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published January 1976

Cover
By John Holmstrom

8 **Editorial**
By John Holmstrom
I wrote this as a joke, but everyone took it very seriously. It kicked off the anti-disco movement, which became sort of a hate group against urban culture. The anti-disco movement climaxed at Disco Demolition Night at Comiskey Park, another joke that got out of hand—during a pre-baseball game ritual thousands of disco albums were burned, instigating a full-blown riot that cancelled the White Sox game.

9 **Lou Reed: Rock 'N' Roll Vegetable**
Interview and cartooning by John Holmstrom
This interview became famous overnight and put us on the map. It was Lou Reed at his best, during a most interesting crossroads of his career—following the release of *Metal Machine Music*, which should get credit as the first official punk rock album.

13 **Sluggo**
Interview by Legs McNeil, illustration by John Holmstrom
Legs got his feet wet in the journalism trade by talking with one of the true greats in the business.

Punk #3
published April 1976

14 **Father No's Best**
By Robert Romagnoli
Robert Romagnoli, one of the funniest people I ever met, contributed to every issue. This was his most popular piece.

15 **Cover**
By John Holmstrom

16 **Letters**
By the readers
They're all real. No joke.

18 **Editorial**
By John Holmstrom
The bit about "any kid can pick up a guitar and blah blah blah" was quoted more than anything else we ever said. . . Kind of the defining statement of early punk rock.

19 **David JoHanson Interview 19**
Interview by John Holmstrom & Legs McNeil, cartooning by John Holmstrom, photos by Roberta Bayley
Someone at *Record World* magazine called this "one of the great documents of our time." The fact that David JoHanson called the NY Dolls "punk rock" in the interview overcame a big obstacle for us—until then, no bands wanted to "limit themselves" or "label their music" by associating themselves with the "punk" word.

23 **Boris & Natasha**
Interview by Legs McNeil, cartooning by John Holmstrom
Legs usually refused to write about music at all, and preferred to write about what he knew—television. Legs' agenda was to become famous, and by calling his interviews "Legs McNeil Famous Person Interviews" he figured they would make him famous. It worked. Legs had his first book, *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk* (basically a collection of Famous Persons Interviews) published in hardcover by Grove Press. Not only is it filled with gossip from the punk era, it also tells the story of how *Punk* magazine got started.

24 **Story To Fill Space**
Story & lettering by Legs McNeil
Strange but true—Chris Stein told me that during Blondie's first tour overseas in 1976 English punks would go around vomiting in the streets because they thought it was the punk thing to do after they read this.

25 **Ramones**
Interview by John Holmstrom, photos by Roberta Bayley
We thought the Ramones' first album would take the world by storm and become "The Next Big Thing." Instead, we heard stories of disk jockeys and radio programmers listening to ten seconds of the record, removing it from the turntable, throwing it in the trash and vowing to stop punk rock from infecting the airwaves. Many rock critics who now claim to have "been there at the beginning of the punk scene" were trashing the Ramones in 1976 and incredulous that anyone would devote a magazine to their brand of unicommercial noise.

The photos are from a session we set up with the Ramones and Roberta Bayley that resulted in their first album cover. These are the outtakes. Roberta is currently co-curator (with Bobby Grossman) of "The Cool & the Crazy: Images of Punk," which includes works from over 40 photogs and is touring the country. (Roberta's Sex Pistols pix are available as art prints from Modern Culture, 14 1st PL, #3, Brooklyn, NY 11231-3408.)

28 **Richard Hell**
Interview by Legs McNeil, photos by Roberta Bayley & Dan Asher
Legs McNeil's finest moment as a rock journalist. By passing out during the interview he unintentionally parodied all of the "gonzo" rock journalism of the 1960s and '70s.

Punk #4
published July 1976

32 **Theresa Stern**
By Mary Harron
We were just about to go to press on this book when Richard Hell called up to talk me into running this interview with him. (Theresa was his invention.) It was one of Mary Harron's favorite pieces too, so. . .

Richard's debut novel, *Go Now*, has just been published by Scribner. It's loosely based on sleazy, real-life adventures Richard and Roberta Bayley experienced when they drove cross-country in a Cadillac.

34 **An Afternoon With Iggy Pop**
Interview by Pam Brown, photos by Roberta Bayley, illustrations by Raven (aka Joey Ramone)
Although Lou Reed has been nicknamed the "Godfather of Punk" because he was on our first cover, Iggy was the Man. Unfortunately he was trying to live down all the interesting stuff he had done in the early 1970s just when we wanted to celebrate it, and released *The Idiot* in 1976 instead of following

up *Raw Power* like he was supposed to. Think about it—almost everyone (Pistols, Damned, Dead Boys, etc. etc.) paid tribute by covering at least one Stooges song but how many punk groups covered the Velvets?

Pam moved to the west coast, got married (*aka* Pam Brown Roberts), developed a successful painting career, and now works in her spare time as a movie publicist.

40 **Lester Bangs vs. Dick Manitoba**
By John Holmstrom, photos by Roberta Bayley
This photo-session captured the first time Lester and Dick met face-to-face. They started goofing around during a Dictators rehearsal, and unintentionally parodied the infamous Wayne County/Handsome Dick Manitoba incident (the inevitable and apocalyptic clash of punk and glam cultures, when glitter rocker/transvestite County bashed punk rocker Manitoba over the head with a microphone stand and almost killed him).

Right after this photo-shoot, Lester gave a public reading of his just-completed "Gay Mafia" exposé that he wanted *Punk* to to publish. Lester told everyone in New York that we were going to publish it, which got everyone very pissed off at the very idea, then changed his mind ("I'm moving to New York and I don't want to make any enemies"), and refused to let us publish it after we decided we had to publish it to show everyone that it was not a shocking exposé but instead a boring, rambling diatribe by Lester about how inbred and self-important the whole New York scene was. And a few years later he wrote an article for *The Village Voice* that branded us as racists. (Lou Reed warned me I'd be sorry I ever got involved with Lester, but since *Punk* was inspired by his *Creem* magazine of the early 1970s, how could I believe that?)

Although we supported The Dictators after the infamous Wayne County incident—setting up their first live show when neither CBGB's nor Max's would touch them—soon after that they decided to go big time (i.e. heavy metal), and wanted nothing to do with punk rock.

43 **Do-It-Yourself Porno Novel**
By Robert Romagnoli
Pornography was becoming mainstream in the early-to-mid-1970s, so Romagnoli did his "interactive" take on it. Although the punk scene was described at the time as "sexless," it wasn't. (Well, compared to disco, maybe.)

Punk #5
published August 1976

44 **Patti Smith Graffiti Contest**
I had been up for 36 hours straight putting the third issue to bed when the printer called and told us the inside back cover was blank. Did we want to print a blank page? I thought for a moment, grabbed a publicity picture of Patti that was on the wall, had Legs scribble "Graffiti Contest" on it and sent it off. I thought it would be a nice visual tribute by the readers, and we got a lot of great responses to it.

47 **Punk of the Month**
Joey Ramone suggested we start a "Punk of the Month" feature, so when Ronald Binder sent in these sick photographs I knew we had our first "real" punk. Ronald went on to achieve fame and fortune, becoming a roadie for Blue Öyster Cult. He's a professor of literature now.

Punk #6
published October 1976

48 **Nick Detroit Cover**
By John Holmstrom

49 **The Legend of Nick Detroit**
Story by Legs McNeil, photos by Roberta Bayley, Chris Stein & Dan Asher
After five issues, *Punk* had become stale, predictable and artsy in a bad, cute way. When Legs suggested starting a serial detective story, I told him we had to make it a full-length movie. The issue was published by Tom Forçade, the mysterious founder of *High Times*, who warned us that it might not sell well—especially with a black and white cover but I refused to make commercial concessions. (For a biography of Tom Forçade, pick up a copy of the book, *High Times Greatest Hits.*)

Although Nick Detroit immediately restored *Punk*'s reputation as the most reckless and imaginative magazine in the world, Forçade was right. It didn't sell well on newsstands at a time when we needed a hit.

Yeah, I know, we misspelled "chief."

Punk #8
published March 1977

57 **Cover**
By Steve Taylor

59 **Johnny Rotten**
Interview by Mary Harron, photos by Bob Gruen
At first Mary Harron, who has gone on to fame and fortune after directing her first feature film, *Who Shot Andy Warhol*, gave me only a few pages from her talk with Mr. Rotten. But I found it so fascinating I insisted that we run the entire transcript and was so inspired I put the Pistols on the cover. This was also the first time we had a chance to publish Bob Gruen's photos. Bob was already a very successful rock photog, so his pix always added a lot of prestige to the magazine.

Color Photo Section

Punk #4 cover
By John Holmstrom
The Sex Pistols: Sid, Johnny, Steve & Paul
By Roberta Bayley
The Sex Pistols
By Bob Gruen
Iggy Pop
By Roberta Bayley
Debbie Harry
By Roberta Bayley
The Sex Pistols at Randy's Rodeo
Courtesy D.O.A. Productions
The Ramones
By Roberta Bayley
N.Y. Dolls
By Roberta Bayley

Iggy Pop
By Roberta Bayley
Richard Hell
By Roberta Bayley

Black & White Photo Section

65 **Punk Benefit**
Photos by Godlis
This benefit, supported by every New York band that wasn't on tour at the time (like the Ramones), was a tremendous outpouring of affection, love and support for *Punk* magazine, its staff, and the entire 'zine culture. (Of course, this didn't stop us from slagging off any band that played, or saying they were full of shit, washed-up or their latest record a piece of crap.) It enabled the magazine to stay in business for another few issues.

70 **Punk Pin-up Section**
Punk #4: Debbie Harry of Blondie
Photos by Chris Stein
These photos originally appeared in a *Playboy* magazine-style foldout. Chris Stein claimed that the foldout was responsible for getting Blondie signed to their first record contract. Debbie was the most beautiful woman anyone had ever seen in a rock group up until that time, so we were happy to publish his great photos (especially since he provided them for free!) Chris is preparing a coffeetable-book collection of his photos, and Debbie's new CD is called *Jazz Passengers*.

73 **Punk #17: Niagara of Destroy All Monsters**
Photos by Dennis Letbetter
John Spacely, who was the Publisher of the last two issues of *Punk*, was a good friend of Ron Asheton (Stooges/guitar). They sent us these photos of Ron's new band at the time, Destroy All Monsters. Niagara was such a knockout that we decided to publish another foldout. I recently saw Niagara, in Ron's new band Dark Carnival, and she is more beautiful than ever.

Punk #14
published May 1978

76 **Letters**
A sample assortment of correspondence from different issues.

77 **Edie Massey**
Interview by Legs McNeil, photo by Roberta Bayley
Edie was a famous actress who starred in several of John Waters' early films, like *Pink Flamingos* (which was the *Rocky Horror* cult film of its day).

78 **AC/DC**
Interview by John Holmstrom, photos By Roberta Bayley
During AC/DC's first American tour they played CBGB's and opened for the Dictators at the Palladium. They soon soured on the punk rock thing and decided to go commercial by becoming a heavy metal band. (Smart move.)

78 **Beware Of Imitations**
By John Holmstrom
Although we weren't commercially successful, several publishers tried to crowd the market with ripoffs of *Punk*, such as *Punk Rock* magazine, *New Wave* magazine, etc. And there were many underground imitations such as *Sniffin' Glue* (whose first issues were devoted to the Ramones and Blue Öyster Cult, but quickly did an about-face and denounced *Punk* magazine and American punk in general.) It got so bad we eventually declared war on all imitation punk magazines, punks and punk rockers.

79 **The Harder They Fall**
By John Holmstrom, photos By Roberta Bayley, Bob Gruen & Joe Stevens
Everyone wondered how we could afford to go on tour with the Pistols. "You say don't have enough money to buy me a beer but you could fly around the country following the Pistols?" Tom Forçade attempted to make *Punk* magazine profitable by hiring us to cover the Sex Pistols tour. He also hired a film crew (which resulted in the punk rock documentary *D.O.A.: A Right of Passage*), several bodyguards (to fuck with and protect himself from Warner Brothers security), and a few friends to make himself more comfortable. When the Sex Pistols broke up, no one thought there was a market for the film, which was eventually produced by *High Times* magazine, and lost a lot of money. (The Sex Pistols Tour issue of *Punk* sold well, though.)

You might notice that Joe Stevens snapped the best stuff on the tour. As the person closest to all sides of the Sex Pistols breakup, he is contemplating writing a book about the tour, and is looking for a publisher.

D.O.A. Filmbook
published April 1981

92 **A Phone Conversation with Sid**
Interview by Roberta Bayley, photo by Joe Stevens
This little discussion with Sid reveals a lot because it caught him at a very vulnerable moment: in the hospital, alone, right after the group's breakup.

93 **Bay City Rollers**
By Elin Wilder, photos by Bob Gruen
Before *Punk* magazine redefined the word, "punk rock" was used, especially in England, to describe 1960s garage rock, and bands like the Rollers, Eddie and The Hot Rods and AC/DC were being called "punk rock" in the mid-1970s. (See Johnny Rotten's comment, pg. 59.) Since the Rollers were Dee Dee Ramone's favorite group, and Bernard Brooke Partridge said they were more obscene than the Pistols, we thought they deserved a mention. The Rollers phenomenon proves what a twisted decade the 1970s really were.

Elin Wilder, *Punk*'s Associate Publisher, went on to bigger and better things: she worked for Don Imus at *WNBC* (when Howard Stern was also there), later edited several rock magazines and is now working at Retna, a photo agency.

97 **Dorian Zero**
By John Holmstrom, photo By Roberta Bayley
I wouldn't have been so awful to Dorian if his publicist, Howard Bloom, hadn't been so persistent in getting us to interview him. Usually I would have ignored the guy.

#15 Issue
published July 1978

99 **Mutant Monster Beach Party**

Story by Legs McNeil, directed by John Holmstrom, photos by Roberta Bayley, Bob Gruen, Chris Stein & Tom Hearn

A few scenes from *Punk*'s masterpiece: a 43-page movie parody that starred Joey Ramone, Debbie Harry, Andy Warhol, and Peter Wolf (of J. Geils Band fame), with guest appearances by Chris (Blondie) Stein, John (Velvet Underground) Cale, famous photog Bob Gruen, Arturo Vega (Ramones design and lighting guy), Anya (Peking Doll) Phillips, Paul (The Fast) Zone, Tish & Snooky & Russell of the Sick F*cks, Scott Kempner and Stu Boy King of the Dictators, Jonathan Paley (Paley Brothers), Lauren (The Washington Squares) Agnelli, Ronald Binder, Lester Bangs, Jay Dee (Patti Smith) Daugherty, Mitch Hyman, Michael Sullivan, David JoHanson, Joan Jett, Edith (the Egg Lady) Massey, Mary Harron and Tom Holaday, who did freelance financial work for *Punk*. (The scene of him on the beach in his three-piece suit always cracks me up.) It was two years in the making, involved special effects drawn by four artists, featured lyrics by Joey Ramone (who later used some of them in an actual Ramones song), and involved shooting with several photographers at dozens of locations.

Although for years afterwards people raved about it, Mutant Monster Beach Party led to our downfall. Once again, the feature-length photo-comic bombed on the newsstands.

107 **Top 99**

By Punk magazine readers, lettered by John Holmstrom

One of *Punk*'s innovations that lives on. I still compile the "Hemp 100" every month for *High Times*. *The Village Voice* did a Top-20 list for awhile, *Maniac* magazine did a Top-40 list, and it does seem that wacky lists of things have become quite popular.

Punk #16

published March 1979

108 **News**

As you can see, the original punk scene was just about over by now. This helped put more nails in the coffin, since *Punk* had not yet been able to develop its own identity outside of the punk scene. We got all this free publicity from the punk thing, then it turned sour when Sid killed Nancy. All of a sudden people were saying, "Change the name! Punk is dead!" Well, it was a bit late for that. Besides, I always liked it.

It's too bad it had to end. The magazine still had a lot of juice left—in fact we were just about to enter our prime. But some things are not meant to be.

109 **The Brat Patrol/Shrapnel**

Story by Legs & Jolly, photos by Tom Hearn

These teenaged kids from Red Bank, New Jersey, kept calling the *Punk* offices to hire Legs McNeil to manage their rock band. Legs was drying out in the mental ward at the time, but once he escaped they got together, and before I knew it Legs wanted to leave *Punk* to go on to "bigger and better things." So I hired Jolly, a juvenile delinquent who was helping Elin Wilder with shipping duties, as the new Resident Punk.

They decided to call the band Shrapnel and dressed in army clothes and sang about war as their gimmick. The band included Dave (Monster Magnet) Wyndorf, Daniel (Daniel Ray, rock 'n' roll producer) Rabinowitz , and Phil (Blitzspeer) Caivano . One of Jolly's first actions was to completely rewrite Legs McNeil's script for this photo-funny, which really pissed Legs off. I thought it was much funnier this way. After all, Shrapnel's image *was* really silly—they used to roll a big cardboard tank onstage and sing about blowing up their high school. Shrapnel released a self-tilted EP on Elektra Records in 1984 on vinyl.

112 **Sid Vicious & Nancy Spungen Interview**

We published this two years before Lech Kowalski finally got around to releasing that *D.O.A.* movie of his. Apparently this interview inspired that horrible *Sid And Nancy* movie.

Punk #17

published May 1979

114 **The Clash 114**

By Jolly, photos by Roberta Bayley & Bob Gruen

Once the Sex Pistols had broken up, a lot of people thought The Clash would become the important punk rock band. Then they helped bury punk by making disco-oriented records, like Blondie. Jolly is now the lead singer of The Sun Demons, a straight-ahead rock 'n' roll group that currently plays the NYC club circuit.

Punk #18

unpublished

This issue, which featured a cover story about the Ramones in the *Rock 'N' Roll High School* movie, was supposed to be published in July 1979 but was pulled off the press by the printer for being too offensive. That was the last straw that put *Punk* out of business for good.

118 **Von Lmo**

Interview by Bruce Carleton

Bruce, who now lives in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, really wanted this to run. It was one of the more interesting interviews we ever did.

122 **Shaun Cassidy Graffiti Contest**

These probably would have appeared in *Punk* #20, if we'd stayed in business—the original contest was published in *Punk* #18.

124 **Punk Club Guide**

By Ken Weiner

Weiner, who still draws disgusting, vile, hilarious stuff for *Screw*, did lots of funny stuff for *Punk*, but most of it was too shocking—even for us! Ken's Club Guide captured the pinnacle of the punk scene, just after the legendary Mudd Club opened.

126 **Ramones Rock 'N' Roll High School advertisement**

By John Holmstrom

This was going to be the back cover of *Punk* #18. It also appeared in an issue of *Record World*. I still get requests from people who want a Ramones or rock 'n' roll type illustration for something, but. . . I've retired from the drawing board.

127 **Lou Reed: A Nice Guy?**

By John Holmstrom

The long-awaited sequel to *Punk* magazine's first feature article! I hear people give Lou a bad rap lately, but I always did think he was one of the nicest people I ever met (no joke), as well as one of the most intelligent.