

A DENIAL
THE DEATH OF KURT COBAIN
THE SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S SUBSTANDARD
INVESTIGATION & THE REPROCUSSIONS TO JUSTICE

by

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A Capstone Submitted to

The Graduate School-Camden

Rutgers, The State University, New Jersey

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies

Under the direction of

Dr. Joseph C. Schiavo

and approved by

Capstone Director

Program Director

Camden, New Jersey,

December 2015

CAPSTONE ABSTRACT

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Kurt Cobain (1967-1994) musician, artist songwriter, and founder of The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame band, Nirvana, was dubbed, “the voice of a generation”; a moniker he wore like his faded cardigan sweater, but with more than some distain. Cobain’s journey to the top of the Billboard charts was much more Dickensian than many of the generations of fans may realize. During his all too short life, Cobain struggled with physical illness, poverty, undiagnosed depression, a broken family, and the crippling isolation and loneliness brought on by drug addiction.

Cobain may have shunned the idea of fame and fortune but like many struggling young musicians (who would become his peers) coming up in the blue collar, working class suburbs of Aberdeen and Tacoma Washington State, being

on the cover of Rolling Stone magazine wasn't a nightmare image. Cobain, with his unkempt blond hair, polarizing blue eyes, and fragile appearance is a modern-punk-rock Jesus; a model example of the modern-day hero.

The musician- a reluctant hero at best, but one who took a dark, frightening journey into another realm, to emerge stronger, clearer headed and changing the trajectory of his life. Cobain intended to walk away from his world-famous band, devoted fans, the grueling life of touring, millions of dollars and a demanding and at times belittling wife. Cobain wanted out. He wanted to pursue other avenues of music, and have a more peaceful life for himself and his baby daughter, Frances Bean. Cobain never had the chance to realize those simple, yet unattainable dreams.

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Introduction

Almost every individual from the Baby-Boomer generation would be able to relate with the clarity of a photograph where he/she was the moment President John F. Kennedy was shot and killed in 1963. It was a watershed moment for that generation. The members of my generation-Generation X only know that moment as a citation in a history book.

What we do remember, what I remember is the date of April 5, 1994. I was in Israel, for a Study Abroad semester. How ironic that friends and family warned me not to go. It was far too violent a place, with guns, bombs and teenage soldiers. But, the only gunshot that mattered to me on that day in April, 1994 was the one that rang out in a solitary greenhouse in Seattle. I was gathered around a television set, (a rare treat) with some friends at The King David Hotel, the ultimate in pampered luxury. We had snuck in for a lazy afternoon.

The voice from the television spoke. Kurt Cobain, the front man of the penultimate Grunge rock group on the planet, (Nirvana) was dead. He had shot himself-committed suicide. The voice of our generation was silent. Kurt Cobain was twenty-seven-years old, the same age as I was at that time. My friends and I asked the same question as everyone around the world was asking, WHY?!

Kurt Cobain and his music continue to speak to new generations of teenagers twenty-years after his death, and Nirvana has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. There are many who conclude that while Cobain's death was tragic and untimely, it was predictable because of his choice of lifestyle and the demons that relentlessly haunted him. When I first choose to

write about Kurt Cobain, I, too, felt as though I would be ultimately exploring the death of a hero by his own hand. I believed there were certain extenuating factors that pushed Cobain to a precipice where he felt he had no other option but to jump.

After many hours of looking over credible research, I now believe, as do many others, that Cobain was in fact the victim of murder. I could not in good conscience write about the significant impact of Cobain's death without reaching any other conclusion. It is clear to me that a great injustice has been done to Cobain, his legacy, family (especially his daughter, Frances Bean) friends, fans, and all those who believe that manipulative people who commit a crime as heinous as murder should be brought to justice.

This paper will examine how it could transpire that for twenty-one years, the Seattle Police Department has held to its initial ruling of Cobain's death as a suicide despite the growing pile of credible evidence to the contrary. I will do so by exploring the tireless work of one Private Investigator, (Tom Grant) who was initially hired by Courtney Love, Kurt Cobain's wife at the time of his death. Love engaged Grant to find her missing husband days before he was found dead. Grant is now certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that Love played an integral part in her husband's murder.

I will also be looking at the work of Max Wallace and Ian Halperin; two investigative journalist who wrote two books on the subject of the possible murder of Kurt Cobain. Finally, I will be following *The Seven Major Mistakes in Suicide Investigation* compiled by Vernon J Gerberth, *Homicide and Forensic*

Consultant.

Just after midnight on July 2, 1994, an eighteen-year old Edmonton (Canada) boy named Bobby Steele puts the Nirvana song “Endless, Nameless” on the stereo and presses the REPEAT PLAY button. Minutes later, he lifts a 12-gauge shotgun from his father’s collection and loads three shells. Dressed in a Nirvana “Silver” T-Shirt, he takes out his little black diary and begins to write: “July 94. I just can’t live anymore. If you just think a lot, you just stop knowing that life has a purpose...I am not intoxicated or high...I just feel bad. It’s been the most painful 84 days of my life.

Eighty-four days earlier, Bobby learned that his hero, Kurt Cobain, had killed himself with a shotgun. A few weeks later, a teenage friend of the family’s named Greg had locked himself in his car with the engine running and died of carbon monoxide poisoning. Bobby and his sister believed he had never gotten over Kurt’s death. Now Bobby finishes writing the words in his diary, ending with a veiled reference to the passage in Kurt’s suicide note, in which he wrote, “so remember, it’s better to burn out than to fade away.” Instead Bobby writes, “it’s better not to spark at all. Rob Steele.” He signs the note, and then snaps a Polaroid of himself with a Kurt Cobain poster in the background. He then takes another picture of himself reclining on his bed with a copy of Nirvana’s *In Utero* above his head. He aligns the photos on the bed and the positions himself on the floor so that when his body is found, he will look like Kurt in the greenhouse photo. With the death-haunted words of “Endless, Nameless” playing in the background, he positions the muzzle of the shotgun in his mouth and pulls the

trigger... Eventually, there would be sixty-eight documented cases of Cobain copycat suicides worldwide. The real figure is likely to be in the hundreds, since most suicides don't leave a note (Wallace and Halperin 168-69).

This paper is dedicated to all the lives lost in hopes they be delivered by Justice. And to Dr. Joseph Schiavo, Dr. Stuart Charmé, and the late Dr. Hugh White, whose wonderful gifts were not wasted on me. I am humbled.

"Famous is the last thing I wanted to be...I feel like people want me to die because it would make the classic rock 'n' roll story."

Kurt Cobain, *Kurt Cobain; The Cobain Dossier*

"I can deny it all the way to the bank...all publicity is good publicity, how's that for a spin? Save the American icon, Tom!"

Courtney Love to P.I. Tom Grant: *Soaked in Bleach Documentary*

"The story just didn't add up... This woman's husband had just been found dead, and there didn't seem to be any sadness whatsoever. And there was more to this than what I was being told."

Private Investigator, Tom Grant hired by Courtney Love, (Cobain's wife) to find Cobain prior to his death.

"Death investigation is a complicated process, which involves a number of different members of the police department as well as other forensic disciplines working together towards the goal of solving the case."

Vernon J. Geberth M.S. M.P.S. Practical Homicide Investigator

The Seven Major Mistakes in Suicide Investigation*

1. Assuming the Case is A Suicide Based on the Initial Report

If the case is reported as a SUICIDE, the police officers who respond as well as the investigators automatically tend to treat the call as a suicide. It is a critical error in thinking to handle the call based on the initial report. The immediate problem is that psychologically one is assuming the death to be a suicide case, when in fact this is a basic death investigation, which could very well turn out to be a homicide.

Any preconceived theories or notions are dangerous in professional death investigation. In addition to errors of assuming a “suicide” or natural death other preconceived notions may include deaths, which appear to be drug related and/or domestic violence. One must keep an open mind and not be influenced either by the initial reports or the presentation in the crime scene.

2. Assuming “The Suicide Position” At the Crime Scene

It has been my experience that when police officers or detectives hear the word “SUICIDE” they go into what I describe as the “*Suicide Position.*” Suicides are non-amenable offenses that are not recorded in the UCR and therefore are considered less important than other events.

Without a doubt investigators take “short-cuts” when they hear the word suicide. I have reviewed many suicide cases where it was apparent that the investigators did not take each point to its ultimate conclusion. Sufficient photographs were not taken and certain tests were not conducted. In some

instances the deaths were suicides, but the incomplete and insufficient preliminary investigation raised legitimate concerns.

3. Not Handling “The Suicide” as a Homicide Investigation

All death inquiries should be conducted as homicide investigations until the facts prove differently. The resolution of the mode of death as Suicide is based on a series of factors which eliminate Homicide, Accident and Natural Causes of death. I recommend that an investigator be assigned to every unattended death case. Some agencies have mistakenly allowed patrol officers to conduct basic death investigations with the assumption that such deaths are generally not criminal incidents and don't require detective investigation. On the contrary, these cases may very well be homicides, which have been staged to appear to be suicide, accidents or natural causes. In equivocal death investigations there is the potential for major errors. If in fact, the death is later attributed to be homicide valuable evidence will have been lost or contaminated because the scene was not handled as a homicide case. The critical interviews and interrogations as well as crime scene documentation and photographs are irretrievable.

4. Failure to Conduct Victimology

One of the most significant factors to consider in any death investigation is victimology. Victimology as it pertains to both suicide and homicide investigations is significant in ascertaining motives, suspects and risk factors. In suicide cases, this becomes paramount in determining *Motive and Intent*. Does the victim fit a “Suicide Profile?” Was there any evidence of marked depression

or suicide ideations? Did the victim have both short and long term plans?

Victimology is the collection and assessment of all significant information as it relates to the victim and his or her lifestyle...The bottom line *is* “*Who was the victim and what was going on in his or her life at the time of the event.*” The best sources of information will be friends, family, associates and neighbors and that will be the initial focus of the investigation.

5. Failure to Apply the Three Basic Investigative Considerations To Establish if the Death is Suicidal in Nature

The investigator should be aware of three basic considerations to establish if a death is suicidal in nature. The presence of the weapon or means of death at the scene, Injuries or wounds that are obviously self-inflicted, or could have been inflicted by the deceased, The existence of a motive or intent on the part of the victim to take his or her own life.

6. Failure to Properly Document any Suicide Notes

If the victim left a note, and even if you are sure that the case is a suicide, obtain an exemplar (An example of the victim’s handwriting from some document that was known to have been written by the deceased.) This is necessary especially when later on there is a dispute over the classification of the death as a suicide. The presence of a Suicide Note certainly suggests suicide. However, there are a number of investigative considerations to determine whether or not the note is genuine. Suicide notes oftentimes have mixed emotional content including “positive” and “negative” feelings. Suicide ideations, which are the formation and conception of ideas in the mind of the deceased, present suicide

as a viable option. There may be reference to an “afterlife” or being with a loved one “looking down”, etc. The Suicide Note is a direct communication indicating intent to commit suicide. The letters and notes may be addressed to relatives and friends or left at the death scene, which indicate severe depression and or anger. The notes are often coherent and legible unless written under the influence of alcohol or drugs and may be instructional and/or admonishing. These notes should be collected in a manner to preserve any latent fingerprints and exemplars should be obtained for comparison.

7. Failure to Take Each Factor to its Ultimate Conclusion

In order to conduct an efficient and effective investigation, the detective first concentrates on the mechanical aspects of the death, i.e. motives and methods, wound structures, crime scene reconstruction, bloodstain pattern analysis, the cause, manner and time of death as well as other factors that provide clues to the dynamics of the event. The detective then accesses various sources, which can be applied to his or her investigation.

*These Seven mistakes were taken from (Gerberth 54-56).

Analysis of the Investigation of Kurt Cobain's Death

It would seem counter-intuitive to begin an analysis of the death of Kurt Cobain prior to delving a bit into his life. After all, we as a society deem murder as reprehensible because it is the robbing of a life. There have been numerous books written on the subject of Kurt's life, the trajectory of his fame, his rock-n-roll marriage, his struggle with depression, a crippling stomach condition and drug addiction. While Kurt's death is still shrouded in mystery, there are certain aspects of his life that remain unchallenged. The most respected authority on the facts of Kurt's early life is Seattle journalist, Charles Cross. Although I find Cross hugely lacking for proof of later assertions in his book, I have utilized the first few chapters of, *Heaver than Heaven* to present some basic truths.

Kurt Cobain was born on February 20, 1967 in Aberdeen, Washington; his only sibling from his parent's marriage is younger sister, Kimberly. During the happier period of his early childhood, Kurt showed an incredible interest and talent for art and drawing. He was also introduced to music as a toddler being that various aunts and uncles were musicians. His active imagination created a lifelong friend by the name of Boddah. His parents, Donald and Wendy endured an acrimonious divorce which swiftly put an end to Kurt's carefree childhood at the age of nine. He was shuttled between the two unfamiliar households of his newly married parents and step-parents. Kurt would forever grieve the loss of his united family unit.

As a pre-teen Kurt sporadically acted out with bursts of uncharacteristic anger. His parents trying desperately to forge new lives of their own, were at a

loss as to what to do about their surly son. Consequently, as a teen, Kurt would mostly live on the porches, couches and in the basements of friends' homes. For a time he would even spend his days in the library, and sleep outside during the oftentimes nasty Washington State weather.

Friends and classmates would describe the young Kurt Cobain as shy, thoughtful and quiet. When Kurt was a Junior High school student, he became friends with a fellow student regarded as gay. Kurt could not understand why he was the target of cruel homophobic jokes. So rather than dissolve his friendship, Kurt simply did not correct the rampant rumor that he too was a homosexual. The following is an excerpt from Cobain (he was 24-years-old) interview at the pinnacle of Nirvana's fame: In person, Cobain is the antithesis of a preening guitar cocksman: He's small, pale, soft-spoken, and articulate. Prejudice infuriates him: he spits out the words "homophobe" and "sexist" with the same venom he reserves for the word "spandex." Particularly upsetting to him was an incident last year in Reno, when two men raped a woman while chanting a Nirvana song. On the liner notes for *Incesticide*, he vented his frustration in a blunt statement to Nirvana fans: "If any of you in any way hate homosexuals, people of different color, or women, please do this one favor for us-leave us the fuck alone! Don't come to our shows and don't buy our records (The Advocate, February 1993).

February 24, 1992, Kurt Cobain married the woman who he often referred to as his 'best friend', Courtney Love. Their daughter Frances Bean was born soon after on August 18 of the same year. But, the friendship and the marriage

soured rather quickly. Cobain had plans to divorce Love before his untimely death. Cobain remained the shy, thoughtful, quiet, fragile boy he had always been. He was the 1990s counter-culture Peter Pan.

I could dedicate an entire paper on the life of Kurt Cobain, and still not include all the interesting and little known aspects of this young man's life. Suffice it to say for the purpose of brevity, Cobain through old fashioned hard work and determination, formed his rock band, Nirvana which was considered to be the cornerstone of the Seattle Grunge-rock phenomena of the early 1990s. Cobain and his band blazed a trail for many to come after.

As I move through the investigation-or lack thereof, of Cobain's death, I will touch upon some other features of his life as well.

Analysis of Kurt Cobain's Death Using the Seven Major Mistakes in Suicide Investigation

1. Assuming the Case is A Suicide Based on the Initial Report

Some facts prior to the initial report of Kurt Cobain's suicide are crucial to making the case for murder. Kurt Cobain left a drug rehab center in Marina Del Rey, California on April 1, 1994 and was later reported missing. On April, 3, 1994, Courtney Love (who was in Los Angeles at the time) hired, Tom Grant; a California state licensed private investigator and former Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Deputy to locate her husband.

Ms. Love stayed in Los Angeles while Grant flew to Seattle to search for Cobain with his best friend Dylan Carlson. In fact, Carlson and Grant had been in the Cobain residence the night before Kurt's body was discovered in the room above the garage.

The police immediately concluded "suicide." Grant wasn't so sure. Neither was Rosemary Carroll, Courtney Love's own entertainment attorney. Ms. Carroll was also a close friend to both Courtney and Kurt. She and Grant both felt certain something was terribly wrong here (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant).

Kurt Cobain's body was discovered by electrician Gary Smith who had been hired by the Cobain's to install a security system in their home. Smith looking from the outside of the greenhouse windows identified what he at first thought was a mannequin, but later told the first police officer on the scene came to believe was a prone body. Two additional police officers arrived along with firefighters who forced their way into the greenhouse by breaking the glass doors. Next on the scene were three Seattle Police Detectives, and three members of the King County Medical Examiner's Office, including Dr. Nikolas Hartshorne who had already been assigned to conduct the examination of the body.

Hartshorne removed the shotgun from Kurt's left hand. The damage to the interior of the mouth, Hartshorne noted, revealed that Kurt had been shot there. There was one live shell in the shotgun chamber, and another in the magazine, indicating that the gun had been loaded with three shells, including the spent cartridge that had apparently fired the fatal shot. There were puncture marks on the inside of each elbow.

After Hartshorne took photos of the body and finished examining the scene, he arranged for the body to be removed to the King County Medical

Examiner's Office where he could conduct an autopsy to determine the cause of death. This was standard procedure, though his parting statement to the assembled officers-including Sargent Cameron, who had arrived an hour earlier--was not: "This is an open and shut case of suicide. The victim died from a self-inflicted shotgun wound" (Wallace and Halperin. 72-73).

No one seemed to bother at that time to take note that Hartshorne was a close friend of Courtney Love. Hartshorne while still in college had befriended Love and her first husband. While being interviewed for Max Wallace and Ian Halperin's book, *Love and Death*, "He (Hartshorne) then confirmed that he had determined Kurt's death to be a 'textbook case of suicide' when he first arrived at the scene, and admitted that the police never seriously contemplated the possibility of murder at all" (Wallace and Halperin 182). Sargent Cameron was later forced to resign the Department under allegations of corruption.

2. Assuming the "Suicide Position" at the Crime Scene

Back in 1994, the idea of Kurt Cobain taking his own life held a sad sense of logic for many people: he was a heavy drug user, mental illness was prominent in his family as was suicide, Cobain endured many years of a debilitating, undiagnosed stomach/bowel illness, his love affair with the music industry was over, and then there was the music itself. Even today, many people hold fast to the notion that Cobain, who had an all-consuming love for his daughter Frances Bean, still possessed the desire and the wherewithal to shoot himself up with three times the lethal dose of black-tar heroin, then take a loaded shotgun and shoot himself in the head. He even left a note which his grieving

widow, Courtney Love so generously shared large portions of with the entire planet. How could there be any question as to suicide? Courtney Love and suicide notes figure significantly in the answer.

Rome, Italy, March 3, 1994. Kurt Cobain flies in from Germany after being diagnosed with bronchitis following a March 1, Munich concert. Cobain's doctor recommends that Kurt take two months off from touring. He checks into the Excelsior Hotel to await the arrival of his wife, Courtney and daughter, Frances. They arrive late in the afternoon with Frances' nanny, (and sometimes heroin dealer) (Michael) Cali Dewitt. Sometime between 6:00 and 6:30AM the next day, the front desk received a call from Courtney requesting an ambulance. When the paramedics arrived, they found Kurt unconscious and rushed him to Rome's Umberto I Polyclinic hospital where his stomach was pumped (Wallace and Halperin 199).

This seems to be the only bit of verifiable truth as to what happened to Kurt in that hotel room in March. The rest would be altered after Kurt's death as told by Courtney Love.

What is known is that twenty hours after having his stomach pumped, Kurt awoke at Rome's American Hospital where he had been transferred at Courtney's request. The next day, Kurt's doctor, Osvaldo Galletta, held a press conference to announce that Kurt was recovering from a 'pharmacological coma, due not to narcotics, but to the combined effect of alcohol and tranquilizers that had been previously prescribed by a doctor.' It wasn't until ANSA, Italy's national press agency, named the tranquilizers that people began to ask questions; Kurt

was reported to have mixed champagne with a prescription drug called Rohypnol. In Rome, this drug is most commonly known as a sedative, or sleeping pill, so the disclosure didn't attract much attention. But, in the United States, Rohypnol was already better known by its sinister nickname: 'The Date Rape Drug' (Wallace and Halperin 199-200).

A person wishing to render another incapacitated in order to take advantage could drop Rohypnol into a drink. The drug is odorless, tasteless and colorless. It will quickly disable a person, as well as remove any memory of what transpired during the inebriated state. *"In 1996 alone, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency reported more than a thousand cases such as this nationwide. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Rohypnol, particularly when mixed with alcohol or other certain drugs, may lead to respiratory depression, aspiration, and even death"* (Wallace and Halperin 200). Tom Grant speculates: "I firmly believe this was her, (Love's) first attempt to kill him (Cobain)" (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant).

Boosting Grant's theory, it was later reported that the Rohypnol was in fact Courtney's prescription, not Kurt's. After his death, the British music magazine Select reported that one of its journalists interviewed Courtney in her London hotel room on March 3, hours before she flew to Rome to join Kurt. One passage in the article seems eerily significant:

"There is a box of Rohypnol on the big mahogany table in the middle of Courtney Love's London hotel room, among the scattered papers and cigarette boxes. 'Look, I know this is a controlled substance,' she smiles as she empties one of those fizzy stomach upset powders into a tumbler

of water and washes back a Rohypnol. 'I got it from my doctor. It's like Valium'" (Cross 311).

It was not until after Kurt's death that Courtney drew public attention back to Rome claiming for the first time that it had been a suicide attempt. She claimed that she had found two empty blister packs of Rohypnol next to Kurt. She said he had taken sixty of the pills, apparently patient enough during a suicidal state to remove them individually from a plastic and foil container. "She later told Rolling Stone Magazine, 'I can see how it happened. He took fifty fucking pills!'" (Wallace and Halperin 201). But, despite Love's claim there is not one witness who saw the empty Rohypnol packets, not even a paramedic or member of the hotel staff.

When Wallace and Halperin interviewed Kurt's doctor, Osvaldo Galletta, he vehemently denied that Kurt had taken the massive amount of Rohypnol described by Courtney. He did not believe that Kurt's overdose was deliberate. Love's own endorsed Cobain biographer, Charles Cross recalls the incident in his book that when Cobain gained consciousness in the hospital, he could not speak because of the tubes in his throat. He asked Love for a notepad and paper on which he wrote to her, "Fuck You!" (Cross 313). Dr. Galletta recalled that when Kurt could first speak, he had asked for Strawberry milk. "The last image I have of him, which in light of the tragedy now seems pathetic, is of a young man playing with his little girl (Frances). He did not seem like a young man who wanted to end it all" (Wallace and Halperin 201).

Genuine doubts can be raised since it was Love's good friend, Dr. Hartshorne who would pronounce unequivocally at the April scene of Kurt's death that it was an 'open and shut case of suicide', and Love being the only one

who was pushing the attempted suicide in Rome theory. She now came forward with what she asserted was a suicide note from that time. “Even members of the Seattle Police Department who saw the Rome letter didn’t believe it was a suicide note. According to one SPD source who is critical of his department’s investigation, ‘Love gave us another note which she said Kurt had written in Rome. She said it was a suicide note, but it wasn’t. It was a rambling letter which was very unflattering to her’” (Wallace and Halperin 202). I will make the suggestion further on that the note found at the scene of Kurt Cobain’s death was also **not** a suicide note.

3. Not Handling ‘The Suicide’ as a Homicide Investigation

Private Investigator Tom Grant was privy to an ever growing pile of notes, and at times surreal conversations which took place days before Cobain’s body was discovered in the greenhouse of his Seattle home. Grant had been hired after all, by Cobain’s wife to find Kurt.

Tom Grant and his associate, Ben Klugman found themselves at the Beverly Hills Peninsula-a five-star-hotel favored by celebrities on Easter Sunday, April 3, 1994. A frantic Courtney Love is insisting that Grant find her husband as he has gone missing from the rehab center in L.A. that he was thought to be staying. Love tells the pair of investigators she believes that her husband is suicidal. He has bought a shotgun, and she fears that he may be planning to use it. “Everybody thinks he’s going to die” (Wallace and Halperin105).

Love goes on a winding narrative concerning her husband’s possible whereabouts and motives. Cobain may be traveling east to visit fellow musician

and friend, Michael Stipe, leader of the musical group, R.E.M. Cobain was planning to work on a project with Stipe and had even been sent a plane ticket from his friend. Then Love asserts that Cobain could be staying in Seattle with a drug dealer, Caitlin Moore. Love makes the allegation that her husband has been sleeping with Moore. "I think Kurt wants a divorce, she (Love) says. If he wants a divorce, that's fine. If we got into a divorce and it came down to a custody battle, I'd win in a second" (Wallace and Halperin 107).

Love launches into a monologue about their prenuptial agreement in which she is not set to gain any of her husband's millions should she and Kurt divorce. All this is taking place while she is supposedly consumed with fear that her gun-possessing husband is missing and is suicidal. She is so concerned that the next day, she confessed to Grant that she phoned the Seattle Police to give a missing person's report pretending to be Kurt's mother, Wendy O'Connor. "They would never have taken me seriously if I had given my own name" (Wallace and Halperin 115). Love also inexplicably fails to tell Grant that she spoke via telephone earlier that morning to her daughter's nanny, Cali Dewitt who was staying at the Cobain's Seattle home and had seen Kurt in the house.

Tom Grant travels back to Seattle to meet with Kurt's best friend Dylan Carlson who explains that Kurt was not suicidal, in fact, to Dylan's view, Kurt was better than he had been in a long while. He had recently found a doctor who prescribed a medication that was finally helping his life-long struggle with stomach pain. Kurt was excited about the new musical direction he was taking, and the shotgun that Love insisted Kurt purchased as a means of self-harm had

actually been purchased by Carlson at Kurt's request. Dylan explained that Cobain wanted it for protection. Since they had no bodyguards, or entourage, he wanted a way to protect his family should someone break into his home. Their Lake Washington home was set back and isolated-surrounded only by trees and a local park.

Kurt was a non-violent person. He simply wanted the peace of mind knowing he could scare an intruder away with a firearm. He instructed Carlson to purchase a light load shotgun which served that exact purpose. Kurt didn't want to kill anything, or anyone. Why did his friend to buy the gun? Courtney Love is the short answer. Not long prior to the gun purchase, Courtney had phoned the Seattle police to report that her husband had locked himself with a gun in a room of their home and was threatening to kill himself. When the police arrived at the residence, Cobain was indeed locked in a room. He assured law enforcement that he did not have any firearms in the room with him, nor had he intentions of self-harm. Cobain said he locked himself in the room as his only means of getting away from his wife.

Once Kurt unlocked the door to speak with the police, Love begrudgingly verified her husband's account. When the cops asked if there were any guns in the home, Cobain lead them to a cabinet where he kept a few locked away with the key hidden safely so that his daughter could not gain access. Cobain explained that sometimes he and his friend, Dylan Carlson liked to shoot tin cans in the woods. They set them up over a canyon to make sure a stray bullet could not hit a person who may be out walking. The police confiscated Cobain's guns

that day. He was afraid that if he attempted to purchase another gun for protection, the police would be alerted. So, Kurt asked Carlson who agreed.

When Grant and Carlson arrived at the Cobain residence on Wednesday, April 6, they found no evidence of Cobain, or anyone else in the home; only a television in a bedroom playing with the sound turned down. Carlson indicated to Grant that the bedroom was the nanny's, Cali Dewitt's. After searching the outside grounds, they could see nothing in the wind and rain of the night. The sad truth was that Kurt's body was lying dead in the greenhouse less than twenty-five feet away. Later, the Media was scornful of Grant's detective skills, after he failed to find Kurt's body. Why did not the seasoned investigator check the greenhouse? "The truth was", Grant says, "I didn't know it was there. It was raining very hard that night and a floodlight was shining from the garage, and in those conditions, it was impossible to see that there was a room up there" (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant). In December of 1995 Wallace and Halperin visited the Cobain house on a night under similar weather conditions in an effort to validate Grant's statement. They did confirm that on a dark, rainy night, the greenhouse room was indeed invisible.

Thursday, April 7, Grant and Carlson return to the Cobain house to continue the search. Half an hour later, Dylan manages to reach Courtney on the phone. She has a request: she wants them to return to the Lake Washington (Seattle) house to look in a hidden compartment of the bedroom closet for the shotgun that Dylan and Kurt had purchased a week earlier. "This was truly bizarre", recalls Grant. "Cali had been staying at the house earlier in the week. I

wondered why she didn't ask him to search for the gun then, or why she didn't tell us about it when we visited the house the night before. All of a sudden she was instructing us to go back immediately for no apparent good reason" (*Wallace and Halperin* 121).

When the two arrived at the Lake Washington house per Courtney's request, they immediately spot a note in plain sight on the main staircase. It had not been there the night before. It was apparently written by Cali Dewitt.

Kurt,

I can't believe that you managed to be in this house without me noticing you. You're a fuckin asshole for not calling Courtney & at least letting her know that your (sic) O.K. She's in a lot of pain, Kurt, and this morning, she had another 'accident' and now she's in the hospital again. She's your wife & she loves you & you have a child together. Get it together to at least tell her how your o.k. or she is doing to DIE. It's not fair man. Do something now (*Wallace and Halperin* 121).

"I became convinced the note had been put there for my benefit for me to find that night," Grant recalls. "That's why Courtney was suddenly so anxious for us to return to the house, so we would find this note." Again they search the house, including the hidden compartment of the bedroom closet, as Courtney has requested. There is no gun, nor any other clues that might point to Kurt's whereabouts. Again, they miss the greenhouse because of the heavy rain.

Meanwhile, a small item in the Los Angeles Times that morning has reported that Nirvana withdrew from their headline slot on the upcoming Lollapalooza tour, and that the band was rumored to be splitting up.

Friday April 8

The next morning, at a gas station, Dylan makes a call at a phone booth.

He returns to the car a few minutes later. He has just learned that a body has been found at the Lake Washington house. Grant turns on the radio, which is broadcasting a special news report on the death of an American icon (Wallace and Halperin 122-123).

4. Failure to Conduct Victimology

Although the world appeared shocked at the terrible news of Cobain's death, and while shows as: Entertainment Tonight, Hard Copy, A Current Affair, and: MTV, NBC, Fox News, CNN, almost all of Seattle's TV stations are clamoring outside of the Cobain residence to broadcast the dreadful story of a troubled young musician taking his life; not many seemed surprised at the official cause of death. But, Tom Grant is talking quietly. He is conversing with Rosemary Carroll, Courtney Love's attorney. She also served as an attorney for Kurt and Nirvana. She was very close to the couple. Their relationship was intimate enough for the Rosemary to be Frances Bean's Godmother. When Grant first entered her office after Kurt's death, she greeted him with; "I knew him too well' Insisting that Kurt wasn't suicidal. She tells Grant that the reports of Cobain being suicidal are not true. Both Kurt and Courtney wanted a divorce, she reveals. They were 'hateful' to each other. Courtney had called Carroll prior to Kurt's death asking her to find the 'meanest, most vicious divorce lawyer' she knew. Courtney said Kurt was leaving her. She also wanted to know if there was a way of voiding her prenuptial agreement. Soon afterward, Kurt called Carroll and asked her to take Courtney out of his recently drafted will, which was still unsigned at the time of his death. She told Grant that it was a very emotional

time for her, because she loved them both, and hated being in the middle of their break-up” (Wallace and Halperin 136).

Both Grant and Carroll also think that it’s strange that Courtney did not once go to Seattle to look for Kurt during the week he was missing. Grant tells Carroll that Courtney informed him that she had business in L.A. and therefore couldn’t get away. Carroll vehemently denies that Love had any business in L.A. After all, Carroll being her attorney would be the first to know if Love had.

Carroll tells Grant that on the night Dylan Carlson called her to have the alarm switched off (Wednesday, April 6) at the Seattle home she overheard Courtney tell him to ‘check the greenhouse.’

“When Rosemary told me that, I knew there was something very wrong.” Grant recalls. “Kurt would have already been lying dead there dead in the greenhouse at that time. I wondered why Courtney hasn’t asked Cali to check the greenhouse before that” (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant).

It also was no secret that Kurt wanted Cali out of their home. Kurt had told Courtney he would no longer employ a dealer as a nanny. Independent filmmaker Nick Broomfield captured a telling conversation in 1997 with a woman named, “Jennifer” who was hired by Kurt and Courtney in March of 1994 as one of Frances Bean’s nannies. This was just after they had returned from Rome following Kurt’s overdose.

Nanny: “There was way too much will talk. A few different times. Major will talk. Just talking about his will...”

Bloomfield: “What kind of points?”

Nanny: "Courtney talking about his will and-I mean, what a thing to talk about."

Bloomfield: "And was this sort of prior to his..."

Nanny: "Yeah, I mean, the month that I was up there was like, I came home for what a week, and then he died, I had quit for, like, a week."

Bloomfield: "Why did you quit?"

Nanny: "Because I couldn't stand it up there".

Bloomfield: "And what did you think of Kurt himself?"

Nanny: "Ummm..."

Bloomfield: "I heard he was a very caring father."

Nanny: (Nodding in agreement) "Yeah, more caring than he was let to be."

Bloomfield: "What do you mean?"

Nanny: "She just totally controlled him-every second that she could."

Bloomfield: "What do you think he wanted?"

Nanny: "To get away from Courtney. And I think he just didn't have a way because she..."

Bloomfield: "If he loved Frances so much and his family was so important, why do you think he killed himself?"

Nanny: "I'm not sure he killed himself".

Bloomfield: "Do you think someone else might have killed him?"

Nanny: "I don't know. I think if he wasn't murdered, he was driven into murdering himself" (*Kurt and Courtney*. Dir. Nick Broomfield).

When Tom Grant arrives at the Lake Washington house on April 14, 1994, a security guard was posted at the door. Courtney Love is seated at the dining room table smoking a cigarette. A woman who Tom Grant does not know approaches him asking what he thinks of the whole situation. He replies that he didn't know what to think. The woman introduces herself as Kurt's mother, Wendy O'Connor, and asks Grant in what he perceives as a hushed voice; "Why

didn't Dylan look in the greenhouse?"

Grant replies that he'd like to know the same thing, and asks Wendy if they can get together and talk soon. She agrees. She would like to talk more to him about this. This is when Courtney goes over to Kurt's mother and whispers something in her ear. "After that Wendy was very evasive towards me", he recalls. "and we never did have that talk she agreed to" (Wallace and Halperin 138).

It wasn't until June of 2003 that Leland Cobain, Kurt's Grandfather agreed to be interviewed by Wallace and Halperin. Kurt was known to be closer to his grandfather Leland, and grandmother Iris, than his own parents. It isn't surprising that it would take nine years after Kurt's death for Leland to be ready to open up to strangers. He welcomed the two journalists into his modest home in Montesano, Washington. Iris had passed away in 1997. It's would be incorrect to claim that Leland's home is a shrine to his late grandson, but the love is obvious in the memorabilia seen all over the house. The senior Cobains have kept pictures from Kurt's childhood, letters from Kurt and his fans, and photos of Kurt at various stages of his life. Wallace and Halperin note there is a palpable presence of the younger Cobain in his grandfather's home.

After Kurt left his hometown for good in 1987, he kept in touch with his grandparents only sporadically. Leland takes out a Christmas card they received after Kurt moved away:

Dear long lost grandparents. I miss you very much. Which is no excuse for my not writing...We put out a shingle just recently and it has sold out

already...I'm happier than I have ever been. It would be nice to hear from you as well. Merry Christmas, Love Kurt (Wallace and Halperin 3).

Leland hadn't read our first book, and we had yet to tell him the subject of this new one. After a tour of the house, and an hour's worth of anecdotes about Kurt and his family while sitting around the dining room table, we are at last prepared to broach the topic we thought would be the most difficult to bring up. Two of Leland's brothers had killed themselves earlier, fueling the most common of all cliché's about how Kurt has inherited 'the suicide gene' It is obviously a sensitive subject, and Leland's voice chokes when he talks about the family tragedies. Finally we ask him how he and Iris felt when they learned that their own grandson had killed himself. His response is not at all what we expected: "Kurt didn't commit suicide." He declares matter-of-factly. "He was murdered. I'm sure of it" (*Wallace and Halperin* 5).

It is undeniable that after interviewing Kurt's family and friends-those closest to him at the time of his death that Cobain was in a very good place emotionally, physically and career-wise. He may have been in the midst of a bitter divorcee battle with Courtney Love, but he was clearly making plans for his life post-Courtney. The note left at the scene of his death is highly questionable as to its intention, and its author(s).

5. Failure to Apply the Three Basic Investigative Considerations To Establish if the Death is Suicidal in Nature

Quite simply these are: (1) weapon or cause of death, (2) wounds and/or self-inflicted injuries, and (3) motive of the victim to end his life. If Kurt Cobain

was alone in the greenhouse as the Seattle PD have always maintained, then he was not only something of a musical genius, but a bit of a magician as well.

Detective Michael Ciesynski was new to the job back in 1994 when he assisted on the Cobain case. No one then thought it odd that Cobain felt it necessary to make use of two methods to bring about his own death. "Cobain's heroin, (morphine), blood level was 1.52 mgs per liter. This would require a minimum injection of 225 mgs of heroin, three times a lethal dose, even for a hardcore heroin addict. The drug Diazepam, was also found in Cobain's blood system" (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant)

Based on the heroin, (morphine), blood levels found in Cobain's body, preliminary research indicates Kurt Cobain would have been almost immediately incapacitated. He could not have picked up that shotgun. He could not have pulled that trigger. Seattle officials maintained that since Cobain was a "hard-core" heroin user, his body would have built up a "tolerance level" that the average person would not have. I found it striking to read the comments of today's young people (one of whom is apparently a recovering "hard-core" heroin user) on this particular issue:

I'm going to go out on a whim here and say. Hey guys, I'm a heroin addict. 9 days clean after 4 years. Still sweating chills and all.... So let me tell you after that first dose he was likely nodding strong... he most likely had to have TWO more doses after that. And I say this why? Because all of that heroin just doesn't fit into one rig. By one rig I mean needle. Hell, 20\$ worth barely fits into one some times and my guess is he, or someone wanted it potent. So, any way there is NO FUCKING WAY that within the 3-6 seconds it takes to enter your blood stream, depending on where he shot up. His foot taking longer to hit his brain, his hands/neck taking 2 seconds... u get the picture.. NO WAY he even had the capacity to put the

orange cap back onto his needle much less shoot himself with a SHOT GUN!. NO WAY. Just no way possible- Not at all. He would have been out like a light within SECONDS after the first , MAYBE second dose. My guess was there was 3. Somebody else was in that room with him. No doubt in my mind. Jenna Ice

That's true my dad is a Prof in Science and stuff and i gave him some Information about the amount of Heroin..., and he and his 'geek Club' (i call it that way) told me that he could never shot himself and that he probaly passed out before he could take the 3 shot Heroin. Sooo i'm just saying what i know... Drowning Lights

I agree. My sister is a heroin addict of nearly 10 years. A pretty hard core user at that. I have watched my sister shoot up on a number of occasions and in a matter of seconds she was useless. She could barely hold her head up, she couldn't finish a sentence without nodding out and I'd have to kick her to get her to snap out of it, she would start to talk and nod off again, drool on herself, etc. It's been documented that Kurt wasn't even using that much at the end to have that high of a tolerance. I'll tell you right now, when you take Xanax on top of heroine it make the heroine kick in even faster and more potent. My sister would also take a couple Xanax right before shooting up. I do not believe for one second that Kurt could have withstood that amount of heroine on top of Xanax and been able to function enough to shoot himself. As little as Kurt was there is no way humanly possible his body could have handled that amount and survived, I don't care how long he had been using. There is no case ever in the existence of man where someone od'd on that amount of heroin and then continued shoot themselves, suicide on top of suicide. Research this case thoroughly and it's not hard to see and understand all the bullshit surrounding Kurt's death. This case needs to be reopened and reinvestigated. JimmyFabs78 (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant)

But, even if the obviously doubtful point is conceded that Kurt could have managed to remain conscious for a minute or longer after injecting such a large amount of heroin, it defies logic that he would then pick up a shotgun, and shoot himself in the head. On the twentieth anniversary of Cobain's death, the Seattle Police Department felt it necessary to take another look at the case. Detective Ciesynski, finally admits in a televised interview (2014) that the amount taken by

Cobain was a “fatal does.” The SPD are no longer standing behind their original claim of “tolerance levels.” Ciesynski goes on to say that NO Medical Examiner in King County has EVER seen this amount of heroin in ANY suicide in King County! Ciesynski reveals that there was an additional roll of 35 millimeter film that was taken at the scene, but never processed. He offers the reason the police already had their standard Polaroids. It was decided in 1994 as not necessary to develop the additional film. Ciesynski does not offer any explanation as to what the SPD were looking for when they developed this additional film twenty years after Cobain’s death.

The detective simply dismissed the fact that anything of importance was found in the pictures. But, the pictures tell another story. One photo shows a clear wound on Kurt’s left thumb where the stock of the shotgun would have been. The heat from barrel combined with that of the friction of the automatic reloading feature of the gun causing the second bullet loading into the chamber caused an abrasion, or burn on Kurt’s left thumb, as he had it held in a death grip, (Cadaveric spasm).

Denise Marshall, a deputy coroner in Colorado has her own theory of the presence of the Cadaveric spasm. “From my experience, everything about this case, points to a staged scene, somebody trying to make a murder look like a suicide. I think that’s exactly what happened. Cadaveric spasm can still occur in a homicide. Marshall believes that someone gave Kurt an incapacitating dose of heroin that immediately rendered him unconscious. “I think that somebody had to give him an overly pure dose, what’s referred to as a ‘hot-shot’. When heroin

addicts do heroin they pretty well know exactly how much they should do.

Whenever you see an accidental overdose, it's usually because they got it from someone else, and they didn't know how pure it was."

Marshall theorizes that if somebody who knew Cobain gave him an overly pure dose of heroin, they simply had to wait for him to lose consciousness. "They could have placed the shotgun in his hands, positioned it in his mouth and pulled the trigger, making the death look like a suicide. At the point of death, his hand would have gripped the shotgun barrel, and you have your cadaveric spasm" (*Wallace and Halperin 93-94*).

Another study comparing homicides to suicides cited by David Lester in his 1986 book, The Murdered and His Murder, found that the typical homicide victim-a man between twenty-five and thirty-four, killed at home with a gun-fits a profile similar to Cobain's. Lester also reports on a study that found wives killing husbands constituted 42 percent of female murderers and that 85 percent of spousal murders took place in the home. But, it is the presence of drugs in Cobain's system that most closely fits the findings of the study, which concludes, "Narcotics were more likely to be present in the homicides than in the suicides" (Lester 46).

"Indeed", says, Vernon Geberth, a former New York City Homicide commander whose book; *Practical Homicide Investigation* is widely accepted as the *Bible* of homicide investigations; "There is one group above all where you tend to find the most staged crime scenes, and that is in the death of junkies. Before I was a homicide investigator, I worked in narcotics. Whenever the

authorities arrive at the scene where a junkie apparently overdosed, or committed suicide, they gave a tendency to write it off as just another junkie death without properly investigating the circumstances” (Gerberth 395).

As to motive, I have stated previously that Kurt was largely content with his life at the time of his death, except for his marriage to Courtney Love. He was in the process of dissolving the marriage, and beginning a new life as has been testified to by the people who knew Kurt the best, and had his trust.

*To see the 2014 interview of Detective Ciesynski along with Private Investigator Tom Grant’s response, visit: (Home Page - The Kurt Cobain Murder Investigation by Tom Grant)

6. Failure to Properly Document any Suicide Notes

Kurt’s “Suicide Note,” (I choose to use the quotations here as a result of the conclusion I have reached that this was not a suicide note) was found in the greenhouse on a shelf which contained a few small pottery containers filled with potting soil. The note had been stuck inside one of the containers with a pen driven through the paper; like a knife through a heart. There are some qualities about the note that even at first glance would give one pause. Firstly, it was entitled: “Dear Boddah”, Kurt’s imaginary friend from childhood. If Kurt was ostensibly writing a suicide note as it continues on to his fans and family-a very public gesture, why would he direct the note to an imaginary friend that few people in his life knew of? The second questionable element was the glaring difference in handwriting. While the major portion of the note can be seen to be written by one person, the first and the last four lines look as if they were added on by another writer. The third item for pause is the content of the note. Many,

including Tom Grant, and Deputy Coroner Marshall believe that Kurt did not intend the note to be his final.

By the time Grant returns to Los Angeles, he is more confused than ever. He drives to Rosemary Carroll's office with a copy of the note. Carroll spends fifteen minutes pouring over it and then says it's, "obvious" that Kurt didn't write it. She reads the note "over and over again" and it doesn't make mention of a suicide. Except at the bottom, Grant points out. Carroll, however, says the bottom section is obviously "in a different handwriting." She tells Grant that the note doesn't sound to her like anything Kurt would write. It actually sounds more like Courtney than Kurt, she says explaining that the note contains a number of phrases she heard Courtney use before (*Wallace and Halperin 148*).

Grant wants to be the professional investigator and remain objective. Clearly Carroll is grieving the loss of a dear friend, and yet, Grant can't help but believe in his gut feeling that Carroll is being genuine in her doubts. The answer comes to him the next day when Carroll asks Grant to meet at her house. She has some important things to show him.

Carroll is in a state of shock when Grant arrives. She shows him a backpack Courtney left behind during a visit to Carroll's house on the night of April 6, 1994. Sick with doubt after reading Kurt's suicide note, Carroll had taken a look inside the backpack, she takes out a sheet of paper. Written in Courtney's handwriting are two words; "Get Arrested." It is one of Courtney's typical "to do" notes. "She planned that whole thing," Carroll says referring to Courtney's arrest on April 7th.

Painstakingly, the two reviewed what occurred after Courtney's visit to Carroll's house two weeks earlier, on the night of April 6. Hours after Courtney left the house, she was indeed arrested. Responding to a 911 call, reporting a "possible overdoses victim", Beverly Hills police, fire department officials and paramedics arrived at the Peninsula Hotel suite the morning of April 7 to find Courtney in a state of physical distress. She was taken by ambulance to Century City Hospital where she told doctors she was merely suffering an allergic reaction to her Xanax medication. Upon her discharge, she was immediately arrested, brought to Beverley Hills Jail and charged with possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession/receiving stolen property. When she went to court, she had a logical explanation for everything, Grant says. It turned out the powdery white substance found in her room was actually Hindu good-luck ashes. The prescription pad in her suite and thought stolen was merely left behind by the doctor. She needed an alibi. Grant explains Courtney planned to get herself arrested so that the papers would report the fact that she was in jail in L.A. the day she suspected Kurt's body to be found.

Grant remembers that's the same day Love wanted him and Dylan Carlson to go back to the house and look for the shotgun in the closet. She could have asked Cali DeWitt (the nanny) who had been staying at the house all week to look for it anytime! (*Wallace and Halperin 150*).

"Hole's guitarist Eric Erlandson later revealed to Charles Cross-Kurt's biographer, (officiated by Courtney) that Courtney had already asked him to search for the shotgun on Tuesday afternoon, April 5 'He burst into the house like

this big lightning bolt, and he was furious at Cali,' Jessica (a friend of Cali Dewitt) recalls. 'You guys have to help me look,' he ordered. Erlandson told them to search every nook and cranny, because Kurt had stashed a shotgun: He specifically insisted they look in a secret compartment in the back of the master bedroom closet which Courtney told him Kurt used. They found the compartment, but no guns. No one thought to search the garage, or greenhouse, and Erlandson rushed off" (Cross 335.) Why would Love then ask Dylan and Tom Grant to do the same thing two days later?

Carroll tells Grant she found another piece of paper in Courtney's backpack, one that disturbs her even more than the "Get Arrested" note. She hands the paper to Grant. On it somebody has been practicing different handwriting styles. On each line, the person experimented with different forms of all the letters in the alphabet. On the top right side of the page, in a section marked "combos" the person has practiced writing two-and three letter combinations. As he studies the sheet, Grant gets a chill. "I had no idea what it meant, or who had done the writing," he recalls, "but Rosemary found it among Courtney's things. It sure looked to us she had been practicing how to forge a letter (*Wallace and Halperin 150*). *see chart.

Season 9 Episode 13 of the popular crime solving series *Unsolved Mysteries* first aired on Feb 07, 1997 on NBC. The question is the credibility of the ruling of Kurt Cobain's death as a suicide. In an effort to come to a conclusion a large piece of the puzzle was examined-the suicide note. *Unsolved Mysteries* employed two of the world's most prominent handwriting analysts to conduct their

own analyses. The first expert was Marcel Matley, an American forensic examiner. Matley was asked to examine the note and compare the writing to two sheets of song lyrics written by Cobain. Matley found a dozen differences in the suicide note. "The last four lines of the suicide letter, which include the words, 'I love you, I love you' were written by a different person. There are differences in the two" (Unsolved Mysteries February 7, 1989).

Unsolved Mysteries also asked Oxford University's handwriting expert, Reginald Alton who at the time was considered to be the world's foremost authenticator of literary manuscripts to examine the note. He wrote a five page report in which he pointed out more than a dozen discrepancies. Like Matley, Alton believes the bulk of the note was written by Cobain, except the last four lines. Alton claims a major discrepancy between the first line, (where the word, *Boddah* appears to be added) and the last four lines of the note. Alton is certain that a second hand was involved in the writing of the note.

What makes these last four lines of the note extremely questionable? I would say one needs to refer back to Kurt's state of mind at the time of his death and the main contents of the note. During that period, Kurt had cancelled Nirvana's headliner appearance at the annual Lollapalooza concert which would have cost him and those associated with him billions of dollars. Kurt had had enough of the road, touring and the band. He wanted to live a simpler life. He believed it would be disingenuous to continue to take the fans' money for albums and shows when his heart was no longer in the music or performances. Kurt had

come to the point that he felt as if he was punching a time clock each time he stepped on stage. He felt his fans deserved better, and so did he:

“For example when we're back stage and the lights go out and the manic roar of the crowds begins, it doesn't affect me the way in which it did for Freddie Mercury, who seemed to love, relish in the love and adoration from the crowd which is something I totally admire and envy. The fact is, I can't fool you, any one of you. It simply isn't fair to you or me. The worst crime I can think of would be to rip people off by faking it and pretending as if I'm having 100% fun. Sometimes I feel as if I should have a punch-in time clock before I walk out on stage. I've tried everything within my power to appreciate it (and I do, God, believe me I do, but it's not enough). I appreciate the fact that I and we have affected and entertained a lot of people. It must be one of those narcissists who only appreciate things when they're gone. I'm too sensitive. I need to be slightly numb in order to regain the enthusiasms I once had as a child” (excerpt-Cobain “suicide note,” Wallace and Halperin 146).

Interestingly, the day after Kurt's body was found, Courtney stood outside their Seattle home surrounded by fans and reporters. After speaking with them for a few moments, she went inside and spoke to MTV's Kurt Loder via telephone. In this conversation, she told Loder that in his suicide note, her husband had written, “It's not fun for me anymore, I can't live this life.” But when the note was made public months later, it revealed that Kurt had written no such thing, nor any other direct reference to suicide. Courtney also told Loder that the physical damage to Cobain's body was so severe that he could only be identified by fingerprints. This too was later revealed to be a fabrication” (Wallace and Halperin 127).

7. Failure to Take Each Factor to its Ultimate Conclusion

The Seattle Police Department conducted a sub-par investigation into the death of Kurt Cobain. Every death scene should be entered into respectfully by

its investigators and with no preconceived notions as to the cause or whom the victim.

These are the major factors that I believe the SPD did not give the proper amount (in some cases none at all!) of attention in their investigation of and ruling as to the cause of Kurt Cobain's death:

(a). The Seattle Police rushed to a ruling of cause of death as suicide without the proper questioning of family, friends, associates, etc. as to Kurt's state of mind at the time of his death, and his life weeks and months leading up to his death.

(b). The detectives did not question why Courtney Love had cancelled one of Kurt's credit cards, (the only one she believed he had with him when he went missing) on the day we went missing. This same card was not found with Kurt's body, but records from the credit card company indicate that someone had attempted to use it from the day of Kurt's disappearance from the Rehab center until the day his body was found. **(c).** There was no questioning of the

discrepancies of the handwriting on the suicide note, or the legitimacy of its intent. Those closest to Kurt, including his attorney- his daughter's godmother believed the note was a retirement letter to his fans. **(d).** Despite three times the lethal dose of heroin (and diazepam) of heroin in Kurt's system at the time of his death, the police maintain that Kurt could still retain the presence of mind to roll down his shirt sleeves, place the caps back on the needles, and return his drug paraphernalia back into the kit found next to his body. He was then able to take up a shotgun that was loaded with three bullets. The police also claim that Kurt intentionally loaded the gun for the purpose of suicide. With three bullets? He

was able to shoot himself in the head. Found next to Kurt's body was a half-full can of root beer- the contents of which were never examined. And why would Kurt have kept the receipt which had the name of the purchaser as being Dylan Carlson, (Kurt's best friend) for that shotgun in his pocket? **(e)**. The police did not question the fact that no legible fingerprints were found on the gun, shells, or the pen which they claim the suicide note was written. **(f)**. The cadaveric spasm which caused the burn print on Kurt's left thumb could have been easily caused by murder as simply as by suicide. The police dismissed the notion that someone could have placed Kurt's hands around the gun while he was incapacitated by the drugs and fired. Remember, Dr. Hartshorne the medical examiner on the scene was an old friend of Courtney Love. **(g)**. The police took two sets of photographs at the scene; Polaroids and a roll of 35 millimeter film which was never processed until twenty years after Kurt's death. Seattle Police Department would not share their reports on the case to any other outside experts who might be able to offer an unbiased opinion on the cause of death. **(h)**. The SPD utterly dismissed the documented questionable behavior and outright lies of Courtney Love and her possible motive for murder as presented to them by Private Investigator Tom Grant.

At the time of Kurt's death Courtney was making a big show of telling reporters that Kurt's overdose in Rome the previous month had in fact been a failed suicide attempt. But, she could not keep her own story straight with what the facts bore out. Eight months after the Rome incident, Courtney told David Fricke of *Rolling Stone Magazine* how she had found Kurt unconscious some two

to three hours before she called for an ambulance.

"I turned over about 3 or 4 in the morning to make love, and he was gone. He was at the end of the bed with a thousand dollars in his pocket and a note saying, "You don't love me anymore. I'd rather die than go through a divorce"..."

Why did she wait for more than two hours before calling for an ambulance at 6:30AM? Was she waiting to make sure he was dead? Or was she simply misquoted by Rolling Stone? Here is the version she told Spin Magazine

"And so we ordered champagne 'cause Pat (Smear) was with us for a little while, and Kurt doesn't drink, and then we put Frances to bed. And we started making out, and we fell asleep. He must have woken up and started writing me a letter about how he felt rejected. But, I'm not sure I believe that because he wasn't rejected. We both fell asleep. Anyway, I woke up at, like, four in the morning to reach for him, basically to go fuck him, 'cause I hadn't seen him in so long. And he wasn't there. And I always get alarmed when Kurt's not there, 'cause I figure he's in the corner somewhere, doing something bad. And he's on the floor, and he's dead. There's blood coming out of his nostril. And he's fully dressed. He's in a corduroy coat, and he's got 1,000 American dollars clutched in one hand, which was gray, and a note in the other."

Here she confirms that she not only discovered him at 4:00 in the morning, but also that she thought he was dead (Wallace and Halperin 204-205).

When Tom Grant asked Courtney about the Rome suicide note after Kurt's death, she told him that the police; a Sargent Cameron advised her to burn the note. When Grant expressed his disbelief that a police officer would advise Love to destroy evidence, Love explained that Cameron told her it wouldn't do anyone any good now to see a note that only made her look bad.

In the 1997 Unsolved Mysteries Episode eluded to earlier, Seattle Police Department Spokesman Sean O'Donnell spoke of the month long investigation

his department had conducted into the circumstances of Kurt's death. His detectives, he said, originally began the investigation with the premise that Kurt had been murdered before officially ruling out the possibility; "That's the way they conducted the investigation, so that there was a very thorough, comprehensive, investigation done from the beginning, and everything that detectives encountered indicated to them that this was suicide. We actually found nothing to indicate that this was anything but a suicide" (Unsolved Mysteries TV Show).

But, a long trail of evidence suggests investigators never seriously contemplated the idea that Kurt was murdered at all. Indeed, a police department source familiar with the investigation told us in 1996 that Sargent Cameron, (the same Sargent Cameron who told Courtney Love to burn the alleged Rome suicide note) made it clear at the time that the so-called homicide investigation was just a show: "We weren't supposed to take it seriously." The source, who said he didn't necessarily believe Cobain was murdered, described a "shoddy investigation" in which Cameron didn't even bother to develop the photographs taken at the scene. He said an outside law enforcement agency should reinvestigate the circumstances because, "Cameron will never admit he made a mistake, He is very concerned about his reputation." The police reports we were able to obtain under the Washington State Freedom of Information laws appear to reinforce his charge that the homicide unit never took their investigation seriously. They prove from the earliest hours on April 8, 1994, each unit of the Seattle Police Department had already officially labeled the death a suicide (Wallace and Halperin 141-142).

Conclusion

The writer David Fricke, revealed that, when he caught up with his subject in the middle of Nirvana's U.S. Tour, he had expected to find what he described as the Cobain press myth---a "pissy, complaining, freaked-out, schizophrenic." Instead, he writes he was surprised to find Kurt in a thoughtful mood, taking great pains to explain that success doesn't really suck---not as much as it used to anyway---and that his life was pretty good and getting better. In the years since his death the public has been fed a steady stream of assertions about the supposed despair that lead to Kurt's suicide. Even many of those who have never heard a Nirvana song can practically recite the factors by rote: the pop success induced desolation, the alienation and misery that came with his fame. All the more surprising then to read what he told Fricke in this interview just a few months before he allegedly killed himself: "I've never been happier in my life" (Wallace and Halperin 55).

Since the day of his passing there have been those who have always believed something suspect in the suicide ruling of Kurt Cobain. Perhaps some people could not bear their icon to die in such a senseless way. I maintain that there are also a great number of people who believe that murder is an equally senseless death, but more difficult to prove. It takes dedication, hours, days, months and years of thanklessly difficult work. It demands being willing to stand up to ridicule and your reputation impugned. It takes being willing to put yourself in danger to ask the questions that no one else will in order to serve justice.

I have great respect for Nick Broomfield whose 1998 Documentary; *Kurt and Courtney* almost was not. It was intended for Sundance Film Festival release, but after lawsuit threats from Courtney Love (who refused to be interviewed for the film) found its home and support from the BBC and private donations. While I do not agree with all of Broomfield's pursuits and methods in his film, he appears to genuinely attempt to question the official ruling of Kurt Cobain's death.

The journalists and filmmakers, Max Wallace and Ian Halperin who co-wrote two books, *Who Killed Kurt Cobain* and *Love and Death* both dealing with the subject of Kurt Cobain's possible murder demonstrated terrific professionalism and balance in the way they conducted their investigation, interviews and the people they chose to interview. It is obvious the great amount of research, fact checking, and overall due diligence on their part. I do not believe that anyone could have done a better job of giving a more objective view of the entire scope of the situation, and the many levels and facets.

Finally, Private Investigator Tom Grant, the one man who risked his professional career, reputation and quite seriously, his life in being the first creditable individual to emerge from the smoke and mirrors during his time working for Courtney Love. Grant had tried his utmost, despite grave misgivings to find Kurt Cobain days before his death. When Grant could no longer ignore all the facts he had gathered, along with his years of law enforcement experience, he refunded Love a portion of his fee and informed her he could no longer work for her because of his suspicions of her regarding her husband's death.

He was then free to continue his mission to gain justice for Kurt. Grant logged in countless hours working on a case that no longer paid any financial gain.

Instead, Grant has been ridiculed for his tireless work. But, interestingly, has never been sued by Love, or any member of Kurt's family. He does have a lot of supporters.

He served as the major consultant on the docu-drama, *Soaked in Bleach* due for release in early 2015. The film is a reconstruction of the last days of Kurt Cobain's life as recorded in Grants notes, cassette recordings, (mostly of his interviews with Love) and investigative work. There is a great hope that with the release of this new film, the Seattle Police Department will no longer be able to hide behind their badges and remain unquestioned in their bungled investigation into Cobain's death. All Grant's has ever advocated for is a change from cause of death from that of Suicide to Undetermined. Perhaps that is the first step toward justice in this long and twisted case.

Attorney Rosemary Carroll never spoke to Grant again after his publicity revealed her doubts about Kurt's death. She moved to New York City, and continues to represent artists and entrepreneurs. It is doubtful that any ties remain between she and Courtney Love, but Love replaced Carroll with the actress Drew Barrymore as godmother to Frances Bean.

Dylan Carlson still lives in Seattle and plays in the band, Earth. He now maintains he does not believe Kurt was murdered.

Michael (Cali) Dewitt worked for a record company for a time, but he was still greatly afflicted by drugs. He was given \$30,000 by Courtney Love for rehab.

The detached garage/greenhouse at the Cobain residence was leveled, and extensive remodeling of the home was done by a contractor, DeWitt's father. Cali could not be located as of 2006.

Courtney Love can be found anywhere from Los Angeles to New York to London. While she was ordered in 2006 to pay back in excess of 2 million dollars that she stole from her daughter's Trust Fund, (established by Cobain) Love mostly rents the places she calls home. She primarily stays in higher end hotel suites, the homes of friends, and now claims that England is her true home. She wants to be the wife of aristocracy. Wherever she is, she leaves a directive for fresh cupcakes to be delivered daily. She believes that some 250 million dollars of Nirvana money is due to her, and has waged legal warfare for years to obtain this so- called lost money. Meanwhile she has begun recording and touring again with a new band. She and her daughter Frances Bean remain estranged.

People often ask why the other two members of Nirvana have never spoken of the possibility of Cobain's murder. Bassist, Krist Novoselic believes that Kurt committed suicide because he was an addict. Novoselic dabbled in several music projects after the break-up of Nirvana, and became politically active in Seattle. He also began to study Law. Novoselic remains close with fellow band member, Dave Grohl, but does not communicate with Courtney Love.

Dave Grohl went on to form a successful band, The Foo Fighters. He was not, however successful in escaping Courtney Love's inexplicable wrath. They have been in and out of courtrooms since Kurt's death. Love charges that Grohl

is hiding money from her. Love's most outrageous claim was that he molested her daughter, Frances Bean. Love's reasoning was that Grohl had been in love with Kurt. Frances made a rare public statement refuting her mother in defense of Grohl saying that he was never anything but respectful towards her. Love has been quoted as saying that she would, "Blow Grohl's head off." During Nirvana's 2014 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Love asked Grohl for an awkward hug in a plea to clear the slate of past transgressions.

Frances Bean Cobain, perhaps the second greatest victim in this sad saga is now a beautiful, artistic 22-year-old young woman who looks very much like her late father. You will not find her arresting blue eyes, or pale skin splashed over the covers of tabloids or magazines. Frances Bean has managed to maintain a grace and wisdom well beyond her youth. Although she does some periodic, upscale modeling, and shows her artwork on occasion, Frances does not possess the seemingly insatiable need for public attention and the limelight as her mother. Frances does seem to have an innate understanding of how harmful fame can be. "On December 11, 2009, a California Superior Court in Los Angeles appointed Wendy O'Connor, her paternal grandmother, and Kimberly Cobain, her father's sister, as temporary co-guardians. It was reported that a judge had issued a related temporary restraining order prohibiting Love from having any direct or indirect contact with her daughter. The papers were filed alleging domestic violence along with Frances' medical records. On August 18, 2010, Frances Bean Cobain inherited 37% of her late father's estate. Documents showed that Frances Cobain, not Courtney Love, now controls the

publicity rights to the name and image of her late father, Kurt Cobain” (“Frances Bean Cobain”).

I have chosen to leave out the graphic photos of the Cobain death scene out of respect. Courtney Love decided to sell a good amount of Kurt’s private writings marketed as his “Journals.” In death, Kurt was the victim of what he feared most in life, a public violation of his personal boundaries. Kurt felt a special kinship with the actress Frances Farmer for similar reasons. She raged against the falseness of Hollywood, and because of her rebellious personality and independent artist friends she was labeled the definitive outsider of her time—a *communist*. After a tumultuous life with an overly controlling mother, Farmer ended up institutionalized twice where she was raped, endured electro-shock therapy and ultimately given a lobotomy.

During an interview, Cobain points in the direction where Farmer towards the end of her short life worked in a Seattle hotel. He remarks how disgusting and shameful it is that the people of Seattle still continue to talk about Farmer’s ordeal as if it is an inside joke. His tribute to her, “Frances Farmer Will Have Her Revenge on Seattle”, appeared on Nirvana’s *In Utero* (1993) album. The ultimate tragic irony of a man whose song, *Rape Me* dealt with the horrors of violation, only to have all his personal thoughts, demons, dreams, sold to the world for the sake of a quick profit. If a person would like to see the burn mark on his thumb, and the perfectly ordered drug kit found by Kurt’s body, all one has to do is a quick Google search.

I have my own theory as to how Kurt Cobain was murdered, but like Tom Grant what I hope for most in this moment is that enough pressure is brought to bear on the Seattle Police Department which will force them to at least change the ruling of the cause of death. There is more than enough evidence gathered (by interested and qualified individuals) to warrant the cause of Kurt Cobain's death to be recorded as, "Undetermined."

Why does it matter so much? Why does the work of one individual touch others in such a profound way as to change their lives, and thus be intertwined somehow? Perhaps, because many of us were those scared, confused, rage-filled, rejected, caring, lost, Generation X-ers who felt Kurt Cobain was singing directly to. I can empathize with those despondent souls who took their own lives feeling they had lost something incredibly precious. And the world lost them.

Identifying beyond a reasonable doubt the killer of Kurt Cobain not only means justice for his remaining family-his most adored Frances Bean, but it teaches society a crucial lesson about *judgment*. In the worst sense of the word, judgment means allowing ourselves the moral prerogative to calculate the value of another human being, ("just another dead junkie") and believe there are no consequences for us. Kurt Cobain freely, and at times unwilling gave us the best and worst of himself. We, it seems, have only given him our worst-a denial.

Appendix

To Boddah

Speaking from the tongue of an experienced simpleton who obviously would rather be an emasculated, infantile complain-ee. This note should be pretty easy to understand.

All the warnings from the punk rock 101 courses over the years, since my first introduction to the, shall we say, ethics involved with independence and the embracement of your community has proven to be very true. I haven't felt the excitement of listening to as well as creating music along with reading and writing for too many years now. I feel guilty beyond words about these things.

For example when we're back stage and the lights go out and the manic roar of the crowds begins., it doesn't affect me the way in which it did for Freddie Mercury, who seemed to love, relish in the love and adoration from the crowd which is something I totally admire and envy. The fact is, I can't fool you, any one of you. It simply isn't fair to you or me. The worst crime I can think of would be to rip people off by faking it and pretending as if I'm having 100% fun. Sometimes I feel as if I should have a punch-in time clock before I walk out on stage. I've tried everything within my power to appreciate it (and I do, God, believe me I do, but it's not enough). I appreciate the fact that I and we have affected and entertained a lot of people. It must be one of those narcissists who only appreciate things when they're gone. I'm too sensitive. I need to be slightly numb in order to regain the enthusiasms I once had as a child.

On our last 3 tours, I've had a much better appreciation for all the people I've known personally, and as fans of our music, but I still can't get over the frustration, the guilt and empathy I have for everyone. There's good in all of us and I think I simply love people too much, so much that it makes me feel too fucking sad. The sad little, sensitive, unappreciative, Pisces, Jesus man. Why don't you just enjoy it? I don't know!

I have a goddess of a wife who sweats ambition and empathy and a daughter who reminds me too much of what i used to be, full of love and joy, kissing every person she meets because everyone is good and will do her no harm. And that terrifies me to the point to where I can barely function. I can't stand the thought of Frances becoming the miserable, self-destructive, death rocker that I've become.

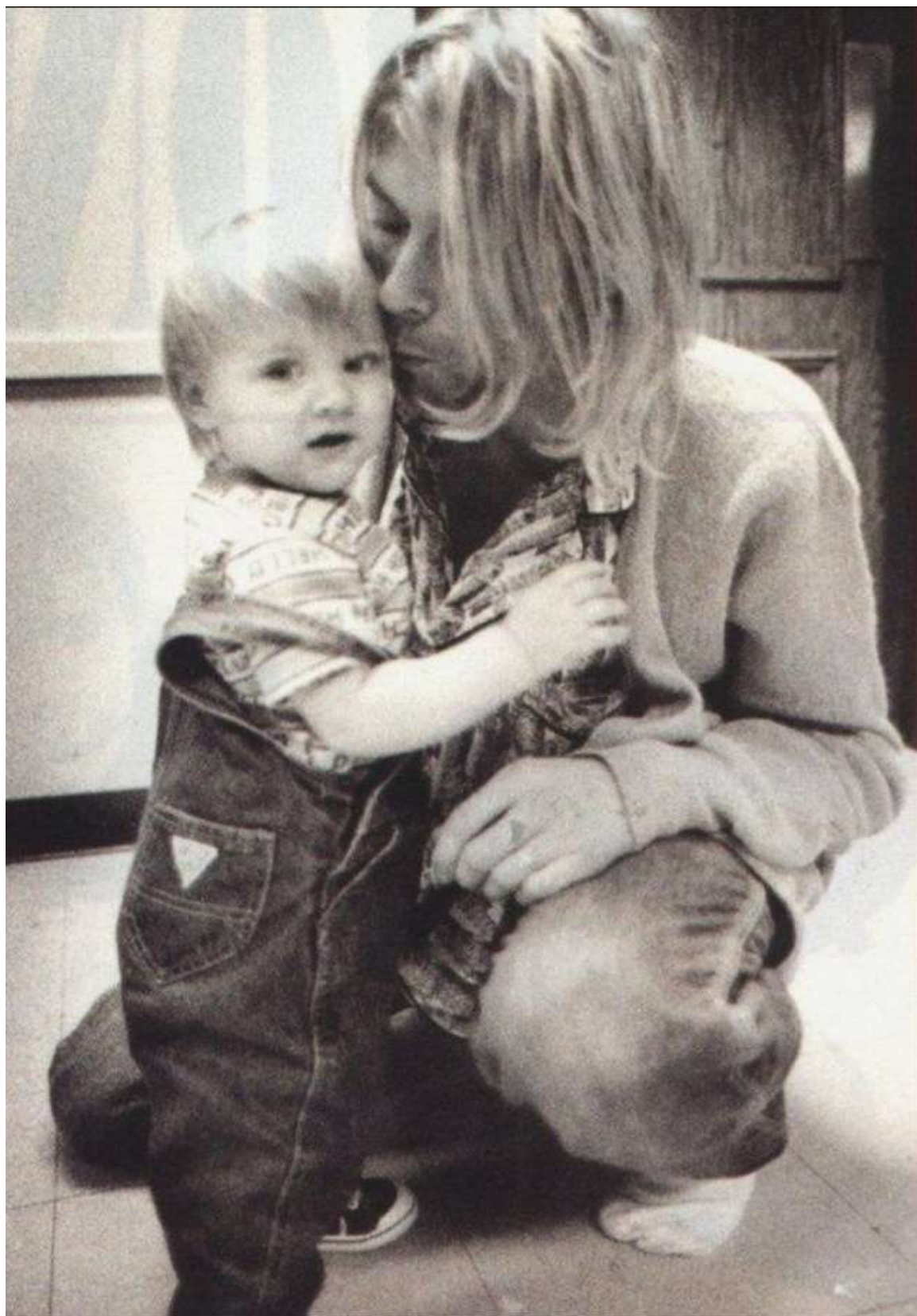
I have it good, very good, and I'm grateful, but since the age of seven, I've become hateful towards all humans in general. Only because it seems so easy for people to get along that have empathy. Only because I love and feel sorry for people too much I guess.

Thank you all from the pit of my burning, nauseous stomach for your letters and concern during the past years. I'm too much of an erratic, moody baby! I don't have the passion anymore, and so remember, it's better to burn out than to fade away.

Peace, love, empathy.
Kurt Cobain

Frances and Courtney, I'll be at your alter.
Please keep going Courtney, for Frances.
For her life, which will be so much happier without me.

I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU!



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