



# Whores: An Oral Biography of Perry Farrell and Jane's Addiction

By Brendan Mullen

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Jane's Addiction's 1988 breakthrough album, *Nothing's Shocking*, had a seismic impact. With a bracing combination of metal, punk, and psychedelia, coupled with lead singer Perry Farrell's banshee-in-a-wind-tunnel vocals, Jane's Addiction helped put alternative music on the map. The band helped pave the way for the mainstream success of bands like Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, and Nirvana. Along the way, Jane's Addiction released another classic album, *Ritual de lo Habitual* (with the hit "Been Caught Stealing"), founded the Lollapalooza festival, and openly celebrated a bacchanalian lifestyle that blurred all lines of gender and sexuality. Drawn from original interviews with the band, their friends, and their musical colleagues, *Whores* takes readers through Farrell's early sonic experiments with Psi-Com and the formative days of Jane's Addiction to their drug-addled break-up and controversial reunion with 2003's *Strays*. Along the way it provides a candid, often disturbing glimpse into the dynamic alternative rock scene of Los Angeles in the '80s and '90s.

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**Whores: An Oral Biography of Perry Farrell and Jane's Addiction** By Brendan Mullen Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #821542 in Books
- Published on: 2006-03-14
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .75" w x 6.00" l, .95 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In this highly entertaining oral history, West Coast punk historian Mullen (*Lexicon Devil: The Fast Times and Short Life of Darby Crash*) assembles an unflinching portrait of the band that brought metallic punk rock to the mainstream, opened the door for grunge and helped spawn the traveling rock freak show, Lollapalooza. First commissioned as an article for *Spin*, the book is based on a variety of sources and interviews with key players, from band members to friends and managers and other L.A. bands, from the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Guns N' Roses. It covers the "addiction" part thoroughly. Throughout the band's heyday, every member (except for drummer Stephen Perkins) and much of its entourage was savagely addicted to heroin—so much so that no one in the band really recalls enjoying the band's success. Under the influence, band members Dave Navarro and Eric Avery fought, often physically, with the eccentric Farrell; tours were a blur; money was made and lost; and recording sessions and film shoots often became Dantean nightmares. Once again, the oral history format works perfectly for Mullen, who succeeds in positioning Jane's Addiction as a seminal band in rock history as well as offering compelling portraits of both Farrell, the band's ambitious, egomaniacal visionary and front man, and the vibrant L.A. punk scene from which Jane's was born. *Agent, Jud Laghi at ICM. (May)*

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### Review

"As thorough a telling of Jane's Addiction as we're likely to get." -- *PitchforkMedia.com*, 6/26/06

"[An] eyebrow-raising story with first-person transcripts from interviews with the principal players." -- *The Guardian*, 05/27/06

### About the Author

**Brendan Mullen** is the co-author of *We Got the Neutron Bomb: The Untold Story of LA Punk* and *Lexicon Devil*, a biography of the Germs' Darby Crash. He lives in Los Angeles.

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