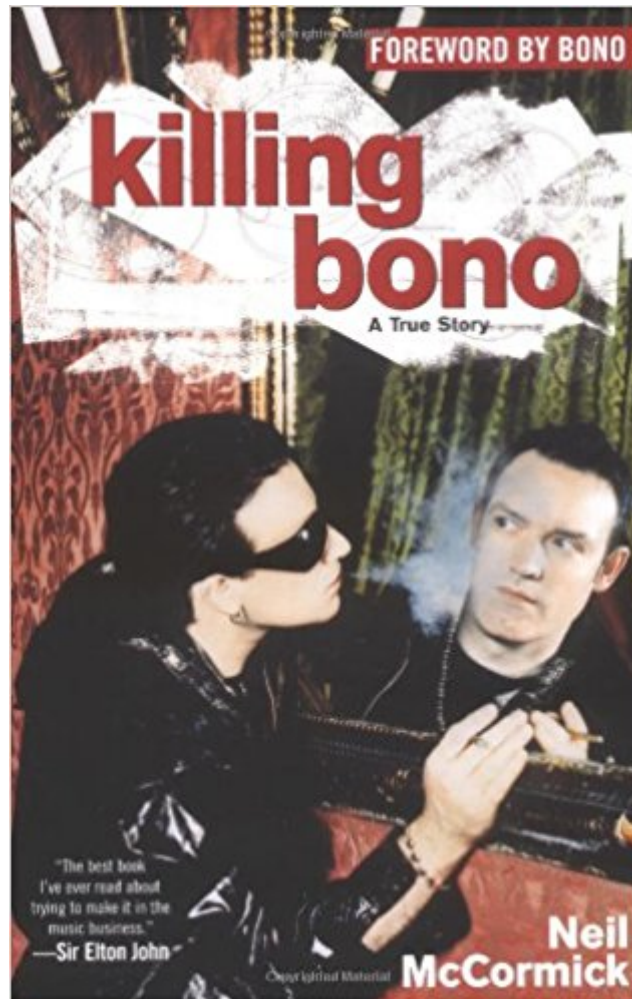


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Killing Bono: I Was Bono's Doppelganger



Synopsis

Longtime friend and reporter, Neil McCormick, reveals childhood and present day stories about Bono and his band, U2. Some are born great. Some achieve greatness. Some have greatness thrust upon them. And some have the misfortune to go to school with Bono. Everyone wants to be famous. But as a young punk in Dublin in the 1970s, Neil McCormick's ambitions went way beyond mere pop stardom. It was his destiny to be a veritable Rock God. He had it all worked out: the albums, the concerts, the quest for world peace. There was only one thing he hadn't counted on. The boy sitting on the other side of the classroom had plans of his own. Killing Bono is a story of divergent lives. As Bono and his band U2 ascended to global superstardom, his school friend Neil scorched a burning path in quite the opposite direction. Bad drugs, weird sex, bizarre haircuts: Neil experienced it all in his elusive quest for fame. But sometimes it is life's losers who have the most interesting tales to tell. Featuring guest appearances by the Pope, Bob Dylan, and a galaxy of stars, Killing Bono offers an extremely funny, startlingly candid, and strangely moving account of a life lived in the shadows of superstardom. • The problem with knowing you is that you've done everything I ever wanted to, • Neil once complained to his famous friend. • I'm your doppelganger, • Bono replied. • If you want your life back, you'll have to kill me. • Now there was a thought...

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Customer Reviews

This book succeeds on three levels1) A vivid portrait of growing up a rock fan in Ireland in the 70's and coming of age as a struggling rock musician in the 80's2) An excellent portrait of the makings of

a supergroup and rock icon written from a fascinating perspective- a long time friend who is STILL a friend.³) A great autobiographical rumination on letting go of your dreams while building new ones and embracing the person you are. As a U2 fan, I loved the captions with Bono. It's refreshing when a famous person who seems to be a nice person in the glare of celebrity actually turns out to be a nice person behind the scenes. Bono comes across as a good guy and genuine person. I like that the two are still friends nearly thirty years later despite their different experiences. It's as if Paul McCartney had still shared a pint and chewed the fat with Pete Best on occasion.... A wonderful aspect of the book is that confirms that you never outgrow your true friends (and shouldn't) and that you shouldn't forget where you came from.... Mr. McCormick- please write another book! You are a fine talent and more importantly- a fine human being....

Let's get something straight from the get-go: this is the best book on music for 2004. Darn-sure qualifies as one of the Top 5 of all time, for that matter. And speaking of the matter, this is the most painfully pleasant description of the music biz's sorry-ass state ever put on paper. Anyone who ever has even remotely dreamed of making it in a band (HELLO-OOO all you folks) must read this book. Mr. McCormick pulls no punches. He shovels the blame on incompetency, including his own. He documents the rise from gymnasium cover band to the most exalted level stardom by his school chums in U2, particularly Bono to whom he remains close. The comparison and contrast could not delineate a clearer gap. The writing reads as rapidly as a Ramones song: "onetotreefo" so you never get the slightest bit bored or anxious over the author's misguided efforts and tragicomic outcomes. How many ways can a band win in the music biz? Well, there's only one way things work when you're successful. How many ways can things get screwed up? Incalculable. A modern classic is what we got with this. Sadly, I don't know if the ol' boy has anything left for a follow-up of substance. But he certainly did provide plenty of insight in this book.

First the basics. McCormick grew up with this guy named Paul. They both formed bands and played the circuits, making connections with the music industry big wigs and recording their songs. Paul is now better known as Bono. McCormick is now better known as the music critic for the Telegraph. So what happened? What makes one person become a star and another fail to break through the maze of the music industry? Talent? Fate? Luck? This book takes you on the whole journey, sometimes funny, sometimes painful, but always interesting. I blazed through its 384 pages in four days, and wish there were still more of it to read. Along the way I was treated to deep discussions of fame, fortune, misfortune, music, the music industry, religion, and life in general. McCormick

weaves together several themes and keeps them all relevant and alive. If you've ever dreamed of being a rock star, read this book.

Bono has to have tremendous integrity and personal charm to have retained the good will of so many of his long time acquaintances. Neil's love for Bono shines on every page of this engrossing book, when he had every human reason to be eaten up with hateful jealousy. It speaks well of Neil that he is able to separate Bono's rock stardom as having nothing to do with his own failure as a rock star. It's a wonderful book and I wish more of Bono's friends would write such an honest account of their relationships. (Are you listening, Gavin?) I listened to Neil's songs and I'd say there is one area in which he is blinded. He simply doesn't have anywhere near Bono's talent, and charisma, but then, no one else does either.

You don't have to be a U2 fan to love this book! However, it is a must read for any U2 fan! Neil McCormick has such an interesting story to tell, having known Bono and co. since before they assembled their band. Watching Bono and U2 ascend to global super-stardom was both frustrating and exciting for the aspiring rock star who seemed to receive a dose of bad luck for every bit of good luck that made U2 the most popular band on the planet. Going from band to band, Neil and his brother just couldn't seem to land a record deal that would enable them to match the success of their school buddies Paul, Dave, Larry and Adam. Through it all, Neil finds comfort in his continuing friendship with Bono and his wife Gloria, not to mention a promising career in journalism. The failed quest for fame and greatness, mixed with intense envy and frustration of the greatness of others, reminded me of the film "Amadeus," in which Salieri burns with envy at the greatness of Mozart. Neil is Salieri to Bono's Mozart, but what I think he has learned at this point in his life is that it isn't so bad being Salieri.

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