



Stand and Deliver: The Autobiography

Adam Ant

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One of the most successful pop stars of the 80s, Adam Ant was a phenomenon. This autobiography tells the full story of his amazing life from his dysfunctional childhood to his key role in the punk movement and creation of a unique musical style that brought him a string of hits, both singles and albums.

Stand and Deliver: The Autobiography Details

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From Reader Review Stand and Deliver: The Autobiography for online ebook

Brie says

A very readable book about a very interesting man. I have long been a fan of Adam Ant's music so reading about his life was very fascinating to me. He is very blunt in his descriptions (from his point of view) about his life and his writing style is engaging. He addresses his lifelong struggle with bipolar illness and how he is coping with it now. I would definitely recommend this book to fans of his music or autobiographies.

Xanthi says

I listened to this audiobook, on a whim. I had been aware of this book for years but something drew me towards finally reading it. I loved that the book was read by the man, himself. I was still in primary school when I heard 'Ant Music'. I was too young to enjoy his music and appreciate the well constructed image/persona that was Adam Ant. It was good, fun pop music to me. As I grew up, I was aware that he had gone into acting and I saw him popping up here and there. I saw him on Live Aid, too. Apart from that though, I knew little of what became of him and knew nothing about his past.

So, this book was quite an eye opener. I was drawn into the book right from the start, with its rather clever opening. As I read on, I learnt of his troubled childhood, abusive father, poverty, punk connections and his mental illness. I found myself truly caring for his well being and happiness - something that surprised me. After all, I had approached the book as a bit of 'where is he now?' 80's nostalgia. I got a lot more than what I bargained for with this autobiography, and I am glad I did. It has real substance.

The book does end on a hopeful note and I have learnt that he has actually been touring the UK this year! I do hope he makes it down to Australia. If not, I wish him a happy and healthy life, regardless. Thanks, Adam - for the music, the fun, and the flair.

John says

Published in 2006 when the author was 52 or thereabouts and his persona, Adam Ant, 30.

I've wanted to read this for a long time. In my salad days I used to follow wee Adam around those (generally small) seedy London music venues. That was in his first guise - the leather clad minimalist punk, usually with dominatrix-like Jordan in attendance, whip in hand (or was that my imagination?) Similar casting in Derek Jarman's film Jubilee, looking vulnerable, a pretty victim with "Fuck" carved into his back with Jordan's razor blade.

Like many at those early gigs his subsequent developments and change of style and costume – Indian King of the Wild Frontier, Dandy Highwayman, Prince Charming was puzzling, to say the least. It culminated in 2 Royal Variety performances – before HRH Princess Margaret who secured his autographs for her kids and then HM. Q. The latter obviously shared my puzzlement when she asked him whether he minded playing to old fuddy duddies like her?

In the book he deals with those questions honestly – any publicity, particularly when it was beamed into millions of homes via TV, whether Royal Variety performances or appearances on kids' TV shows, was good, it sold records.

His story is a very interesting one, poor working class kid who made it, physically tough and driven. Mentally it was a different story. Bi Polar helped make and almost break him. His punishing schedules, balancing month long music tours of USA /UK and elsewhere with acting dates – theatre and movie - had me feeling knackeringly jet lagged on his behalf. He was of course punished hard -mentally.

His hit song, “Goody Two Shoes”, is more than a little autobiographical – no alcohol, smokes or other drugs but loads of sex, but that of course would have spoilt the song.

Worth reading. But keep taking plenty of deep breaths. It's quite an exhausting read.

Tosh says

I found this memoir by Adam Ant fascinating, but not totally for the words on the page. The first part of the book is really fantastic, where he describes his family and upbringing, which is border-lined terrible. The last part of the book is horrifying due to his severe manic -depressive state. The middle part (surprising) is not that interesting for some odd reason.

I would like to know more about the recordings, because as a life-long pop music fan I think Adam Ant made some amazing and UNIQUE pop recordings. His greater recordings are sort of Brian Eno meets Morricone. And his guitar player and co-songwriter Marco is an amazing guitar player. Beautifully textured recordings.

The showbiz aspect of Adam, which is a big part of his make-up (no pun intended) is huge, yet it sort of takes away the uniqueness of his recordings. That said, the showbiz part of the book is kind of weird compared to the rest of the book. He talks about meeting famous people all the same way . Whatever he meets them backstage at one of his concerts or he himself waiting in line to get a book signed by a famous individual. It seems to be the same to him. There is sort of a numbing affect where he is watching from a distance.

There is also the 'gay' aspect of Adam that is totally missing in the memoir. This is not saying that he's gay or not (a serious sex addict regarding his women), yet for sure it is sort of a 'gay' aesthetic that plays in his visuals as well as his obsessive (in a good way) take on clothes, etc.

Overall I think he's a remarkable pop music artist - and it's interesting to see how he used his 'manic' side with respect to his music career. Also I think this is a good document of the London punk years. Adam is a good writer when the emotions are upfront and there in front of him.

Eva says

I feared reading this book because it had the potential to be so self indulgent, but Adam Ant writes pretty honestly and not very melodramatically about his life. It's not the most eloquent memoir in the world (or the least), but it took me through Adam's troubled childhood, the punk and post-punk London music scenes and explained more recent, unhappy appearances in the news.

I came out respecting him...

Andy says

I rogered this bird. I got this injury kicking my pirate legs in bondage gear. I punched this right cunt out. End of book. Sorry about the spoilers.

Nick Sweeney says

I was a big fan of Adam Ant in the late 70s, before he went on to become mega with the whole cowboys, Indians and pirates thing. I first saw the band in an early incarnation at Wardour Street's Vortex Club supporting my other fave ('before they became famous') band Siouxsie and the Banshees. I liked the vaguely dangerous atmosphere at the gigs, loved the edgy show, the frankly weird songs about S&M, Dirk Bogarde, and Hampstead ('not a place for revolutions - you're deprived of being deprived'). So the parts of this book that interested me most were those that dealt with this early period, and it went all too quickly. Adam's rise to fame was accompanied by sex addiction, an inability to stay in one place for too long - he bought several houses, in several places, in which he barely lived before selling them - and an inability to stay in the steady relationships he craved. It's all here, set out frankly, and rather heartbreakingly at times, and I was reading, thinking, 'How did you screw that up AGAIN...' The repetitive nature of Adam's various and numerous affairs with women, conflicts with managers and record companies comes through in the book, and, far from making it a bad read, underlines the nature of what is gradually revealed: his incipient mental illness, culminating in his well-publicised instances of being sectioned and prosecuted. I can't really complain about the lack of detail in the early years - the early versions of the Ants just formed a phase he went through - but I'd like to have seen more detail of the creative aspects; how did he come to write this song or that, what was in his mind at the time. The number of collaborators he worked with grew, but he writes off their endeavours with yet another statement on the lines of 'so we got together and wrote more songs'. His observations on the early punk scene and some of its characters are quite well done - including two punch-ups with Sid Vicious - and his time spent with characters as larger-than-life as Derek Jarman, Jordan (Pamela Rooke, so much more than a 'shop assistant for Vivienne Westwood') and Malcolm McLaren. Adam's quest to 'get into the movies' draws a lot of time in the book, and his sense of despair at being offered yet another role as a 'sort of rock star figure' comes over very well; unfortunately, he starts to tell it as desperately as he must have appeared to be, finally making the wrong choices of roles in films destined to be B-movies before they were even finished. The end seems positive - the Kindle version has a long footnote about having his book out and knowing that there are still people out there who are fans, a new relationship that at last seems stable and a positive turn to his life. He did a series of gigs throughout 2011 - look them up on YouTube - in which he seems to have regained his old songs and his old power and presence, and I hope (being an old admirer, despite his having dropped off my radar for 20 years) that continues for him. For a much longer version of this, and a reminiscence about the day I nearly became an Ant, see my blog at

Tiffany Day says

I love Antmusic. Back in the day, I enjoyed the hits on MTV- since then, I've become much more of a fan. I was excited to read about how it all came to be. The early chapters seemed a little long and I was itching to get on with reaching the music and his later mental breakdown, but he really seemed to cover a lot of ground. He gave great focus to the formation and rise of his rock career and sound. There was a lot of detail on the work - and his sex life. The latter, at times, was too detailed, leaving me feeling uncomfortable. Yet, he dated a lot of famous women, and he does spill the tea. I have to admit, much of the reading left me liking him a lot less than when I began the book. At times, he comes off as a bit narcissistic and lacking a little insight. Yet, when he finally really delved into his madness (bipolar disorder) in the final chapter, my respect again flourished. He seemed humbled and I appreciated his candor. He has called mental illness the last taboo, and having worked in the field, I have to agree. Overall, I really enjoyed the book - an easy 4+ stars. I recommend it to Ant fans, anybody nostalgic for the 80s, and those interested in mental health.

Kerry says

This is hardly a review but more of a gush of admiration.

He is one of my favourite artists and to read this has been a fast-paced, tragic story of a guy so scared of failure he forgot to acknowledge his successes.

I recently saw him at the Brighton Centre for his Kings of the Wild Frontier tour and he was full of life and energy and performed like a man half his age with the charm, sexiness and charisma I enjoyed seeing from his early live shows with the Ants. I respect him all the more following this read. His music and videos inspired me from a very young age and now I am twenty and seen him live he is still one of my heroes.

Many of my interests span from the 80's aesthetics and particularly Adam and the Ants. My style, my humour, History, particularly 18th and 19th century, criminals and knee-high boots pretty much stem from him and early british 80's ...

And, I'm certain that he was one of the reasons that I firmly believe that you're never too old for fairytales and stories and magic and adventure. We never stop wanting to be Heroes and his music makes you feel like a Hero. You laugh, cry and sing-a-long to his original 'Antmusic'.

The dandy Highwayman always will be one my Heroes. Even more so for this book. It would be amazing if he updated this book with an insight to the past decade. He is looking and sounding really great!

He's amazing live (and theres nothing better than singing along with one of your favourite artists) I'm honoured to have been welcomed into the mind of one of the most creative icons of the 80's and Britain by reading this book.

I wish him more happiness.

Anne says

I found this a very interesting and quite nostalgic read. Although I was never lucky enough to see Adam Ant perform live, I did see some of the other bands he mentions such as Siouxsie and the Banshees. This made this a nostalgic trip back to the heady days of early punk - the excitement of discovering new bands, new music and the thrill of shocking my parents by playing some pretty risque singles extra loud in my bedroom.

He writes very very well, his artistic influences are there in his use of language. There is a wonderful description of his Grandfather's nose - which I felt the need to read out loud to anyone that would listen.

Having worked in a mental hospital for many years, I recognised his description of the highs and lows of manic (bipolar) depression - and found it incredible that he was undiagnosed with this from early childhood.

I hope that by writing this book he has been able to overcome some of his demons.

Sharon says

A very interesting and sometimes sad history of one of the most enigmatic pop stars of the early 80s and 90s.

As well as his childhood and his rise to fame and the comedown afterwards, he talks about punk at it's peak in London in the 70s. What is also facinating is that he talks frankly of his depression and manic episodes and the truth behind some of his relationships and sexual exploits.

This is a very well written book, honest and truthful. I rather think that this book helped Adam defeat some of his demons and the added epilogue which is an addition to the paperback version not in the hardback is a lovely touch, where he talks about the book signings and his ongoing road to recovery.

Before I read this book, I thought he was a good musician and I liked his music and only knew what had been written about him. After reading this book I find that now not only do I now love his music, I admire and respect this man.

Well worth a read if you have any interest in music.

Rachel McNab says

From having an abusive father to being sectioned under the Mental Health Act of 1983, this man has come out the other side with humility and humour. Adam is just about my favourite person on the planet.

Godzilla says

Adam Ant dropped off my radar some time in the late 80s, early 90s, and only pinged back on following his court case for affect. Clearly something had happened in the intervening years, and this book lays that bare and the root causes if it.

There are few affectations in this book, maybe surprisingly for someone who appeared so image obsessed.

It's not a heart warming tale, but it's candid and pulls no punches.

It would garner 5 stars, but the detail of the "glory" years is rather glossed over, although given the seriousness of the mental problems he was dealing with, I can sort of understand where his focus is.

Whether you're a fan or not, this narration of a battle with mental illness would leave only the most cold hearted unmoved.

Kirsty says

I found this a fascinating read. Written honestly, Adam takes you on a journey from his early childhood to the present day, and documents the ups and downs in his life. He writes candidly about his battle with bipolar disorder and, particularly in the later chapters, you really feel for him. However, there are times when Adam seems to skim over months and years, and I felt that he could have talked more about his career in the late 80s and early 90s, when his fame was slipping and his records weren't selling so well. One minute, he talks of a no. 2 single being a disaster, but then suddenly seems content with having a record that peaks at no. 13, but provides no explicit explanation for this. His love life is also incredibly complex and I found myself having to flick back in the book to work out who he was talking about. At times I felt he came across as being quite self-centred, yet there are glimpses in the book that suggest the contrary (e.g. towards the end of the book he says the thing that spurred him on in his career was the desire to look after his family, particularly his mum, and he also tried to help his dad when he was arrested). It's worth noting that the paperback version of the book contains an extra epilogue that follows his story since publishing the hardback version of this book. Overall, I really enjoyed the book and would recommend it to anyone interested in Adam, the 80s or pop music history.

Aoife Lennon says

Stand & Deliver is a powerful autobiography. You feel as if you are in Adam Ant's head throughout the book. Parts about his bipolar disorder were difficult and at times upsetting to read, but he is truly a survivor. I would recommend it to anyone who loves his music.
