



One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock

By Dave Laing

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Originally published in 1985, *One Chord Wonders* was the first full-length study of the glory years of British punk. The book argues that one of punk's most significant political achievements was to expose the operations of power in the British entertainment industries as they were thrown into confusion by the sound and the fury of musicians and fans. Through a detailed examination of the conditions under which punk emerged and then declined, Dave Laing develops a view of the music as both complex and contradictory. Special attention is paid to the relationship between punk and the music industry of the late 1970s, in particular the political economy of the independent record companies through which much of punk was distributed. Using examples from a wide range of bands, individual chapters use the techniques of semiology to consider the radical approach to naming in punk (from Johnny Rotten to Poly Styrene), the instrumental and vocal sound of the music, and its visual images. The concluding chapter critically examines various theoretical explanations of the punk phenomenon, including the class origins of its protagonists and the influential view that punk represented the latest in a line of British youth "subcultures." There is also a chronology of the punk era, plus discographies and a bibliography.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A clear, unprejudiced account of a difficult subject." —Jon Savage, author, *England's Dreaming*

"What united punk . . . was the tension between realistic lyrics decrying conformity and repression and the sonic jolt that undermines musical predictability In chapters titled 'Formation,' 'Naming,' 'Looking,' 'Listening' and 'Framing,' Laing dissects the strategies claimed by punk." —John L. Murphy, spectrumculture.com

"This is a reasoned and well researched history of those times, it explains where the (punk) movement came from and how it fitted into the social patterns of the times." —Adrian Bloxham, louderthanwar.com

"If not a defining text on 70s Punk, then certainly one of the most unbiased and articulate of its kind."
—Steve Scanner, scannerzine.com

About the Author

Dave Laing is an associate editor of the journal *Popular Music History* and an honorary research fellow at the University of Liverpool who has been researching and writing about popular music, its business, and its politics for more than 40 years. His books include *Buddy Holly* and *The Sound of Our Time*. He is a coeditor of *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World* and *The Faber Companion to 20th Century Popular Music* and has contributed to several collections, including *Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*; *Global Pop, Local Language*; and *The Popular Music Studies Reader*. **TV Smith** was the founder, singer, and songwriter of the Adverts, who formed in late 1976 and became one of the leading bands in the first wave of British punk rock. He continues to tour the world, bringing his epic solo show to ever-increasing audiences.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frederick Roark:

The knowledge that you get from One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock is a more deep you rooting the information that hide within the words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to know but One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in certain way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this guide is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go along, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this specific One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock instantly.

Alex Miller:

The book untitled One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock contain a lot of information on this. The writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read it. The book was compiled by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works. It is easy to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can start their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice learn.

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Thomas Hill:

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