" was than

apparently is the case. I thought a groupie was someone who followed and/or slept with rock stars because they enjoyed being close to fame, but they chose who they followed and who they slept with, and it was mostly about the conquest - not about trying to find true love. Pamela, however, basically falls in love with more or less every rock star she meets, and in addition to sleeping with them, she does things like make them clothes, cook for them, do their laundry, etc. Like a maid or nanny that also provides sexual services. The entire book is one anecdote after another about how she met this famous person, was fascinated by them, slept with them, fell completely in love with them, and got her heart broken. Over and over and over. She fixated on these famous men to the point of creepy-stalkerish behavior (the stuff about her relentless, unrequited pursuit of Marlon Brando was really embarrassing. He finally had to tell her to leave him alone and look for answers inside herself - the problem is, I don't think there WERE any answers there).

Reading this book reminded me of that enervating feeling I once felt, circa 1979 or so, during a midnight viewing of Led Zeppelin's "The Song Remains the Same." It was a flash of horror in which my excitement over the rock n' roll life (I was in a band at that time, my head filled with ambitions and pretensions) gave way to a feeling of aimlessness: What is with all this cheesy medieval imagery? How come these guys don't look cool, but just scrawny and strung-out? Do I really need to hear an eight-minute drum solo? What the hell have I been doing wasting my time with all this? Des Barres' book left me with a similar feeling of the blahs: some books make it seem like there was more to the 1960s-70s rock culture than previously realized. This book makes one feel like there was a lot less. I picked up the book hoping that it would bring the sights, sounds, and philosophy of a unique time back to life. It didn't. Despite having had dalliances with titanic figures ranging from Mick Jagger to Jimmy Page to Gram Parsons to Don Johnson, the author conveys very little of their artistry. In fact, she rarely tries to discuss or describe their music at all: passages on what makes a Mick Jagger or a Jim Morrison sexy sound as though they could have been written about any high school bad boy, musician or no. And indeed, that adolescent attitude pervades this book. The book begins with the author entering a boy-crazy period in high school, and is related largely through excerpts from her diary, replete with CAPITAL LETTERS and exclamation marks(!!!!!) about how COOL this guy is and how WHEN HE KISSED ME I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO FAINT!! Blech. Most of the remainder of the book has a similar tone, merely transplanted to a larger stage.

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