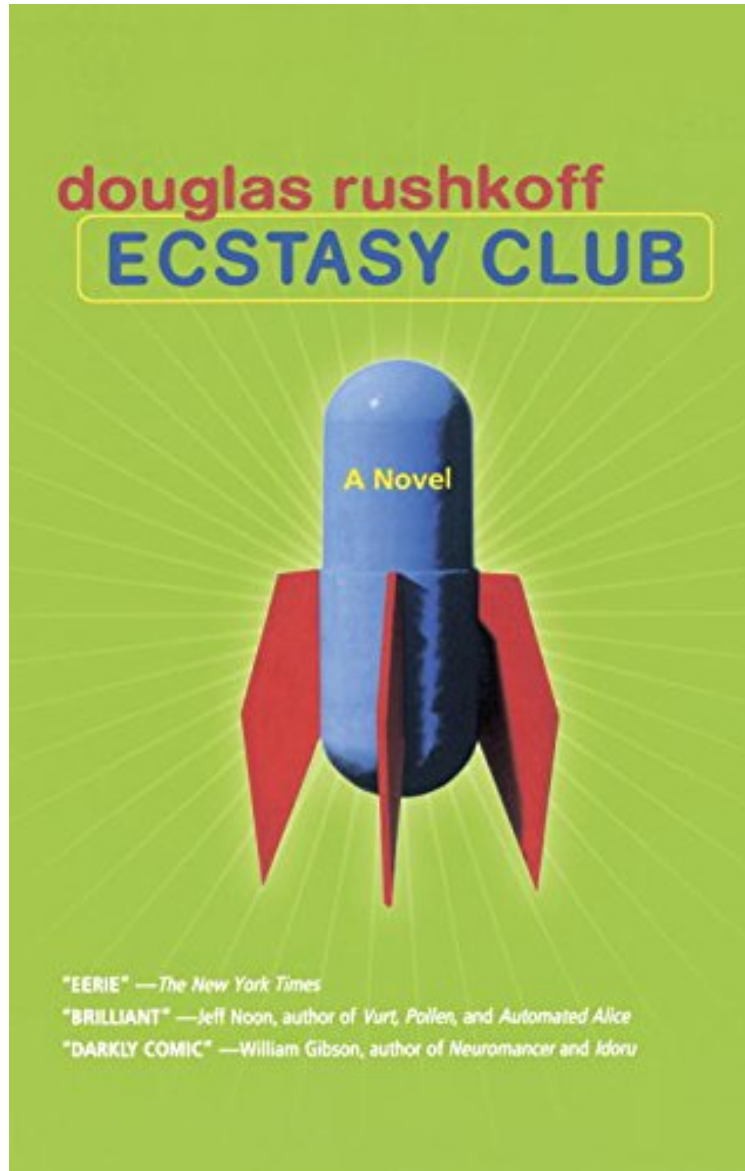


## Ecstasy Club: A Novel

*Douglas Rushkoff*

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**Douglas Rushkoff : Ecstasy Club: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ecstasy Club: A Novel:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Breaking through to the next dimension!!By D. MalaraI haven't read a fictional novel in many days, and this was quite refreshing. These rave party throwing kids tackle topics stretching from large scale social programming to trying to break through to the next level of consciousness using a virtual

reality feedback loop while on ketamine! There are also lots of "meta" talks between intellectual group members that I found interesting. The narrating character reveals to the reader some of the more complex, unsaid dialogue and brings you right to that level of thinking. I really enjoyed it for that part more than anything else. 188, twitch, reset... Good Read, I'm very glad I randomly purchased it. Oh, and I might add: this book is a quick read. I zoomed through it about a week. Hard to put down. Hard to do pretty much anything else until I finished it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The 90s will be remembered. By Customer For the time being, Ecstasy Club is a bit under the radar. Fans of Rushkoff and those circles are aware, but it isn't a particularly famous novel. I believe one day that will change and this book will get the recognition it deserves. As we drift away from the time period of the 90s, the generation of my youth, and our memories glamorize and stereotype, eventually this book is going to be remembered as one of the defining works capturing the soul of that era. The cultural identity of the 90s will not be forgotten. You see, I was there and we all thought rave was going to be our punk. That was going to be the next big thing, our contribution to the ages, and it was going to change the world. But it wasn't, it didn't, and in the end it only burnt itself out and then it died. That is the tragedy Rushkoff so brilliantly portrayed in Ecstasy Club. I find it hard to believe that this is Rushkoff's first novel, yet that's what he says. It has all the cyberpunk-hacker-coutnerculture-mystical themes you expect from Rushkoff, but it's so terribly readable. The love drama of Zach and Kirsten and Lauren and Duncan; the conflict between our protagonist as damage control Levite and the charming cult leader guru Duncan ready to shift our dimensional reality. And the intricacies of the pseudo-Scientologist conspiracy and insanities of the drug culture perfectly bend your mind enough to question yours and Zach's realities. The novel isn't just a good intelligence journey though, it's actually a fun read. I breezed through the book, eager to see what happens to the diverse cast of characters next, laughed at the clever references, and was sad to see it end too soon. Ecstasy Club is simultaneously one of the most mentally engaging and entertaining books I've read in a long time. Rushkoff's nonfiction is always engaging, and his new comics are spot-on, but personally I hope he has a few more novels in him. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. More Than Just Drugs. By Adam Trahan. The Ecstasy Club by Douglas Rushkoff is the fastest read book I have ever encountered. I consumed and devoured every word, every scene, every concept. This book put priority over almost everything in my life at that time. Rushkoff's ideas and concepts were extremely hard to grasp, but that is exactly what kept me interested. This novel was the first I have ever read about the current club scene: raves, drugs, sex, and Rock 'n Roll (or in this case Techno). One may think that this novel is strictly written for the teenager, but I believe that it may attempt to explain the culture of teenagers to any adult who is interested. I believe, though, that if an adult attempts to read this novel, it will have an "all or nothing" effect; either the adult will grasp the idea completely or reject it out of ignorance. The novel contains a journey theme. This journey consists of a group of kids traveling to throw raves for their enjoyment as well as their profit. On the symbolic level, it is a quest for the truth about life; an answer to all the questions concerning the fate of our world. In the end, the truth is not uncovered by the "deprogrammed" (Ecstasy Club members and alike) outdoing the "programmed" (cultists and fascists), but by an evolution into a mutual understanding between both groups. When this novel was first recommended to me by a friend, I expected it to be good, but definitely not this powerful. The Ecstasy Club had me overwhelmed with the most complex thinking concerning the realities of our world that I will ever grasp. It takes a very smart, open-minded person to enjoy the novel in its entirety. "So do we need an educated elite to censor out the bad information, or are we evolved enough to accept or discard prescriptions for change using nothing other than our intuition? Maybe it's YOU who are unduly afraid of the dominance of favored, state-sponsored memes. If we accept the basic premise that our mindset extends, eventually, to the reality we inhabit, then wouldn't your attribution of the psychedelic revolution to a fear-mongering elite and subsequent admission of your own powerlessness in the face of such adversity ultimately result in the full manifestation of the very forces you hope to quash?" This quote was the first realization of the truth regarding reality that I was in the process of revealing. Sadly, though, the truth is not easy enough for me to just simply tell you; it must be uncovered by diving into the deep, complex dialogue Rushkoff uses throughout the novel's multi-level development.

"A darkly comic contemporary fable: a brave, very funny, very knowing trip through the neo-psychedelic substrate of the wired world." --William Gibson, bestselling author of Neuromancer and Idoru. Douglas Rushkoff--the foremost authority on cyberculture and author of Cyberia, Media Virus and Playing the Future--has penned the ultimate novel for our fast and furious times. A wired-in thrill ride into the here and now of tripping, raving, net-surfing...and beyond." An eerie tale of 20-somethings caught up in an increasingly trippy world of homegrown religion. Set in an abandoned piano factory in Oakland, CA., Rushkoff's novel drops several characters--hackster, hipster, hustler, hippie--into a pop-culture Cuisinart along with a nice Jewish boy, and then spins them off into an intricate plot that leads to a showdown with the leader of a rival cultlike group." --New York Times

.com The end of the millennium is just a couple of years away, and folks, it's getting squirrely out there. Survivalists are stockpiling weapons in the hills as they wait for black helicopters and a new world order; Heaven's Gate cultists returned to the mother ship via poison-laced applesauce while members of the Solar Temple believed their suicides on

earth would result in a better life on the planet Sirius. Can it get any stranger? In Douglas Rushkoff's novel, *Ecstasy Club*, it can and does. Rushkoff's club is an abandoned piano factory in Oakland, California, where members of a small group of idealists hold round-the-clock raves even as they seek to combine computer technology, mind-altering substances, and New Age spirituality to create a method of time travel. Along with end-of-the-world scenarios, the millennium brings with it a heavy dose of conspiracy theory, and *Ecstasy Club* has its fair share. Once narrator Zach Levi and his merry band actually succeed in "breaking time" online, they are beset by menacing government agents, religious zealots, and a host of other special interest groups who are out to shut them down. So while we're all waiting for 1999, what better way to pass the time than with Douglas Rushkoff's *Ecstasy Club*? From Kirkus sRushkoff, author of such books on the emerging cyberculture as *Playing the Future* (1996), etc., applies his Faith Popcornlike sense of the zeitgeist to his first fiction: a high-tech conspiracy tale that ends up as a conventional melodrama despite its next-wave flair. In an abandoned factory in Oakland, a group of drug-munching techno-nerds and cyber-geeks, along with a guru wannabe, set up their experiment in communal living: a huge, fully wired environment for moneymaking parties and performances. With their virtual reality toys and visionquest drugs, the motley group of eight or so full-time residents hope to discover a higher level of consciousness and evolve as a select group of psychic travelers. Duncan, the leader of the rave cult, is a master of situational psychology, capable of bending his minions to his will--except for the narrator. Zack Levi, an Ivy League grad, seems to know that he's just slumming on his way to becoming a suburban shrink. Zack, after all, recognizes the cultic dimensions of the group's experiment as some sort of Zen nazism, a yin-yang adventure in tribe-think. Lauren, Duncan's lover, is also Zack's true love, despite his cohabitation with a hippie chick named Kirsten. When things go haywire, Lauren helps Zack pull out and retreat to domestic bliss in Ohio. Along the way, Duncan focuses his paranoia on one E.T. Harmon, the leader of Cosmotology, a kind of cross between L. Ron Hubbard and Bill Gates. And, like many paranoids, Duncan has real enemies: All the troubles that befall the naive space-trippers are in fact engineered by a grand conspiracy involving Cosmotology, the government, and some characters who resemble such famed space cadets as Timothy Leary and John Lilly. Full of the buzzwords valued by advertisers and marketers, this hyped-up fiction proudly proclaims: "This demographic belongs to us." Enough cyberpop sociology to keep the Internet chatting; others will log off. -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. From the Publisher When the young, hypertalented idealists who call themselves ECSTASY CLUB find an abandoned piano factory in Oakland, they make it the focus of a round-the-clock rave the likes of which the Bay Area has never seen before. They also make the factory a base camp in their search for a method of time travel that combines computer wizardry, esoteric spirituality and mind-altering substances. The club's mesmeric leader, Duncan, and the story's resourceful narrator, Zach, actually manage to "break time" online, only to discover that an unsettling array of characters has beaten them to it. Government agents, corporate saboteurs, religious zealots and even the local cops are suddenly out to get the club. As they battle an ingeniously conceived conspiracy (think Thomas Pynchon meets *The X-Files*), Zach battles his own growing affection for Duncan's lover, Lauren, and begins to wonder whether enlightenment is all it's cracked up to be.