



Weird Al Yankovic: The Kindle Singles Interview (Kindle Single)

Mara Altman

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On an L-shaped sofa at his home high atop the Hollywood Hills, 54-year-old “Weird Al” Yankovic – the Grammy-winning song parodist famous for such hits as “Like A Surgeon,” “I Love Rocky Road,” and “Eat It” – lets down his legendary hair for a relaxed, revealing and often hilarious three-hour conversation. Among other topics, Al opened up about his nerdy childhood, his late-night writing binges, his gut-wrenching reach for movie stardom, and his hopes for his latest album, Mandatory Fun. He also discussed his future plans to have a drug problem.

The interview was conducted by Mara Altman, the author of five bestselling Kindle Singles including “Baby Steps,” “Bearded Lady,” and the Kindle Singles Interview with Tom Robbins. Altman has worked as a staff writer for The Village Voice, and has also written for New York Magazine, The New York Times and Salon. In 2009, HarperCollins published Altman’s first book, “Thanks For Coming: A Young Woman’s Quest for an Orgasm,” which was optioned as a comedy series by HBO.

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From Reader Review Weird Al Yankovic: The Kindle Singles Interview (Kindle Single) for online ebook

Josh says

Any big Al fan will know most of stuff covered in this book so most of the questions posed to Al seemed a bit boring to me. When the interviewer tried to go beyond basic questions it usually ended badly.

At least the price was right.

Rich says

Wow. I found Weird Al to be even more fascinating than I thought. He came across as a wildly creative and intelligent man who is well-grounded and self-controlled. He speaks openly of his love for his family and his deliberate avoidance of profanity and innuendo in his music (which he intentionally keeps "family-friendly"). The thing that cost this interview a fourth star in my rating was the terrible skills of the interviewer, who seemed dead-set on talking about drugs, alcohol, and a lascivious lifestyle despite the fact that Al had indicated several times that he had never participated in such things. She badgered him about drugs to the point that Al seems uncomfortable. When he speaks of his affinity for caffeine and his late-night writing sessions, she asks him if this sparks his creativity the way LSD does for other recording artists. When he finally throws her a bone and jokes about his "intentions" to develop a dependency on drugs after he reaches seventy years of age, she asks him if he thinks he'll look back and lament what he might have missed. When he speaks of the remarkably "tame" lifestyle he and his band shares while on the road and their commitment to time spent with their families, she suggestively pushes him with questions about encounters with groupies. Yet when he raises the subject of his "strict" upbringing, his church attendance, and his Christian faith, she drops the topic like a live grenade. Ultimately, the interview jumps the shark when she announces that she has to "pee" and they take a break. At the end, I found myself wanting to hear more from Al, but simply wishing that the interviewer would go away.

Kelly says

Turns out, Weird Al is a really smart, nice guy.

Allison says

This was an oddly fascinating interview. I knew so little about Al (except that I liked his parody songs) that I couldn't put it down -- despite the fact that behind his persona he's just like anyone else, (anyone else who just happens to have made millions of dollars on a record deal and 30 years of hits!) I liked the interviewer less than the subject -- though she was well-researched, I thought she left some good follow-up questions unasked. I wanted to know more than just that he was "Christian," and there were a few times I thought she could have entered into the conversation a bit more. He seemed to outsmart her, and I came away wanting to play Words with Friends and go listen to his entire oeuvre.

Nancy says

A very well done interview, Al Yankovic is intelligent and well spoken...and still passionate about his music. These Kindle singles, especially when loaned to me are great.

Kevin Allen says

Interesting person, not a great interviewer

Weird Al is an interesting person and entertainer, and in this respect the book was good. However, Mara Altman seemed to insert herself into the book too much for my taste.

Jeff Raymond says

Some Kindle Singles interviews are a little dull or frustrating, but there's no reason not to love Weird Al. Hardcore fans probably won't get much new information from this, but as someone who hasn't looked too hard into Weird Al's life outside of his career, there are a lot of nice little gems in here. Maybe not as "hard hitting" as some might like, and it doesn't traverse a ton of new ground, but it's Weird Al. It's in the lending library, so it was worth it for a quick read this month.

Lindsey says

A well-researched interview that was a quick, enjoyable read. Yankovic is genuine and articulate and as nice a guy as he seems.

~Geektastic~ says

It's your basic, friendly interview-there are no phenomenal discoveries. It does confirm my theory that Weird Al is a genuinely nice guy with a fierce work ethic. It probably took an hour, at most, to read. Not a bad way to pass the time, but nothing revelatory. I probably wouldn't have read it if it wasn't offered in the Kindle Unlimited program; a dollar is a bit much for a generic interview with a pop star (though I don't consider Al generic one bit).

Ryk Stanton says

No astonishing revelations, but a pretty good interview. I envy Mara Altman for having the opportunity to sit down one-on-one with Al, but it was obvious she was not a fan but just someone doing an interview.

She starts with some descriptive imagery of his home, but once the interview starts there is little more than Q and A. There are odd transitions between topics in the interview that probably indicate they had gotten sidetracked for whatever reason and then started back up again. I would rather have word-pictures created for me of how he sat, how he moved, how his face and eyes looked at different points, things like that.

I have heard much better stuff on the many podcasts on which he has appeared.

This "Kindle Single" costs 99 cents, but it was free to borrow on my Kindle. It was worth free -- it was worth the time to read -- but I would not have wanted to pay a buck for this.

Rachael Booth says

A little drier than I thought it would be but interesting.

Kek says

Nothing earth-shattering here, but it did remind me I need to buy Mandatory Fun!

Goth Gone Grey says

Weird Al - he's just like us!

Celebrities - they're just like us. Al was a socially awkward teen, lounges around his home barefoot in various random boneless yoga-type poses, and isn't hilarious with every word.

This is a quick read, a pleasant enough interview in promotion of the Mandatory Fun CD. His Weirdness is refreshingly down to earth, dare I say normal, in a world of addiction and scandal fueled celebrity gossip. I've been a fan for decades, back to the Dr. Demento days. Many of the answers herein reinforce why: he's a genuinely good guy who likes to entertain and not offend.

Craig Hansen says

Highly satisfying, in-depth interview with one of the most underappreciated artists of our time. As someone one said, "Dying is easy. Comedy? Now that's hard..."

Tim Smerken says

I thoroughly enjoyed reading through this interview. It was nice to read about Weird Al's thoughts on life, his career, and the new Mandatory Fun album. You can tell through this interview that Weird Al is a kind and compassionate person who really cares about what his fans think and about making them happy. I'm looking

forward to seeing the Mandatory Fun concert tour next year!
