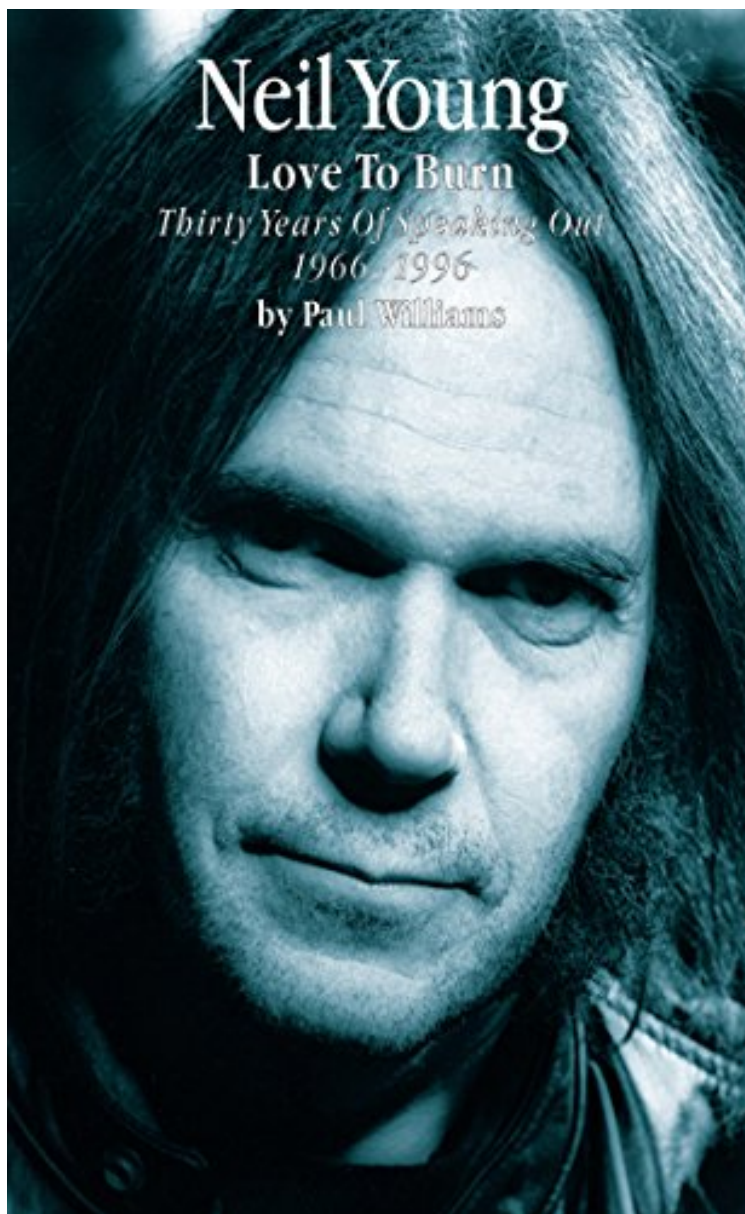


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## Neil Young: Love to Burn

*Paul Williams*

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**Paul Williams : Neil Young: Love to Burn** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Neil Young: Love to Burn:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy thanwashopit's in my collection!!!15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. The music but not the manBy A CustomerWilliams has written an ambitious book which attempts to review Young's music from his earliest commercial releases in 1966 through 1994. As the other

reviews indicate a large portion of the book is devoted to a song by song review of the Italian bootleg 4 CD retrospective "Rock and Roll Cowboy". Unlike those reviewers I had owned "Cowboy" for years before reading "Love To Burn" so my criticism of the book is a little different. Put simply, this book should be titled "What Neil Young's music means to Paul Williams." While Williams has some interesting thoughts about some songs that's all they are -- his thoughts. Second, Williams sometimes succumbs to the dread rock reviewer's affliction of writing pretentiously and sometimes sounds like a sophomore English Lit major who just had his first class in music theory. For hardcore Neil Young fans it is in an enjoyable read because it is interesting to compare and contrast one's thoughts with Williams' but the book offers little insight into the thoughts of Neil himself. Of course, no available book has done that because Neil is not forthcoming and does not allow the authors opportunity to pick his brain. Which is a shame because Young is the most important figure in rock history (a bold assertion I know but one that could be amply illustrated by the RIGHT book), and his personal life is a remarkable story as well. We need but lack the magnum opus which chronicles how a kid from Canada came to L.A. formed a seminal and hugely influential band moved on to superstardom as a solo artist and with CSNY, then deliberately abandoned mainstream acceptance with a series of the darkest, rawest albums ever released by a pop musician (Time Fades Away, On the Beach and Tonight's the Night), only to end the 70's with a series of successful albums that contained not a hint of compromise to commercial formulas. Then after reaching the top a second time, Young again (to borrow a phrase from Dylan) threw it all away-- with a series of albums so determinedly eccentric as to alienate all but his most devoted fans. Then at an age when his contemporaries were all either dead, retired or all but irrelevant he soared again for a third time with a stunning series of albums including Freedom, Ragged Glory, Weld and Sleeps With Angels ( and more after the book was published). Williams meticulously chronicles the music but misses the man who produced the largest, most daring and most compelling body of work in rock history. Unfortunately we Rusties have to make due with books such as this rather than the definitive biography (or dare we pray, autobiography) because of the Neil's reluctance if not refusal to divulge his essence to others. But in the end it is maybe just that reluctance, or maybe ambivalence is a better word that makes Neil what he is. The man clearly wants acceptance and success--- but only on his terms. He does what moves him at the moment and hopes it is popular but won't change a note or a word to make his music more accessible or commercial. And, in the end he has succeeded. I can listen to the music and discuss it with my friends so William's book gives relatively little to the hardcore Young fan (and who else is going to read a book like this?) other than an enjoyable night's read while blasting Rock and Roll Cowboy or other Neil on the stereo----- but you can do a lot worse than that with your time. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable insights -but you must have the CD's discussed. By A Customer Book is very enjoyable as a listening companion to the music discussed. As usual, the author brings enlightening, personal observations on the music and artist. However, the majority of the book centers on the unofficial 4 CD bootleg "Rock and Roll Cowboy", which covers live performances for most of Neil's career. Until I tracked this bootleg down, reading the book was frustrating (to say the least). Once I got the bootleg, the book was immensely enjoyable. (So, there is no point to reading the book without having the music discussed.) (By the way, the music in this bootleg is a MUST for serious Neil Young fans.) - WGL

A collection of articles and reviews. Following Neil Young's career, from his emergence in Buffalo Springfield in 1967 through thirty years of surprising and ever-changing Neil Young music. Includes substantial coverage of unreleased tracks.