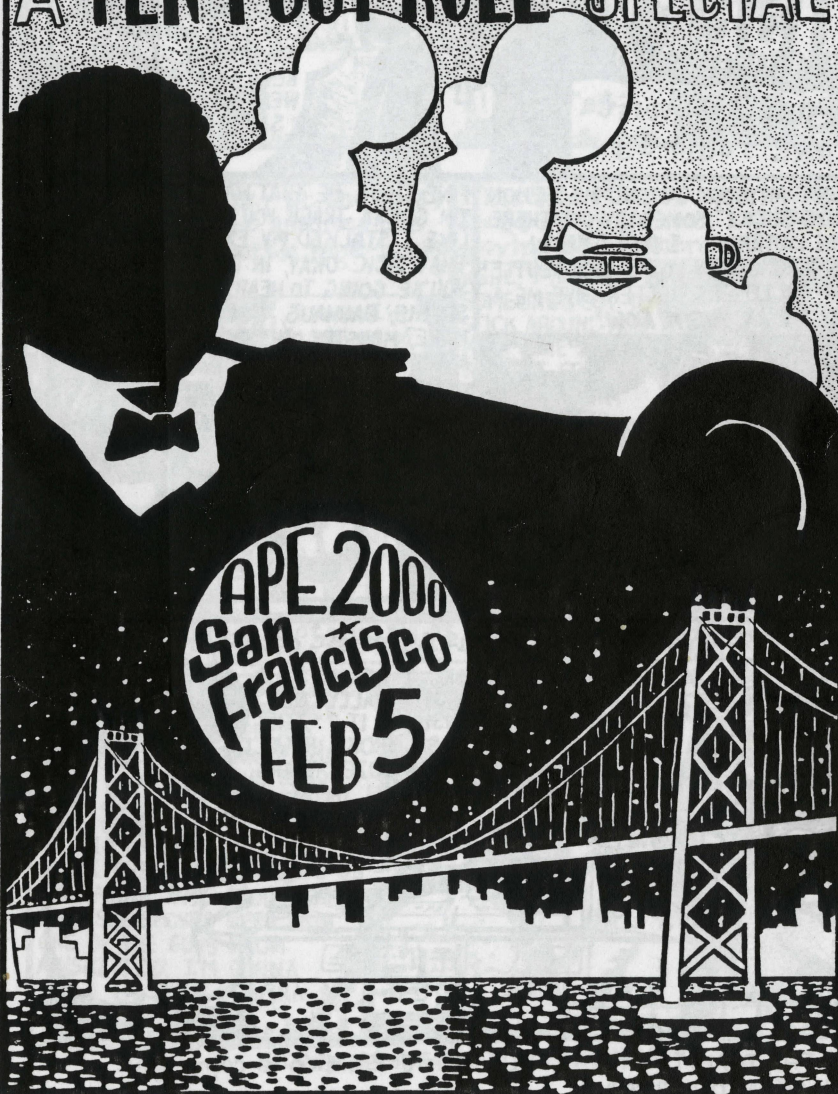


FIFTY CENTS

LEFT ^{of the} DIAL

A TEN FOOT RULE SPECIAL



SHAWN

GRANTON

Hey Kids! It's DJ Misery

Everyone's favorite
college radio DJ

Listen to her witty banter!



OKAY, LIKE IT'S 3PM
HERE AT THE STUDENT
CENTER. IT'S COLD
AND GLOOMY OUTSIDE,
JUST LIKE MY DUMB
LIFE. HELL, I'M
NOT EVEN SURE
IF IT'S COLD AND
GLOOMY OUTSIDE,
BECAUSE I'M DOWN
IN THIS WINDOWLESS
BASEMENT. I JUST
READ WHATEVER THE
WEATHER FORECAST
SAYS. ANYWAY...

WHY ISN'T ANYBODY CALLING ME? C'MON,
YOU GUYS SUCK! SOMEBODY OUT THERE
MUST BE LISTENING. I DON'T KNOW
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU STUPID PEOPLE!
ONE OF YOU LOSERS BETTER GIVE ME A
CALL **RIGHT NOW!**

FINE THEN. BE THAT WAY. BUT SOMEDAY
I'M GONNA TRACK YOU DOWN! JUST
LIKE I STALKED MY EX-BOYFRIEND,
THAT DICK. OKAY, IN THE NEXT HOUR
YOU'RE GOING TO HEAR THE CURE, THE
SMITHS, BAUHAUS, MORE CURE, DEPECHE
MODE, MINISTRY, THE SMITHS AGAIN,
AND IF YOU'RE LUCKY, NEW ORDER.



See her make important decisions as "music director"!



HEY MISERY!
SHOULD WE ADD
THIS NEW **CLASH**
LIVE L.P. TO OUR
ROTATION?

NO. I MEAN, IT'S
NOT REALLY "NEW"
MUSIC, IS IT? THE
CLASH BROKE UP WELL
OVER A DOZEN YEARS
AGO, AND ALL THOSE
SONGS WERE TAPED
WHEN? LIKE IN THE
EARLY '80S!

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Hang out with her at the local hipster bar where assumes the roll of "token Bettie Page-looking woman."



What does Misery have to say about staying "here" instead of moving somewhere else?

WELL, Y'KNOW, SOMEONE'S GOT TO STICK AROUND AND KEEP THE SCENE REAL. I SEE MYSELF AS A SORT OF MATRIARCH, SHOWING ALL THE YOUNG KIDS HOW IT'S DONE. IT'LL NEVER BE LIKE THE OLD DAYS, OF COURSE, BUT HOW CAN YOU COMPARE TO THEN? AT BEST BLAH BLAH...

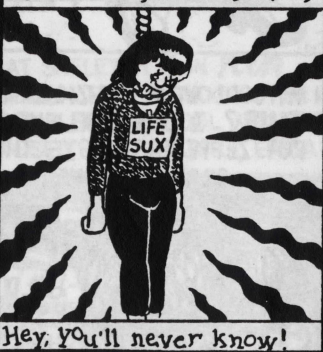


Shelly Stockton, another DJ at the station, has a different view.

IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S **PATHETIC** AND BEING A DJ IS THE ONLY THING THAT GIVES HER ANY IMPORTANCE! I MEAN, JEEZUS CHRIST! SHE'S 30, SHE GRADUATED **EONS** AGO, BUT SHE'S STILL ON COLLEGE RADIO! IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON, MISERY! AND I SWEAR IF SHE TELLS US **ONE MORE TIME** ABOUT THE TIME SHE SMOKED WEED WITH ONE OF THE GUYS FROM **HUSKER DU**, I'M GONNA RAM A LIT STICK OF DYNAMITE **UP HER ASS!**

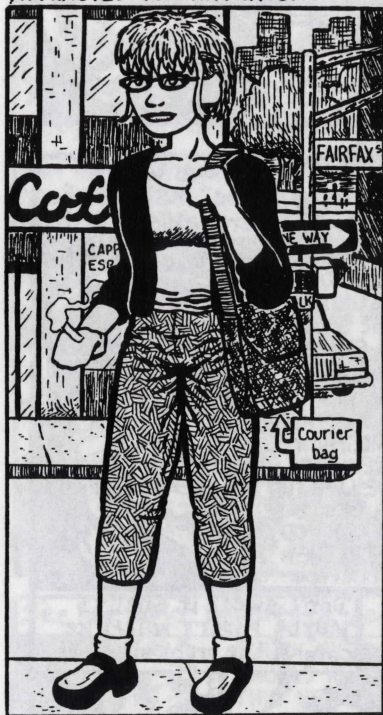


Don't sweat it Shelly! Maybe Misery will take care of the problem herself!



WAKEN iViVA ROCK STARS!

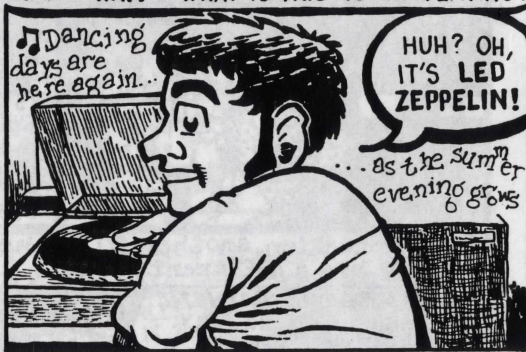
I WAS SORT OF SEEING THIS GIRL NAMED ERICA. ERICA WAS THE TYPICAL COFFEE HOUSE/ART SCHOOL GIRL-TYPE THAT I ALWAYS SEEM ATTRACTED TO. ANYWAYS...



ONE NIGHT I BROUGHT HER BACK TO MY "PAD". KNOWING HER TYPE, I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS ONE COMING, BUT STUPID ME!



BLAH BLAH *POETRY* BLAH BLAH BLAH BL-- WHA - WAIT - WHAT IS THIS YOU'RE PLAYING?

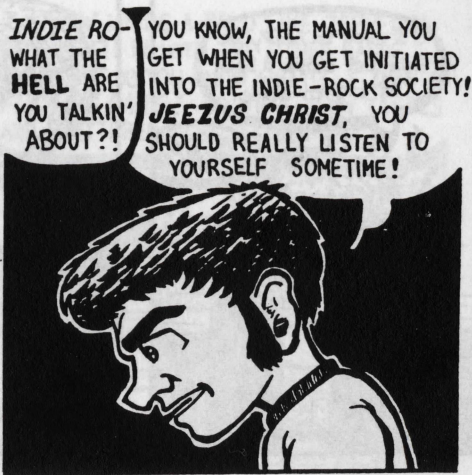
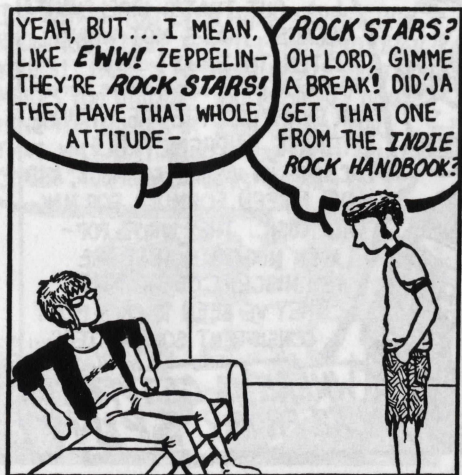


OH MY GOD! WE'RE *ACTUALLY* LISTENING TO **THIS**? I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY PUT ZEPPELIN ON! IS THIS SOME SORT OF JOKE?!

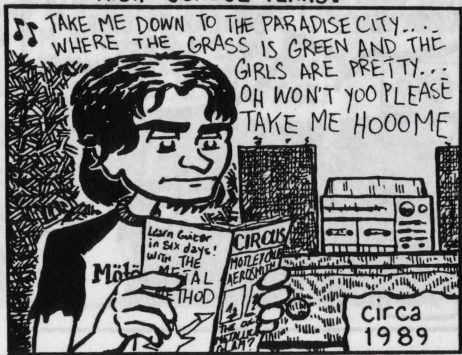


I KNOW IT'S NOT *COOL* TO LIKE LED ZEPPELIN ANYMORE, BUT I DO! I'VE LIKED THEM SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND I'M NOT GOING TO STOP NOW!





PEOPLE LIKE YOU TRY TO MAKE PEOPLE LIKE ME GUILTY FOR LISTENING TO BANDS **OTHER** THAN THE SMITHS DURING OUR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS!

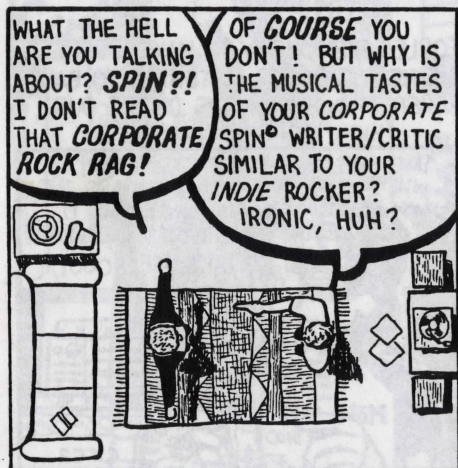
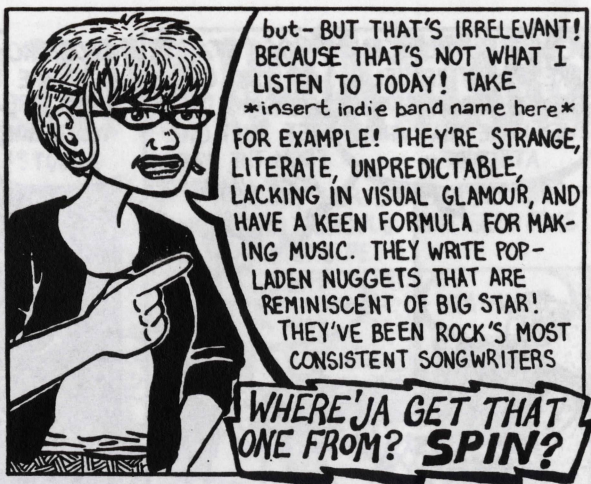


OH SILLY ME! I FORGOT THAT WHEN YOU BECOME AN INDIE-ROCKER YOU **DENY** THE FACT THAT YOU'VE BEEN INTO **ANYTHING** OTHER THAN INDIE-ROCK!



SO... WHAT SKELETON IS IN **YOUR** CLOSET, HMM? WHO DID YOU LISTEN TO **BEFORE** YOU BECAME COOL AND WORKED AT THE USED RECORD STORE, ERICA?





FACE IT ERICA! YOU'RE NOT INTO INDIE ROCK BECAUSE YOU LIKE IT! NO, YOU'RE INTO IT TO IMPRESS CERTAIN PEOPLE! YOU USE BIG ROCK-CRITIC TERMS TO DESCRIBE AN OBSCURE BAND FROM BOSTON SO YOU CAN LOOK COOL TO ALL YOUR PSEUDO-HIP "FRIENDS" AT THE COFFEE SHOP!



I DOUBT IF YOU REALLY LISTEN TO THOSE BANDS YOU SO HIGHLY PRAISE, 'CAUSE WHENEVER *I* LISTEN TO THEM, THEY LEAVE ME **COLD!**



AND WHY DOES EVERYONE LIKE **EXACTLY** THE SAME BANDS? BECAUSE THEY'RE THAT GOOD? BECAUSE THE RIGHT PEOPLE HYPED THEM UP? BECAUSE THERE'S SOME FACTORY OUT IN THE WILDERNESS PRODUCING COOKIE CUTTER INDIE KIDS? I DON'T KNOW.



I DOUBT IF YOU EVEN HAVE AN ORIGINAL IDEA INSIDE THAT TRUST-FUND HEAD OF YOURS! THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT YOU THAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE! YOU PROBABLY DON'T HAVE ANY QUIRKS IN YOUR CHARACTER THAT WILL DISTINGUISH YOU FROM ALL THE OTHER "TORTURED POETS" IN THIS CITY!



I *KNOW* LIKING A BAND LIKE ZEPPELIN DOESN'T FIT IN WITH THE OTHER BANDS I LIKE! BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT? *I DON'T FUCKING CARE!* SO WHAT IF MY TASTES ARE SCATTERED ACROSS THE MAP?



AND IF YOU THINK I LIKE 'EM FOR THE IRONY OF IT, OR BECAUSE THEY'RE "SO BAD, THEY'RE GOOD," WELL, THINK AGAIN!

I'M INTO THEM FOR BEING GOOD MUSICIANS! I'M INTO THEM FOR WRITING SOME OF THE BEST ROCK SONGS *EVER!* I'M INTO THEM FOR NOT BEING AFRAID OF TRYING DIFFERENT THINGS THAT MIGHT NOT WORK OR WASN'T IN A STYLE THEY WERE EXPECTED TO WORK IN! AND I'M INTO THEM FOR THE MAGICAL, MYSTERIOUS, PRIMAL, SEXUAL AURA AROUND THEM FROM BEING A *ROCK STAR!*



Y'KNOW, IT SADDENS ME TO THINK HOW THE YOUTH OF TODAY ARE BEING DEPRIVED OF THE CRYPTIC ICONOGRAPHY THAT ROCK ONCE POSSESSED! I MEAN, WHEN I WAS 12 I USED TO STARE AT THE COVER OF ZEPPELIN *IV* FOR HOURS, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE HELL IT MEANS! WHERE IS THAT KIND OF PSEUDO-MYSTICAL SHIT TODAY?



BUT YOU JUST WAIT! ROCK'S GONNA COME BACK IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM! BANDS THAT KNOW HOW TO PUT ON A GOOD LIVE SHOW ARE GONNA LEAVE YOUR FEET-STARING, CRITIC-PLEASING, PERFECTLY MESSED UP HAIRCUT-SPORTING INDIE ROCKERS IN THE DUST!



FUCK! I'M SICK OF TALKING ABOUT THIS SHIT WITH YOU! IT'S DRIVING ME TO DRINK! SO GET! GET YOUR INDIE-ROCKIN', SANRIO-COLLECTIN', BELLE h' SEBASTIAN-LISTENIN' ASS OUT OF MY GOD DAMNED APARTMENT! NOW!



LATER THAT EVENING...

FUCK! WHY DIDN'T I JUST PUT ON FUCKIN' PAVEMENT INSTEAD? FUCK! ME AND MY BIG MOUTH! NO WONDER WHY I CAN'T KEEP A GIRL!



THE FOLLOWING WEEK...

Oh, dancing days are here again, as the summer evening grows,



You are my flower,
You are my power,
You are my woman who knows.



EPILOGUE:

AFTER COMPLETING THIS COMIC, WE NEGLECTED TO MENTION THE VELVET UNDERGROUND, WHICH AS WE ALL KNOW HAS TO BE MENTIONED WHEN ONE DISCUSSES "INDIE ROCK." WE ARE SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE.



ADDENDUM: I have found out that the INDIE-ROCK HANDBOOK really does exist. The handbook I mentioned in the story has nothing to do with the real one, since I've never actually seen it. -SG 8/99

END ?

Joe Strummer and the Pietasters NYC, TU 23 NOV 99



HOW CAN I PASS UP THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE JOE STRUMMER, SINGER OF THE **CLASH**, ONE OF THE BIGGEST, MOST INFLUENTIAL PUNK BANDS **EVER**?



THE CLASH IS MY FAVORITE PUNK BAND FOR A MULTITUDE OF REASONS. THEY WROTE GREAT SONGS, THEY WERE IDEALISTIC, THEY DID MORE IN THEIR SHORT CAREER THAN MOST BANDS ACCOMPLISH IN THIRTY YEARS...



l-r: TOPPER, HEADON, drums, JOE STRUMMER, vocals/gtr, PAUL SIMONIN, bass, MICK JONES, gtr/vocals

AND THEY WENT BEYOND THE LIMITED DEFINITION OF **PUNK ROCK** THAT MANY PEOPLE AND BANDS— THEN **AND** NOW— SUBSCRIBE TO. THE CLASH PROVED THAT PUNK DIDN'T NECCESARILY MEAN MOHAWKS, BEING DIRTY, PLAYING SLOPPILY, KNOWING ONLY THREE CHORDS, AND BEATING THE SHIT OUT OF EACH OTHER.



PUNK IS MORE A FEELING, NOT **WHAT** YOU DO, BUT HOW YOU DO IT. LISTEN TO ALBUMS LIKE **LONDON CALLING** OR **SANDINISTA!** FEW OF THE SONGS ON THEM FIT THE GENERIC IDEA OF PUNK, BUT YOU CAN'T DENY THEM BEING **PUNK** LPs!



THE SHOW TOOK PLACE AT THE **ROSELAND BALLROOM**, A BIG HALL ON WEST 52ND. I ARRIVED AT 8:00PM AND FOUND THE CAVERNOUS CLUB SPARSELY POPULATED.



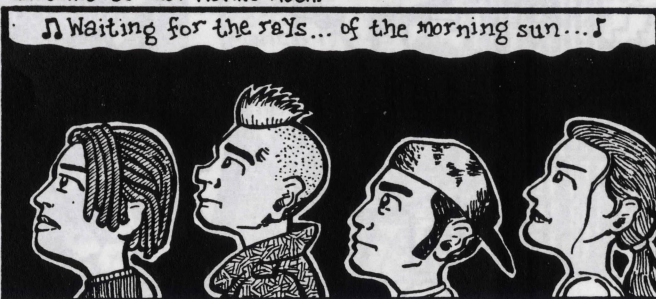
THE PIETASTERS WENT ON SOON AFTER I ARRIVED. THEY PLAYED AN EXTREMELY SHORT SET - 25 MINUTES - AND SEEMED TO BE INEBRIATED. DESPITE ALL THAT, AND THE FACT THEY HAD A FILL-IN GUITARIST, THEY PLAYED FINE. I DIDN'T CARE THOUGH. I LOVE THE PIETASTERS, BUT I'VE SEEN THEM BEFORE, AND I'LL SEE THEM AGAIN. JOE STRUMMER WAS ALL I WAS CONCERNED WITH TONIGHT.



DURING THE LONG INTERMISSION, THE HALL FILLED UP UNTIL THERE WERE A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE INSIDE!



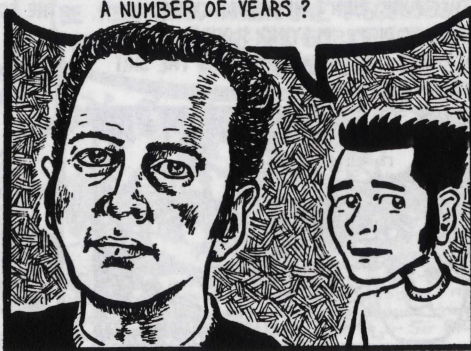
FINALLY, ABOUT 9:45, JOE STRUMMER AND HIS NEW BAND, THE MESCALEROS, TOOK THE STAGE. THE CROWD WAS HAPPY, BUT DIDN'T EXACTLY **EXPLODE** LIKE I THOUGHT THEY WOULD (AND LIKE THEY DID AT THE **MADNESS** SHOW BACK IN APRIL. STRUMMER PLAYED TWO SONGS OFF HIS NEW ALBUM, **ROCK ART & THE X-RAY STYLE**. THE CROWD STOOD AT ATTENTION, WATCHING BUT NOT MOVING MUCH.



THE BURNING QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S MIND, "WILL HE PLAY CLASH SONGS?" WAS ANSWERED BY THE THIRD SONG, WHEN HE KICKED INTO **ROCK THE CASBAH**.



EVEN WITH THAT CROWD PLEASER, THE AUDIENCE WAS STILL A BIT COLD AND STRUMMER WAS A LITTLE STIFF. WAS IT BECAUSE HE HASN'T PLAYED LIVE IN A NUMBER OF YEARS?



TWO.

MY WORRIES WERE SATIATED, THOUGH. STRUMMER CONNECTED WITH THE CROWD A COUPLE SONGS LATER, WHEN HE PLAYED **WHITE MAN IN HAMMER-SMITH PALAIS.**



DURING THE SONG, A CROWD-SURFING KID GOT YANKED AWAY BY THE BOUNCERS. WHEN JOE SAW THAT, HE STOPPED SINGING AND STARTED CURSING THE BOUNCERS, WHILE THE BAND PLAYED ON.

AFTER THE SONG, JOE TOOK TIME OUT TO RANT.



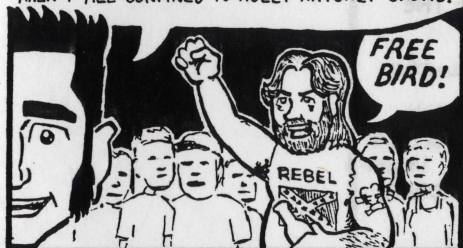
THE REST OF THE SHOW WAS GREAT AND WITHOUT INCIDENT. STRUMMER AND CO. RIPPED THROUGH MOST OF THE **ROCK ART** ALBUM, PLUS 12 CLASH GEMS LIKE **TOMMY GUN**, **LONDON CALLING**, **BANKROBBER**, **STRAIGHT TO HELL**, AND MORE. I WAS DISAPPOINTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE DIDN'T PLAY ANYTHING FROM HIS 1989 SOLO L.P., **EARTHQUAKE WEATHER**, WHICH I THINK IS A GREAT ALBUM, NOR DID HE TOUCH ANYTHING FROM THE CLASH'S 1980 TRIPLE LP **SANDINISTA!**



OF COURSE, THERE'S ALWAYS IDIOTS IN THE AUDIENCE WHO DETRACT FROM MY ENJOYMENT OF THE SHOW. I WAS NEAR A GROUP OF DRUNK, OLDER GUYS WHO DIRECTED "WITTY REMARKS" AT MR. STRUMMER. THEY HATED JOE'S NEW STUFF (WHICH ISN'T VERY CLASH-LIKE), AND WERE ONLY HAPPY WHEN CLASH SONGS WERE PLAYED.



IT PROVES THE POINT THAT NO MATTER HOW OBSCURE, INTELLIGENT, OR ECLECTIC A BAND OR MUSICIAN MAY BE, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOME DUMB LUNKHEADS WHO LIKE THEIR MUSIC TOO. SO DON'T GET TOO SMUG AND THINK ONLY "SMART" PEOPLE LIKE YOUR FAVE CULT BAND, 'CUZ THE MORONS AREN'T ALL CONFINED TO MOLLY HATCHET SHOWS.



AFTER NEARLY AN HOUR AND FORTY-FIVE MINUTES OF PLAYING, WHICH INCLUDED A **SIX** SONG ENCORE, STRUMMER AND THE MESCALEROS WRAPPED UP THE EVENING WITH THE ANTHEM **WHITE RIOT**. INDEED IT WAS! THE PLACE ERUPTED, A FITTING END TO ONE OF THE BEST SHOWS I'VE SEEN IN AGES!



shawn granton * tfr * drawn 1/2000

END.

I apologize in advance for all badly drawn Strummer panels.



If you're going to San Francisco...

WELCOME TO **LEFT OF THE DIAL**, A **TEN FOOT RULE** SPECIAL EDITION COMIC BOOK. THIS EDITION COMMEMORATES THE **ALTERNATIVE PRESS EXPO** (or APE, for short), HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO ON SAT. FEB 5, 2000. IF YOU NEVER PICKED UP **TEN FOOT RULE**, IT'S FILLED WITH THE SAME TYPE OF SMART-ASS HUMOR FOUND IN THESE PAGES.

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP TO SAN FRANCISCO, I GOT THINKING ABOUT **MUSIC**. HOW CAN YOU NOT? I MEAN, AS STARSHIP SAID, "WE BUILT THIS CITY ON ROCK AND ROLL." SO WHY NOT DEDICATE THIS **TFR SPECIAL** TO MUSIC? HERE'S MY GIFT TO THE CITY THAT BEGAT JOURNEY: AN ALL-ROCK COMIC. I HOPE YOU ENJOY IT!

IF YOU WOULD LIKE AN ISSUE OF **TEN FOOT RULE**, SEND ONE DOLLAR AND ONE STAMP TO THE ADDRESS BELOW. I HAVE NOS 1 THRU 5 (PLUS THE 2½ SPECIAL) AVAILABLE. AND NEW FROM **tfr INDUSTRIES** IS THE COMICS ANTHOLOGY **MODERN INDUSTRY**, FEATURING TEN GREAT CARTOONISTS (plus myself:) YOU CAN PICK ONE UP FOR ONLY TWO DOLLARS PLUS A STAMP.

ENJOY THIS COMIC AND LIVE THE ROCK N' ROLL LIFESTYLE!

Shawn Granton

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