



Rant: The Oral Biography of Buster Casey

By Chuck Palahniuk

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Buster “Rant” Casey just may be the most efficient serial killer of our time. A high school rebel, Rant Casey escapes from his small town home for the big city where he becomes the leader of an urban demolition derby called Party Crashing. Rant Casey will die a spectacular highway death, after which his friends gather the testimony needed to build an oral history of his short, violent life. With hilarity, horror, and blazing insight, *Rant* is a mind-bending vision of the future, as only Chuck Palahniuk could ever imagine.

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Rant: The Oral Biography of Buster Casey By Chuck Palahniuk Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Buster Casey, destined to live fast, die young and murder as many people as he can, is the rotten seed at the core of Palahniuk's comically nasty eighth novel (after *Haunted*; *Lullaby*; *Diary*; etc.). Set in a future where urbanites are segregated by strict curfews into Daytimers and Nighttimers, the narrative unfolds as an oral history comprising contradictory accounts from people who knew Buster. These include childhood friends horrified by the boy's macabre behavior (getting snakes, scorpions and spiders to bite him and induce instant erections; repeatedly infecting himself with rabies), policemen and doctors who had dealings with the rabies "superspreader"; and Party Crashers, thrill-seeking Nighttimers who turn city streets into demolition derby arenas. After liberally infecting his hometown peers with rabies, Buster hits the big city and takes up with the Party Crashers. A series of deaths lead to a police investigation of Buster (long-since known as "Rant"—the sound children make while vomiting) that peaks just as Buster apparently commits suicide in a blaze of car-crash glory. This dark religious parable (there's even a resurrection) from the master of grotesque excess may not attract new readers, but it will delight old ones. (May)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Zombies, government conspiracies, religious epiphanies, time travel, a postmodern Typhoid Mary, and a woman who mixes thumbtacks into her cookie dough—all are fair game in *Rant*, Chuck Palahniuk's eighth novel. Critics agreed that *Rant* is vintage Palahniuk, a grim thriller ride filled with his signature black humor, withering social commentary, and stomach-churning details. Some grumbled, however, that the ideas in *Rant* have been recycled from previous novels, particularly *Fight Club*. They were also disappointed with the novel's lack of depth, distracting structure (a succession of hundreds of brief eyewitness testimonies), and underlying glorification of violence. The truth is that Palahniuk is an acquired taste. Readers either love him or leave him alone, and will judge *Rant* accordingly.

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From [Booklist](#)

In his eighth novel, Palahniuk uses a new form--oral history--to revisit the themes that have always informed his oeuvre. Buster "Rant" Casey, a naturopathic serial killer, is dead, and those who survive him--family, friends, enemies, and hangers-on--are trying to make sense of the void left by his passing. Perhaps offering a meditation on celebrity, the author explores the topics that have always intrigued him: uniqueness and belonging, cross-generational panic, the search for authenticity, and the consume-or-die worldview. If this suggests that Palahniuk's biggest influence here is himself, this *Tom Sawyer* on methamphetamine (the first 100 pages depict Casey's boyhood as a poison-obsessed, priapic Pied Piper) belies the influence of William S. Burroughs (in its satire of boys'-own adventures), William Gibson (characters "boost" each others' neural transcripts of lived experience), and J. G. Ballard (Casey's clique crashes cars in order to feel more alive). Outrageous but not quite over the top, full of energetic humor, *Rant* (Casey's nickname is said to be onomatopoeic for the sound of children vomiting) is a memorable portrait of the cults that gather around authentically different people and a portrait of dystopia that feels unsettlingly contemporary. Palahniuk is no Studs Terkel, but Terkel's heartland probably looks more like Palahniuk's nowadays. *Keir Graff*

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Users Review

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Christian Fowler:

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