



The Death of Cool: From Teenage Rebellion to the Hangover of Adulthood

By Gavin McInnes



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A laugh-out-loud chronicle of extreme-but-true stories, featuring drunken fist fights, Satanic punk bands, afternoons on heroin, and multiple threesomes—perfect for readers of Tucker Max and Chuck Klosterman.

Gavin McInnes is more than just a rude lunatic who keeps getting beat up. He is an icon who personifies irreverence for an entire generation. This is his story, or, rather, stories—lots of them, and all gut-punchingly hilarious, from that first far reach into a girl's tight jeans to turning forty with a cataclysmic party. In between you'll read about acid trips, threesomes, Nazi skinheads, his band Anal Chinook (Inuit for "warm wind"), Martians in northern Canada, throwing pedophiles in jail, dinner with the Clash, what happens when you crash Bill Maher's show wasted, and the true story of *Vice* magazine. A gifted writer and a born storyteller, McInnes has lived his life without apology. Learn from it.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #59585 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Scribner
- Published on: 2013-07-16
- Released on: 2013-07-16
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.37" h x .80" w x 5.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 288 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“You will not find a memoir like this anywhere. Usually when people are this insane, they can’t form coherent sentences, but Gavin brilliantly weaves his bizarre outlook on life in a way that makes them somehow feel relatable. I love this book.”—Justin Halpern, author of *Sh*t My Dad Says*

“I loved this book, though it may have given my eyeballs gonorrhea.” —Samantha Bee, author of *I Know I Am, but What Are You?*

“An interesting, infuriating read. You will never love this book harder than it already loves you.”—Patton Oswalt, author of *Zombie Spaceship Wasteland*

“I laughed so hard I got a headache.”—Justin Theroux, author of *Tropic Thunder* and *Iron Man 2*

“Wonderfully powerful, funny, and full of life, this book is amazing and a pleasure to explore. I cried while reading the 9/11 chapter.”—Andrew W.K. author of “Party Hard”

"This book sucks."—Tucker Max, author of *I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell*

“*How to Piss in Public* is a Bible waiting to happen.” —*Maxim*

"[A] compelling memoir...insanely hilarious." (*Huffington Post*)

"So f**king good, I can't recommend it enough." (Nikki Glaser)

About the Author

Gavin McInnes is a prankster, provocateur, comedian, and creator of contemporary, alternative pop culture. He established an underground Montreal newspaper, which he grew into Vice Magazine Publishing Inc., an international megabrand that still defines cool for “the kids today.” He is the author of *The Vice Guide to Sex, Drugs and Rock & Roll*; *DOs & DON'Ts*; *DOs & DON'Ts 2*; and *Street Boners*, which is based on his new website *StreetCarnage.com*. Today McInnes lives with his wife and two kids in New York City, writes for television, and makes viral comedy videos for any corporate sponsors that don’t mind fart jokes.

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Zapped by Space Guns into a Shit Hole on Acid (1985)

I would never do acid in New York City—it’s too dirty and claustrophobic—but when you’re stuck way out in Buttfuck, Ontario, it’s your only escape.

First, let me tell you how Buttfuck this place was. Canadian developers back then were busy creating cookie-cutter housing communities in the middle of nowhere. They had slogans such as “Tomorrow’s city ... today” and names such as New Granada and Bridlewood. They were far from the city and had no drugs, bars, gangs, sluts, or crime—just trees, houses, and the local school.

My parents were educated but working-class Scots who wanted to get as far away from their shitty past as

possible. Like all ex-poor people they wanted a better life for their kids and this seemed like a great opportunity. They tried England but it wasn't working. Canada was brand-new back then. It had just settled on a flag in 1965 and was yet to choose a national anthem (they chose "O Canada" in 1980). In the 1970s, they were building their lower middle class from scratch and pouring British immigrants into the mold like pancake mix.

In 1975, five years after a breathtakingly gorgeous baby Me was born, the Glaswegians who created me gave up on their new home in England and stuck the whole family in a mass-produced Canadian suburb surrounded by farmers' fields. Kanata is a half hour from Canada's tiny capital, Ottawa, and had houses that were so prefab and generic, I would often get lost trying to figure out which one was mine.

On my first day of school, I was asked to say a few words and after using my posh English accent to say, "Well, hellowe, I simply cannot tell you how chuffed I am to be here in Canad-er and have brought along my park-er for the occasion," I got the shit pounded out of me so badly, I was saying, "Maggie Longclaws is pregnant, eh?" like Bob and Doug McKenzie within the week. This began my life role as a misfit always adapting to uncomfortable situations. Whether it's an Englishman in Ontario, an English speaker in French Canada, a Canadian in New York, or the only dad at the family resort covered in tattoos, I've always been most comfortable when I'm out of place.

Can you blame them for kicking my ass? (1975)

It was fun, though. Rural seclusion is great when you're a little kid. We shot at each other with BB guns, chased cows, and would make jumps for our bikes that were so intense, anyone who landed wrong was guaranteed a broken wrist. This was in the pre-safety days when not only did we not wear helmets, we didn't even wear shoes, and if your bike didn't have brakes, you'd have to stop the front tire with your bare foot. We swung off tire ropes into swimming holes in the summer and had snowball fights in the winter, but when the testosterone kicks in, so does the need for more. The seclusion goes from "groovy times" to a pressure cooker that makes you want to start a nuclear war. So, the day our teenage years began, we took our cold, bleak, lame environment and magically converted it into Funtown by using drugs. We also started a club that we pretended was a gang.

Steve (hat), Dogboy (curly hair), and me in a photo booth where we'd try to not laugh for as long as possible. (1986)

Half the students at my high school were the children of British expats, and the other half were Canadian farmers' kids. Our crew consisted of about a dozen ornery misfits from both sides. We called ourselves the Monks because we were loosely divided into mods (a now-esoteric subculture that was like punk but based more on neatly dressed, working-class 1960s British soul fans) and punks, though there were quite a few hosers (Canadian rednecks). Our crew ran the gamut. There was a huge basketball player with a harelip named Marty, a male-model-looking kid we thought was ugly so we called him Dogboy, and the Fonzarelli of the group, Steve Durand. Lawrence McCallister was a mod and so was his buddy John. We called John Pukey Stallion because he always threw up at parties and never got laid. We weren't part of the school's social hierarchy and had carved our own niche as the weird kids.

Being fucking idiots was very important to us. If anyone farted or burped without saying "safety" before someone else called "slut," everyone in the gang got to beat the poo-stuffings out of him until he could name five breakfast cereals. Unfortunately, guys started memorizing cereal lists, so we were forced to switch it to chocolate bars to keep things interesting. This was the early stages of a career devoted to troublemaking. Our motto was, "It ain't shit 'til it hits the fan" but the bully from *The Simpsons* later said it much better when he

asked Bart, “If no one gets mad, are you really being bad?”

Drugs enhanced this lifestyle, especially acid. We’d drop a tab around eight o’clock at night and go walk around a boring landscape that had blissfully transformed into a place worth visiting. I acquired X-ray vision to see through houses and observe how people lived when they didn’t know they were being watched. We stole hovercrafts and walked through trees. One time, Pukey’s head was a chicken.

My favorite LSD trip happened when I was fifteen. It was me, Steve, Dogboy, and Marty. We met after dinner behind our high school, and Steve pulled a sheet of about ten tabs from his wallet. As we each put one of the tiny square papers on our tongues, Dogboy said to Steve, “Let me see your driver’s license.” Steve pulled it out and Dogboy fell to the ground laughing. Steve always went cross-eyed in his ID pictures and eventually we made it a tradition—even for the yearbook. Soon we were all sharing our driver’s licenses and laughing at them, but I noticed something strange about Marty when he saw his. He looked disturbed. Marty’s harelip was obvious, but we’d known him for so long we couldn’t see it. Now I was seeing it. It was more than a single harelip; it was a full, lustrous, head-of-harelip. “That’s kind of a bad trip,” Marty said after quietly looking at the picture on his license. Then he put it back in his wallet and decided to move on.

We wandered over to a big hill by the football field where we used to punch each other in the nuts and we lay down to stare up at the night sky. It was a beautiful spring night, and the moon was so bright, we could see all the clouds perfectly. I realized I was tripping balls. “Holy shit,” I said to Marty as Steve and Dogboy continued to laugh at their licenses. “Do you see octagons?” The entire sky was made up of eight-sided geometry-defying shapes all turning in the same direction like cogs. It was a mosaic honeycomb of shapes that seamlessly rotated in unison, and I wanted to know if it was just me.

“Yes!” Marty said. “I see it, too.”

Now I was really confused. “Whoa,” I said. “Now, that is a fucking trip and a half. I get how I can be hallucinating something, but how can *you* be seeing the same thing? That’s like us having the same dream.”

Then he asked, “You know those weird desk toys where there’s a plastic board made up of steel pins, like a bed of nails kind of but they move?”

“Er, kind of?” I replied.

“You push your hand on one side,” he explained further, “and then your hand imprint is on the other side.”

I finally got what he was talking about. “I think it’s called Pin Art,” I said.

“That’s it!” he said excitedly. “And if you put your face on one side, the pins appear on the other side as an imprint of your face.” I didn’t know where he was going with this and I was getting nervous. Then he said, “That’s what I see in the sky. Only it’s God doing the impressions of your face.” Then he fucking turns to me and says, about a foot away from my ear hole, “Whatever face comes out the other end, that’s your face. Do you understand?”

I was desperate to get off this topic and nervously said, “Yeah, yeah, I get it. Hey! That cloud looks like Garfield taking a shit. You see that?”

He wasn’t having it, and he got up on one elbow so we were face-to-face. “No, man, I’m serious,” he said. “I’m going to ask you tomorrow if you really do get it, because it’s important.” I could feel a bad trip starting

to bubble from my toes and surge up my body, so I sprang upright and said, “Let’s sneak onto the golf course,” to which Steve and Dogboy yelled, “*Yeah!*”

Those guys usually got all Beavis and Butthead on acid, and I envied that. For me, acid was like having a thousand eyes and twenty million ears that could hear every conversation in the world at once. I think that’s God’s Pin Art way of saying, “Stick to booze,” but every time God spoke, I put my fingers in my ears and said, “La la la. I can’t hear you. Doo dee dee. Not listening to you.”

I was rattled by Marty’s provocations for the rest of the night, but I had shaken the bad trip and was able to file his heavy vibes away under No Fucking Way Are We Ever Going There Again for as Long as We Shall Live.

The Kanata Golf and Country Club was in the upper-class section of Nowhere and we were well-known by the security staff. Tonight it was beautifully lit up by the moon and we all felt fearless. We were all such old hats at sneaking into stuff, we actually preferred it when they chased us. Steve would do karate moves and run in circles like he was training to be a Keystone Kop. We were bored brats who were desperate to get back to all the danger and excitement our immigrant parents had rescued us from. Adding acid to this game was like colorizing a black-and-white movie. We ran up and down hills and tossed flags like javelins. We threw garbage cans in the water and climbed trees as if they were made of stairs. We had the agility of Olympic monkeys and the whole thing was such a riot, we started laughing uncontrollably.

Then it happened.

Steve was bouncing along and saw a small circle of mud that was about two feet in diameter. Without a second thought he jumped on it, expecting a small “splatch” and maybe a slightly muddy toe. Instead his entire body vanished into the atmosphere and the only thing left was his disembodied head sitting there on top of the puddle.

Do you get what I’m telling you?

His body was gone. Disappeared.

If you were a Nobel Prize–winning physicist you would have been confused. We were stupid kids on fucking acid. Ergo, we *completely* lost our shit. After screaming “What the fuck!?” about seven hundred times, I calmed down a bit and started to get mad at society for having such technology. “Why is it okay to annihilate people’s torsos and limbs using some kind of invisible death ray? I understand security can’t tolerate trespassers and I wouldn’t have complained if we were kicked out or arrested, but obliterated with a space gun? They shoot your body off if you walk on a golf course after hours? How long have they had this technology? Why isn’t there more blood? The military are the only ones who should be able to use such guns—*not* that fat rent-a-cop with the woman’s mustache! What if he gets drunk? He could end civilization! I’m going to fight for Body Gun–control legislation when I grow up.”

My mind was racing.

Marty was bewildered and laughing but in control. Dogboy and I were gone and had begun howling with confusion. Steve had been murdered. We were both sitting on our haunches with our arms outstretched screaming, “Whaaaaat!?” over and over.

Steve knew how important it was to laugh at a time like this—especially if you’re not actually dead. He

authoritatively said, “I’m all right. You can laugh,” and while still having no idea what happened to his body, Dogboy and I both fell back and laughed our heads off with no holds barred. I felt like my teeth were cumming. As we both pounded the grass and continued roaring, Steve commanded Marty to get him out. Being the legal giant that he is, Marty had no problem reaching into the muck, grabbing Steve by the armpits, and hoisting his mud-dripping body from what now appeared to be a perfectly cylindrical hole designed for people to fall into.

Then Steve said, “It’s shit,” and the laughter went to a whole ‘nother level. But Steve wasn’t laughing. “I’m not high anymore,” he said like a science teacher. The adrenaline had burned the lysergic acid diethylamide out of his system, and he was completely sober. As Steve washed all his clothes in a nearby creek, we calmed down enough to put the pieces together:

A golf course needs to have plenty of manure around to maintain perfect lawns, but you can’t have a huge mountain of manure sitting there while people play. So, they had these cylindrical containers drilled into the ground. The holes are less of an eyesore and can still hold enough fertilizer for the groundskeepers.

We all walked back to Steve’s house with him sopping wet but feces-free.

As Steve tried to explain to his mom what happened, we snuck downstairs to watch TV. He had a shower and came down later with new clothes on and a small joint we quietly and carefully smoked in the laundry room. As a particularly unfunny episode of *Who’s the Boss?* droned in the background, Steve’s buzz came back and I explained to him how I thought his entire body had gone flying off into the forest, leaving his head working but unattended.

As the laughter started up again, I considered drawing connections to cosmic exchanges and how Marty and I had the same hallucination earlier, but my mind snapped shut against it. Life’s too short to risk getting serious.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lisa Jennings:

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