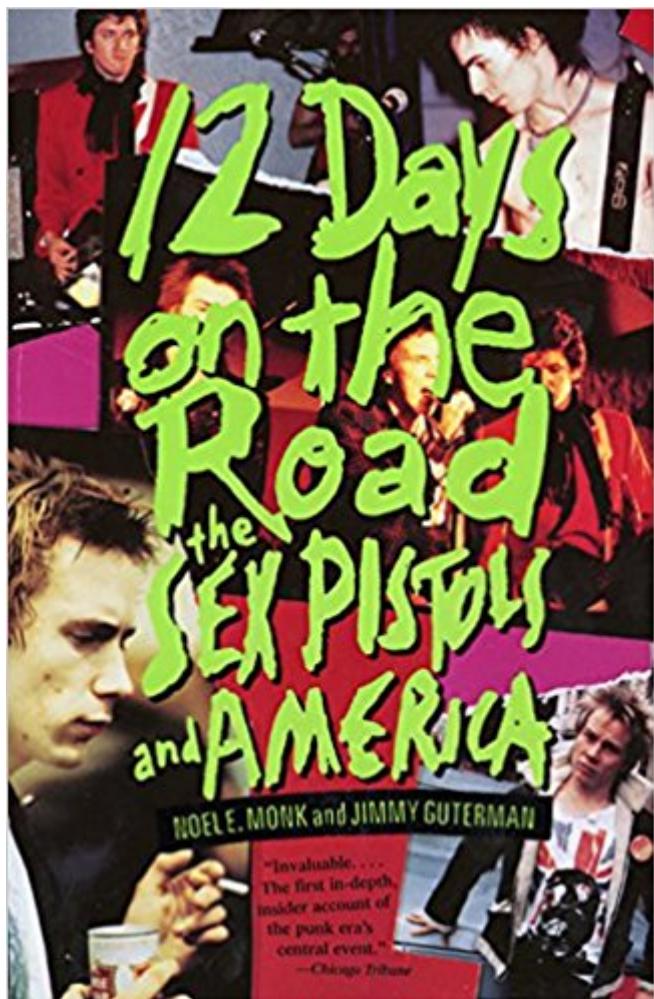


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12 Days On The Road



Synopsis

In the mid-seventies, the Sex Pistols, the most controversial rock-and-roll band ever, erupted out of London, offending everyone from members of Parliament to the rock establishment it sought to unseat. With its raw, anarchic sounds, aura of sex and violence, outrageous behavior, and concerts that frequently degenerated into near-riots, the band changed the rules of rock-and-roll forever. Add to that the early death of band member Sid Vicious, by heroin overdose, and you have all the ingredients for a legend. In January 1978, the Sex Pistols came to the United States for a twelve-day tour, mostly of cities in the Deep South. *12 Days on the Road* is an extraordinary moment-by-moment re-creation of that wild adventure by Noel E. Monk, the Sex Pistols' American tour manager, and veteran journalist Jimmy Guterman. Here is a sensational, "explosive chapter in the history of rock" (Booklist) that is also "a touching and improbable tale of innocence and exploitation" (Kirkus Reviews).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Noel Monk helped stage-manage Woodstock, served as Bill Graham's right-hand man at the legendary Fillmore East, and worked with rock musicians including Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, the Grateful Dead, the Rolling Stones, and the Sex Pistols. He is also the author of *12 Days on the Road: The Sex Pistols and America*, and he lives in Colorado.

It's a bit disconcerting to read a factual book where the author speaks of himself in the third person.

Consequently he relates events and conversations for which he wasn't present, and he offers up thoughts from inside other people's heads - all stuff he could surmise, yet he presents as factual. Nevertheless, it's an easy read, fascinating and there are enough anecdotes, stories and reflections from Monk when he WAS present for me to excuse the weird third party narrative and its liberties. For a group that made history through its message and method, most of the stories show what lost little boys they were: Cook's and Jones's behavior on the San Francisco radio interview, the band's excitement about Texas and its myths, and Sid's delusions and problems - detailed (Monk was his babysitter). A few particularly striking groupie stories. I liked it. I ate it up. I read parts of it twice. They were totally gross, uniquely absorbing and I love their music. Along with Lydon's book, it's part of my permanent book collection.

This is a hilarious recounting of the one and only U.S. tour of the Sex Pistols written by the road manager Noel Monk. It has to be funny, because it would be too disgusting otherwise. Monk has his work cut out for him, and faces countless thankless tasks with the dedication of a platoon sergeant under fire. Don't miss the sweeping irony of the underlying theme that the smelly, rude, uneducated, tasteless and surprisingly poor Sex Pistols have contempt for their Southern White audience members. Even these low-lifes can jump in on one of America's last two permissible prejudices: disdain for poor white southerners (the other permissible prejudice is against Catholics). Highlights include Sid Vicious's multiple disappearances, a pathetic radio interview where two of the Pistols were promised leather jackets to complete, and the mysterious and zonked out founder of High Times tagging along trying to insert himself into the tour for Lord knows what agenda. An excellent recounting and an excellent example of the trope that history is far more bizarre than anything your imagination can conceive.

Husband is a Sex Pistols fanatic and this was a quick and enjoyable read for him.

Nice snapshot of that time in music history and a good story about some really seedy characters (and I'm not talking about just the Sex Pistols!). If you like music in general you should read this book because it tells a lot about music at that time in history and also, of course, about the Sex Pistols first American tour.

LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS NEXT BOOK!

How interesting would it be to read about a legendary musical act 31 years after their only tour of America and their immediate implosion thereafter? 12 Days on the Road provides their tour manager's perspective of a very compact tour principally through the South. It is interesting to assess how much the music industry has changed since that time and in some aspect how it is not changed at all. The Sex Pistols according to the authors were all about the appearances and had no apparent musical ability. The act itself seems largely out of touch with the going ons about them and anesthetize themselves through extreme alcohol and massive drug consumption. The act cannot stand the record label and the record label cannot understand the band. The music is secondary to the stage show. Noel Monk, the author and tour manager, writes the book in a timeline type manner that works well. Unfortunately, he also writes the entire story from third-party perspective, despite being the common denominator throughout the tale. Even though the book is written 12 years after the tour, the author despite having the ultimate insider's perspective does not really tell the inside story at least at the level that I would have expected. For example, on the last date of the tour, The Sex Pistols sold out the 5000 seat Winterland Theatre in San Francisco and the band only netted \$66 for the show. This fact is just barely mentioned in a photo in the book without any meaningful explanation or insight. The book focuses almost entirely on Johnny Rotten and Sid Vicious. There are enough secondary characters to make this quick story flow easily. Despite the lack of more in-depth detail, some of the secondary characters warranted additional attention. The book closes with an epilogue that is craftily done and really brings the book to a satisfying conclusion. Jimmy Guterman, the co-author, these days is a very talented writer whose style reflects an integrated perspective and insightful style. I recommend reading from his body of work. This is an interesting period piece reflecting the late 1970s. If you lived through those times with any interest in the music industry, then this quick read will bring quite a few smiles to your face and stimulate some long dormant memories.

I picked this up at used book store as an impulse buy. Looked interesting. Here's my one petty complaint: The first two chapters are schlocky apocryphal backstory a la Hit Parader or Guitar World. That over with, the story really takes off. I've read/watched a whole buncha stuff about these guys over the years, most of it useless junk. The best being the film The filth & The fury. This is a close second. It was both entertaining and informative. Some of it totally tragic. Some of it gross-out. Some of it laugh-out-loud funny. I recommend this book for anyone interested in pop culture or even just looking for a quick read. I would especially recommend it to anyone wondering what the big deal was about punk rock or why anyone cares about a band that only put out one record.

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