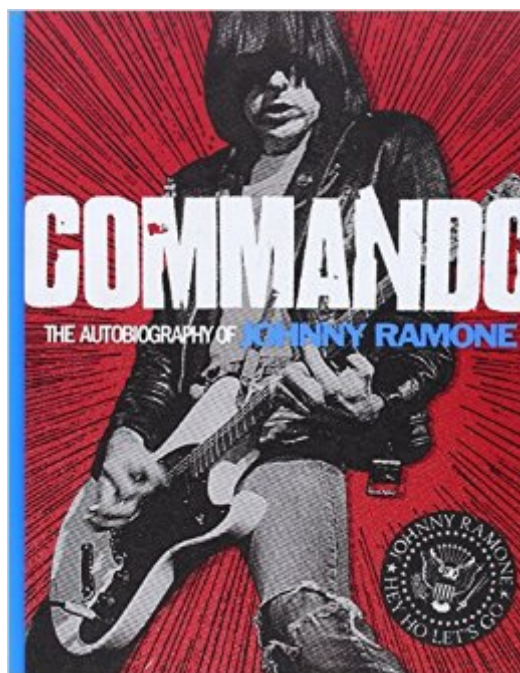


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Commando: The Autobiography Of Johnny Ramone



Synopsis

Raised in Queens, New York, Johnny Ramone founded one of the most influential rock bands of all time, but he never strayed from his blue-collar roots and attitude. He was truly imbued with the angry-young-man spirit that would characterize his persona both on and off stage. Through it all, Johnny kept the band focused and moving forward, ultimately securing their place in music history by inventing punk rock. The Ramones were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002—two years later, Johnny died of cancer, having outlived two other founding members. Revealing, inspiring, and told on his own terms, this highly designed memoir also features Johnny's assessment of the Ramones' albums; a number of eccentric Top Ten lists; rare historical artifacts; and scores of personal and professional photos, many of which have never before been published. Praise for *Commando*: "Amazing book . . . dense and throbbing with character—enough to bring this departed New York icon barking back to life." • "New York Daily News" "Johnny's delightful, sadly posthumous autobiography, *Commando*, is just like its author—as punk as it gets." • "Wall Street Journal" "Ramone memoir reveals charming, grumpy punk icon." • "Reuters" "There's no grand confessional to end *Commando*, just a nod of gratitude toward family, friends, and fans. Its characteristic succinctness rings genuine." • "Austin Chronicle"

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After many books about the Ramones, written both by insiders and outsiders, we now have the band's inside story from the one who was there from the very beginning until the very last show, Johnny Ramone. Johnny's perspective on the Ramones history is interesting not only because he

performed at every show, endured every grueling van tour, and made it through every recording session, but because Johnny himself was such a unique individual. Especially in the music business, where hard-working conservatives are the exception and not the rule. With a military school background and a deeply ingrained work ethic, Johnny wasn't your average rock star, fixated on sex and drugs and avoiding responsibility. He was focused on making the band successful and keeping the quality consistently high. *Commando* is less of a tell-all book about the personality conflicts within the group (that gossip has been covered elsewhere) and more of a sober assessment of Johnny's and the Ramones' successes and failures over their long career. Johnny's highly developed business sense comes through loud and clear (and loud!).

Attention up-and-comers: *Commando* is a textbook for anyone who wants to start a band and make a living at it. Being one of the architects of punk, Johnny's story is told with unflinching honesty. It's as much about "I don't care what you think" as it is about maintaining his own personal integrity. Johnny candidly admits to the bad stuff he did (some of it a little shocking) as well as the phenomenal job he did keeping the Ramones together and working steadily. It's neither boastful nor apologetic. It is what it is. The text is very much in Johnny's own voice. You almost feel like he's talking to you when he discusses his friends, his former girlfriends, and his wife Linda.

Let me begin this by saying that I am extremely surprised by this book that I casually bought. It brought me to tears at the end, (I'm a male in my 50's, ex-Marine) and gave me a penetrating glimpse into my adolescence, but first a little history. My youth was spent in and around N.Y.C., either as a privileged kid in a North Jersey suburb, or at a place we had in the city. I revolted against my upbringing all throughout my school years, and found a source of intense excitement with this new band, The Ramones. We're talking 76' here, I picked up on *Leave Home*. First one went by me. I was 12 years old then. Anyway, I soon became a nut for the Ramones, and would see them everywhere I could. N.J., The city, Queens, Long Island. I would go see Dee Dee at comic book conventions and just the weirdest places. I would ever so often see Johnny on the Subway, he was always dressed just like he was onstage, the jacket,... everything. I would always go up to him and say, "Johnny, I'm a huge fan and I just wanted to say that you are the God of Thunder. Only you are able to do this. You rule." I would smile and he would give me a serious look and reply, "Thanks a lot.... that really means a lot to me. That's the kind of thing that keeps me going!" Then he'd smile. I lost touch with the Ramones after *Road to Ruin*, I tried, but there was endless better music out there. When Joey died I was pretty emotional because he was the sweetheart of the band. But Joey told a rather 1 dimensional picture of Johnny that this autobiography clarifies completely. I cried

when I got to the end of the book because I realized what an incredible person he was. Amazing ethics and standards. Sure, a lot of imperfections, but what resonates with me is the integrity. I realized that I was looking for the very things he believed in.

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