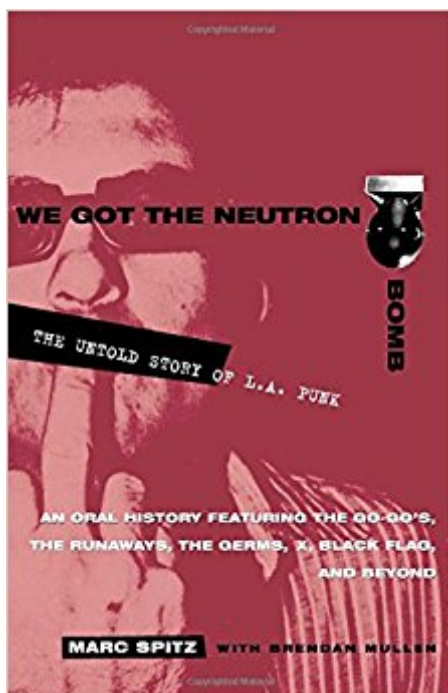


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We Got The Neutron Bomb : The Untold Story Of L.A. Punk



Synopsis

Taking us back to late '70s and early '80s Hollywood "pre-crack, pre-AIDS, pre-Reagan" *We Got the Neutron Bomb* re-creates word for word the rage, intensity, and anarchic glory of the Los Angeles punk scene, straight from the mouths of the scenesters, zinesters, groupies, filmmakers, and musicians who were there. "California was wide-open sex" no condoms, no birth control, no morality, no guilt. "Kim Fowley" "The Runaways were rebels, all of us were. And a lot of people looked up to us. It helped a lot of kids who had very mediocre, uneventful, unhappy lives. It gave them something to hold on to." "Cherie Currie" "The objective was to create something for our own personal satisfaction, because everything in our youthful and limited opinion sucked, and we knew better." "John Doe" "The Masque was like Heaven and Hell all rolled into one. It was a bomb shelter, a basement. It was so amazing, such a dive ... but it was our dive." "Hellin Killer" "At least fifty punks were living at the Canterbury. You'd walk into the courtyard and there'd be a dozen different punk songs all playing at the same time. It was an incredible environment." "Belinda Carlisle" Assembled from exhaustive interviews, *We Got the Neutron Bomb* tells the authentically gritty stories of bands like the Runaways, the Germs, X, the Screamers, Black Flag, and the Circle Jerks "their rise, their fall, and their undeniable influence on the rock 'n' roll of today.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Three Rivers Press; First Edition edition (November 13, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0609807749

ISBN-13: 978-0609807743

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 36 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #302,480 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #98 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Punk #742 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet

Music & Scores > Forms & Genres > Popular #921 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music >

History & Criticism

Customer Reviews

For years, West Coast punks have been ardently arguing for some much-deserved respect. Though

the L.A. punk scene had a late start, it has turned out more relevant bands in the last two decades than the communities in New York and London combined. There's only been one roadblock in L.A.'s way until now, there hasn't been a book. Spitz, senior contributing writer at SPIN magazine, and Mullen, founder of the seminal Masque club that fostered many of the bands covered here, have fashioned a long-overdue oral history along the lines of Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain's *Please Kill Me*, Gotham punk's definitive history. Starting in 1971 with Jim Morrison and the glitter rock invasion and ending in 1981 with the Go-Go's commercial success, this book presents raw quotations from vital scenesters, promoters, and musicians. Readers will get glimpses into the formation and demise of acts like the Runaways, X, and the Circle Jerks. Much more thorough than *Forming: The Early Days of L.A. Punk* (LJ 11/1/99), this book not only titillates with insights and anecdotes that are alternately hilarious and grisly but also fills a gap in popular music history. Highly recommended for all libraries, especially those in the Golden State. Robert Morast, "Argus Daily Leader," Sioux Falls, SD Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Spitz and Mullen give the L.A. punk-rock scene the same treatment that Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain gave the New York scene in *Please Kill Me* (1996). Out of interviews with dozens of club owners, promoters, musicians, journalists, and groupies they shape an evocative oral history of the mid-seventies L.A. punk subculture, before bands like the Go-Go's made it to the cover of *Rolling Stone*. They show the small number of those who dug the New York Dolls and Iggy Pop transforming a stagnant West Coast scene dominated by the Eagles, Linda Ronstadt, and their cronies into a chaotic, culturally vibrant synthesis of art school, rockabilly, surf music, and hard rock. Producer-promoter Kim Fowley put together an all-jailbait girl band, the Runaways, which prompted others. X, the Germs, and Black Flag soon followed, offering a mixture of raw energy, aggression, and real, honest-to-goodness talent. Heroin, AIDS, and self-destructive behavior played a tragic but not unsurprising role in it all. An eminently colorful account. Benjamin Segedin Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Excellent.

I had a really hard time getting into this book at the beginning. While I understand that talking about the glam and glitter scene of the early 70s is important in setting the stage for a punk history, I found the first few chapters of this book rather tedious, whereas the chapters on glitter and glam in "Please Kill Me" were much more interesting and insightful as to educating in the origins of

punk. Once it got going it was a little better, but everything seemed a little glossed over. I always felt that I was missing some key element to the story. Just comparing the size of the book with Please Kill Me shows how much of a difference there is between the two. McNeil really brought you into the depths of late 70s New York, where Mullen and Spitz let you look at it from the outside. The focus is limited to a few bands, the only one that got any major focus being the Germs. To be fair, X, Black Flag, The Screamers, The Go-Gos, and The Runaways all get some coverage. If you don't know much about L.A. Punk, this is a good place to start. But it really only whets your appetite.

Fantastic read. It is written by the people who were here & lived it. And how crazy the Huntington Beach hardcore punk rock started in Orange County with bits of Los Angeles history

Unbiased accounts of the early L.A. punk scene from the mouths of those who were there. All interview snippets with no editorializing or narration. Starts with the proto-punk years, which is a really cool perspective to start out with. A must-read for any self-proclaimed punk rocker/hardcore kid.

The Screamers, Germs, X and The 90028! Come on, it gets no better.

Terrific book!

great

This is a very informative book. Many, many participants of the scene are heard from, instead of just the usual few. The authors let everyone say their piece - some of those interviewed are insightful, some nasty, others just have fun stories to share. It must have been hard to track everybody down, and the authors should be commended for their effort. If you are curious about the history of L.A. punk, I would recommend Hardcore California and We Got The Neutron Bomb.

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