



## Punk Rock Blitzkrieg: Mi vida en los Ramones

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La revista Rolling Stone puso a Ramones en el número 26 de la lista de los mejores artistas de todos los tiempos. En 2011 recibieron un Grammy por su trayectoria profesional y fueron incluidos en el Rock and Roll Hall of Fame en 2002. Marky Ramone fue una parte esencial de la consecución de este éxito: su particular estilo al tocar la batería, denominado blitzkrieg, caracterizaba el sonido del que la banda fue pionera. Antes de unirse a Ramones, Marc Bell ya tenía un nombre en la escena musical neoyorquina, pero al encontrarse con otros tres inadaptados sociales, se convirtió en Marky Ramone, y con él llegó el ritmo que encarnaría al punk. En este libro, el legendario batería narra los secretos del inimaginable ascenso desde los torpes inicios del grupo hasta la entrada en el Salón de la Fama del Rock. Pero no todo fueron buenos tiempos y temazos, y Marky no se corta al hablar sobre sus propias luchas internas, incluyendo su adicción al alcohol, que lo llevó a estar temporalmente fuera de la banda, y retrata también los aspectos más disfuncionales de una banda que cambió a una generación.

## Punk Rock Blitzkrieg: Mi vida en los Ramones Details

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## From Reader Review Punk Rock Blitzkrieg: Mi vida en los Ramones for online ebook

### Lester says

A Great book that seems to get into the personal story of the band without maliciously dishing dirt. It's a very easy read geared to young punks.

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### Dave says

I received this as a complimentary copy from NetGalley over two and a half years ago in exchange for an honest review, and while I regret not getting to it sooner, I do want to extend my thanks.

If the laws of physics would allow, and granted I'm no superfan, I would exercise time travel and disregard the flaw of being born maybe three quarters of a generation too soon to see the birth of some of the rawest live music to grace a stage. No seizure inducing light show. No multi-chromatic splash of neon blinding futuristic crayola shade. No advanced pyrotechnic guy who's got a guy with a box and a butane lighter. Just a goddamn bunch of long hairs from New York staying in virtually the same place the whole show because they're too busy playing the shit out of the songs. Sonically, I don't always want to be entertained like I'm being wooed. Take me back to the mid to late 70s, somewhere in New York or London, hell Germany even and have the Ramones thump the air from my lungs. But enough about my impossible journey. The way Marky tells it, the Ramones stripped it down to pop songs done louder, faster and shorter. And no one would give them air play, no hits. Perfect. Within the industry, it didn't matter, names were still either lining up to work with them or revering their influence. But history can be written by the survivors, and of the five Ramones inducted into the Rock n Roll HoF, Marky is the last remaining. As he tells it, Johnny was a strict businessman, learning guitar essentially as he joined the band; conservative in his politics and often brooding on the road unlikely to party with the other band members. Most of all, it was his disgust for Joey that outsiders rarely caught a glimpse of. Joey was portrayed as an unhygienic gangly introvert, stunning for a front man in a band. For someone so revered in rock circles, it was difficult to read about the periphery of his life from an insider and the juxtaposition that went along with being at the forefront of a movement. He was debilitated by OCD for instance, two-timed by his girlfriend Linda, in front of the entire band, who ended up marrying Johnny. They didn't speak for upwards of 20 years. I got the sense he died hapless and an empty soul at way too young an age. Tragic really. As for Dee Dee, apparently he was a brilliant songwriter, continuing to write for the band even after he left to embark on an ill-advised rap career; he had stones if nothing else to try something like that. His past became too much, and in the end, it caught up with him; a victim of a drug overdose after being sober for some time. The tragic story of a band and its members dying and its dysfunction is not unique to be sure, but to go about it in relative stateside obscurity the way the Ramones did, for all that they did, certainly lends some credence to Marky Ramone's book. It does tell a fair amount about his time before the Ramones as well when he drummed for the Voidoids and others. So use discretion. 3.5 stars.

One short post-script amendment I neglected to add in my haste. I did find the last words of the book a surprisingly succinct and touching tribute to his band mates. Unsure if those words were borrowed from elsewhere but they were uttered in perfect rhythm.

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## Joseph says

*I see countless people around the globe wearing Ramones T-shirts. That's a good thing, but I wonder if it's like Che Guevara worn by people who don't know who Che Guevara is. Or if they can name the guy on the shirt. -- Marky Ramone*

*Punk Rock Blitzkrieg: My Life as a Ramone* by Mark Bell is the autobiography of Ramones drummer Marky Ramone. Marky Ramone tells his life story which is more than his life as a Ramone. Bell is the longest playing member of the band still alive. Joey, Johnny, Tommy, and Dee Dee have all died over the last decade and a half. Various cancers took three members, and Dee Dee died from a heroin overdose.

The New York underground of the 1970s was a rough life and forty years later the list of survivors is small and shrinking. Last year Tommy Ramone and Lou Reed became memories. Of the small crowd that remains, it is good to see the history documented by Bell and others like Patti Smith. It was an important time in American rock music. There has been a steady stream of autobiographies out over the last year or two and all of them have proved to show a different side of the music. Keith Richards dove in with the drugs and a bit of self-congratulations. Neil Young wrote as a folksy, marijuana influenced, storyteller. Patti Smith wrote mostly of herself in her biography of Robert Mapplethorpe, and Bell tells his story which is much more than a Ramones story.

Most people can name a song or two Ramones. AT&T/Cingular used "Blitzkrieg Bop" as part of an ad promotion, leaving out the part of "Shoot'em in the back now." People with a casual knowledge will tell you of glue sniffing and heroin. If you did not catch the Ramones in the 1970s, they seemed a bit odd and out of place. Perhaps what Kiss is to hard rock, the Ramones are to the punk movement -- Innovators that left a mark and still have young fans today.

Bell takes us through is fairly normal early life in a middle class New York and into his early music career in Dust and his time with Wayne County and the Backstreet Boys. Wayne (Jayne) County was a transgender singer well known in the Max's Kansas City clique. The band did not catch on it was a little too extreme even in the era of David Bowie and The New York Dolls. Bell had quite a start before even joining the Ramones. Once in the Ramones, Bell goes into a great deal of telling who the members were and what it was like being in the band. Johnny the boss and proud Republican. Joey and his OCD and physical ailments. Dee Dee the songwriter and "character" in the band who had more than a mild drug problem. Marky enjoyed drinking to excess. Among all the substance abuse, there is only one mention of the drug mostly closely associated with the band -- airplane glue. That reference, however, was used in its proper context though.

*Blitzkrieg Bop* takes the reader through a history of famous people of the era. Bell mentions meeting Jim Morrison, and when he mentions names it's not name dropping. He was genuinely thrilled with meeting these people. Aside from the music, tours, and concerts, Bell goes into detail covering the making of *Rock and Roll High School* and the collaboration with Phil Spector.

Bell writes an amazingly coherent and detailed account of his life and his time in the Ramones. This is probably the most detailed history of the Ramones published and one that honestly details the relationships between the band members. Bell remarks that original members Joey and Johnny played over 2,200 shows together and despite differences managed to hold together for twenty years. This is clearly one of the best rock and roll biographies out there -- honest, personal, and significant.

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### **Angela says**

Okay...Marky isn't my favorite Ramone. He's also not my least favorite either. That title goes to Johnny. And it's true I've had a chuckle or two over Marky's spaghetti sauce and meatball food truck ventures. AND If you can find it in the archives of WFMU there is a hilarious spoof of Marky Ramone promoting his historical erotic fiction. However in spite of all that he is a serious drummer and a pretty good one to boot.

Then I read the book...

I found out some pretty interesting things I never knew about the Ramones, Marky included and I thought I knew it all about the band that catapulted me into the world of punk.

I have new found respect for Marky. For all intents and purposes he's the last man standing and that's an amazing feat in itself after reading his side of the story.

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### **Randa Myers says**

You take a chance, when you read the biography of a personal hero. I gambled & lost. I mean, I loved the flow of the book. It was very easy to read & I was engaged the whole time.

Here are my problems with his view of life on the road:

He acts like the rest of the band taking the hotel soaps was thievery, yet he & his wife taking the hotel robes was okay.

No loyalty to anyone but himself & Marion.

Gary Kurfurst selling counterfeit concert tix is "just show business," but not giving him an equal share when he first joins the band is robbery.

Brags about his drinking, which he admittedly began when he rolled out of bed each day. The other guys are criminals bc they took pills. Yeah he sobered up, but unfortunately he's one of those that thinks it should be so easy for everyone.

Accused Johnny of racism for phonetically speaking Chinese but he does the same in Italian

Calls Johnny a tight wad like it's bad yet eats off strangers plates in restaurants.

All in all, Marky Ramone comes off like Peter Criss. Relentlessly blaming everyone else for everything.

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### **John Lyman says**

This was a very interesting book because it is on one hand, pretty awful, and on another, extremely good. The stories Marky tells are very interesting and he gives a perspective that was missing from Johnny's and Dee Dee's autobiographies. It was great to get more into the nuts and bolts of some of the recording and

touring issues the band had. That said, wow!, it would seem this was written by a sixth grader for an audience of either space aliens or people living entirely cut off from society for their entire lives. Marky went to the same high school as Neil Diamond, cool, glad to hear it. Do I need to be told that Neil is a singer songwriter? When he records a three song EP with an early band we are treated to an explanation of what an EP is. Really? Japanese sake gets an explanation. There is a very detailed synopsis of Rock and Roll High School, with some omissions. Does he think that readers have not seen the film? If they haven't, do they really need so many details? The stories should be enough to inspire the reader to watch the film if he/she hasn't already. The use of cliches and blending Ramones' song titles and lyrics into context was dumb after a while. I'm glad I read the book because I got a new perspective on one of my favorite bands. I wish Marky had found a better co-author, not what could pass for his 14 year old nephew. I cannot believe the balls it took this guy to write a book about his life as a Ramone and not include one single picture of any of his band mates. Absurd.

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## **Rod says**

This book was way to sober!

Is Marky really this wise now? Possibly? He does have his own Punk radio show and has a great professor like understanding of music history. This book is worth reading just for that.

I think I finally got all these Ramones characters memorized: here goes. Joey (singer), Johnny (guitar), Dee Dee (bass), Tommy (drums).

Then we move on to the legendary fill ins: Marky (drums), C.J. (bass), And those 2 other guys who attempted temporarily. Who cares - It's not like they were Lynyrd Skynyrd. :cP

This whole book constantly asks the question: what is Punk? Is it Johnny's defiant stands and stubbornness? Is it Dee Dee's comical rebelliousness? Or maybe Joey's outsider longings? I'm pretty sure it's NOT Marky's hardworking ethics and professionalism through a long term career. (but definitely his self-destructive drinking binges and anarchy like goodtime behavior). Mostly it's putting all these nuts in a Van and shaking them up dysfunctionally.

Punk often fails to ever be 100% punk. It reminds me of the young Anarchist who dared to chat with me for a few hours. He claimed that Anarchy leads to peace and a loving protective purpose. I then told him: "you're NOT an anarchist then - You're just a poorly applied Republican Hippy."

Similar to the Ramones endlessly complaining about Album Sales, Tours, Respect, Media appreciation and placement, art and money. Sounds like Capitalism at its finest. How PUNK! (Johnny would be proud!) The only truly Punk thing is death --- but then again, defying death is somewhat Punk. Most punks stupidly and comically assume they are immortal.

There is rarely a reason to take the Ramones seriously. Marky tries to do this on occasion, even says how some of the lyrics are deep and meaningful. That's like inviting the Pope to party like a Rockstar... it's okay, it's for charity.

It was interesting to hear Marky's side of the story. Especially his somewhat sober account of driving nastily drunk and ending up in a store surrounded by furniture and screaming people. It's amazing that normal citizens go to jail for such insanities - but NOT rockstars! I'm glad Marky got himself straightened out, but look at the wreckage. This is why all people should have children: so they learn to care about something other than themselves. Mark has come a LONG way. I applaud him, and especially his effort to help the

other band members deal with their abuses and self-righteous insistencies. He should get some kind of award for that.

It was cool that Mark mentioned my favorite Twilight Zone episode: (pg. 16)

"On the Twilight Zone, there was always more than just a good sci-fi story. There was usually a real point to it. In one episode, a bookworm bank teller locks himself in the bank vault so he can read without being disturbed. While he's in there, an atomic bomb is dropped. Then the teller steps out of the vault, he's actually glad that everything and everyone is gone so he has nothing but time and books. Then, as he begins to read, his glasses fall off and break."

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The Punk in me loves this story from Mark's youth: (pg. 11)

"On one particularly boring day, a friend had a cool idea to take a bunch of pillows and blankets, tie them together, and make a human dummy... WE carried the dummy up to the roof of our building and waited for a passerby. Timing was EVERYTHING... we would toss the dummy over the parapet wall and scream at the top of our lungs like someone jumped. It worked... people flipped out."

Bhahahahaha! Makes me wish I lived downtown with big buildings.

Like almost all music biographies: religion was mentioned. (not very much though). But enough to be interesting. Mark is pretty much an eternal agnostic. But here's a moment: (pg. 340)

Marky takes Joey to AA.

The other people at the meeting were fairly young and hip, and given the location that made sense. They told stories of how they were helped by friends, family, God, self-discipline, and self-respect...Joey was stuck in his seat sneering. On the walk back to his apartment, he avoided stepping on the cracks in the sidewalk and complained.

"Look, Merk, I'm not into this God crap."

"No one's telling you you have to be."

"Oh yeah, right," Joey said. "That's all I heard in there was God did this and God did that. what a bunch of S\*\*T."

"Joey, that was a few people - not everybody. It's not about God in there. It's not about religion. It's about using whatever you can focus on to help you get sober. There's no written rules. The twelve steps are guidelines..."

"C'mon, Marc, it's like a cult."

Fun eh? How would Joey know what a cult is like? He went through reality in the most insane, obnoxious, self-righteous, self-absorbed delusional fashion. Which makes him somewhat normal - and pathetic (or a great candidate to be a CULT leader). At least God stands for something morally and eternally. I'm not sure what Joey ever stood for???

Yes Mark, there are written rules. God insists. Why get healthy in AA if you're just going to die soon anyway? There's a much bigger reason for life AND DEATH.

It is fascinating that Joey only heard about God did this and God did that. Why the hatred? Did God upset Joey's life in some way? Did He restrict his abuses or oppress his Rockstar freedoms? Did God ever step in and ruin his fun? Joey and the Ramones did that all by themselves. Only an idiot would find time to hate a god for it.

Now, horrifically perhaps, Joey/Dee Dee/Johnny are standing before God to give account of themselves and their musically abused gifts. I'm pretty sure God will say, "Boys, i'm not into this RAMONES CRAP. ---

Why would I dare accept you into Jesus Kingdom?"

Hopefully some of them have the spiritual answer. That is, Jesus died for my sins so I will have HIS righteousness covering me when I stand before a Holy God. And as my favorite verses in the Bible says...

Luke 23:39-43

39One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him,d saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” 40But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” 43And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

I hope Joey and Marky and Dee Dee and Johnny learned to fear God before it was too late. I'm doubtful. Sadly, they got to fully try things THEIR way - look at the mess it left them in.

Having said this, I've been a Ramones fan for over 30 years. Fun music is always needed on occasion.

Now I have to go back and read Johnny Ramones book again. Since he was the least drugged up, drunk, and mental. I somewhat trust his accounts, and barely at that. He had some weird issues as well.

But this book included some great details and moments that the other personal accounts left out - like the US FESTIVAL and some details about making classic albums. Now i'll see if I can find Marky's Raw footage movie.

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### **Nestor Rychtyckyj says**

I've pretty much read every book about the Ramones and by anybody with the Ramones, so I've been eagerly awaiting Marky's take on this. We've heard from Dee Dee, Johnny and Joey (through his brother Mickey Leigh) and now it's Marky's turn. In a way this is probably the final word on this band whose popularity today is even greater than when they were around. As Marky himself said at a book release event that I attended – “the only insiders left are Marky and Monte Melnick” the road manager. Marky describes his pain at losing Joey, Dee Dee and Johnny in the book and Tommy passed away last summer. The Ramones only live on through their music, but what a ride they took us on!

Marky was an established rock & roll drummer when Tommy recommended that he replace him in the Ramones. Marc Bell became Marky Ramone and the first song that he played on was “I Wanna Be Sedated” which turned out to be the band's biggest hit. This was followed with the filming of “Rock & Roll High School” and life with Joey, Johnny and Dee Dee while they were crisscrossing the USA in a Ford Econoline van. The book is well written (Rich Herschlag is the co-writer) and they do an excellent job of setting the scene and describing the world that the Ramones were trying to function in. I lived in that world and I can attest that what passed for music was pretty bad. Hearing a single Ramones song on the radio was a cause for celebration.

We all know by now that the Ramones were not a “happy family” and Marky makes no attempt to sugarcoat any of this. Dee Dee had drug problems, Joey and Johnny stopped talking to each other and Marky's drinking led him to be fired by the band. There was little commercial success for the Ramones – even the legendary Phil Spector could not produce a hit album for them. But the Ramones persevered and Marky persevered. He candidly describes his battles with alcoholism and his realization that he must take control of his life. Marky became sober and the Ramones came calling again when Richie (Marky's replacement)

suddenly quit the band. Marky was back and would remain the Ramones drummer until their final show. There was no happy ending for the band, but they all realized that the world had caught up with the Ramones and now they finally had the success and credit that had eluded them for years.

This is a wonderful addition to mine and anybody else's bookshelf" Just open the cover, put on any Ramones LP on the turntable and "Hey Ho, Let's Go" – you're now in Rock & Roll Heaven!

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### **Tom Schulte says**

Marky Ramone takes us from his participation in Estus and Dust to the end of the Ramones. Along the, we are in the van for some of the 1700 shows Marky did with the group to learn how deep the division was between OCD Joey, also documented in I Slept With Joey Ramone, and conservative Johnny Ramone and the extremes of Dee Dee's wide-ranging substance abuse. Marky confronts and defeats his own alcoholism at great cost through AA and becoming a bike messenger for a while. Dee Dee gets painted as the creative principal and music director of the group through his extensive song writing an teaching guitar parts to John. This is a much better picture than the drug casualty and failed rapper that marks the end of his career.

This edition has an interview with the author but adds nothing as the interviewer is from the publisher and seems to really know nothing about Marky or The Ramones.

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### **Dave McGurgan says**

#### **Very good memoir by Marky**

It started off a little slow for me, especially with the early years, but once it got into Marky's music career it really picked up. It's a very honest and classy look inside the Ramones' music and career without getting into trash talking or some of the negativity that can taint the aura of your favorite bands.

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### **John Millard says**

Being 55 (about 6 years younger than Marc) I grew up with Rock (Stones, Zeppelin, Who, etc) and Punk (Ramones, Minutemen, Meat Puppets, etc.) so naturally I liked this book for the insights it gave me into my most listened to band. Having a favorite band is not logical but emotional. I cannot explain why I keep listening to The Ramones but I do. They occupy more space on my ipod than any other band and I love many bands from Pat Metheny to The Replacements to Patti Smith and on and on. After reading some of the criticisms from other readers I just want to say that I do not really care if Marc embellished a bit here and there. He joined The Ramones when he was only 22 years old after having already made a name for himself in the business. Marc jumped right into a dysfunctional family and worked hard to make himself useful, indispensable and likable like any of us would in that situation. Marc enlightens the reader to more in depth knowledge about each of his band mates, more in depth than Monty did in his On The Road with The Ramones book (which I also loved by the way, Melnicks always welcome at my bakery). Yes, the Ramones are my favorite band. No, I would not want to hang out with any of them. I am grateful to Marc for all the

effort he put into this book. It reads clear and true and has a nice pace to it. So, order yourself a copy and Hey Ho, Let's Go!

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### **Kristine says**

*Punk Rock Blitzkrieg by Marky Ramone is a free NetGalley ebook that I began reading in early April, because, hey, ho, let's go.*

Marky's voice is very grandiose and it comes off a little too much like a pop culture history professor talking to a group of kids who have no relevant concept of public life between the 1940s and the present day. It's a somewhat interesting story with some scant dramatic antics, but I expected a grittier punk tone to his writing, instead of a detailed, yet fond nostalgia.

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### **GK Stritch says**

I met Marc at CBGB the last night he played with the Voidoids in May 1978; I was once his greatest admirer, but our relationship ended when the Ramones played at Central Park in August 1979. We were young and that was long ago. Through him I met and traveled with the Ramones and their wives and girlfriends twice, once on the Phil Spector trip to Los Angeles for about three weeks, and another time on a week-long tour South (Washington, DC, Raleigh, and several other places). The first time Marc invited my sister and me to see the Ramones was at a club on the outskirts of New Brunswick, not far from Rutgers University in New Jersey, but far enough from his New York Brooklyn girlfriends. (I was a New Jersey outsider.)

What I remember most about Marc: he was popular, ambitious, and funny, hilariously funny, he made everyone laugh, and that was a good thing with a group of people as unhappy as that band and their wives and girlfriends, and the Ramone wives and girlfriends played an enormous part in those lives, so do not discount them. He also was a respected drummer and people admired and liked him, a likable guy.

From the excerpt of the book posted on *Rolling Stone*, I see that I'm not mentioned, and understand why. I didn't expect nor need to be. However, from that it determined to me the accuracy of the author. Now, William S. Burroughs (*Literary Outlaw*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012) said, "When someone asks me to what extent my work is autobiographical, I say 'Every word is autobiographical and every word is fiction.' " This is true, and I could say the same of my own writing, and here we could ask what extent of this bio is fiction, clouded by time and inebriation? In a way, what difference does it make if the story is entertaining and a fast, fun read? How accurate does it need to be? Most important, from the publisher's view, what difference does a small matter like truth make if the book sells? Marc is remembering things through his filter, just as every writer does. (FYI, always interesting Burroughs also said, "I think the so-called punk movement is a media creation." *New York Babylon: From Beat to Punk*. London: Omnibus, 1998.)

I feel a bit of a voyeur reading this book, but did so quickly in a few hours concentrating on the 1970s, the most interesting time for the music. A more authentic story would have been told, if the author spoke in his own voice, rather than through a co-author. Much seems glossed over, sanitized, and politically corrected, without a sense of the true grit of the time or place. Written to appeal to the base and sell books--funny

Alligator Alley story--but I learned a few things, such as Marc's true age. Thanks for reminding me about the Uncle Floyd show; I almost forgot being there. It seems in all those years, the individuals didn't change much. The band stayed together like a miserable marriage that dragged on for years and years, but they were determined to be commercially successful . . . and in that they succeeded.

I would prefer not to rate the book, but the system won't allow this review without it, so five stars for the follies of youth, and thanks, Marc, for an inside look at the workings of the early Ramones complete with Phil Spector and Grandpa Munster, a tour of Capitol Records, and a top performance by Robert Gordon in one of those LA clubs. Minus one star here and there for not quite telling it straight.

Marc and Hersch, (as Matt calls you), congratulations on your Amazon bestseller. Marc, you look the same as you did almost forty years ago.

To the fans, what a loyal bunch, you'll enjoy the read.

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### **Suzeesg says**

WOW. Of course a must-read for any Ramones/punk rock/rock'n'roll fan. The style is SO Ramone - no real flowery language or witty turn-of-phrases, perhaps some cliche humor, but very honest, straightforward, no slickness, no frills, not a single page I wanted to skim through.

For me, the last few chapters dealing with the band's break-up and deaths of the founding members were hard to read on an emotional level. Gonna have to buy this book

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### **Jeff says**

I enjoyed this book. Outside of his Sirius show, I knew very little of Marky. On the radio, he comes off as a dope with a bit of an ego who loves great music. In his book, he comes off as very thoughtful and humble, the glue holding the band together until his own personal problems. I'm sure reality is somewhere in the middle.

After reading this, I'm dying to read more stuff on the Ramones. Get the other side of the story from the others in and around the band.

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