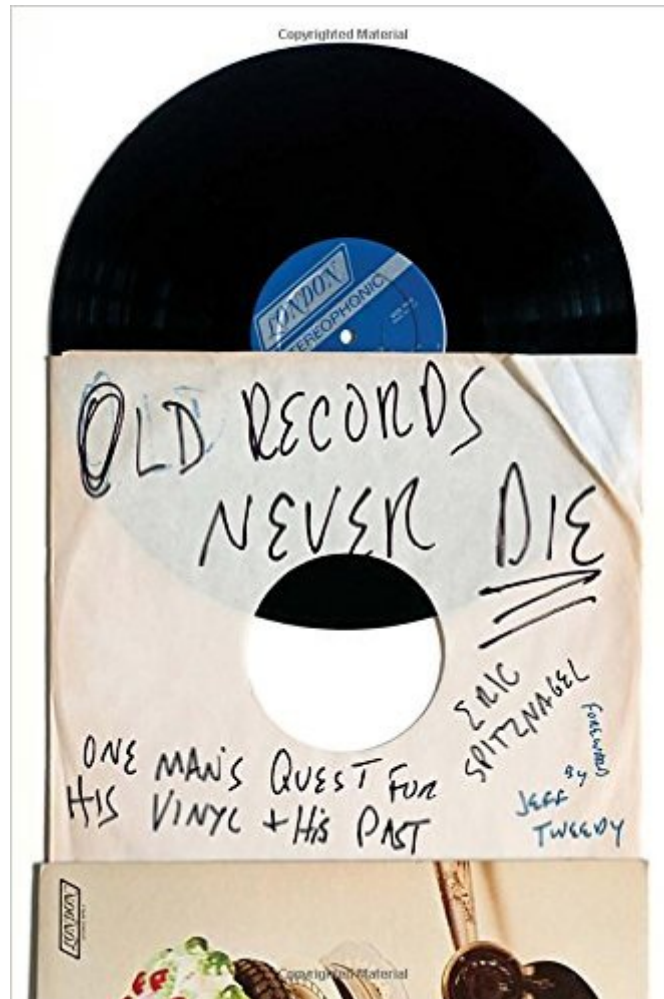


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Old Records Never Die: One Man's Quest For His Vinyl And His Past



Synopsis

Foreword by Wilco's Jeff Tweedy. High Fidelity meets Killing Yourself to Live when one man searches for his lost record collection. As he finds himself within spitting distance of middle-age, journalist Eric Spitznagel feels acutely the loss of something. Freedom? Maybe. Coolness? Could be. The records he sold in a financial pinch? Definitely. To find out for sure, he sets out on a quest to find the original vinyl artifacts from his past. Not just copies. The exact same records: The Bon Jovi record with his first girlfriend's phone number scrawled on the front sleeve. The KISS Alive II he once shared with his little brother. The Replacements' Let It Be he's pretty sure, 20 years later, would still smell like weed. As he embarks on his hero's journey, he reminisces about the actual records, the music, and the people he listened to it with—old girlfriends, his high school pals, and, most poignantly, his father and his young son. He explores the magic of music and memory as he interweaves his adventures in record-culture with questions about our connection to our past, the possibility of ever recapturing it, and whether we would want to if we could. "Memories are far more indelible when married to the physical world, and Spitznagel proves the point in this vivid book. We love vinyl records because they combine the tactile, the visual, the seeable effects of age and care and carelessness. When he searches for the records he lost and sold, Spitznagel is trying to return to a tangible past, and he details that process with great sensitivity and impact." —Dave Eggers, New York Times bestselling author of The Circle

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Customer Reviews

What can I say, beyond the fact that Eric Spitznagel is a master at his craft, and hysterically funny,

to boot. He's also very skilled at pulling the reader into the moment, making you a willing participant (without being maudlin!) in his wild chase for the things in our youth that we think got away. The book arrived within 48 hours, so order yours now and set aside the third day to dive into a melee of memories which you will, on one level or another, identify with.

Eric's musical past and mine are quite similar. He writes about the visceral 'album' experience with wit and honesty. If you're around fifty, you will especially enjoy his various recollections of teenage lust and social awkwardness against the backdrop of the 1980s and 90s music world. His decision to track down not just the music of his youth but the actual, physical record ALBUMS leads to several humorous adventures and inevitable self-realizations. Also, the subjects of aging, parenting and marriage are occasionally addressed in context. If you are even casually interested in vintage vinyl and semi-punk ethos, read this book.

Old Records Never Die is a fabulous book, one of the best I've read all year. It's like another installment of High Fidelity and I mean that in the best way possible. I was fully expecting the amazing musical commentary, but I wasn't expecting such a well-written memoir. Spitznagel does a fantastic job weaving the threads of his vinyl tales with his past in a way that feels really natural. The telling of one wouldn't have been as strong without the other and vice versa. As part of his personal pursuits of tracking down his old records, Spitznagel delves deep into the notion of physical, tangible music and what that really means as well as why vinyl is an art in a way that CDs and MP3s aren't and never will be. Like many aspects of digital technology, digital music has a number of obvious advantages over its analog counterparts. However, it will never fully replace them because it doesn't have the same tangible quality that makes it art and gives each recording its own history. I know many people will find the entire topic really silly and not see it as a reason to read the book, but I know it will resonate with quite a few, too. I read The Song Machine this year as well, and between these two books, my feelings about vinyl, CDs, and the music industry as a whole have never been more well defined. Anyway, if you're a fan of High Fidelity or other books and movies in this vein or you simply enjoy memoirs and don't mind a lot of musical commentary in the mix, please read Old Records Never Die.

as a huge music collector over the years this is the kind of book down my alley. it's the kind of book where you can relate and also vibe off the one liners and the humor and balance is well served. if you came around during a particular era and time this book speaks directly to the mind set.

This book is great. It's a mix of a memoir, observations on growing older, and how what you listen to becomes the soundtrack of your life. It's funny, interesting, and at times a little sweet. If you're a person who really loves music, who likes records, or wonders why at 45 you should still be thrashing around to The Replacements, this book is for you.

Old Records was a pleasure to read. For me, it was full of nostalgia for the good old days of the 1980s and record stores. As Spitznagel says, "...I want the old thrill back, the adrenaline rush of hunting for music the way it's supposed to be hunted." In the 80s, I worked in 3 different records stores. And if I wasn't working, I was probably zooming to Portland with my friend Rees in his old VW...so we could go to record stores. That's how you made friends back then; all about the music and the hunt for music. My first real relationship was based almost entirely around music (okay, and art). So reading Old Records led me on my own trip down memory lane at the same time I journeyed with Spitznagel on his quest to recover all the old vinyl he'd sold or given away or lost over the years. (And he totally GETS The Replacements, okay? And all you bastards of the young who love the Mats, you know who you are, and you know what I'm talkin' about.) Did I enjoy this book? Hell, yes! (Do you see me throwing rocker horns? Because I totally am.) So read this and go on your own nostalgia trip. Because, yeah, those were the good old days.

This is an enjoyable read. The author is about ten years younger than me but I could still relate to how he feels about music and musicians. And his efforts to find specific records (ones he used to own) make for some memorably funny episodes.

This book is about so much more than records. I have the same nostalgic memories and stories with my own songs/albums. A great read and so many funny one liners. If you collect records, cd's, or just love music this is an amazing book.

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