



Clubland: The Fabulous Rise and Murderous Fall of Club Culture

By Frank Owen

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Outrageous parties. Brazen drug use. Fantastical costumes. Celebrities. Wannabes. Gender-bending club kids. Pulse-pounding beats. Sinful orgies. Botched police raids. Depraved criminals. Murder.

Welcome to the decadent nineties club scene.

In 1995, journalist Frank Owen began researching a story on Special K, a designer drug that fueled the after-midnight club scene. He went to buy and sample the drug at the internationally notorious Limelight, a crumbling church converted into a Manhattan disco, where mesmerizing music, ecstatic dancers, and uninhibited sideshows attracted long lines of hopeful onlookers. Owen discovered a world where reckless hedonism was elevated to an art form, and where the ever-accelerating party finally spun out of control in the hands of notorious club owner Peter Gaten and his minions. In *Clubland*, Owen reveals how a lethal drug ring operated in a lawless, black-lit realm of fantasy, and how, when the lights came up, their excesses left countless victims in their wake.

Praised for his risk-taking and exhilarating writing style, Frank Owen has spawned a hybrid of literary nonfiction and true crime, capturing the zeitgeist of a world that emerged in the spirit of “peace, love, unity and respect,” and ended in tragedy.

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Clubland: The Fabulous Rise and Murderous Fall of Club Culture By Frank Owen Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1075890 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Three Rivers Press
- Published on: 2004-06-08
- Released on: 2004-06-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .75" w x 6.00" l, 1.06 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

To anyone who's ever wondered what went on in the 1990s' most notorious nightclubs, Village Voice reporter Owen has a highly engaging answer. He weaves together three strands of masterful reporting, focusing on Peter Gatien, the nightclub impresario who owned Limelight and the Tunnel in Manhattan; Chris Paciello, the gangster who started Miami Beach's Liquid; and "club kid king" Michael Alig, the party promoter and Gatien employee who murdered his friend Angel Melendez. Alig's drug-addled story is the most grotesque and chilling: a few weeks before he hacked off the legs of his dead friend, he had thrown a "Blood Feast" party in which some guests "came covered in raw liver and slabs of beef." The author has apparently settled down now; "life is too precious to waste spending your time lurking around VIP rooms and getting high." At one time, though, he was a true believer in clubs and raves "as perfect but temporary democracies of desire," and is saddened by the crime that came to surround them. He has a distinctive writing style, recklessly mixing metaphors—one woman is "the proverbial tough cookie laced with arsenic straight from the pages of a hard-boiled novel"—and packing his chapters with noirish "wise guys" and "feds." It's a treat for fans of true crime, but armchair party animals will also appreciate the lengths to which this reporter goes—the book opens with Owen seeking, buying and tripping on the drug ketamine.

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From [Booklist](#)

Ah, club culture! Was it really all glamour, heroin, and flashing lights? Owen considers that and other questions in his contribution to the continuing story of sex and drugs and rock and roll. He has a lot to work with, including real-life *Pulp Fiction* characters like Michael Alig, nowadays "stoned and puffy with jail food fat," but "the prince of perversion" when he was a party promoter in high demand. Alig had equally alluring playmates, of course—Mafia dandies, drug lords, and zany "club kids"—but his career screeched to a halt when he "chopped up his buddy's body." Owen came to his subject as a result of a *Village Voice* assignment to do an article on ketamine, an animal anesthetic and clubgoers' "mind-bending party favor." One thing led to another, and presto!—this chronicle-cum-true crime story in the gaudy, Mardi Gras-like trappings of a phenomenon that straddled the disco and rave cultures. A gripping story, pleasantly sleazy and well told. *Mike Tribby*

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Review

Like a line of coke begs for another bump (or so we've been told), *Clubland* is a compulsive page-turner."
—*Miami Herald*

"*Clubland* satisfies by meting out the justice that many '90s party kids never got to see—or perhaps never wanted to. *Clubland* sees through the smoke, mirrors, and Ketamine." —*The Village Voice*

"Positively riveting . . . to be enjoyed even by those who've never stepped foot anywhere more stimulating than a Howard Johnson's." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Loraine Brown:

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The knowledge that you get from Clubland: The Fabulous Rise and Murderous Fall of Club Culture may be the more deep you digging the information that hide in the words the more you get serious about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but Clubland: The Fabulous Rise and Murderous Fall of Club Culture giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by means of anyone who read it because the author of this guide is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this particular Clubland: The Fabulous Rise and Murderous Fall of Club Culture instantly.

Daryl Church:

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Carmine Caulfield:

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