

THE
RADIO
ONE

Story of Pop

THE FIRST
ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF POP
IN 26 WEEKLY PARTS

Parade

Part 1

25p
EVERY THURSDAY

ELVIS: The greaser with dirty songs and no future.
BOWIE: The disturbing new King of Rock ?
BERRY: From Duck Walk to Ding-a-ling.
PLUS: Lyrics, Mood of the 50's, Rock 'N' Roll, pull out pop wall chart.



The history of pop music is not a long one; less than 20 years from the first eruption of rock & roll to the present day. But already it is a story packed with incident, with phenomena, with personalities and with stars.

The story of pop is the story of young people, the story of the people who read this. For the first time in its history, pop is being studied as a rich source of social and sociological material covering the last two decades. And this publication, in conjunction with the Radio One series, is a unique chronicle of the birth and rise of a music that has spread across the world, levelling all boundaries.

Readers outside the UK, however, will find that the publication is complete in itself, providing a comprehensive history in its own right.

For the next 26 weeks in the UK, BBC Radio One will tell that tale with the spoken word and music; while this publication will complement it with the written word and pictures. Together we will show the listener/reader exactly how, why, when and where pop was created and progressed. And show who the people were who formed and performed it. By the end of the two series even pop experts will have added to their knowledge of the subject, and pop fans will understand and appreciate more fully the music they love.

Between them the two series will present the most complete and authoritative record of pop ever compiled. Each week this publication will reflect and expand on the subject and stars featured in the radio programme, and in addition will deal with those topics that cannot be fully explored in the scope of an hour-long radio documentary.

The series start with the birth of rock & roll and the years 1956-1957.

On the radio you will hear the music and voices of the people who started a revolution from Bill Haley to Elvis Presley. In this issue you will find the same people: Presley in part one of his amazing story; Chuck Berry who was in at the beginning and rocks on still; you will read how rock was born and why a generation responded to it. Also you will find a profile of today's greatest, most outrageous star - David Bowie. Two of the songs you'll hear are printed in full.

In coming weeks, both series will build up the story, each medium offering the information it can present best, to give you a unique audio-visual narration of the most exciting story of the century. The result will be an unprecedented chronicle; 26 hours of radio, together with the fullest published account yet of the musical years from the early '50s to the present time. In short: Radio One's Story of Pop.

How to obtain future copies: Part one of the Radio One Story of Pop is on sale for almost two weeks. The best way to make sure you do not miss any of the future parts is to ask your newsagent to keep a copy for you each week or deliver it to you. When you place a regular order in this way you are not putting yourself under any long term obligation. With two weeks' notice you can cancel your order at any stage. But the great advantage of placing a regular order is that you run no risk of missing one of your weekly parts.

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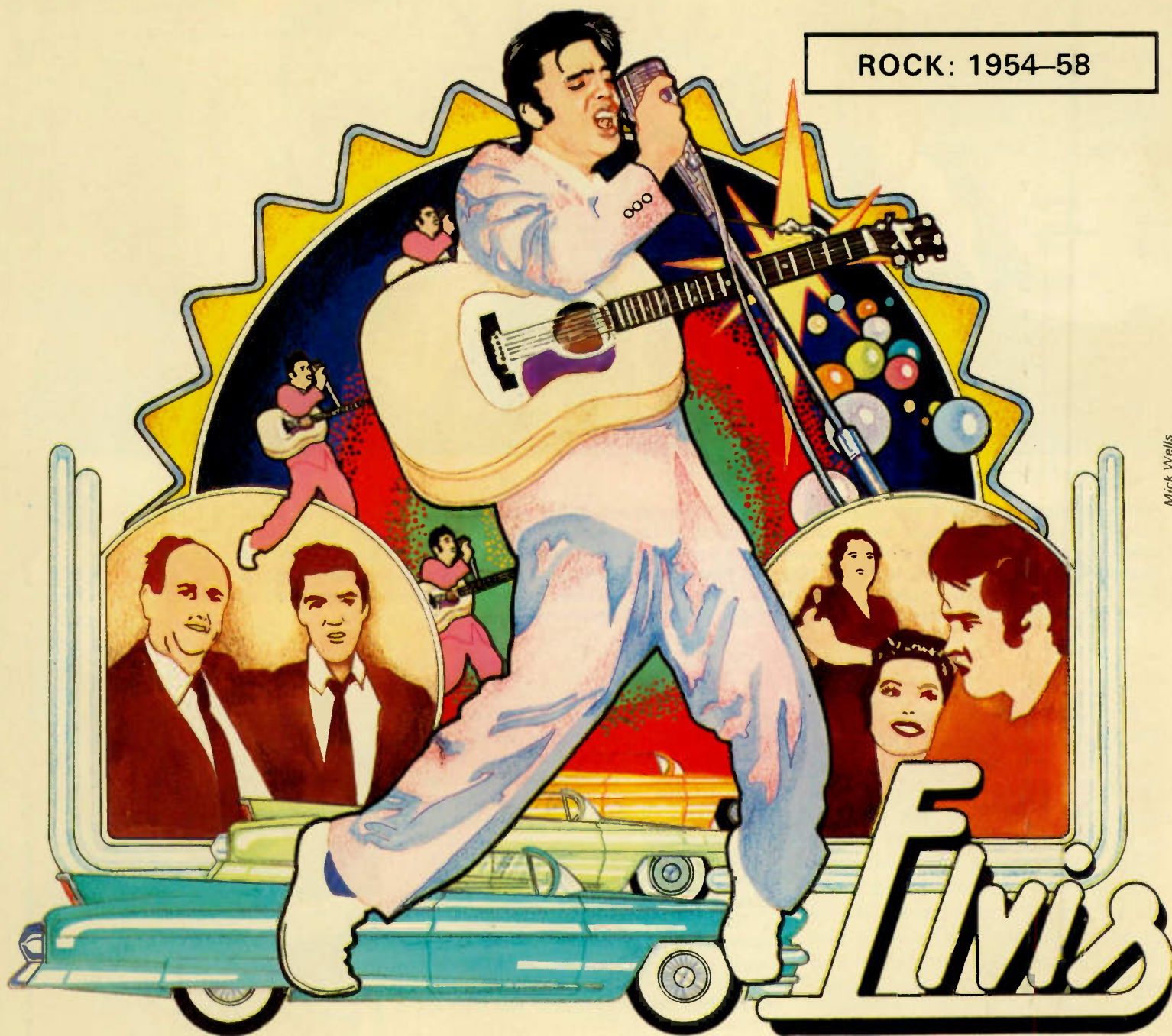
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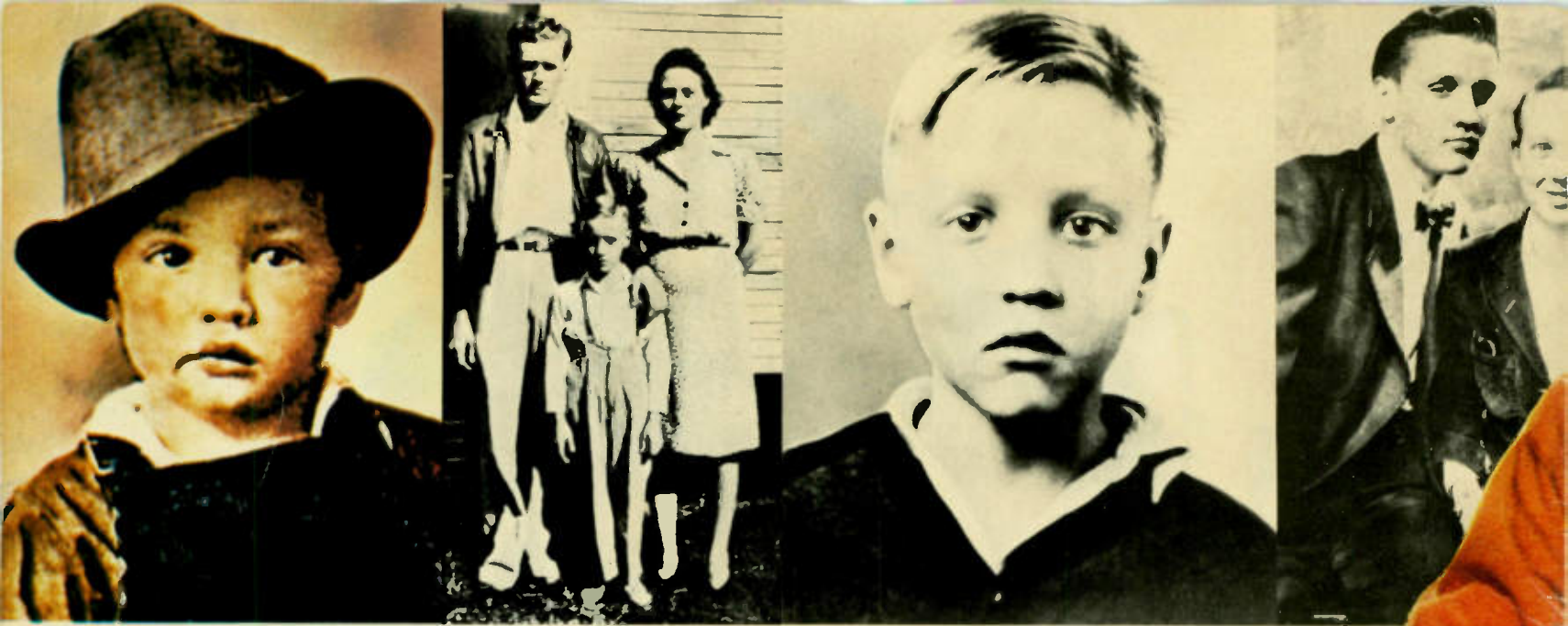
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**‘Elvis Presley is a 21-year-old sex maniac
with greasy hair,
dirty songs and no future...’**

Yes, that’s what they’re saying – all the preachers and teachers and youth club leaders, the bankers and brokers and Respectable Folkers: they’re all saying Elvis is mean and evil; a walking disgrace to the human race. They’re screaming about all these Shocking Things – the way he sings, his flashy rings, his sneering lips, his writhing hips. My God! guess what – He’s a Communist Plot! – I’m tellin’ ya, Mac – he’s gotta *pink* Cadillac! To the older generation in the ‘50s that’s the way Elvis came over. Right from the start he was larger than life – he wasn’t so much just another singer, as a threat to the youth of America.



RCA Keesee Phototrends Associated Press

From childhood to rock & roll star. Left to right: Elvis Presley about two years old; Elvis, aged eight, with his parents; Elvis, aged six, with blond hair. His natural colour is reddish-brown which he dyed black early on in his career; Elvis the adolescent with his cousin, Gene Smith; teenage Presley, complete with acne; Elvis at 18, leaning against his father's car. Far right: 50,000,000 Fans Can't Be Wrong; Elvis the well-groomed star. Centre left: Elvis aged 13 posing in a cowboy suit. Centre: Elvis in the pose that launched a thousand female fantasies. Centre right: golden-suited Elvis being escorted into the International Amphitheatre, Chicago, in 1957.

So, here you are stuck in a small American town and it's 1956, and you don't care what they're saying about Elvis Presley, because he's something else. *He's* like a hurricane blowing the roof off everything, and all those people who are moaning and groaning about it are so dull they practically smother you to death. School, and home is just sit-up-for-teas full of silence and scolding and holding you down. Dull growing up in a dull, dull town.

And then – *AWOP-BOP-A-LOO-BOP-A-LOP-BAM-BOOM!!!* – along comes Elvis Presley, with the wildest music in the world, more energy than the atomic bomb and more sexuality than your most secret dreams.

He's got greasy hair, flicked up and back so it all falls across his face when he's singing and moving, long sideburns that your parents really hate; and he never stands still, and he never looks humble, and he never tries to be witty like all those crooners in their bow-ties and dinner-jackets. Presley, in fact, looks like he's going to make all those crooners with their cute lyrics and clear, precise voices obsolete. He doesn't treat songs that way. He growls and mumbles and sneers and sulks with a will that's hard to mistake:

*'If you're lookin' for trouble
You came to the right place.
If you're lookin' for trouble
Just look right in my face . . .'*

(*'Trouble'*)

And his voice! He's got all that sexy sug-

gestiveness you only ever heard before on those old black guys' records that play late at night on weird little radio stations your momma doesn't know about. Under-the-pillow listening; furtive, primitive, strange. And now here's Elvis, sounding that same way but gutsier and young. He even did it on the Ed Sullivan TV Show – which is like pulling down your pants in front of President Eisenhower or something.

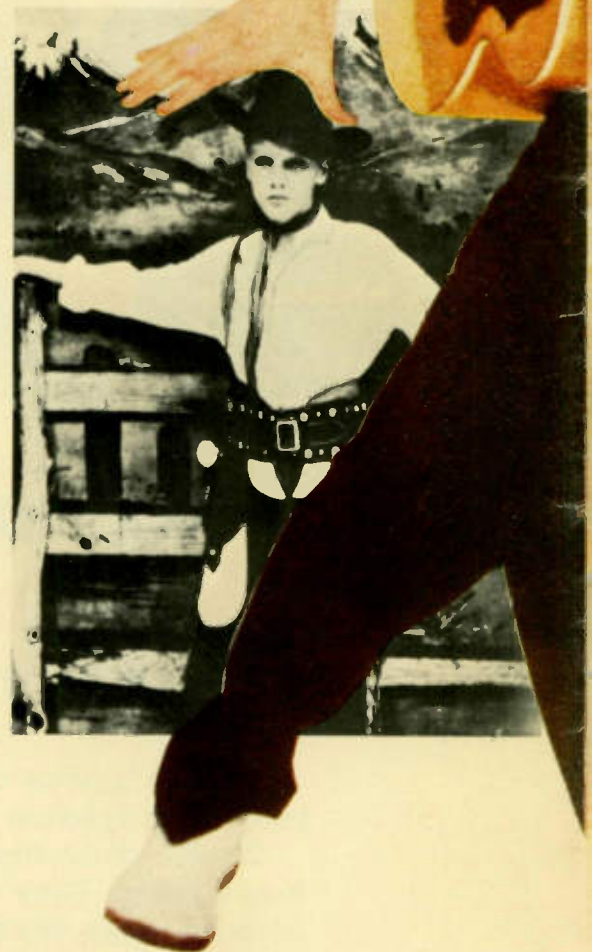
From now on they could burn rock & roll records till they choked on the smoke; they could pulp it out in the pulpits till they frothed at the mouth; all to no avail. What's more, they couldn't anymore just blame it on the blacks:

'NOTICE! STOP: Help Save The Youth Of America', those posters from the lunatic fringe had screamed, 'DON'T BUY NEGRO RECORDS. The screaming, idiotic words, and savage music of these records are undermining the morals of our white youth in America!'

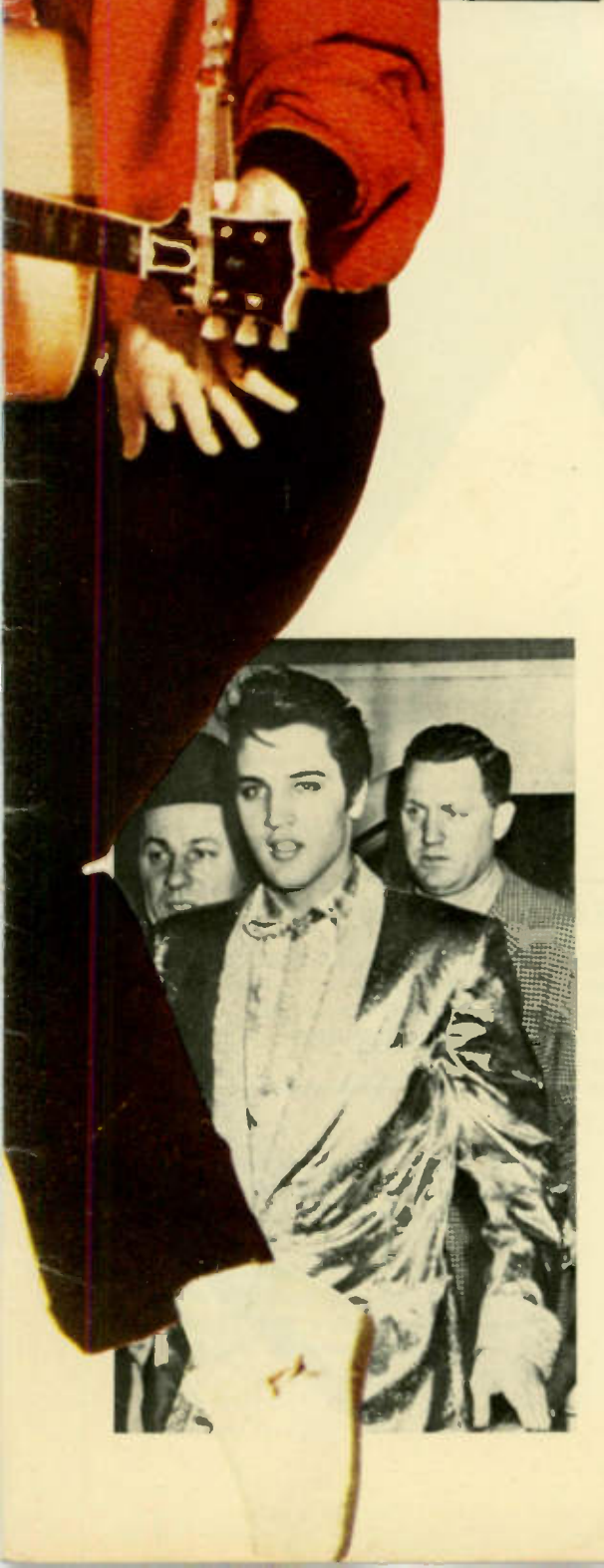
But it was too late. It wasn't under-the-pillow listening to small black radio stations any more – it was everywhere, out in the open, and Elvis Presley was showing that, yes, that 'white youth of America' could be a living part of that music. So Dullsville could think what it wanted. *Rock & Roll is here to stay!*

The Magic Formula

Elvis had the formula for rock & roll within him: he had been brought up with the Blues and country music all around him; in its living environment. He was born in the Deep South – in Tupelo, Mississippi, and his family moved to Memphis, Tennessee when he was at the moody, restless and rebellious age of 13.



Elvis Aaron Presley was his real name, and all he had to change for his public career was the colour of his hair. He really has a kind of auburn, reddish-brown hair-colour, but he dyed it black early on in his



fortune-hunt, and it has now been black for more than 15 years.

He was born on January 8th, 1935, son of Vernon and Gladys Presley, who were sharecroppers plagued by poverty, half-helped by welfare programmes, and much-comforted by The First Assembly Church of God. They had a still-born son, Elvis' twin, who would have been called Jesse Garon Presley. Presley's mother died in 1958 with her son at the height of his rock & roll career; more famous and successful than any other American of his generation; the most potent sex symbol since Rudolph Valentino; and selling records faster than anyone in history.

The Way Up

How did Elvis get to that position? It started with him playing guitar all day long, hanging round the local clubs where the black gospel groups came to perform, listening to bluesmen like Junior Parker and Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup on battered old radio-sets. Elvis had always wanted something more than to drive a truck for 35 dollars a week, and kept his hair immaculately combed for a fantasy-world of admirers. Then enter two other men who helped and launched Presley. The first was Sam Phillips, and the second was 'Colonel' Tom Parker.

Sam Phillips was also very much a Southerner, born in Alabama; and like Elvis himself, he was a white guy with a good ear for black music. An ex-DJ, he formed his own record company, Sun Records, which started issuing 78s from Memphis in 1950.

Elvis has rarely been interviewed about his music, but when he talked to *Hit Parade* magazine in January 1957, he explained how Sam Phillips helped him:

"You wanna make some blues? he suggested over the phone, knowing I'd always been a sucker for that kind of jive. He mentioned Big Boy Crudup's name and maybe others too. I don't remember . . . I hung up and ran fifteen blocks to Mr. Phillips' office . . . We talked about the Crudup records I knew, . . . settled for 'That's Alright Mama', one of my top favourites . . ."

So Elvis cut five singles for the Sun label, each having a bluesy song on one side and a countryish song on the other.

But by this time, Elvis had been performing all around the Memphis area, and had come to the attention of a man with much less a love of music – but with far bigger dreams and ambitions – than Sam Phillips. That man was Colonel Tom Parker; one-time fairground barker and small-time promoter with an unerring eye for a smart deal, outrageous publicity, and Elvis' almost limitless future. The Colonel became Presley's manager and RCA Victor bought Elvis' Sun recordings. The price paid, which also included a Cadillac, was in 1955 considered extraordinarily high, being \$35,000; but as things turned out, RCA Victor was getting gold for glass beads and Sam Phillips had signed away millions and millions of dollars.

Nevertheless, everyone seemed to be quite happy with Elvis Presley's new deal. He got top TV exposure, he broke concert attendance records all over the United States, and he built up a fanatical following in Britain and many other countries which he never bothered to tour. (Elvis always said it was because he was terrified of flying – Colonel Parker, more bluntly, said there just wasn't enough money in it.) Either way, it didn't harm the phenomenal Presley success; if anything it helped, by making Elvis the most untouchable, golden superstar in world history.

Poor Boy Elvis

In any event, turning down huge financial offers became a Colonel Parker pastime, and merely ensured that future offers for the services of 'The King' were ever bigger, ever more sensational. Reportedly, one of the attempts to get Presley to Britain, by a Birmingham promoter, involved offering him £100,000 for one performance in Wembley Stadium. It had been planned that he should appear inside a magnifying bubble so that, in perfect harmony with his image, he would appear to be both completely untouchable and much larger than life. The Colonel, needless to say, rejected the offer, with the characteristic remark: "Well,

that's fine money for me and my staff, but what about my poor boy Elvis?"

In the first two years after they acquired him, Elvis gave RCA Victor the no. 1 slot on the singles charts in America (which accounts for 70% of the world record market) for 55 weeks. That's more than one week out of every two when Elvis beat all other comers, and almost single-handedly vanquished the old give-me-the-moonlight regime.

In fact Elvis had *twelve* no. 1 records in the US, all Gold Discs, before he was inducted into the US Army after making his fourth film, *King Creole*, in 1958. These twelve included 'Heartbreak Hotel', 'Hound Dog', 'Love Me Tender', 'All Shook Up', 'Jailhouse Rock', and 'Hard Headed Woman'. While Colonel Parker was later to prove acutely aware of the dangers of over-exposure and cut down the number of concerts, records, and especially interviews; at this early point in Elvis' career, RCA Victor was fairly saturating the market. After 'Hound Dog', they released seven singles at the same time! Every one became a major hit.

Presleymania

It was just like Beatlemania in fact. Presley generated exactly the same hysteria. No-one else could possibly have hits with seven different records all issued the same week. No-one else seemed to need half so many ambulance-men, or doctors, or nurses, or cops, or security-guards, as Elvis made necessary when he did a concert.

His films too were smashes – including the very first one, a Western called *Love Me Tender*, which – as the credits at the beginning admitted – was simply 'introducing Elvis Presley'; and the title song from that film earned Elvis another first in recording history, by notching up over 1,000,000 advance orders before it was even recorded!

And of course, his albums were smashes, some selling over the million mark in their own right. By the time RCA Victor were trying to fill the gap caused by Presley being in the Army and unable to cut new material, they could legitimately issue an album called '50,000,000 Elvis Fans Can't Be Wrong: Elvis' Golden Records Volume 2'. No other singer had ever achieved more than one such volume before.

And British chart history gives an equally favourable record of Presley's early years: six of his LPs and EPs sold well enough to crash the singles charts; and in 1958, with 'Jailhouse Rock' (another film title-song) he broke yet another boundary when that single jumped into the charts from nowhere straight to no. 1 in its first week of release.

Two things made for this shattering success. The first was the acumen of The Colonel. He never put a foot wrong; he guided Presley's affairs with total dedication and uncanny flair that verged on the Midas touch. Example: seeing, in the earliest days, that Presley was going to be huge, he also saw that there would be a sizeable anti-Elvis movement, not just among the oldies, but also among those young people who



NEXT WEEK

Part Two: The Tiger turns tame . . . Elvis Presley in the '60s and '70s, the return from the Army . . . Elvis the 'all-round-entertainer' and 'plastic' movie star . . . 'ELVIS IS DEAD: LONG LIVE KING RINGO' . . . from rock to plastic and back again?

just didn't happen to dig his voice, or were perhaps jealous of the effect he had on their favourite girl, or whatever. And he also saw that he and Presley could cash in on that. Suddenly, there was a flood of 'I Love Elvis' buttons, and T-shirts, and balloons, and more besides: along with it, there was a smaller but still considerable flood of 'I Hate Elvis' products . . . and they were all making equally good money – for Elvis Presley Inc.

Parker also knew, and expertly, the way to dangle 'his boy' in front of the financial giants of Hollywood and Madison Avenue in the most challenging, tempting terms possible. He was once approached by the company that was making a film of the hit Broadway musical *Bye Bye Birdie*, who wanted Elvis to appear in the film and perform two songs. "Sure," said the Colonel, "the price is 100,000 dollars." The film man gulped, turned white, swal-

lowed, recovered himself a bit, and said that that kind of figure was unthinkable. "Tell you what I'll do to oblige," said Parker good-naturedly, "I'll toss a coin and you can call. If you lose, you pay 200,000 for two songs. If you win, you get four songs for nothing." The film man ran away in a cold sweat and Elvis never did appear in that film – but the repercussions were tremendous. Everyone began doubling their offers, and Parker certainly didn't have to worry about letting 'Bye Bye Birdie' fly away.

But the second thing that made Elvis so huge, such a unique giant among stars, was simply his own talent. He was the classic poor-boy-who-makes-good – but he was never the boy-next-door. He was never that touchable or reachable. Nik Cohn once said that the difference between British and American rock & roll was that Tommy Steele made it to the London Palladium, and Elvis Presley became God. And it's true, Elvis Presley *did* become God. He came to represent something much bigger than himself – the whole vast potential of adolescence finding its own rebellious identity as something quite separate from the role of imitation-adult.

Yet only someone with as much innate talent as Presley could have come to represent all that. He could do it, and did it, because he lived and breathed the tight connexion between music and sex which White America had long been at great pains to deny. Elvis was indeed, in this sense, 'the nigger in the woodpile': he was the greatest sexual threat to White Virginity in the USA. His style of presentation showed it (his hip-movements were blanked-out on US TV), his way of dressing and posing for photographs showed it, and, most of all, his music showed it. The *New York Times* in fact once went so far as to complain that he 'injected movements of the tongue and indulged in wordless singing that were singularly distasteful.'

Apple Pie and Pork Chops

He had a fantastic mixture of bluntness and suggestiveness – like Mick Jagger was to come along and use for another generation – and he combined both those qualities with a third: that magic magnetism which nowadays is known as charisma. Presley had masses of charisma – masses of whatever magic it takes to keep your ears and eyes riveted on a performer of extra-special power.

Part of that power stemmed from Presley's natural-looking arrogance, which in fact concealed the polite southern boy underneath. Elvis really wasn't very rebellious at all – he said yes sir, no ma'am, to reporters; he liked home-cooking, especially apple pie and pork chops; and he was as patriotic as many of the senior citizens who hated him. Part of it stemmed from his sense of humour – for indeed he had a lightly mocking self-awareness and self-amusement that few people have ever credited him with. And part of it came from having a stronger voice than any of his rivals. It was a voice that could be light-and-delicate (as on early Sun recordings like 'I Don't Care If

The Sun Don't Shine'), or light-and-breathless (as on 'Don't Be Cruel'), or unusually soulful ('Is It So Strange?'), or just beautifully raucous and tough, as on all his pre-Army rockers. In short, he had a range and a control, an ability to punch and to hint delicately with equal sureness and ease, that gave him legitimate claim to the tag 'white blues singer', and made him the best country-rocker and tough urban rocker there was.

King Kong

But in the beginning, it was his lack of inhibition and his sexuality that had the devastating impact. There was none of the coyness and cleanness of 'going dating' in an adult-approved way as far as Elvis was concerned. Other teenage-aimed singers might make records with titles like 'Put Your Head On My Shoulder', 'At The Hop' and 'Teenage Crush'. Not Elvis. *His* titles were earthy and blunt and mean.

'Trouble'; 'One Night'; 'Baby Let's Play House'; 'Paralysed'; 'Got A Lot O' Livin' To Do': those were the typical Elvis titles. And they all fitted in with the ingredients that made Presley a unique, thrusting, ominous force. His music always managed to suggest an underlying violence – 'He don't stop playin' till his quit-ar breaks', is a line from the self-describing song 'King Creole'. And as for 'Jailhouse Rock', well not only is violence in the air, but Elvis' voice seems to be raging from the depths of some confinement – raging like King Kong in chains.

In his love-songs Elvis never pretended that he'd 'saved himself' for the girl he was addressing the song to; the lyrics always suggested that he had plenty of experience behind him, and could sweep aside all hesitations and shyness:

*'If you wanna be loved, baby you gotta love me too:
Cos I aint for no one-sided love affair:
Well a fair exchange aint no robbery
An' the whole world knows that it's true...'*

('One-Sided Love Affair')

That really lays it on the line; there's not going to be any time-wasting games, and anyone who doesn't agree is just being hypocritical. That's the message, and it typifies the message that Presley was burning into the consciousness of the kids. It added up, over those late '50s years, to nothing less than a sharp concerted attack on all the two-faced conventions and straitjackets which were imposed by adults on the youth of White America.

Presley's delivery gave a stylishness and authority to all these open, blunt songs, which was utterly lacking in other rock artists. He did it not just with sneers and swagger (which plenty of others mimicked), but by a pent-up tremble in his bass notes, sudden full-throated rasps, and equally sudden mellow country moans.

So Presley was saying love minus zero – no limit! – not only years before 'the permissive society' replaced the upright pre-Kennedy America, but also a full six years before the Beatles were wanting to hold your hand. Millions of eager 17-year-olds,

weary of the pudge-next-door who *did* only want to hold their hands, could get off a good deal more honestly when Elvis belted out 'Stuck On You' and 'Doncha Think It's Time'.

It certainly was time, too, that the music related to the real feelings and dreams and emotions and aspirations of teenagers. And it was Elvis Presley's achievement that he made it happen – and made it happen so big that there was no stopping it. Not even Elvis, when he got older and flabbier, could put the clock back. When he came out of the Army in 1960, and grew up, and changed forever, that was *his* concern, not everybody's. The music and the greater freedom and assertiveness it had achieved, kept on rolling. Rocking and rolling. And what happened to Elvis is another story.



Keesee Phototrends

BLUE SUEDE SHOES

*Well, it's one for the money,
Two for the show,
Three to get ready,
Now go, cat, go!
But don't you step on my Blue Suede Shoes.
You can do anything – but lay off of my Blue Suede Shoes.*

*Well, you can knock me down,
Step in my face,
Slander my name all over the place;
Do anything that you want to do,
But uh – uh, honey, lay off of my shoes –
Don't you step on my Blue Suede Shoes.
You can do anything – but lay off of my Blue Suede Shoes.*

*Well, you can burn my house,
Steal my car,
Drink my cider from my old fruit jar;
Do anything that you want to do,
But uh – uh, honey, lay off of my shoes –
Don't you step on my Blue Suede Shoes.
You can do anything – but lay off of my Blue Suede Shoes.*

Talking 'bout my generation

The stars and their songs created the history of pop, but who can say which was the more important – the singers or the songs? Some songs are written by the stars themselves, others by craftsmen whose only fame consists of a small credit on the label. Yet the songs are what remain in the mind, nostalgic, evocative, haunting.

Over the next 26 weeks on Radio One, you will hear those songs that have gone to make pop history. Here are the words that made pop; the trite, the banal, the 'doo-wops' and 'yeah, yeahs'; as well as the sharp observations of a new generation of poets.

This week, Chuck Berry – 'America's first rock poet' – celebrates rock & roll, while Carl Perkins glorifies the narcissism of being young and sharp in a dull, grey world.

An all-time classic of rock, 'Blue Suede Shoes' is one of those records that goes to set a style. It might indeed, as many people say, be part of the obsession with objects – from clothes to cars – that was becoming ever more central to the growing youth culture; but the whole tone of the lyrics, their bite and beat, captures what rock music is all about.

It was 1956 when Carl Perkins first had a hit with 'Blue Suede Shoes', and 1957 when Elvis gave it his special treatment, but in the context of rock music it's hard to imagine how the message of the song is ever going to date. And the message is simple: away with all the stuff about Moon and June; romantic crooning that made your life depend on everything but yourself – from now on you could feel free of the world as you found it – free to treat things as they come – free to be obsessed by a pair of shoes if you want.

And the energy! The jerky rhythm and strained vocals harness the almost cocky, but very cool, lyrics into a really tight song; one that stays with you long after you've heard it, and makes it a lot more fun and a little bit easier to just carry on rockin'. If you know what rock & roll is all about then there's probably not much more to say about one of the greatest rock & roll songs.





ROCK & ROLL MUSIC

*I've got no kick against modern jazz
Unless they try to play it too darn fast;
And change the beauty of the melody
Until they sound just like a symphony,
That's why I go for that rock'n'roll music
Any old way you choose it;
It's got a back beat, you can't lose it,
Any old time you use it.
It's gotta be rock'n'roll music
If you wanna dance with me,
If you wanna dance with me.*

*I took my loved one over 'cross the tracks,
So she can hear my man a-wail a sax;
I must admit they have a rockin' band,
Man, they were goin' like a hurrican'*

*That's why I go for that rock'n'roll music
Any old way you choose it etc. . . .*

*'Way down South they gave a jubilee,
The jokey folks they had a jamboree;
They're drinkin' home-brew from a water cup,
The folks dancin' got all shook up.
And started playin' that rock'n'roll music
Any old way you choose it etc. . . .*

*Don't care to hear 'em play a tango,
I'm in no mood to hear a mambo;
It's way too early for a congo,
So keep a-rockin' that piano.
So I can hear some of that rock'n'roll music,
Any old way you choose it.
It's got a back beat, you can't lose it,
Any old time you use it.
It's gotta be rock'n'roll music
If you wanna dance with me,
If you wanna dance with me.*

Mike Cook

'Rock'n'Roll Music' says it all. It's typical that Chuck Berry in a few words gets right to the heart of the music, shouts right to the listener and celebrates the joy of being young and having music that's all your own. Words and music marry perfectly to convey a totally uninhibited spontaneity; the song as a whole, in the words of a critic, 'presents the most important lesson that pop has to offer: that energy is enough.'

Rock & roll is uniquely teenage. Berry has no time for modern jazz which loses the basic thunder of the beat and becomes, like classical music, unintelligible and unexciting. Likewise he rejects the 'square' dances, the latin-american rhythms that were all the rage of the parents. To the kids happiness was simple – a rockin' band, booze and a partner. The music was life even if you did have to cross the tracks – to the 'wrong' side no doubt, and in the face of parental disapproval – to find it. It doesn't matter that the words don't rhyme exactly – *band* and *hurrican'* or *congo* and *piano* indeed! – the meaning is there; it's loose, undisciplined and real.

Perhaps Chuck Berry is the first notable rock & roll writer; the first to capture the essence of the music, the rebellion, the importance of rock in the lives of the young. Probably his greatest achievement is in saying out loud what the teens felt. The old music is dead – 'roll over Beethoven and tell Tchaikovsky the news' – but rock is alive and vibrant. It's just gotta be rock & roll music; that's all that needs to be said.

NEXT WEEK: Heartbreak Hotel – and Trouble.

'Blue Suede Shoes': Words and music by Carl Perkins. Reproduced by kind permission of Carlin Music Corporation. USA Copyright '1956 by Hi Lo Music. Used by permission. 'Rock 'n' Roll Music': Words and music by Chuck Berry. Reproduced by kind permission of Jewel Music.

CHUCK BERRY

Still rockin' 20 years later

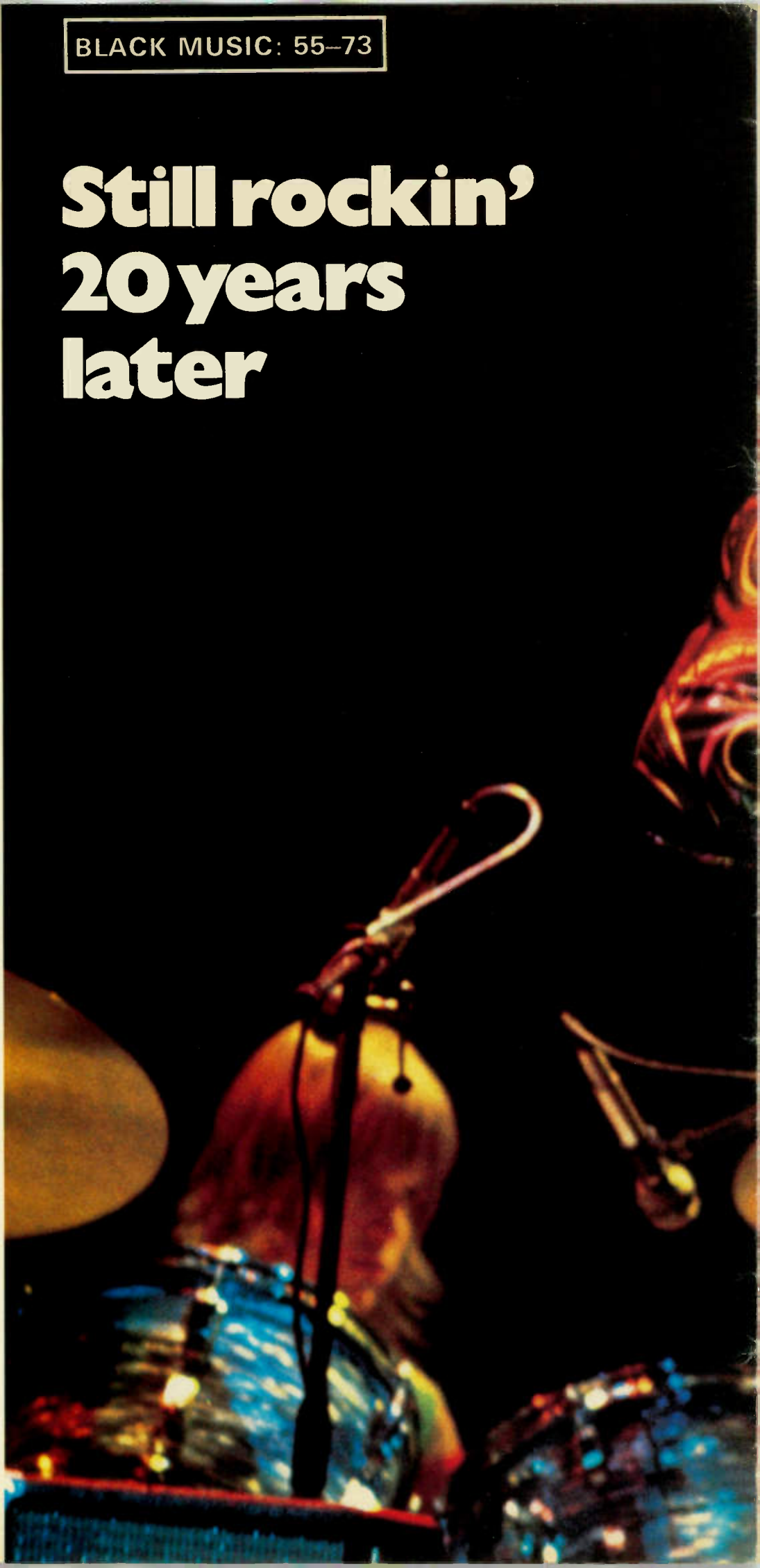
Chuck Berry stands alongside Elvis Presley, the Beatles and Bob Dylan as one of the key figures in the history of rock music. His career provides a thread linking '50s rock & Roll with contemporary white rock; blues with pop; black music with white audiences. As well as being an enormously effective and influential stylistic innovator, his lyrics in many ways articulate the underlying spirit of rock & roll more vividly and lastingly than any other artist.

I. Chicago calling/1930-1955

Berry has never been very forthcoming about his date of birth except to say that it was October 18th. The year is believed to have been between 1929 and 1932; the place was St. Louis, Missouri.

His background is in many ways typical of the black performers who shaped the musical direction of rock. He began singing in a church choir at the age of six - which, as he's said himself, 'seems to be the ritual.' While still at high school, he began learning to play guitar, and by the early '50s he had formed a group. He recalls how his earliest 'professional' appearance came in a high school glee club revue, playing 'Confessing The Blues' - already it seems that his style was showing, and his outrageous lyrics and raw, crude guitar-work received a rousing welcome.

His next step was similarly typical. The late '40s and '50s saw a large number of major southern blues artists become part of the mass migration of blacks to the northern industrial cities, particularly Chicago. There, Muddy Waters, Elmore James, Howlin' Wolf, Little Walter and others transformed the rural styles of the South into the heavily amplified, raucous Chicago bar blues sound, with its loud, emphatic beat. Chuck Berry played with the Muddy Waters band at one of its club gigs in the city early in 1955. The blues star liked his style and suggested that he get in touch with Leonard Chess, the head of Chess Records, for whom all the major Chicago blues artists recorded. Leonard Chess told him to come back with some of his material, and when he returned with six tracks - including 'Maybellene' and 'Wee Wee Hours' - taped on his \$79 mono. recorder, he was signed up immediately.





Two weeks later he had his first recording session with Chess, and his first record, 'Maybellene', was released in May. It reached no. 5 in the singles charts and sold a million!

II. Close your books, get out of your seat/1955–1959

In spite of the blues background from which it arose, 'Maybellene' was not a blues record. It provides a striking example, in fact, of the way in which black and white musical traditions intermingled to produce rock & roll. It was conceived as a country and western song; hence the incongruous hillbilly name of the heroine, a subject on which Berry once remarked: "... the only Maybellene I ever knew was the name of a cow." The way Berry performed it was in a coarser version of the 'rockabilly' style, successfully pioneered in Memphis by strongly country-influenced white artists on the Sun label.

The Dollar Dictates

The records he issued immediately after the initial hit – 'Thirty Days' and 'No Money Down' – came closer to the spirit of the bluesy music he liked most, but both failed to make the pop charts. In retrospect, it's clear that Chuck Berry's classic recordings would probably never have occurred if there had not been an overriding desire to break through into the lucrative white market; a speculation backed by Berry's oft-quoted belief that 'the dollar dictates what music is written.' The fact that Alan Freed, the DJ most responsible for bringing black music to white radio audiences, was present at the 'Maybellene' session (he is even credited as part-composer) confirms the impression that one of Chuck Berry's chief aims was to make money. He was once asked if he would have written his hit songs even if it had not paid him to do so. He replied simply: "No, I wouldn't have had time. Commercialism is a great instigator."

Between 1956 and 1958, Berry found a way of regularly harnessing his creativity to the demands of the market. 'Roll Over Beethoven' was a medium-sized pop hit in 1956, and set the pattern. He evolved a readily identifiable style characterised by chugging rhythms based on switching rapidly back and forth between two or three chords; wailing and clanging lead guitar sounds, with biting high-speed solos serving as explosive intros; staccato rhythms in the lyrics reinforcing the overall impression of speed; and slick, clearly enunciated vocals.

The sly, sinuous clarity of his singing was important to his success. It meant that the words were almost always audible and became a far more central part of his songs than they were with most rock & roll. Also, of course, it helped him to reach the white audiences who had always complained that they couldn't understand what black artists were saying. Above all he was cool – rather than committing himself entirely to the wild abandon which rock & roll seemed to imply, Chuck Berry often

adopted the stance of a person commenting on the action from a slightly removed position, leaving space for wit and humour.

Prolific

He entered fully into his stride with 'School Day', which reached the Top Ten early in 1957; to be followed later that year by 'Rock And Roll Music'. 1958 was a great year for him: his biggest hit, 'Sweet Little Sixteen', reached no. 2 and was followed into the charts by 'Johnny B. Goode' and then 'Carol'. But Berry was to have no more major hits in the '50s, though other recordings between then and early 1961 were well remembered, and exerted almost as much influence on later rock: songs like 'Beautiful Delilah', 'Sweet Little Rock And Roller', 'Jo Jo Gunne', 'Almost Grown', 'Little Queenie', 'Back In The USA', 'Too Pooped To Pop', 'Let It Rock', 'Bye Bye Johnny', 'Jaguar And The Thunderbird', 'Talkin' Bout You' and 'Come On'. He was, in fact, an extremely prolific composer, and some of the songs for which he is best known were not even issued as 'A' sides at the time. Songs like 'Brown-Eyed Handsome Man', 'Reelin' And Rockin'', and 'Memphis Tennessee'.

Life-Style

In writing his lyrics, Chuck Berry consciously aimed at appealing to the new white teenage rock & roll audience. In doing so, he defined a life-style which revolved around the music, and created a series of anthems that celebrated speed, sex and dancing – life as fun, and fun as physical excitement. Songs about driving frequently recurred: the car was personal territory; simultaneously providing opportunities for sex, listening to rock & roll and moving around how and where you wanted. His vision was essentially anti-Puritan, anti-Romantic, and rooted in city life. And it was rebellious, because Berry's songs precisely located the enemy – work, school, the law, parents and old age. 'School Day' summed up the attitudes he affirmed:

*'Soon as three o'clock rolls around
You finally lay your burden down
Close your books, get out of your seat
Down the hall and into the street
Up to the corner and round the bend
Right to the juke joint you go in
Drop the coin right into the slot
You gotta hear something that's really hot
With the one you love you're making romance
All day long you've been wanting to dance
Feeling the music from head to toe
Round and round and round you go...
... Hail, hail rock'n'roll!
Deliver me from the days of old!'*

As in most of his songs the vitality stems partly from the rich details of his observations. His openly patriotic hymn to America, 'Back In The USA', is bursting with this kind of energy:

*'Did I miss the skyscrapers, did I miss the
long freeway?'*

*From the coasts of California to the shores
of the Delaware Bay?*

*You can betcha your life I did till I got back
in the USA...*

*... Looking hard for a drive-in, searching for
Arconica Bay*

*Where hamburgers sizzle on an open grill
night and day*

*And the juke box jumping with records back
in the USA...*

... I'm so glad I'm living in the USA

*Anything you want, got it right here in the
USA.'*

Berry wrote and sang about teenagers; about sex and cars, the boredom of school, the way that parents didn't understand them. His music and words perfectly expressed what the kids felt but possibly could not say. His talent was for imagining himself in the place of a teenager (even though he was almost certainly 10 years older than his audience), and an ability to understand and express their problems. In 'Sweet Little Sixteen' he summed up their dilemma personally:

*'Sweet Little Sixteen,
She's got the grown up blues,
Tight dresses and lipstick,
She's sporting high heel shoes,
Oh but tomorrow morning,
She'll have to change her trend,
And be sweet sixteen
And back in class again.'*

When Pete Townshend gave one of his astute commentaries on the meaning of rock, Berry's name came automatically to mind: "Mother has just fallen down the stairs. Dad's lost all his money at the dog track, the baby's got TB. In comes the kid, man, with his transistor radio, grooving to Chuck Berry. He doesn't give a shit about Mum falling down the stairs. He's with rock & roll."

III. Have Mercy, judge/1960–1964

By 1960, however, rock & roll was on its knees. Elvis was being cleaned-up in the Army, Little Richard had gone back to church, Holly and Cochran were dead, Jerry Lee was returning to country ballads after falling into disrepute over his 'child bride'. And Chuck Berry suffered a similar fate at the hands of vindictive Puritanism when, in late 1959, he was charged with transporting a minor over a state line for immoral purposes.

The most common version of the abduction story is that the girl, an Indian from Texas, went with Berry to work as a cloakroom assistant and salesgirl at his night-club in St. Louis. When he fired her, she went to the police and revealed that she was only 14. A series of trials followed, with Berry making fewer records and getting much less airplay. According to local court records, the wrangle culminated in his conviction and a two-year jail sentence, begun in February 1962. Berry denies all this: he says he was acquitted, and adds that he certainly didn't know the girl was so young.

Born 18th October, somewhere between 1928 and 1932.

Professional debut in the early '50s at high school 'Glee Club' review.

1955: Moved to Chicago, gigged with Muddy Waters and signed with Chess Records. 'Maybellene' reaches no. 5 in USA.

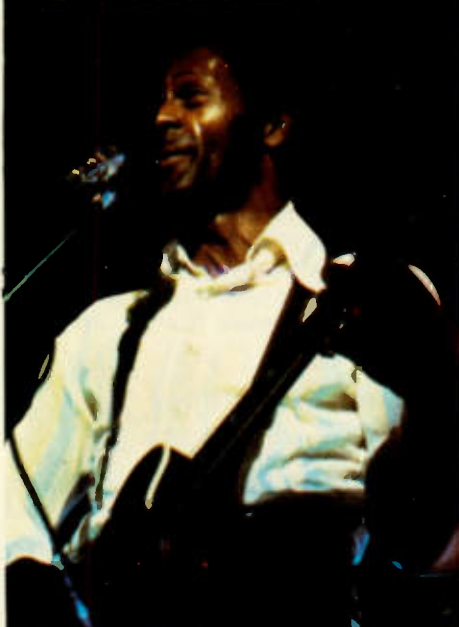
1956: 'Roll Over Beethoven' makes no. 29. 'Thirty Days', 'No Money Down', 'Brown-Eyed Handsome Man', and 'You Can't Catch Me' all miss the US charts.

1957: 'School Day' (no. 5); 'Rock And Roll Music' (no. 8); 'Oh Baby Doll' (no. 57).

1958: 'Sweet Little Sixteen' (no. 2 USA, no. 16 UK); 'Johnny B. Goode' (Top Ten USA); 'Beautiful Delilah' (no. 81); 'Carol' (no. 18); 'Sweet Little Rock And Roller' (no. 47); 'Jo Jo Gunne' (no. 83); 'Merry Christmas Baby' (no. 71); 'Run Rudolph Run' (no. 73).

1959: 'Antony Boy' (no. 60); 'Almost Grown' (no. 60); 'Little Queenie' (no. 80); 'Back In The USA' (no. 37); 'Broken Arrow' (miss).

BACK TRACK



1960: 'Too Pooped To Pop' (no. 42); 'Let It Rock' (no. 64); misses were 'Bye Bye Johnny'; 'Mad Lad'; 'Jaguar And The Thunderbird' and 'Talkin' 'Bout You'.

1961: 'Come On' (miss).

1963: 'Let It Rock'/'Memphis Tennessee' (no. 6 UK).

1964: 'No Particular Place To Go' (no. 10 USA, no. 3 UK); 'Nadine' (no. 23); 'You Never Can Tell' (no. 14); 'Little Marie' (no. 54); 'Promised Land' (no. 1).

1965: 'Dear Dad' (no. 95); misses were 'It Wasn't Me' and 'Lonely Schooldays'.

1966: 'Club Nitty Gritty' (miss).

1967: 'Back To Memphis' (miss).

1968: 'Feelin' It' and 'Louie To Frisco' (misses).

1970: 'Tulane' (miss).

1972: 'My Ding-A-Ling' (no. 1 USA and UK).

1973: 'Reelin' And Rockin'' (no. 27 USA, no. 18 UK).

(Information courtesy of Let It Rock). Chart positions refer to USA unless otherwise stated.

Whatever the facts of the case, the upshot was that while schmalz dominated the pop scene in the early '60s, Chuck Berry was notable by his absence.

IV. They're really rockin' in Bolton/1964-1966

When Berry did re-appear he landed firmly on his feet. The British rock renaissance was in full spate, and he was its chief hero.

On one level, his influence here lay in the simple fact that almost all the major British beat groups and R&B bands emerging in 1963 included his material in the hard core of their repertoire. The Beatles used 'Too Much Monkey Business' in their stage act, recorded 'Roll Over Beethoven' on their second LP, and did 'Rock And Roll Music' for their third.

The Rolling Stones owed even more to him. They started their recording career with 'Come On', included 'Carol' and Berry's arrangement of 'Route 66' on their debut album, and later recorded 'Bye Bye Johnny' and 'Round And Round'. Other Berry numbers, such as 'Johnny B. Goode' and 'Little Queenie' were central to their stage act.

The other new hitmakers joined in. The Kinks featured 'Beautiful Delilah', Gerry and the Pacemakers did 'Maybellene', and in Sheffield Dave Grundy changed his surname to Berry, and had a minor hit with 'Memphis Tennessee' – until the re-issue of the Berry original.

But any attempt to explain Berry's

impact must go beyond his musical and lyrical substance. His great strength lay in the way that he appealed to different audiences. The beat groups like the Beatles and the Stones saw him as one of the great rockers, and delighted crowds by playing his songs. At the same time, trad and folk fans saw him as a genuine blues man in the great black tradition. Because his appeal was so wide, he helped to bring together the strands of popular music. He limited the 'pop' and the purist factions, and helped to mould the future course that pop was to take.

Berry was also respected because, unlike most of the '50s stars, he wrote his own material. He was a poet and musician as well as a showman; and one of the most important features of the '60s breakthrough was a universal belief in the need to extend the artist's control over all aspects of the product, and prevent performers becoming mere vehicles for hit songs manufactured by the industry.

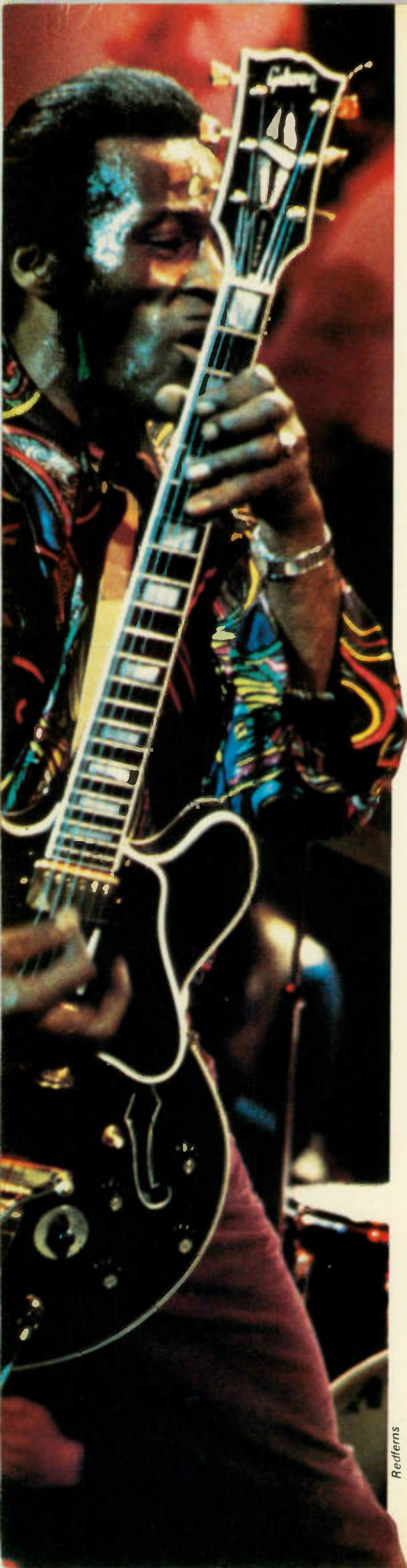
Berry himself capitalised on the resurgence of interest in his work with a string of new singles releases, beginning early in 1964 with 'Nadine'. Most of these were re-worked from earlier successes. The lyric of 'Nadine' was a colourful extension of the car chase theme of 'Maybellene', though the song was slower and funkier. 'No Particular Place To Go' – a Top Ten hit on both sides of the Atlantic – was 'School Day' with new, comic words. 'Little Marie' continued where 'Memphis' left off. But the songs were mellower, and placed a fresh emphasis on his warmth and wry humour.

'You Never Can Tell' was the outstanding example. Two rock & roll fans get married and settle down. Berry delights in the story, not letting on whether he sees the situation as the triumph of true love, the end of freedom, or the only possible way to retain at least part of the way of life based on excitement which he had celebrated in the '50s:

*'They had a hi-fi phono, boy did they let it blast
Seven hundred little records, all rockin'
rhythm and jazz
But when the sun went down, the rapid tempo of the music fell
"C'est la vie", say the old folks,
"It goes to show you never can tell."'*

Like the best of his other songs of the era, 'You Never Can Tell' has an even denser visual quality than his '50s material and is full of little specifics like: 'The coolerator was crammed with TV dinners and ginger ale' and 'They bought a souped-up Jidney, it was a 'cherry-red '53'. In 1964, Chuck Berry was not only at the height of his influence, but also at an imaginative peak as a lyricist.

Berry was also an enormous influence on the new post-Beatle groups and their music, and American bands of the '60s often paid homage to him. But he also had a more direct effect on major figures in the States. The Beach Boys founded their career on Berry's material, minimally adapting the words of 'Sweet Little Sixteen' to create 'Surfin' USA', copying his guitar licks, and



transposing his whole car/girl mythology into an affluent Californian context.

More lastingly significant, perhaps, was Bob Dylan's debt to Chuck Berry. He had included Berry numbers in his rock & roll repertoire during his schooldays, and when he first tried his hand at recording rock the result was 'Subterranean Homesick Blues'. This song appears both lyrically and musically as an extension of 'Too Much Monkey Business', and provides an interesting comparison: Berry's lament about 'working at the filling station' becomes Dylan's 'Twenty years of schooling and they put you on the day shift'; and even the metrical pattern is almost identical, with Chuck singing 'Blond-haired, good-looking, trying to get me hooked', and the '60s song echoing it with 'Get sick, get well, hang around the ink well'. More generally, the sheer linguistic fireworks of Dylan's mid-'60s lyrics find a clear rock precedent in Chuck Berry's restless rhythms, imagery and phrasing.

V. Got myself a little job/ 1966–1969

In 1966, Chuck Berry left Chess to sign a contract worth \$150,000 with Mercury. During the next three years his recording career reached its lowest ebb. Perhaps it was the mood of the times: rock was becoming increasingly preoccupied with 'inner space' and studio effects in the wake of the 1967 drugs, love and 'Sgt. Pepper' phenomenon; and it's hard to imagine Berry writing songs which could be as meaningful in that context as his classic hits were in their time.

It was during the mid-'60s however, that his reputation as a live artist reached its peak; and his shows became legendary occasions. When he toured Britain in 1964 – heading a bill that included Carl Perkins, the Animals and the Nashville Teens – the audiences were split between those who had loved him in the '50s, including a sizeable proportion of hardcore Teds; and those, like the Stones' and Beatles' fans, who had just discovered him and tended to be the educated, middle-class youth. No other performer could attract such a cross-section. Sometimes the mixture was explosive, as in the 1969 concert at the Albert Hall, when he shared the bill with the Who. Berry was forced to go on first, and the rockers showed their displeasure by, among other things, invading the stage and bring his act to an untimely end.

The act itself has been developed and refined over the years, but still features the famous 'duck walk', which involved half-gliding, half-shuffling across the stage in a crouched position while playing guitar. Berry once explained the origin of this trademark which earned him the nickname 'Crazy Legs'. He was appearing in an Alan Freed show in New York in 1956: "We had

one suit, we didn't know we were supposed to *change*. So I actually did that duck walk to hide the wrinkles in my suit. I got an ovation . . . so I did it again, and again . . ." Like his cherry-red Gibson guitar, it has become part of the myth.

VI. Back home/1969–1973

Berry returned to Chess in 1969. In the following months he put out two new albums, 'Back Home' and 'San Francisco Dues', which showed that the reunion had been a happy one. The LPs were more firmly in a blues vein than anything he'd done before. Although it was good music, it seemed then that Chuck Berry was a man of the past as far as pop success and the development of rock were concerned; that his career as a major musical figure was over.

Then, early in 1972, he visited Britain. At the time, a stronger consciousness of the traditions of the music appeared to be developing among both the performers and the audience. Perhaps it was simply nostalgia. But when he played in Coventry the audience reception was unprecedented and the music press was ecstatic. The legend, it seemed, was bigger than ever. Berry spent much of the show just playing the accompaniment – the fans knew all the numbers, and he listened to them sing.

This performance gave him the live half of his next album, 'The London Chuck Berry Sessions'. More important, it gave him 'My Ding-a-Ling'. He had recorded a slightly different version of the song for Mercury under the title 'My Tambourine', and the number had appeared in a variety of forms by black artists since about 1950. The new Berry version, however, was issued as a single, cleverly promoted, and hit the jackpot. It gave him his biggest-ever hit, and his first no. 1 in both Britain and America. He had at last reached two markets from which he'd previously been extremely remote: the 'novelty' market and the early-teen and pre-teen buyers, both attracted to the obvious (but very mild) dirtiness of the song. Berry followed up its success with his live, sexier version of 'Reelin' And Rockin''; and it too sold well. The new interest prompted yet another spate of Chuck Berry revivals, and the Electric Light Orchestra's version of 'Roll Over Beethoven' soared into the British Top Ten, 17 years after the song was written.

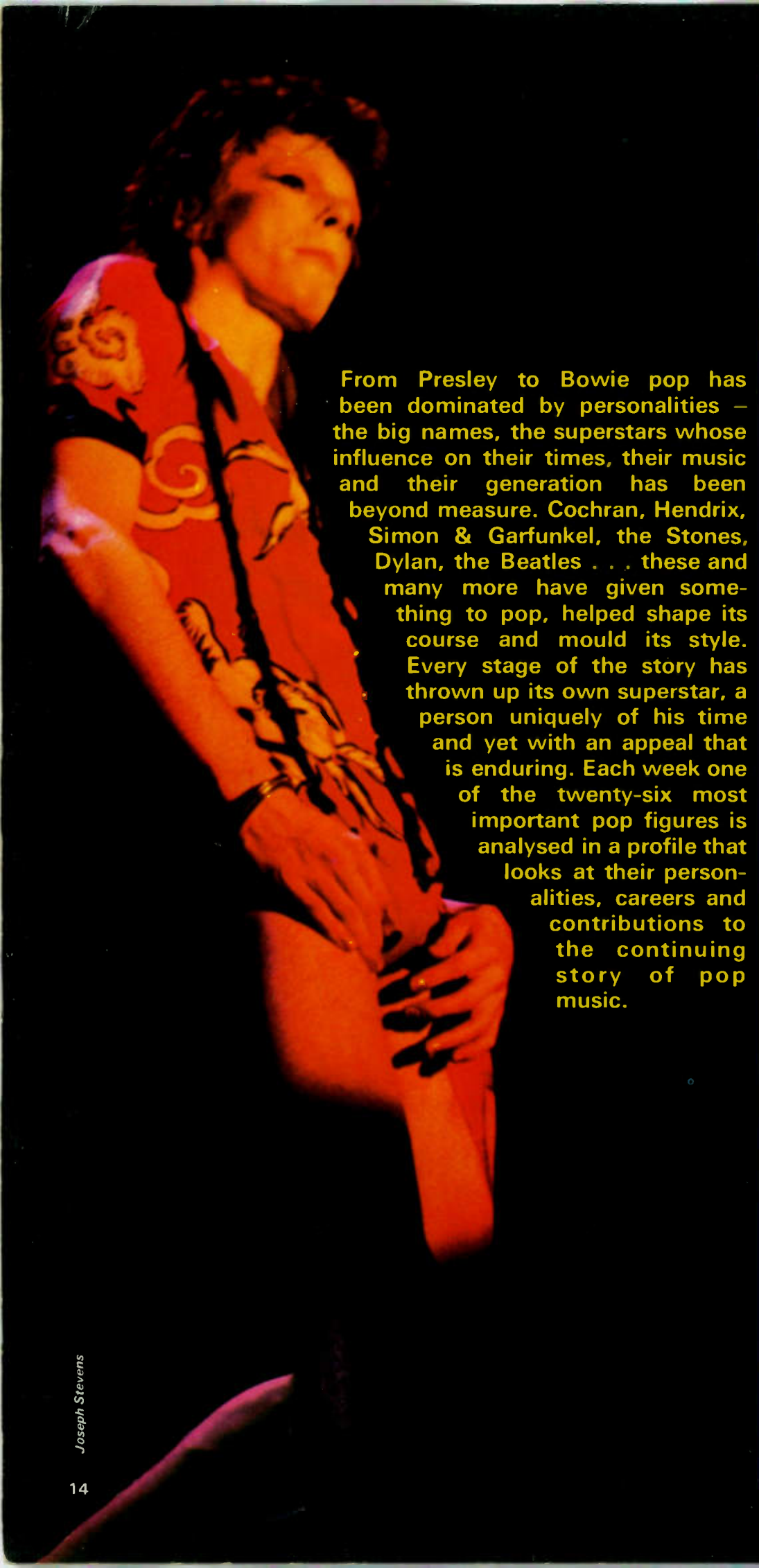
These developments, along with the systematic programme of re-issues embarked on by Chess, and his bill-topping appearance at the Rock and Roll Festival in London, made 1972 the most successful year of his career. Such a comeback makes it difficult to argue with him when he sings, 'I may go down sometimes but I always come back rocking'. But in terms of influence and musical achievement, Chuck Berry will always remain, first and foremost, the paragon of '50s rock.

NEXT IN BLACK MUSIC: The Roots of the Blues; an account by Tony Russell of the blending of the African and Anglo-American musical heritages which produced the Blues. The field hollers, the barrelhouse music, the work songs, the minstrel songs, and the rest of the pre-blues spectrum.



THE SUPERSTARS

**THE
DISTURBING
BOWIE**



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By the time that David Bowie took his final bow from the whole touring scene at London's Hammer-smith Odeon in July 1973, he had probably become the best-loved and most-hated performer in the rock world. His admirers called him a prophet, a demi-god, a superman; while, in common with many another artist who seemed to be breaking new ground, he had been the subject of frenzied attacks from all directions. His detractors branded him a fraud, a hoaxer, a pretentious charlatan and worse, but Bowie himself shrugged it all off with the élan of a true star. "There have been some fairly petty things said," he murmured.

So what was all the fuss about? Why would one of America's most important daily papers call David Bowie 'the most intellectually brilliant man currently using the medium of the long-playing record', while a British music paper would sneer about 'another nail in the coffin in which the whole Bowie mystique will soon be laid to rest'? It wasn't Bowie's theatrical stage act was it? Maybe it had something to do with his much-publicised bisexuality. Or, if not that, could it be that the intense crystal-gazing of some of his lyrics proved rather too much for them to stomach?

The cause of all this comment was born in Erixton in 1947, the son of the public relations man of a children's home. He dropped out of art school to work in an advertising agency, while playing in various groups like the Conrads, David Jones and the Lower Third and others. When the Monkees began to terrorise the planet in 1967, David Hayward-Jones became David Bowie and the Buzz. Photographs taken around then show him looking curiously similar to the Bowie of the '70s.

Lauren Bacall

Bowie had made an album for Deram and a couple of singles for Pye, but it wasn't until late 1969 that he emerged with his first big hit. This was 'Space Oddity', which appeared on the Mercury label in the wake of 2001 and the first moonshot. This tragicomic tale of the spaceman who was unable to get back connected instantly in the public mind, and was followed by an album called 'David Bowie' (later to be re-issued as 'Space Oddity'), and a single called 'The Prettiest Star', the latter featuring Marc Bolan playing lead guitar.

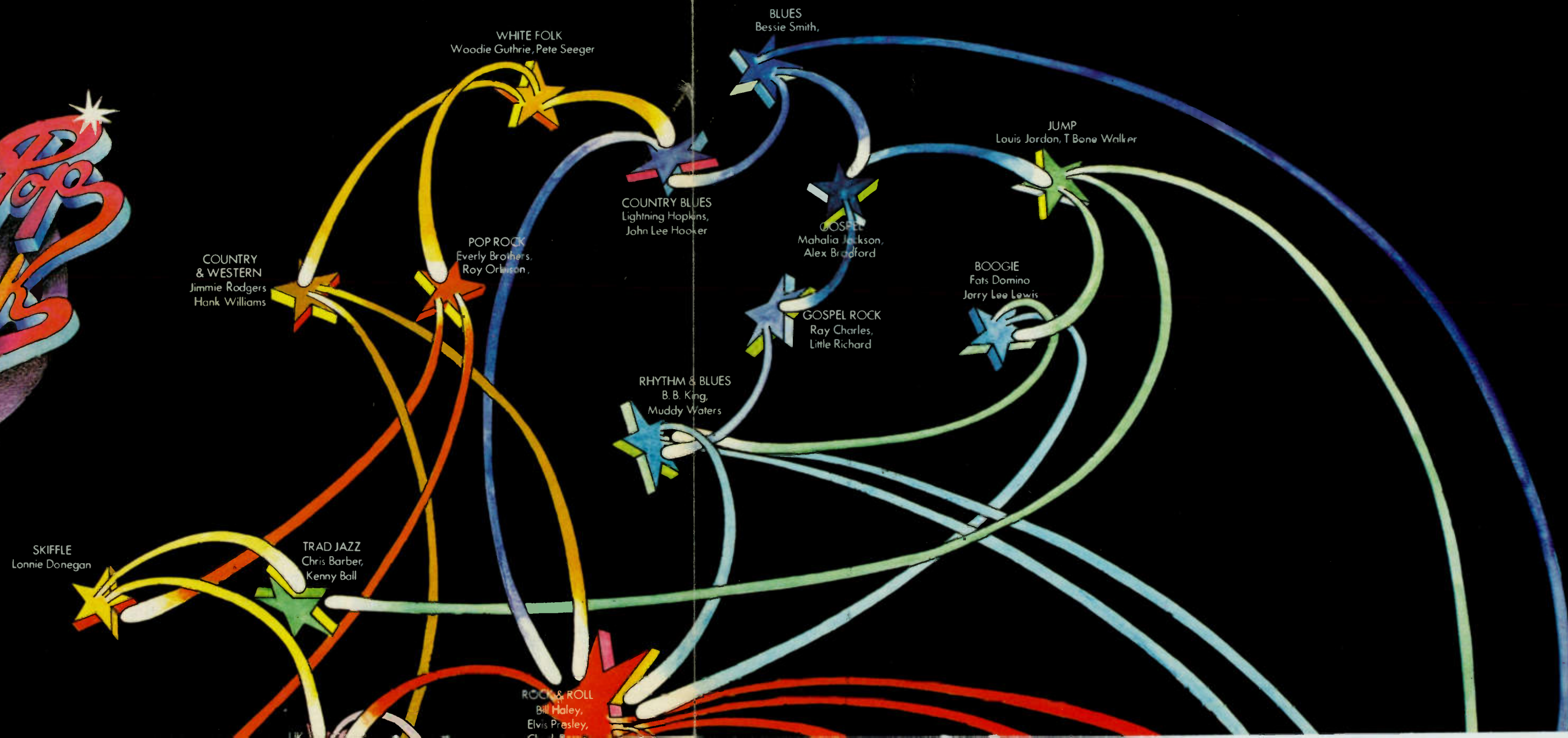
Neither album nor single was successful, and Bowie seemed to have joined the long list of one-hit wonders. He retired from the music business for a year and a half, and ran an Arts Laboratory in Beckenham in partnership with a lady called Mary Finnegan.

Eventually, the apathy of the local community caused Bowie to abandon the project. "People were simply coming to be

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With Elvis a King was born, but within a very few years on the tragic death of Buddy Holly, rock & roll was nearly finished. The music that started it all by outraging parents, shocking teachers, challenging authority had been tamed, changed and emasculated; and from it had grown a quieter, tamer music called pop. Rock & roll was virtually forgotten for ten years until suddenly it was rediscovered and lived again.

THE STARS:

Haley – the old man who started it all and was finished almost as quickly as he had triumphed.

Cochran – a brief, brilliant career cut short in a car smash.

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INFLUENCES:

Why are Alan Freed and Sam Phillips called 'the midwives of rock & roll'? What has country music given to pop? Why has Nashville produced so many stars, so

many hits? What made Philadelphia the hit centre of the late '50s, Liverpool in the early '60s, L.A., San Francisco and the West Coast in the '70s? All have directly influenced the course, shape and sound of pop over the last twenty years. For behind every star and song is a studio, technicians, equipment, manipulators. Places, machines, personalities that have steered, exploited, improved, created.

CULTURE:

The story of pop is not just the story of music, it is also a record of change. Change in morals, in life-styles, in society. Pop created its own culture; a culture for, of and by the young.

In this stream we look at:

FILMS: *Blackboard Jungle* introduced a song called 'Rock Around The Clock'. Then a film of that name was produced, followed by *Don't Knock The Rock*. Suddenly there were rock films. Presley was the first rock star to become, also, a film star. He made a string of them, three a year on average; were they all as bad as the critics claimed? *Hard Days' Night* – the Beatles' first movie – met a rapturous reception from the same critics and spawned a new trend in pop films that continued until the monster festival films like *Woodstock*. Meanwhile, movie producers had been using pop musicians more and more to supply themes and soundtracks.

POP ART: Warhol and soup cans; Peter Blake and pop stars; op art, Union Jacks, anything and everything became art. A new, young art for the masses rather than the select few – and with subjects from everyday life.

FASHION: the explosion of fashion from Mary Quant.

HAIR: from greased D.A.'s through the Beatle cut to hippie shagginess. Hair as a symbol of youth.

DRUGS: to many the curse of a generation, to some the liberating creative force. Featured in so many songs, movies and books.

THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION: the permissive society, nudity, frankness; the post R&R youth throws off the repressions of their parents.

ROCK THEATRE: from *Hair* to *Godspell*, from *Catch My Soul* to *Tommy*.

The whole creative explosion that followed when young people picked up guitars and started to make their own music.

THE MUSIC:

The songs and songwriters. The hit-makers, the poets, the banal creators of chants. The great songwriting teams: Lennon/McCartney; Goffin/King; Mann/

David Radford



Weil; Leiber/Stoller; Greenwich/Barry; Pomus/Schuman; The singer/songwriters: Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Ray Davies, Nilsson, James Taylor, Randy Newman, John Sebastian, Neil Sedaka, Paul Simon, Elton John, Neil Diamond, and more.

The poets: Bob Dylan, John Lennon; the men who took pop from 'doo-wah-bop' to a generally recognised art form.

PLUS:

The full lyrics to two milestone songs being featured in the radio programme every week with an analysis of their meaning and significance. Learn who 'put the bomp in the bomp-ba bomp-ba bomp'; what Dylan or Lennon were really saying. Follow the songs as they are played and keep the lyrics for future reference.

ALL THIS IS BROUGHT TO YOU EVERY WEEK IN 'RADIO ONE'S STORY OF POP' plus *Back-Track* – the important milestones in the careers of major stars at a glance AND *Play List* – the artist's most important and most representative albums listed to form the basis of an archive collection of the classics in pop history.

The breadth and scope of the material appearing each week makes this the most complete and exciting pop publication ever produced. Coupled with the radio series, 'Radio One's Story of Pop' is unequalled in its presentation, research and information.

Story of Pop

How did a novelty foxtrot, written by a sixty-three year old lyricist and his partner, become the anthem of a whole generation, spark a bloodless revolution and change the world?

How did a sharecropper's boy from the poorest state in America rise to be the richest popular star in history?

How did a badly scarred, partially deaf, small-time disc jockey with a voice too grating to be successful as a radio announcer take a slang term for sexual intercourse and christen the most violent musical explosion ever?

What part did these and others play in the story of pop?

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entertained," he recalled, "and the essence of an Arts Lab is participation."

Meanwhile, his record company were less than overjoyed by his semi-retirement, and demanded another album. What they got was the classic 'The Man Who Sold The World', a strange and foreboding album which took a few years to achieve the appreciation it deserved. On the cover, Bowie reclined languidly on a chaise-longue, enticingly clad in a long flowing dress and looking exactly like Lauren Bacall — this at a time when stubble and denims were the order of the day. Clearly, something more was afoot than simply another has-been folkie trying to make a comeback.

If the cover was startling, the album was infinitely more so. The music was the heaviest of heavy rock — taut, claustrophobic and menacing. The songs were harrowing exercises in paranoia; complex essays on themes of alienation and madness. Bowie's imagery was literate, economical, witty and immensely sophisticated, and doubly outstanding at a time when the stoned burblings of the Acid Age had only just slipped into memory. The album was produced by Tony Visconti, who also played bass on it. The other musicians were both formerly members of a Hull blues band called the Rats; guitarist Mick Ronson and drummer Mick 'Woody' Woodmansey.

Hunky Dory

'The Man Who Sold The World' shook up a lot of American critics, and the album sold a healthy 50,000 copies in the States; but Britain didn't seem ready for it, and it just rolled over and died. A year was to pass before Bowie recorded his next album, and in that year a number of important changes took place. He parted company with Tony Visconti, and formed a partnership with Ken Scott, who had engineered his last two albums. Even more important, he teamed-up with Tony DeFries, a young lawyer to whom he'd taken his tangled financial affairs, and who became his new manager. DeFries immediately negotiated a new recording contract with RCA, and thus equipped with a new producer, a new manager and a new company, Bowie went back into the studios to record 'Hunky Dory'.

'Hunky Dory' was lighter in texture than 'The Man Who Sold The World', but, if anything, heavier in terms of content. In fact, Bowie wasn't softening up at all. Even 'Oh You Pretty Things', which had been taken into the charts by no less a personage than Peter Noone himself, was about the need for the present human race to realise its own infinite possibilities and 'make way for the Homo Superior'.

Among the more straightforward songs on the album was 'Kooks'; a sweet little tune dedicated to Bowie's son Zowie and his wife Angie. 'Song To Bob Dylan' expertly pastiched its subject; while 'Queen Bitch' was Bowie's tribute to Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground. Finally, there was 'The Bewlay Brothers', undoubtedly Bowie's strangest song, and one that Bowieologists are still trying to unravel — Bowie himself is politely unhelpful when



asked to elucidate.

After the release of 'Hunky Dory', Bowie took one tremendously important step. He cut his long blond hair into a feathery Mod cut reminiscent of the mid-'60s, dyed it a fluorescent orange, and, in the company of Ronson, Woodmansey and bassist Trevor Bolder (who had played on 'Hunky Dory') began to play concerts. Also, he gave an interview to one of Britain's leading rock weeklies, admitting that he was bisexual. And that really put the pigeon among the cats. Britain's first openly gay rock star! Who could resist such a divine spectacle? It was a stroke of pure genius. Bowie was made.

Bowie and his band wore tight quilted jumpsuits that looked as if they'd been left over from a gay version of *Star Trek*. Ronson peroxided his hair blond, Trevor Bolder dyed his six-inch-long sideboards silver, and Woodmansey adopted a blond version of Bowie's own hairstyle. They looked like gay vandals from some horrific future (not for nothing had Bowie seen *A Clockwork Orange* several times), and the instant they first stepped on stage, every other group in Britain looked completely out of date. This was clearly a totally different kettle of piranha from the inept flounderings of mere sensation seekers – these guys meant business.

Straight

Of course, the whole thing was something of a hoax. The band were as straight as could be, and despite the publicity Bowie's preferred company was that of his wife and child – hence 'Kooks'. Paradoxically, but perhaps predictably, his alleged gayness and his marriage only served to increase his following of both girls and boys, who faithfully reproduced his hairstyles, clothes and make-up as part of a familiar pattern of teen adulation that has been part of the rock & roll experience all along.

But the qualities which made Bowie artistically viable for somewhat older listeners who weren't really into dressing up, were the same ones that had won him a faithful cult audience long before Ziggymania. Basically, Bowie's greatest

strength lay in his songs. No-one seemed to be writing songs for the '70s which cut so deep into the feelings that many had recognised in themselves, but had failed to analyse. His band too was amazing – as tough a power trio as anyone had heard, but tight, controlled, and willing to channel all their formidable energies and skills into the power blasts of those songs. The album that put it all together was released in the summer of 1972, and it was entitled 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars'.

It was probably Bowie's finest and most complete performance on record. While its two predecessors had included individual songs that surpassed the 'Ziggy' material, this album really made it as a whole. Its setting was five years before the end of the world, and its theme was the life of the rock & roll star. Remember, Bowie was not yet a big star at the time that the 'Ziggy' songs were written, and so he was able to look at the situation with a certain amount of detachment. The album's opening number 'Five Years' lets down the backdrop, and the remaining songs on the first side (with the exception of Ron Davies' composition 'It Ain't Easy', a leftover from the 'Hunky Dory' sessions) examine various aspects of the situation. But it's the second side of 'Ziggy' that shows Bowie really getting his hands into the meat.

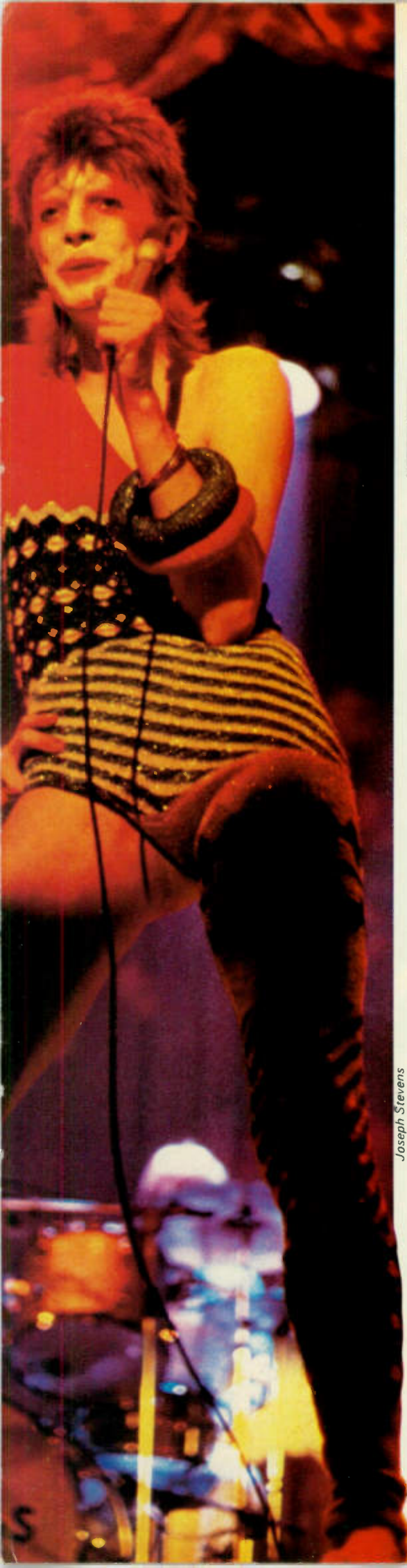
Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars are the archetype rock & roll band, and the songs chart their career from the first time Ziggy gets up to sing in a small club, right through to his superstardom when leeches and hangers-on bug him non-stop, inter-group jealousies develop, and the final apocalyptic moment arrives when 'the kids had killed the man I had to break up the band'. As a kind of alternative ending, there's 'Rock And Roll Suicide', when the forgotten idol roams the streets forlorn and nobody wants to know anymore. That 18-minute song cycle stands as a veritable tour-de-force, a total brain-bruise, and it made David Bowie almost as big a star as Ziggy himself. Tony DeFries leapt in fast and made sure everybody realised it: no interviews and no pictures except by Bowie's authorised photographer. The press, as

Below left: The Bowie family; his wife Angela and their son, Zowie. Below right: The changing face of Bowie; an early 'image'.



Syndication International & New Musical Express Tony DeFries





Joseph Stevens

BACK TRACK

Career: Born 1947

1964-66 David Jones and the Lower Third
 'The World Of David Bowie' (Decca)
 1967 David Bowie and the Buzz
 'David Bowie' (Deram)
 1967-69 Lindsay Kemp Mime Troupe and Bowie's own Feathers Mime Company
 1969 'David Bowie' (Phillips; re-issued as 'Space Oddity' RCA, 1972)

1970 Hit single 'Space Oddity'
 Soloist, touring with Humble Pie on their debut tour of England
 Leaves rock-scene to run an Arts Lab in Beckenham
 1971 Returns to rock with 'Man Who Sold The World' (Mercury; re-issued RCA, 1972)
 'Hunky Dory' (RCA)
 1972 'Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars' (RCA)
 1973 'Aladdin Sane' (RCA)
 'Images' (London Records, New York) made up of 'David Bowie' – 1967 album and 'The World Of David Bowie' In July, his last live performance at the Hammersmith Odeon, London

well they might, struck back the only way they could – by mounting an all-out campaign against Bowie's records and performances.

Regular Superstar

But the live shows just got more and more extravagant. Costume changes, elaborate lighting, the complete works. At one concert at the Rainbow in London, Bowie was even joined by a team of dancers led by the great mime Lindsay Kemp, one of his early mentors. At this same concert a lot of industry people got very uptight because the support group, Roxy Music, were not allowed to rehearse in the hall, and their record company were not permitted to set up advertising stands in the foyer, or to give away posters and badges to the audience. Again, with only a few exceptions, the critics jumped on Bowie with both feet.

Following a moderately successful American tour, Bowie went into the studios to record his next album 'Aladdin Sane', comprising songs written on tour and reflecting his impressions of 'God's Own Country'. The main innovation on this album was the piano work of veteran New York jazzman Mike Garson, but the band had never played better, and the album contained some stunning moments. To the critics though, and to many of Bowie's followers, this album appeared something of an anticlimax compared to past glories. It was viciously put down, but nevertheless became Bowie's biggest seller so far, and the focus of a stage act with which he made a stormy and controversial tour of Britain. It began in chaos at the packed 18,000-seater Earls Court Stadium in London, where poor acoustics and minimal visibility ruined the proceedings for vast numbers of the audience. At subsequent performances, however, Bowie delivered shows of such total virtuosity that few, if any, of his fans were disappointed and the rock press at last found some sympathy, and even praise, for the man whose big gig in London had been a flop.

But the stresses and strains of that last

tour were enough to convince Bowie that further 'live' performances were out of the question. So, in July 1973, after a gig in London featuring Jeff Beck, Bowie at last renounced the stage for the recording studio and movie lot.

So much for history, then. In the final analysis, why is David Bowie so deeply disturbing? Why *did* so many people feel threatened by his very existence? Reasons are manifold. Firstly, some folks found him 'cold' and 'contrived'. On the face of it, there's some substance for this charge; but Bowie never claimed to be a spontaneous boogier. The creative processes that go into producing work like Bowie's are far more complex and precise than those of most of his contemporaries, and this very complexity renders any impression of spontaneity laughable. Also, every aspect of Bowie's operation has equal importance. The clothes, the performances, the records, the composing – they are all part of the total experiment in living that Bowie carries on every moment of his life.

Bowie's particular vision of the world and the life-styles that go with it, mean that his influence goes far beyond a bunch of songs and a stage act. From now on, it seems as though Bowie will be 'leading from the back', as his career opens up and he is beginning to concentrate on work in the studio and various film projects. But to backtrack. On the eve of his big teenage breakthrough, Bowie sang in 'Star' from the 'Ziggy' album:

*'I could do with the money,
 I'm so whacked out with things as they are,
 I'd send my photograph to my honey,
 And I'd come on like a regular superstar'*

and ended with this line:

*'I could make it all worthwhile as a rock
 and roll star.'*

As in all good fairy stories, the charm worked. He did it just like he said he would. It leaves you wondering if 'Rock And Roll Suicide' – the song he finished his last 'live' gig with – had perhaps been written for that very occasion.

ROCK 'N' ROLL is here to stay



Phillip Castle

It was a revolt. Millions of kids all over the world stood up for the first time, demanded to be recognized and danced. Parents, governments, police forces, churches and newspapers at first reeled under the surprise assault and then, when they had collected their wits, cracked down heavily on their own children. The bewilderment in anybody over 30 was universal. 'What went wrong?', they asked, 'we brought our kids up right and decent and they act like animals.'

It was as if, quite suddenly and without any prior warning, the world had gone mad and degenerated into sexual excess and anarchy. There was no *respect* any more. And all because of rock & roll! To be young, though, was great. Rock & roll meant liberation. No more aping the parents, being dressed up like dolls dancing like marionettes, watching how you talked, being put down by anyone who was older. Anything that adults hated *had* to be alright by the kids because it showed the difference, emphasised the gulf that stretched between Dad, who was lulled by Rosemary Clooney, and Mum who was starry-eyed over Sinatra.

No wonder they loathed Elvis, he was so damned uppity. He spat right in their faces, shocked them when he moved, offended them when he opened his mouth, twitched his leg, tossed his hair.

Could music really do all this? Certainly, for the music was an expression of so much that had been bottled up inside youthful bodies. There had been no fun, no thrill. Music was just strict tempo, a draggy waltz, a stumbling foxtrot; it didn't release your inhibitions, burn up your excess energy, make you feel good to be young and alive.

What the squares didn't understand was that none of this was new. The kids didn't suddenly feel like this. They had always felt like it but until the early '50s nobody had put it into words, or, even better, expressed it in a dance beat. If there was nothing to do and nowhere to go you just had to hang out on street corners killing time, waiting for something, anything, to come along and break the monotony, crack the boredom. The trouble was, nothing ever came along, until...

Jungle Music

Alan Freed wasn't young. He was years older than the teens and not even famous. He wasn't good-looking, in fact his face had been terribly smashed in a car crash. He looked like a loser, and had been turned down as an announcer by the big stations because his voice was too grating. Worst of all, for a DJ, he was partially deaf. But that didn't stop him having 'an ear' for the music that kids loved. He ran a show on a small-time station in Cleveland, Ohio. He played 'good music', the music the squares liked, all lush strings and Italian voices – he even played classics. But in 1951 he got a

call from the man who ran the biggest record store in town. The record dealer told him to hurry down there and see what was happening. All the kids were buying 'speciality' records. These were also known as 'race' records; songs recorded by blacks for blacks. Harsh, grating, earthy music. Music from the ghettos, without the polish or glitter that whites expected of their performers. Some even called it 'jungle music'. Actually it was R&B – rhythm and blues. White kids weren't just buying this, they were dancing to it.

When Freed realised he was onto something he bulldozed a programme devoted to this music onto the air and, taking his idioms from those of the young, he called it *Moondog's Rock and Roll Party*. Rock and Roll? What was this Rock and Roll? The blacks were always singing about rockin', urging their partners to roll with them. There could be no doubt what was in their minds. Rocking and rolling was a euphemism for sex. These cats didn't wail about their 'secret love' or drool about Moon and June, divorcing love from sex. They got right down to it and the way they danced, throwing each other around, swinging their girls under their legs, pulling them right in close, was surely no more than a simulation of the sex act. It was physical, spontaneous; a complete overthrowing of the sexless mechanics of ballroom dancing.

Moondog Ball

Alan Freed allowed the music to seep into him. He howled, he screamed, he hollered. He thumped the console in front of him. He let the music come on hot and hard, and the white, middle-class kids heard, maybe for the first time in their homes, music that was about life and sex. That was about them. Rock & Roll was born.

However parents might condemn Freed as a 'nigger lover', polluting the airwaves with that dirty music, a chord had been struck deep inside the teens. In 1953 Freed announced his *Moondog Ball* at the Cleveland Arena where black groups would be appearing live. The venue held 10,000, but on the night somewhere between 30–80,000 kids turned up. The authorities were horrified by the sheer weight of numbers. Even worse, black and white teens mingled! Cleveland was a segregated city and so the event had to be cancelled. But Freed's point was overwhelmingly made. Adult authority was so disturbed that there was a move to arrest the DJ on a number of charges including breaking the fire laws. Not only had Freed had the impertinence to bring black music to a white station, he had actually and physically brought black and white kids together.

Freed had learned a lesson. He ran no

more dances in the city but promoted sell-out, sit down concerts featuring artists like Joe Turner, Fats Domino, and the Drifters, who had previously only played to black audiences. By now the change had been wrought; perhaps two thirds of the paying customers at the concerts were white.

Tomorrow the World

There was something electric in the air; Freed and his rock & roll was unstoppable. By 1954 his word had spread and he was offered and accepted a job at a New York station. Now he was pumping out his music in the most important city in the States; right in the heart of the traditional centre of popular music. Soon he was king, he took WINS – then a mediocre station – to dominance within a few months. Rock & roll was here to stay. Today New York, tomorrow America, the day after... the world.

It sounds like rock & roll started overnight. But, like all 'instant' successes it had actually been around, below the surface, for years. Probably the main reason it hadn't emerged sooner was blatant racial prejudice. In the early '50s, black Americans were virtually a race apart. There were ways in which individual blacks could achieve status, but these were usually limited to sport and show business, and even then there were severe restrictions. Black singers were only acceptable if they sang in a white style. Nat 'King' Cole conformed in every way to the white 'Italian' ideal. He sounded like the dominant Italian-style balladeers, he had poise and polish. He wasn't raucous, he didn't shout, you could understand every word he sang. He wasn't dirty and if you had only listened to his records on the radio you'd never know that he wasn't white. Louis Jordan, Fats Domino and Joe Turner were another matter. They *sounded* black, they slurred their words, they murdered the language, their voices reflected the wail of the saxes that backed them. You'd never hear a violin on their records. They were black, and to be black meant that you never reached a white audience.

'Race' Records

Domino was just one of many such performers who, though they sold an enormous number of records, were virtually unknown outside their own communities. But by the early '50s, white kids who found nothing exciting in the national charts, from the releases of the major companies, or through the output of established radio stations, were twiddling the dials on their receivers and discovering a new world of music that was being beamed out to their black neighbours in the ghettos and rural

areas. Slowly at first, but then in increasing numbers, the young whites, disenchanted with what their own entertainment media were offering, turned to black sources. And they didn't just want to hear these songs, they wanted to own the records, and started invading black preserves to patronise their record stores. So it was that 'race' records came to be snapped up in Cleveland; and inspire Alan Freed to create a new market.

Rock & roll gradually permeated the white consciousness. Anything blatantly black was still reviled, and although Freed had made it quite obvious that R&R was what the kids wanted, it didn't mean that black artists were immediately welcomed into the national charts. What in fact happened was a rather shameful bleaching of black music. Black hits, brought out on their own labels, were plundered by the major companies. The words were emasculated, the pulsing rhythms toned down somewhat, and the finished, translated products handed over to young white performers. The sex was specifically cut out and the words cleaned up. For instance, Hank Ballard in 1954 wrote and recorded a song called 'Work With Me Annie' which was fairly explicit in content; containing lines like 'Work with me Annie/Let's get it while the getting is good', and 'Annie, please don't cheat/Give me all my meat'. This was seen as being far too unambiguous to be presented before a wider, more moral audience. Soon it was changed and recorded by a girl who sang it as: 'Roll with me Henry/You better roll it while the rollin' is on'. But even this was too obviously sexual for a white audience and, before it was considered right for a general public, it was changed yet again to an innocuous song about dancing. The final version, cleansed of all sexual connotation, reached the public ear as: 'Dance with me Henry/Let's dance while the music rolls on'.

Blackboard Jungle

Rock & roll didn't hit the general mass of youth until 1955, and by then it had very little to do with blacks. What was to spark a generation was a film theme. The movies had caught the mood of the young even before music. They had recognised that there was a growing feeling of discontent in youth, and had crystallised it in two stars and three films. The films were *East Of Eden*, *Rebel Without A Cause*, and *The Wild One*; the stars were moody, mean and brooding – James Dean and Marlon Brando. But the music that accompanied the films was, significantly, the Big Band sound that had traditionally been used by Hollywood. It wasn't until *Blackboard Jungle* – the story of a young and liberal teacher's efforts to understand and educate his malcontent charges – that music specifically of the young was introduced to the screen. The song was 'Rock Around The Clock'; the singer Bill Haley.

Here, at last, was a film that portrayed so much of the disaffection felt by its audience, and at the same time introduced an intensely exciting song. Teenagers all

over America responded to the dual message. They flocked to the movie and demanded the record of the song.

Bill Haley was a classic case of cleaned-up rock. He was born in Michigan in 1927, a presentable looking chap, but hardly the material that sex symbols are made of. His family moved to Pennsylvania when he was seven and he was a semi-professional musician by his mid-teens. At the age of 20 he got a job with a local radio station and became their musical director. In 1953 he formed his own band, the Comets, and the following year they secured a recording contract with Decca. Initially the band had played a run-of-the-mill repertoire of country and western and jazz numbers and also a tentative form of R&B. But one of the first numbers he cut for Decca was 'Shake, Rattle And Roll'.

'Shake, Rattle And Roll' was a typical compromise by a major recording company which was forced to the conclusion that the teens wanted a music uniquely their own, but which couldn't associate itself with anything suggestive. It had first been recorded on the independent Atlantic label by Joe Turner, but the Haley version was watered down, and the words and vocal delivery emasculated so that it would get played on white radio stations while still giving the kids the forceful beat they seemed to crave. The difference in the words is obvious. Whereas Joe Turner sang:

*'Get out of that bed
And wash your face and hands*

*Get into the kitchen
Make some noise with the pots and pans*

*Well you wear your low dresses
The sun comes shining through*

*I can't believe my eyes
That all of this belongs to you'*

The Bill Haley version excises any suggestion that the couple might be living together (married or not), or that the man is obviously very aware of his lady's sexual charms. This was too strong meat for nicely brought up white kids, and had to be changed to:

*'Get out in that kitchen
And rattle those pots and pans*

*Roll my breakfast
'Cause I'm a hungry man*

*You wear those dresses
Your hair done up so nice*

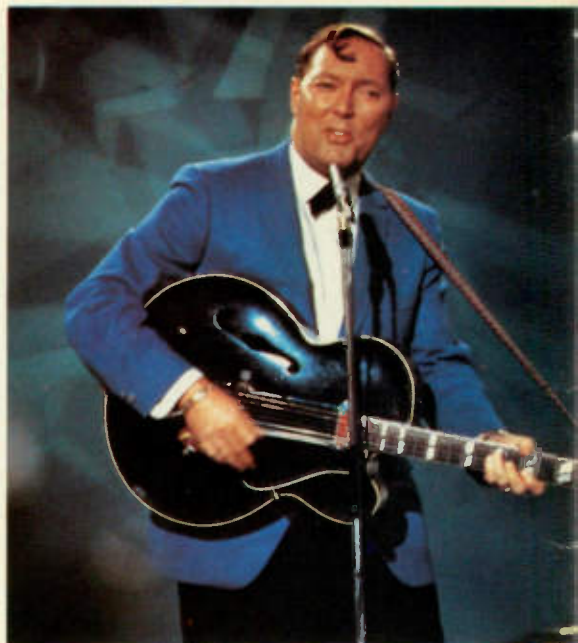
*You look so warm
But your heart is cold as ice'*

A further verse that made an obviously sexual innuendo was cut out entirely. Haley was aware of the need to clean-up when he said: "We steer completely clear of anything suggestive! We take a lot of care with lyrics because we don't want to offend anybody. The music is the main thing, and it's just as easy to write acceptable words."

'Rock Around The Clock' was the first great rock & roll anthem. There is a lot of

argument about which was really the first true R&R song, but there is no doubt that 'Clock' was the one that turned young adults into teenagers, divided the generations, and changed the course of the next 20 years. This is the number that had kids dancing in London, Paris, Sydney, Teheran, Moscow, anywhere that teenagers felt a need to express themselves.

So successful was it that commercialism followed almost immediately. The potential was obviously enormous. For the first time industry recognised that teenagers were a new, independent market with the



money and style to demand goods aimed exclusively at them. No longer would they wear cut-down versions of their parents' clothes. Now they had their own fashions, their own hairstyles, their own entertainment. Now came their own film, created solely from one song – 'Rock Around The Clock'. By now the excitement was intense. It was as if, quite suddenly, teenagers recognised themselves as being distinct, not just substandard adults or overgrown children, but a different culture. The split was not between white and black, American and European, but between *Them* and *Us*.

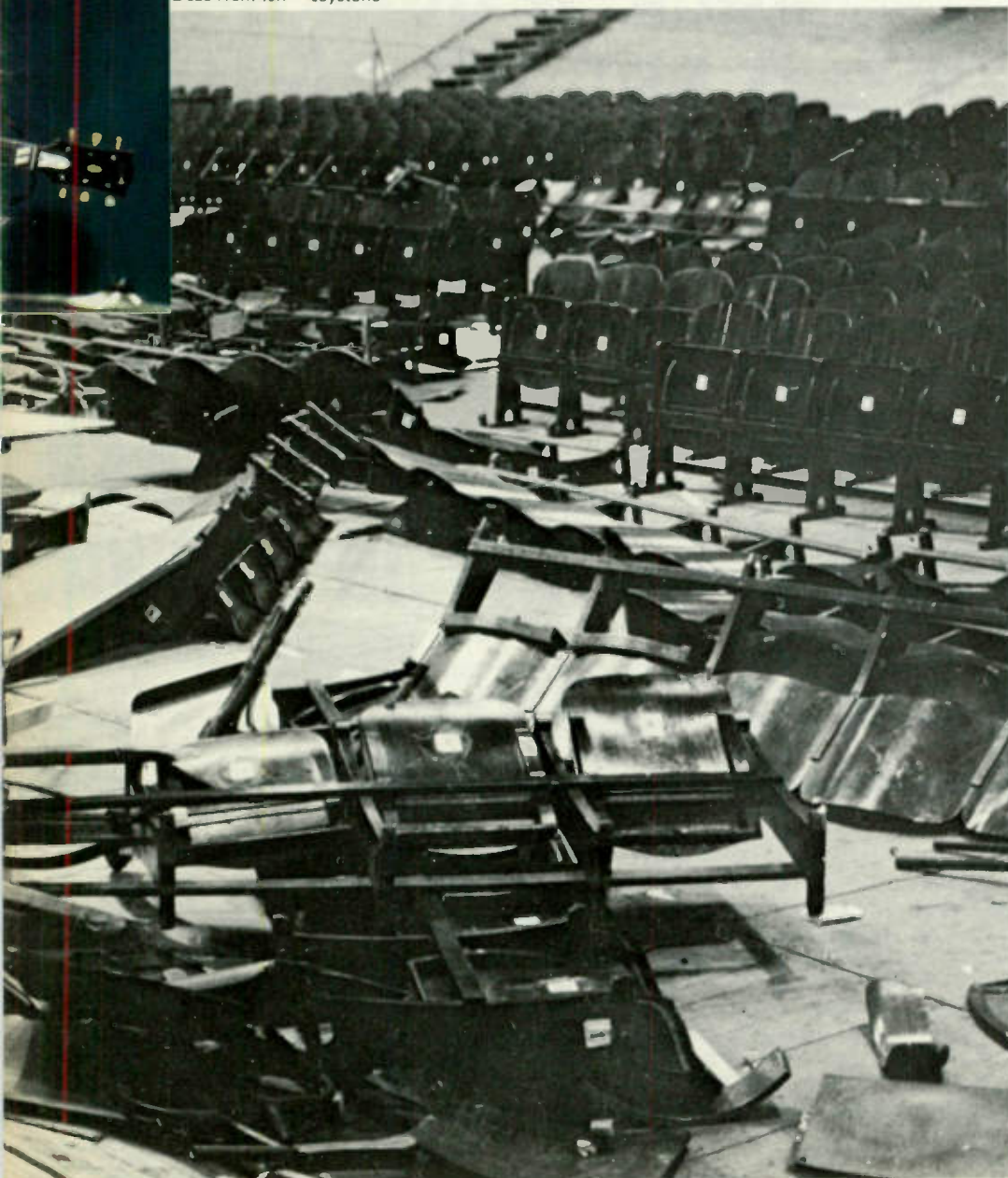
Their film – *Rock Around The Clock* – really shook up that authority which measured teenage independence only in terms of violent rebellion. The terms 'teenager' and 'juvenile delinquent' were, in their minds, the same. Teenage music – strong, hard, aggressive – was everywhere, and kids were reacting to it. Now rock & roll wasn't simply music, it was a symbol. A symbol of youth, a symbol of exclusivity. But the film...!

In fact, it was a small-budget, cash-in quickie, that simply told the story of how Haley had been discovered while playing a rocking gig that had all the kids dancing, had met Alan Freed, done nationwide TV shows, and hit the top. It was simple, it showed that ordinary kids could become stars. Better still it was true. It set the

style for a thousand other clichéd copies; but in 1956 it was new. Teenagers flocked to it, and because it generated so much excitement there were repercussions. Rock & roll was dance music and so the audience wanted to dance. It didn't matter to them that they were in a cinema, they just got up and danced in the aisles. This, of course, couldn't be tolerated, and the authorities were swift to stop it. The kids retaliated by acts of vandalism, particularly ripping up seats. Just how many seats were ripped and how often is now impossible to judge, but even one would, in the climate of the time, have been enough to spark off big,

The kiss-curl'd Bill Haley. Perhaps rock's most unlikely star; he had a light-hearted, almost 'safe' approach to rock & roll. The audience response was far from safe however. Scenes of destruction, while exaggerated in the press certainly took place. This one was from Haley's German tour

Dezo Hoffman Keystone



black headlines. It mattered not that the film was shown in New York without any trouble despite its high rate of juvenile delinquency and violence. At Princeton University there was some disturbance, and by the time the film had travelled across the Atlantic the authorities were primed for and expecting trouble. The first reports of European scenes came from Dublin, but it played all over Britain without anything serious occurring until it reached London. A couple of hundred kids coming out of a cinema were in high spirits. They had been infected – as had kids all over the world – by the blood-pumping excitement of the music, and this had spilled over into the street where they skipped and chanted to the music in their heads. Traffic was held up! This was enough to rate in newspaper terms as a riot, and the numbers involved were multiplied tenfold. The authorities had never had to deal with honest teenage exuberance before and it perplexed them. They acted hastily and with a heavy hand. Attempts were made to ban rock and it was condemned on all sides. In the Southern

States of America – the most rabidly anti-black area in the States – 'decent and upright' citizens burned records in the streets. If such acts were designed to deter teenagers they failed abysmally. What the adult world had failed to grasp was that R&R was a musical revolt, and the more the squares hit against it, the more the kids cherished it.

But Haley's run was to be short-lived. Even as he was feted in Europe, his popularity was waning in America. The reasons were simple. At the height of his success he was at least 10 years older than his audience; he wasn't one of them. The kiss-curl gimmick, the baggy pants and the loud plaid jackets were not trends that teenagers wanted to follow. Even his music was essentially ersatz. 'Shake, Rattle And Roll' was a censored copy of the real thing. 'Rock Around The Clock' was closer to the real live-for-the-day, forget school, have a good time and flaunt authority theme; but even that had been written by a pair of veteran Tin Pan Alley tunesmiths, one of whom was 63!

A Boy from Tupelo

Already the first wave was nearly spent. Haley would soon wane and Alan Freed, the prime mover of the new music, came to be regarded by the new generation as an affectionate father figure. Rock & roll had come a very long way in a very short time. In less than five years it had erupted, from the underground and the ghetto, to the world. In its path had come rapid change. In 1951 it hadn't existed, by 1955 it was established. Already some black artists were stepping onto ground previously denied them, although the charts were still predominantly white. Already the generations were dividing. Already R&R records were appearing in the charts. All that was now wanted was one commanding figure who would further unite youth. One man who would crystallise all the hectic excitement, the intense sexuality, the proud, arrogant display of individuality that was fermenting inside the young. He had to be authentic, to spring from an environment that recognised black music and understood it, that had its own white interpretation, that was poor and downtrodden and had given birth to a welling need to express anger, frustration and defiance in music. Even as Bill Haley's pioneering work was ending and other important R&R innovators were waiting to step onto a new global stage, a boy with a weird name from Tupelo, Mississippi, was starting on a career that would carry him from the studios of Memphis to world domination.

Rock & roll was getting ready to storm the bastions of adult authority and carry with it a generation of kids who would change the face of a century.

NEXT WEEK: Freed and Phillips – the 'Midwives of Rock & Roll'.

The children of the '50s changed the world. They turned it upside down. They didn't know what they were doing, and had anyone told them what would come out of it they might have been the first to be appalled . . .

That within 15 years 'swinging London' would have much of its men's fashion designed by homosexuals, its music derived from Negroes, and its style set by 14-year-old delinquents; that Savile Row and the Paris salons would be almost extinct as fashion arbiters, and the coldly-elegant top model of their era, Miss Barbara Goalen, would be replaced by a Cockney-speaking teenager with a flat chest called Twiggy; that Princess Margaret would be married to a photographer called Jones who would be turned away from the Savoy Hotel for wearing a polo-neck sweater beneath evening dress; that their successors as under-21s would be a majority of the world's population, universities around the world in riot, and politicians falling over themselves to attract 'the youth vote'; that there would be droves of teenage pop stars, entrepreneurs, authors, playwrights, artists, even millionaires; and that the parents of the '60s would be stampeding to imitate their children, cramming their bellies into wasp-waisted shirts and their matronly bottoms into mini-skirts; that, in short, the cultural domination of the elite would be swept away and replaced by a new mass culture, the style of which was set from below, and by the young.

It would all have seemed unreal, impossible, a nightmare. Yet most of it was their doing. They made it possible.

The War Babies

The children of the '50s were the war babies. They grew up in an age of unparalleled world conflict, amidst jingoism and propaganda, austerity, and the breakdown of traditional values and restraints. Their fathers were away fighting, their mothers worked. Often they were separated from their families altogether; in Britain by 'evacuation' from the cities, in Occupied Europe by the ravages of war. Some of them had no normal childhood at all, and many of them grew up fast. These were the children who reached puberty in the '50s, to find themselves a generation defined and separated from the adult world by an adult label. They were 'teenagers'.

The teenage condition of being in a no-man's land between sexual and legal maturity was hardly new, but before the '50s it had been a stage to rush through as speedily as possible. There was no glory in being neither child nor adult. At 13 all you wanted to do was to look 21; to smoke, to go in pubs, to wear your father's suits or your mother's lipstick and nylons; you lied about your age, upwards.

The new teenager was partly an economic phenomenon. The teenagers of the '30s and '40s had little more than pocket money, and were therefore dependents. They had

POP CULTURE: THE '50s

Mood of the Times: Rebels with a cause

TEDDY BOY THREAT TO A CINEMA
ROCK 'N ROLL hit London again last night, with more than 20,000 jazz fans watching the film. Many were kept in the aisles. Some stamped the floor and danced in the aisles. The cinema manager's staff were arrested after the film. The cinema was closed for some time.

Town sits on a rock 'n roll volcano...

ROCK 'N ROLL TERRORISES A CITY
WHAT IS BEHIND THE RIOTS...?

ROCK 'N ROLL TERRORISES A CITY
WHAT IS BEHIND THE RIOTS...?

RHYTHM-CRAZED teenagers terrorise city last night. Police had to help to quell stampedes who rioted in M

ROCK 'N ROLL RIOTS FLARE

Police squads rush to 4 more cinemas

ROCK 'N ROLL trouble spread to four cinemas last night.

Police squads rush to 4 more cinemas

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Associated Newspaper Group Ltd. Syndication International



Jeannie Baker

The typical British teenage boy of 1950 hid most of what he had going for him, such as a 24-inch waist and a flat stomach, beneath clothes designed for pot-bellied burghers of 50. Girls could hardly be prevented from looking sexy, but it was an adult sexiness that didn't challenge their elders with its youthfulness. Let us look at a young couple on their way to the one-and-ninepennies at the Odeon, where they will watch John Wayne winning the war.

He wears a great hairy sportscoat of 18–20 ounce Harris tweed, bought with the accurate expectation that it would last. Its style is 'hacking-jacket', tailored to the needs of the saddle with two vents at the back. Below this, grey trousers of sensible Yorkshire worsted, or possibly fawn 'cavalry-twill'. Beneath, a vast baggy shirt, probably with a separate collar so it can be worn all week, and a tie of tweed or Tootal paisley-pattern. His underwear is white, with short sleeves on the vest and legs on the pants. All this is covered with a mud-coloured gaberdine raincoat; those with pretensions to Bohemia substituting an atrocity known as a duffel-coat, a relic of the booming Army-surplus market. The whole is topped-off with a tweed or corduroy cap, or an unattractively-styled trilby.

She wears a woolly twinset – sweater and cardigan – home-knitted, pink; sensible tweed skirt, wide, four inches below the knee. Beneath, a slip, possibly a 'roll-on' corset, a boned, possibly padded bra, knickers – the word, incidentally, is still in 1950 unmentionable – suspender-belt, all in white or flesh-colour. Above, a poplin mac or a tweed coat, a headscarf or perhaps a hat over short hair heavily permed into curls. Was it really like that? Yes.

Teddy Boys

It was like this because of a stifling conformity imposed from above: in dress, literature, accent, values . . . Britain, seen from abroad through its books and films, seemed like a country of stiff upper lips, stately homes and Jeeves. 'Yaroo you bounders!' yelled Billy Bunter, munching tuck-shop cream buns, as unlikely a portrait of typical British schoolboys as one might imagine, yet read eagerly by children who had never seen cream and for whom post-war reality, as late as 1951, was bread-rationing. And then there was Biggles, and Bulldog Drummond, the Dornford Yates adventures, John Buchan's Hannay . . . upper class to a man. Style filtered down from above, slowly; what Belgravia did today, Bootle and Balham might copy, badly, the year after tomorrow. The formula is now familiar; the nation's young were taught to aspire to be third-rate gentlemen, and the Establishment raged when working-class teenagers of the late '50s seized Savile Row's newest creation of Edwardian suits and turned themselves into Teddy Boys. 'For the first time in the history of this country', a woman doctor wrote in 1957, 'a section of the community has not been able to dress as it pleases without virulent attacks and suspicion.'

But the attack against what Nancy

border on arrogance and aggression.

The young were defined as a group by a widespread and intense adult hostility. 'The hatred with which the mature of Western society regard the young', wrote one academic, 'is a testimony to the latter's importance, to their power, both potential and actual.' And in both Europe and the United States social, political and cultural pressures to conform were still to intensify to a point that made Norman Mailer write off the era as 'one of the worst decades in the history of man'. But perhaps even that dense greyness was a sign that the oldies

who had run things for a trillion years knew they were about to come under attack. Yes, roll over Beethoven, it was our world, and if we didn't like our inheritance we'd remake it in our image.

At first, nothing changed. The young had money to spend, but manufacturers hadn't woken up to it. And it was still, in Europe, a time of austerity. City centres and housing estates were being built, mostly dull and featureless, but new, which was what counted. There was little choice, and none expected; you bought what was put before you – and you just had to like it.

Mitford's *Noblesse Oblige* revealed as a matter of U or non-U behaviour had been mounted earlier elsewhere. The elite's cultural leadership was undermined in the early '50s by a wave of writers who didn't crook their fingers round tea-cups or care if the milk went in first, and whose characters certainly didn't say 'looking-glass' instead of 'mirror'. They were mostly from the North, they wrote about the working-class, and they were young.

Alan Sillitoe wrote about factory-life in Nottingham, John Braine about the Town Hall and the mill in Yorkshire, Stan Barstow about working-class courtship and marriage, Kingsley Amis' outrageous hero *Lucky Jim* went to a red-brick university. The new heroes and their creators showed few signs of being obediently reconciled to their Station In Life: they were almost arrogantly confident. Shelagh Delaney, the Salford, Lancs. teenager who wrote *A Taste of Honey*, revealed she had been inspired by seeing a Terence Rattigan play at the Palace Theatre, Manchester, and thinking she could do better than that. And there was the archetypal Angry Young Man, and Establishment enemy, Jimmy Porter; the hero of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, he hated English society so much he couldn't involve himself in it.

But the most influential changes of the



Jeannie Baker

Pre-revolution fcxtrout: Harris tweed and cavalry-twill hid sexless white leggy underpants. Under the twinset, a boned and perhaps padded bra and a suspender belt effectively hid female charms.

'50s were to occur in the United States. There, too, culture had been dominated by an elite: the WASP, the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. The turn of the century had brought millions of European immigrants, turning cities like New York and Chicago into ethnic mosaics. But the WASPs had written the history books already, with themselves as heroes. The tired and huddled masses had barely landed on Ellis Island before they found themselves yearning to be like him, the all-American, the blue-eyed boy. The rest were, among others, wops, micks, hunkies, polacks, spades, spics, yids, chinks and nips; nobody, but *nobody*, ever called anyone a dirty WASP. WASP values were still enshrined and celebrated, even as droves of ethnic Johnny-come-latelays moved into whole areas of national life, from literature to cinema and sociology.

Not Enough Night

Hollywood, strangely, enlarged these values and gave them to the world. The dream-factory was run by Jews with a cast of white ethnics, but Bernie Schwartz had to be renamed Tony Curtis and Doris Kappelhoff had to become Doris Day. The All-American Boy and The Girl Next Door had to look like WASPs even, and perhaps particularly, when they weren't. As one commentator noted, 'if your name was Marx you had to be funny or you'd be dead in Akron.' Jews were comedians, Latins and Orientals were villains, Red Indians bit the dust before the WASP cavalry, and Negroes were more-or-less nowhere. Superman was a WASP, and so was Tarzan, even when his name was Johnny Weismuller.

Revolt began in the sub-cultures. And the most deeply-significant event was a strange cross-cultural love affair, that of the white hipster for the Negro. In the classic novel of the beat generation *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac had spelled out, almost embarrassingly, what was happening. His hero, Sal Paradise, walked through the Denver ghetto 'with every muscle aching . . . wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music, not enough night.' As Norman Mailer put it later, announcing the birth of what he called 'The White Negro': ' . . . the bohemian and the juvenile delinquent came face-to-face with the Negro, and the hipster was a fact in American life . . . And in this wedding of the white and the black it was the Negro who brought the cultural dowry.' The Beats, wrote Jack Newfield much later, were 'a portent, the first wind of a new storm, a coded signal that America's youth were starting to gag on conformity, materialism and silence.'

The war years had brought migration. More than a million Negroes came out of the Deep South to the jobs in the wartime factories of the North. They were looking for the Promised Land: what they found in the North's burgeoning ghettoes was more like Babylon. They brought with them rural culture and values and folk song. They moved and talked to other rhythms. The cities broke their family structures; their





Warner Bros.

children grew up as violent, fast-talking strangers. And their music changed: it took on a dance beat and bitterness. It became the voice of an alienated sub-culture. Beneath the surface, the blues singers like Muddy Waters growled their bawdy, raucous songs of love and lust and hate through the brawling bars of Chicago's South Side. They sold their music for a handful of dollars and a bottle of booze. The crooners on the white radio stations rhymed Moon with June, and when the record companies or the music industry noticed the Blues at all it was with a shudder. They called it race, ebony or sepia music. But a minority of the white young had started to listen and move to the new rhythms; the seeds of what was to emerge as 'rock & roll' had been sown.

Other things were changing. Technological developments forced new social patterns. They arrived faster in the US, the style-leader. Mass car ownership eroded public transport and brought entertainment facilities designed for motorists: 3,000 drive-in cinemas by 1952. Youngsters learned to drive at 15 and borrowed the family car for a night out: teenage status meant wheels. Increasingly, the cars had radios. (The Yippies' founder, Jerry Rubin, who grew up in the era, was later to write that the New Left sprang out of Elvis Presley's gyrating pelvis, sexually-liberating a generation of teenagers on the back seat of the family car to the strains of hard rock ballads like 'Turn Me Loose'. It was something of an exaggeration, but it had more than a grain of truth.)

The Global Village

And, quite suddenly, there was television. It was possible to put the same image in a million, 10 million, even 100 million homes at once. At the start of the decade, Britain had 200,000 sets, France a mere 20,000. Three years later, 100 million viewers on both sides of the Atlantic watched Queen Elizabeth II crowned. This was what Marshall McLuhan was later to style 'the global village'; a world in which the one-eyed camera was king, a world whose children learned from the earliest age – a fact that was to change the marketing of politics and education as well as breakfast foods – to absorb non-verbal information. The new mass culture was ripening like a dandelion head: television was the medium that would scatter it to the four winds.

Politics, in 1950, were only a decade in time but light-years in attitudes from John Kennedy. The adults who came through the war wanted reassuring father-figures. Mr

Truman was succeeded in 1952 by General Eisenhower, a solid citizen and soldier who even played golf. In London, Mr Atlee – could he ever have been young? – was followed by Mr Churchill, aged 77, and Mr Eden, whose sartorial elegance caused him to be regarded as the world's best-dressed statesman. In Paris, the greybeards played Prime Ministers like musical chairs. The White House, 10 Downing Street, and the Elysée were hardly places for the young to look for heroes. Apart from anything else, a sizeable minority was starting to see their political leaders as war-crazy hypocrites.

The Generation Gap

April 1953, for example, found President Eisenhower announcing that every gun, every warship, every rocket was a theft from the hungry; the choice was one bomber or 30 schools. This, he added, wasn't a way of life, but 'humanity hanging from a cross of iron.' It was all very eloquent. A few months later, Russia exploded her first H-bomb, and President Eisenhower's administration led the world into an unparalleled arms race. On both sides of what Mr Churchill had christened 'the Iron Curtain', everybody was building guns, warships, rockets and bombers like crazy. In Britain, Mr Eden's campaign poster for 1955 said simply 'Working for Peace', yet within a year the Suez Crisis was at hand. Wherever you looked, there were new holy crusades: Commie-bashing in Korea (the start of a fiery frightfulness from the air, napalm, which incinerated, along with men, women and children, the Geneva Conventions and the idea that war could still be a pastime for gentlemen); wog-bashing in Suez; subduing the colonies in Algeria. All this, and, suspended over everyone on earth, The Bomb. The Oldies were at it again, and the young had had enough. Patriotism, as defined by the old's ability to pack the young off to war at the drop of an ultimatum, had been an unchallenged reflex. It was no longer. The mood that started in the '50s and grew until 'the generation gap' and 'youth revolt' were clichés in virtually every society in the world was simply this: the young were no longer prepared to acquiesce. They would choose the clothes, music, heroes, politics and causes they wanted.

The beginnings of non-acquiescence can be traced through the books and films of the era: one of the earliest, perhaps, was J. D. Salinger's mild, lovable 16-year-old rebel, the hero of *Catcher In The Rye*. The first of the film young rebels was Marlon Brando. Groomed for stardom in *Streetcar Named*

James Dean, (left), with Ann Doran from *Rebel Without A Cause*, and Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*. Mean, moody and brooding, Dean and Brando were the symbols of the generalised disaffection and non-conformity of the 'new youth'.



Keesee Phototrends

Wild scenes at an Elvis concert. The uninhibited reaction of the audience at these early rock & roll concerts, although tame by today's standards, was profoundly shocking to the Establishment morality. The horrified policeman is typical of the official attitude to rock & roll and the blatant sexuality that went with it.

Desire in 1951, his screen image was a blend of sensitivity, savagery and inarticulateness. In private life he was the first of a new breed of Hollywood anti-heroes, who detested commercialism and phony publicity, refused interviews, and turned up at premieres in jeans and sneakers. In *The Wild One*, Brando led a motorcycle gang, a US cult so feared that the film was banned almost everywhere in Britain. Perhaps James Dean – hero of the hipsters, killed at 24 in a car crash after his third film – gave the new young an image in *Rebel Without a Cause* (almost the phrase of the decade), and *East of Eden*.

Bring in the Army

The 'rebels without a cause' were not that most dreaded word of the '60s, the students; they were, almost everywhere you looked, lumpenproletariat nonconformists. Britain had Teddy Boys. They wore drainpipe trousers, long coats with velvet collars, string ties, and pointed shoes known as 'winkle-pickers'. If you believed what you read in the newspapers, towns were gripped by fear. Crazy teenagers rioted. Menacing rabbles seethed and strutted. There were questions in the House of Commons about

the threat of the 'Edwardian gangs', of which, one newspaper claimed absurdly, there were 1,000 in London alone. The streets of the capital were no longer safe, wrote one MP. He argued against arming the police: if guns were needed, he continued, then bring in the Army. The Metropolitan Police announced they would use the Public Order Act against the Teds; and Lord Goddard, the retired Lord Chief Justice, suggested bringing back the stocks.

But it wasn't just Britain. It was hard to find anywhere that was not in a state of public alarm and hand-wringing over a remarkably similar wave of juvenile delinquency: *Blousons noirs* in France, *Halbstarke* in Germany, *bodgies* and *midgies* in Australia, *stilyagi* in Russia, street-gangs in New York, and – perhaps the forerunners of them all, inventors of the 'zoot suit' in 1945–46 – the Mexican-American teenagers in Los Angeles, the *pachucos*. It seemed at the time like aimless, mindless hooliganism and the wearing of outlandish clothes, but it is now possible to recognize it for what it was: the first protest by the post-war generation against its inheritance. In the musical of the era, *West Side Story*, Doc complained 'you kids are making this a lousy world' and the kids retorted 'but that's the way we

found it!' The *New York Times*' Harrison Salisbury wrote presciently in 1958, after studying black street gangs: '... the slums are only reservoirs and, perhaps, tradition setters for antisocial adolescent conduct at all social levels ... What the Cobras do today, shook-up high school seniors in Great Neck, Long Island, or Beverly Hills, California, will consciously or unconsciously imitate and reflect tomorrow.' From now on, in other words, revolt, fashion, style, would come from beneath.

In the midst of this, in 1956, came rock & roll. Its films – *Rock Around the Clock*, *Blackboard Jungle* – were said to cause riots. In fact, most of the 'riots' were newspaper exaggerations, but this didn't stop a dozen British towns and cities, quaking with fear, from banning *Rock Around the Clock*.

Hell-Fire

Around the world, adult hostility bordered hysteria. It is a curious experience to ruffle through the newspaper cuttings from those years, perhaps to a background of 1973's 'God Gave Rock And Roll To You' blaring uncontentionally over Radio One. Some of the critics had understandable axes to grind: Sir Malcolm Sargent, who said rock & roll had been played in the jungle for centuries; the Ku Klux Klan and White Citizens' Councils, who led protest marches across the Deep South; Mr Frank Sinatra, who said it was sung, played and written by 'cretinous goons ... the martial music of every sideburned juvenile delinquent on the face of the earth'. At their worst the pronouncements of public figures gave off a stench of hate and envy strong as burning sulphur. Hell-fire, indeed, was sometimes explicitly promised. 'Rock & roll', preached a British clergyman, 'is a revival of devil dancing'. In Persia, the Ministry of Education launched a 'Hate Elvis' campaign; in Moscow, Foreign Minister Shepilov condemned the music as 'an unrestrained debauch of passions and an exploitation of the basest instincts and sexual urges.' Eton's debating society carried a motion that 'a nation which can sink to rock & roll deserves extermination.' Screamed one British newspaper: 'Why Grovel To These Strutting Idols?' When *The Times* finally deigned to notice Mr E. Presley it did so beneath a headline: 'US SCENES RECALL JUNGLE BIRD HOUSE AT THE ZOO'.

With nice irony, what had really changed was demonstrated a couple of years later, when *The Times* launched a massive circulation campaign around the slogan that it was the paper for Top People; it failed dismally, and *The Thunderer* was sold to Lord Thomson. The old brand of snobbery, the concept that everyone wanted to ape a social elite, had gone out of style.

NEXT WEEK: Sex and Dance; what do we *really* do on the dance-floor.

POP FILE

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND is one of America's best 'live' groups. They come from the South, and cut their teeth in the go-go-club and liquor-bar circuit. From there Duane Allman became a revered and respected session guitarist, working for people like Wilson Pickett ('Hey Jude'), Aretha Franklin, Clarence Carter and King Curtis. Sometime later he took time off from the band to work with Eric Clapton on the 'Layla' album.

The Allmans' basic blues-rock style can be found on their first album 'The Allman Brothers Band', but a fairer representation of their legendary 'live' appeal occurs on 'The Allman Brothers Band/At Fillmore East' and on the highly praised 'Eat A Peach' album. It was half-way through this last album that Duane Allman hit a peach truck on his motorbike, and joined that long list of rock stars who died before their time.

The band continued without him; the old two-guitar interplay between Duane and Dicky Betts being changed to a closer relationship between Betts' guitar and Berry Oakley's bass. But fate struck again, a year after Duane's death, when Berry Oakley was killed riding his motorbike.



W.E.A.

New members, Chuck Leavell (piano) and Lamar Williams (bass), have joined Gregg Allman (organ, piano, guitar and lead vocals), Jai Johanny Johanson (drums and congas) and Butch Trucks (drums and tympani); and the band roars on - both 'live' and in the studio.

HERB ALPERT. Born on March 31st, 1937, Herb Alpert attended the University of Southern California. He took up trumpet at the age of eight and played in junior and full symphony orchestras. During his spell in the Army he developed a love of jazz, but realised that he had no particular talent as a jazz musician.

In 1957, he teamed up with Lou Adler writing songs for Keen Records. Their 'Wonderful World' was a hit for Sam Cooke in 1960, and later for Herman's Hermits in 1965. During 1966 he was working as a session musician and recording himself in his 'home-studio', where he discovered his distinctive 'double-trumpet' sound.

Alpert formed A & M Records with Jerry Moss to promote his first hit 'Lonely Bull', which reached no. 6 (USA) and no. 27 (UK) in 1962. From there he had a succession of Gold Albums, starting with 'Lonely Bull' (1962), then 'Herb Alpert Vol. 2', 'South Of The Border', 'Whipped Cream And Other Delights' (1965), and 'Going Places' (1965). In April 1966 'Going Places' was no. 1, 'Whipped Cream' no. 3, and 'South Of The Border' no. 6 in the US charts. Following a decline in his popularity, Alpert has moved more into the production side of A & M, and is currently producing Gino Vannelli.



Redferns

AMEN CORNER were the top Welsh group in 1966. They came to London and found success on the Deram label. They scored with 'Gin House', 'World Of Broken Hearts', 'Bend Me, Shape Me', 'High In The Sky'. Then they transferred to Andrew Oldham's



London Features International

ill-fated Immediate label, and scored their first no. 1, 'Half As Nice', followed by 'Hello Suzie'. The group was swamped as such by the collapse of the Immediate label; dropped the brass section and signed with RCA as Fairweather, releasing 'Road To Freedom' and 'Natural Sinner'.

Andy Fairweather Low (vocals and guitar) now does sessions with Dave Edmonds. Neil Jones (lead guitar) is now a photographer. Blue Weaver (organ) has spent some time with the Strawbs, and Allan Jones (baritone sax) formed Judas Jump. Dennis Bryn (drums) is part of the Bee Gees backing group, while Mike Smith played tenor sax, and Clive Taylor played bass.

THE ANIMALS were one of the strongest groups in the English rhythm and blues boom of the mid-'60s. Formed in 1959, the original band hailed from Newcastle, and featured Alan Price on organ and piano, Chas Chandler on bass, Hilton Valentine on guitar and Eric Burdon on vocals. In 1964, 'House Of The Rising Sun' cut through the Beatlemania to sell over 4,000,000 copies world-wide and achieved the distinction of turning Bob Dylan onto rock & roll. Alan Price can be seen hanging round with Dylan and several bottles of Newcastle Brown on the 'Don't Look Back' film.

A string of hits followed, and the Animals became known as the 'blackest' of the white R&B bands and Burdon's voice was considered 'soul' enough to rate five pages in the Black American magazine *Ebony*.



Redferns

In 1966, when Alan Price had left, Eric Burdon killed off the wild bluesy Animals, took LSD, formed Eric Burdon and the New Animals, and sang gentle songs about love and San Franciscan nights. The old fans were dismayed, and after releasing 'Love Is' in 1968, Eric left rock to become a film star. He returned a couple of years later with a backing group called War and left yet again for Hollywood. Chas Chandler went into management with Jimi Hendrix and now handles Slade. Alan Price, after working with the Alan Price Set is currently working with Georgie Fame.

The first two albums 'The Animals' (1964) and 'Animal Tracks' (1965) still stand as remarkably clear illustrations of what the British R&B boom was all about.

PAUL ANKA was born in Ottawa, Canada, on 30th July 1941, and started professional singing at the age of 12 with two friends. The trio were pretty successful in Canada, so when they disbanded Paul persuaded his parents to send him to Hollywood where he had an uncle with 'show-biz' connections. Eventually he was signed by Don Costa to Paramount records. He had his first hit in 1957 with 'Diana', which stayed at no. 1 for one week in the States and nine weeks in the UK. 'I'm so young and you're so old, This my darling I've been told.' Not exactly tactful, but it went down well all the same. Anka's publicity told him as a heavily emotional singer exposing his soul through his rather tortured voice. Other recordings to earn Gold Discs were 'Lonely Boy', 'Put Your Head On My Shoulder', 'Puppy Love' and 'My Home Town'.

By the time he was 17 he was a millionaire and at 18 he was the youngest performer ever to star at the famous Copacabana Club in New York. By 21 – amidst talk of retirement – he had written over 200 songs, notably 'It Doesn't Matter Anymore', which was recorded by Buddy Holly in 1959.

He has survived into the '70s in better shape than most of his contemporaries, such as Fabian, Tommy Sands and Avalon. He is still recording and writing songs, and had a single out in the summer of 1973.

ROD ARGENT first formed the Zombies in 1964 with himself (piano, organ, harmonica, violin, clarinet, vocals), Hugh Grundy (drums), Paul Atkinson (guitar, violin, harmonica), Chris White (bass, double bass, vocals) and Colin Blunstone (guitar, tambourine, lead vocals). Two of their major hits of the time were 'Tell Her No' and 'She's Not There'. They then seemed to drop out of the picture for a time, but came back again with a new album in 1968. It wasn't long after however, that Rod decided to break up the Zombies, and at the time of their successful hit 'Time Of The Season' in March 1969, he formed Argent with his cousin Jim Rodford (bass), who used to be with Mike Cotton and Lucas, Russ Ballard (guitar), and Robert Henrit (drums). Argent's first album, 'Argent', was released soon after, but their first break came with the 'Hold Your Head Up' single, a hit on both sides of the Atlantic, which was followed by the successful 'God Gave Rock And Roll To You'.



Redfern's

Recently the band has been touring mostly on the college circuit, playing very solid heavy rock to enthusiastic audiences.

JOAN ARMATRADING, 23-year-old singer with a powerful bluesy voice. Born in St. Kitts, West Indies, she came over to England at the age of eight and settled with her parents in Birmingham. In 1969 she teamed up with Pam Nester – Joan writing the music and Pam the lyrics. They have



Essex Music

worked together ever since. Though comparatively new on the scene she has been credited with a number of radio and television shows and has completed extensive tours of both Germany and the UK. In November 1972 she released her first album 'Whatever's For Us' and in June 1973 her first single 'Lonely Lady'.

THE ASSOCIATION are a bit of an oddity on the US scene. Their first hit in 1966, 'Along Came Mary', picked up a lot of publicity from the fuss about drug-references in rock songs. The 'Mary' in the song went round solving people's problems and somebody decided that 'Mary' must be marijuana. Their next three million-sellers, 'Cherish', 'Windy' and 'Never My Love', were as free from drug-references as 'Mary' probably was, but by that time they were on their way.



London Features International

A very clean, wholesome and unrebelling group, their strength is their pure vocal harmonies. Highly rehearsed, they tend to sound like a 'robust heavenly choir'. They have a large following in the Mid-West of America.

CHET ATKINS, a country guitarist who became a 'Grand Ole Opry's star, and was vice-president of RCA Victor when they bought up the unknown Elvis Presley's contract from Sun. Chet produced the early Presley records putting more emphasis on the electric guitar, drums and vocal backing groups than the very basic Sun tapes. He also produced the Everly Brothers for Cadence.

He was the inspiration behind most of the rock guitarists of the '50s and early '60s, and still remains a major personality in Nashville today. In spite of being a millionaire, senior executive, and prolific producer, he can often be seen playing on sessions, even for unknowns. One of the greatest draws of Nashville as a recording centre is the chance that you might wind up with Chet Atkins playing lead guitar for you.



In the next issue



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BLACK MUSIC

The Roots of the Blues: The growth of the Blues, from the cotton fields and the work houses. The various forms of music from which the Blues emerged, almost overnight, nearly 100 years ago. Not a long list of forgotten names, but a skilful picture of the social and musical environment that created the root form of modern rock and jazz.

ROCK

Elvis Presley (Part 2): March 1960. 'The King' comes out of the US Army; the anticlimax and the sell-out to Hollywood. The rebellious hero of a generation becomes a sequinned variety star performing for middle-aged ladies in Las Vegas night-clubs.

POP INFLUENCES

The Midwives of Rock & Roll: Alan Freed was a run-of-the-mill Mid-West DJ until he turned-on to rock & roll. Sam Phillips was the man who signed Elvis to his record label in Memphis, Tennessee. Between them they gave rock & roll its first big audience and in the process changed the course of pop history.

POP

The Rise and Fall of the Crooners: The post-war fall of the Big Bands, whose singers become bigger attractions than the bands themselves. The musicians, and the rise of the smooth, Italian-American, 'image' singers. The reign of the ballad up to the ominous arrival of Bill Haley.

POP CULTURE

Sex and Dance: Is it just a question of soft lights and loud, loud music – or is it all really a sexual preliminary? The answer depends on the individual, but our roots lie deep, and whether it is the waltz or jive our motives are much the same.

PROFILE

Bill Haley: The man least likely to become the first rock hero. 30-ish, fat, flash-suited and kiss-curlled, Haley created rock & roll almost single-handed. His C&W background coupled with a good ear for Black R&B and high school slang, gave him a brief moment of glory as *the* trail-blazer of rock.

THE SUPERSTARS

Rod Stewart: After seven years wandering in the wilderness, singing with such notables as Clapton, Ron Wood and Jeff Beck on guitar, Rod has at last found fame and fortune with the Faces – and put a lot of the fun back into rock in the process.

Plus: Pop File and more Lyrics

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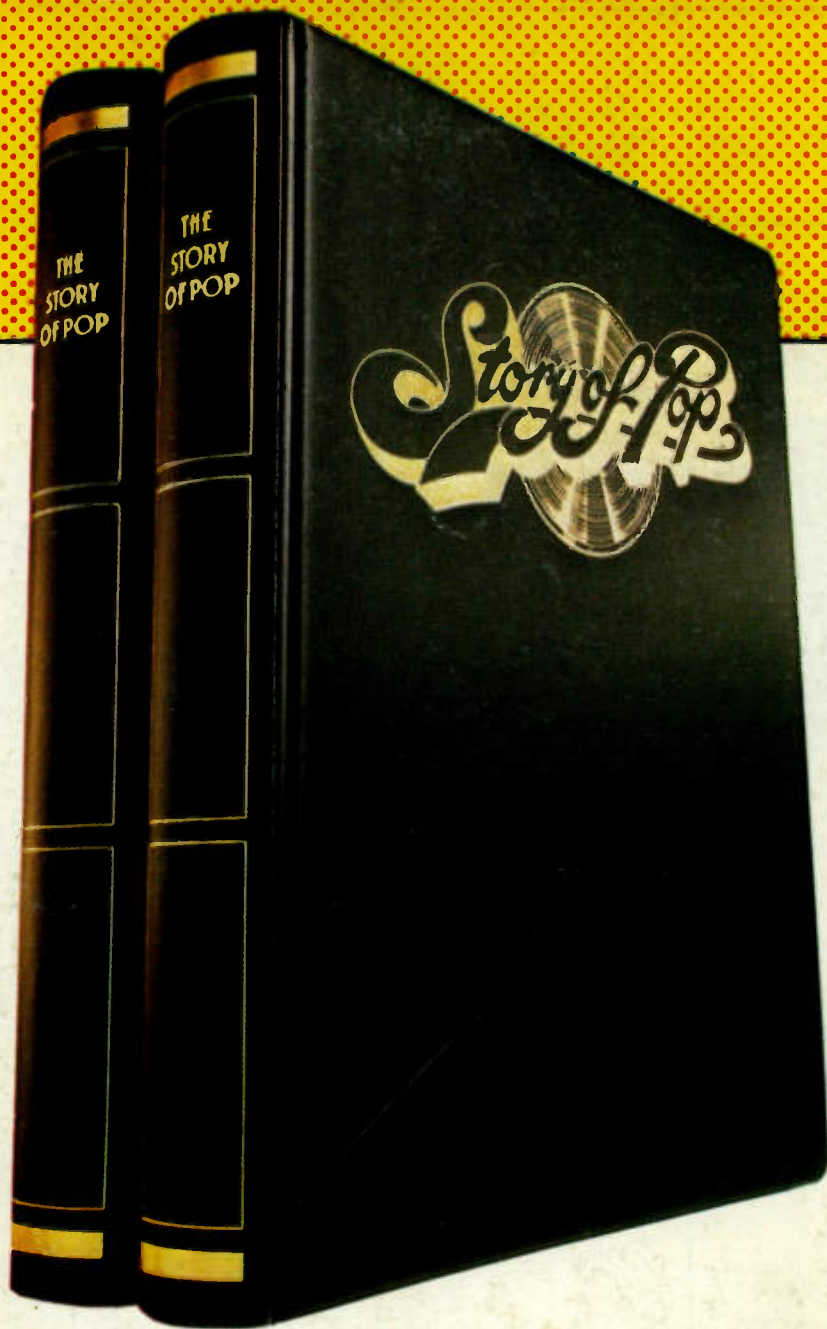
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