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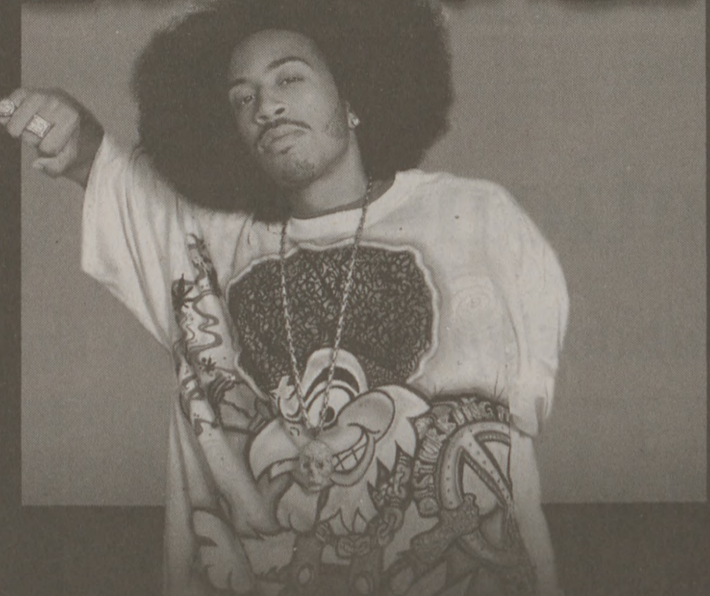
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BOOK WORMS

Generation S.L.U.T. by Marty Beckerman Pocket Books and MTV Books

America today is confronted with sex more than ever before — in news, TV, movies, you name it, sex is there. In "Generation S.L.U.T." (Sexually Liberated Urban Teens), Marty Beckerman takes an honest, disturbing and dark look at the sexual behaviors of teenagers in today's society. Although interesting, it's sometimes hard to follow the book, as it takes the reader on a rollercoaster ride of statistics, personal experiences and newspaper articles dealing with incidents involving teenagers and a story that follows the lives of a group of sexually risky high schoolers.

Although the story in the book is fictional, readers will find themselves recalling similar stories that happened to them or that they have heard about in real life. Beckerman touches on many controversial topics in this story, including rape, abortion, suicide and sex parties. The fact that all of these events are compacted into short excerpts will tempt one to write it off as an exaggeration. However, combined with quotes from real-life teenagers, news articles and statistics scattered throughout the book, it's apparent that the story is pretty close to reality.

Brett, one of the characters in the story, is the quintessential high school jock who goes to lots of parties, drinks, does drugs and really likes sex. Rude to basically everyone he knows, Brett is an initially unlikeable character, but he redeems himself a little by the conclusion of the story. Max, Brett's unlikely best friend, is a polar opposite of Brett. Max is awkward, inexperienced and dorky. The reader gets to experience Max's first time to have sex, first experience with marijuana and his first love. These are just a couple of the colorful characters included in this story, which helps maintain the book's fast pace.

If the story isn't enough of a shock, the statistics,

which Beckerman calls "S.L.U.T. Stats" may be surprising to some readers. For example, 23 percent of 18-year-olds were sexually active compared to 80 percent in 1999. Then there is the quote from a 16-year-old girl who says that she has had sex with 14 people.

"Generation S.L.U.T." is a book that needs to be read. There is a lot of information included in a book that cannot be ignored, and it is presented in a way that is also entertaining. However, it needs to be approached with an open mind and taken seriously. Critics are often harsh when discussing teen sex shows because sex is so rampant, but this book proves that shows on MTV may be pretty indicative of the truth.

- Use this as firestarter
- Read only when insomnia hits
- Buy it at a used bookstore
- Buy it in hardback
- Buy a copy for your coffee table, nightstand, and bookshelf

FEEL THE BEAT

Damageplan "New Found Power" Elektra

Technically, Damageplan's debut CD "New Found Power" is quite good. Filled with impressive guitar riffs, solos and a pulse-pounding beat courtesy of former Pantera band members Dimebag Darrell and Vinnie Paul, "New Found Power" is a headbanger's nitro-fueled wonderland, if you like that kind of thing. Damageplan's breed of metal is heavier than anything that sees playtime on TRL or the top 100. Harder than any nu-metal and rawer than alternative grudge, Damageplan's debut album was made for and by a select audience whose demands are not shared by the majority of A&M's student body. For fans of heavy metal, this album is an impressive debut and a worthy legacy for Pantera. For those listeners who prefer a little variance in their music however, listening to "New Found Power" will be one of the duller experiences of a lifetime.

Such songs as "Wake Up" and "F*** You" contain the requisite amount of anger and brutality that, when cranked up, will shatter souls and rock socks off. On the first track, "Wake Up," lead singer Pat Lachman growls in a voice that sounds as if it's been through a rough battle with throat cancer.

"Do you still think that you're better than me/You better wake up 'cause you know it's a lie," he croons while Paul cranks out a fast-paced, throbbing beat that will have walls reverberating

and neighbors complaining about the racket.

After the eighth song, though, non-heavy metal fans will swear they have their CD player on repeat, as every song sounds a little too similar for the casual fan's ears. Most of the songs on the album obviously lack the studio touch ups that create a sense of variance that most music fans are used to. The songs that are touched up by the studio are instead lackluster and uninspired.

On a lighter note, Lachman's voice has a nice range, allowing everything from angry scream to angry murmur. Damageplan's music would obviously lead to a great concert, but for those who like to listen to CDs in the comfort of their living rooms while reading the daily paper, "New Found Power" is wrong, wrong, wrong. Everything about this CD screams "Pantera Light," but that's to be expected from a band with half of the members imported from said metal legend. Minus the different vocal talent, "New Found Power" could have very well been released as Pantera's latest CD. Instead, a new band is ushered into the scene with a debut CD that unfortunately lacks the crossover appeal that would help bring in new fans. Heavy metal fans, however, will find a great new addition to their collection with "New Found Power." Slipknot frontman Corey Taylor and renowned guitarist Zach Wylde also make appearances on the CD. Damageplan also contains enhanced material that can be played on computers.

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