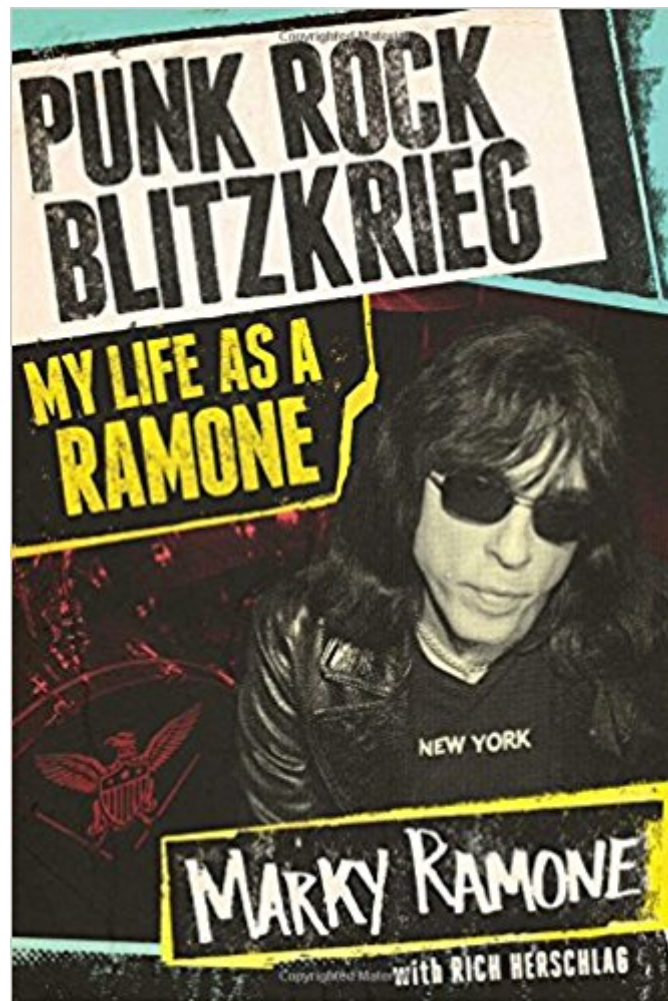


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Punk Rock Blitzkrieg: My Life As A Ramone



Synopsis

The *entertaining and enlightening* (Stephen King) final word on the genius and mischief of the Ramones, told by the man who created the beat behind their iconic music and lived to tell about it. When punk rock reared its spiky head in the early seventies, Marc Bell had the best seat in the house. Already a young veteran of the prototype American metal band Dust, Bell took residence in artistic, seedy Lower Manhattan, where he played drums in bands that would shape rock music for decades to come, including Wayne County, who pioneered transsexual rock, and Richard Hell and the Voidoids, who directly inspired the entire early British punk scene. If punk had royalty, in 1978 Marc became part of it when he was knighted *Marky Ramone* by Johnny, Joey, and Dee Dee of the iconoclastic Ramones. The band of tough misfits were a natural fit for Marky, who dressed punk before there was punk, and who brought his *blitzkrieg* style of drumming as well as the studio and stage experience the band needed to solidify its lineup. Together, they changed the world. But Marky Ramone changed, too. The epic wear and tear of a dysfunctional group (and the Ramones were a step beyond dysfunction) endlessly crisscrossing the country and the world in an *economic* "practically a psychiatric ward on wheels" drove Marky from partying to alcoholism. When his life started to look more out of control than Dee Dee's, he knew he had a problem. Marky left music in the mid-eighties to enter recovery and eventually returned to help the Ramones finally receive their due as one of the greatest and most influential bands of all time. Covering in unflinching detail the cult film *Rock n' Roll High School* to *Wanna Be Sedated* to Marky's own struggles, *Punk Rock Blitzkrieg* is an authentic and always honest look at the people who reinvented rock music, and not a moment too soon.

Book Information

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Touchstone; Reprint edition (January 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451687788

ISBN-13: 978-1451687781

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (154 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #217,718 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #50 in [Books > Arts &](#)

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Customer Reviews

I thought I knew EVERYTHING about the Ramones. I even own the Ramones™ pinball table. But Marky Ramone's Punk Rock Blitzkrieg surprised me with a few chestnuts I had never heard before. Did you know the Pet Sematary video was filmed in the Sleepy Hollow graveyard (yes, the one with the Headless Horseman)? Or that Marky and Dee Dee got stuck driving in circles in said graveyard, freaking out to the point where Dee Dee started hallucinating monsters? Did you know Marky, when getting off booze, had DTs so severe, he thought he saw dinosaurs? The book goes pretty in-depth into Marky's pre and post-Ramones life. While the "before and after" won't interest Ramones fans as much as the "in-between" stuff about his time with the Ramones, it makes for an interesting read and fills in a lot of gaps. He covers his bands Dust, The Voidoids, Wayne County and the Backstreet Boys (not THOSE Backstreet Boys), Marky Ramones and the Intruders and The Remainz. But the bulk of the book, as expected, is Marky's time with The Ramones. And what a time it was. While most of this is stuff previously covered in the myriad of Ramones biographies and auto-biographies already released, it goes into further depth and with (obviously) a different view. Marky discusses, even more in-depth than in Mickey Leigh's excellent, I Slept With Joey Ramone • Joey's trouble with OCD. Dee Dee's trouble with drugs. Monte's trouble with falling for practical jokes and being the butt of all jokes. Johnny's trouble with being an abusive jerk (not just to his bandmates and girlfriends, but even toward his bandmates' girlfriends!). Marky's battle with the bottle and his hitting rock-bottom; having his wife abandon him and his smashing his car into a furniture store midday. The problem with the book, as with most auto-biographies, is Marky doesn't point the same finger at himself as he does the others in his book. He spends a ton of time (too much time, really), pointing out Joey's problems with hygiene. Dee Dee's problems with drugs, dishonesty and even stealing from fellow bandmates. But, despite his being temporarily kicked from the band for his drinking, Marky never goes into much depth about his own self-destructive behavior. He seems to justify crashing his car into a furniture store by repeatedly talking of how no one was killed and how some father lied about Marky running over a daughter's foot. He also justifies his drinking by expressing, repeatedly, his feeling of betrayal by Dee Dee ratting him out for hiding a bottle of vodka in a garbage can (which is, according to this book, what got him removed from the band). He says, time and time again, that

Dee Dee ratting on him and Marky's being booted was not fair, because Dee Dee was way more of an addict than him. He glorifies himself for being the only Ramone who visited Joey in the hospital as Joey was dying. But never does he, despite living next to the hospital, address why he only managed to visit Joey once in the three months Joey was there. Instead, he curses out Johnny for refusing to visit, despite Marky's telling Johnny that Joey was dying. He not only glosses over, but completely ignores the ridiculous fight he had with Joey on Howard Stern's show (this one was nasty and Marky came off looking like a villain and addressing it was expected and appropriate -- Marky chooses to pretend it never happened). He goes on for pages about how he tried saving Dee Dee through NA and AA. He says he told Dee Dee to call him if he got the urge to cop heroin and how Dee Dee would still be alive if he had only taken Marky's advice and given him a call. He makes himself out to be the hero when he defends Johnny on MySpace when people were claiming Johnny had Alzheimer's or HIV. What Marky's good at, as long as he's not talking about himself, is putting the band's dysfunctionality into further perspective. The band, as we all know by now, basically hated each other. Joey and Johnny didn't talk for over a decade. What Marky does is bring you into these conversations. How he remembers, word-for-word what was discussed, especially during his blackout drunk days, is beyond me and it's likely the verbal back and forths are memory fragments, despite being quoted as verbatim conversations. That said, the conversations ARE interesting. And there is a lot of them. Even if they're half-truths, they make for a fun, slightly disturbing, read. The best thing Marky does in the book is discuss his feelings on each of the albums he was involved in. He goes into how the records were made, the band's thoughts behind each album, the feeling the band had over each album's success, or lack thereof. He even lets the reader know each band member's individual feelings regarding most albums. Unfortunately, Marky didn't play on the classic four Ramones' albums. He wasn't in the band for the first three and he had been kicked from the band when they made their last punk rock masterpiece, 'Too Tough to Die'. It would have been nice to hear his thoughts on these albums, but as he wasn't there, there's not much he could have offered. Not being there doesn't stop Marky from doing some conjecture and writing of things he could not have known. He discusses the number of people who stepped over Joey Ramone as he lay on the ground on New Year's Day with a broken hip. How these people likely thought Joey was just another homeless guy. How could Marky have known any of this? It's possible Joey told him, the one time Marky visited the hospital, but it sounds like Joey was pretty out of it and it's likely Marky is fictionalizing or theorizing plausible/possible

scenarios. Still, the book makes for a quick read (I finished in three days) and adds a few more tales of trials and tribulations to the Ramones™ legacy. My favorite was finding out that Johnny, who hated Joey, got stuck with Joey Ramones™ Rock and Roll Hall of Fame statue. Ah, the irony. This one got a laugh out of me. A lot of the stories elicit a chuckle. Marky has a sense of humor that comes through strong in this book. Marky Ramone isn't the greatest storyteller in the world, but he does weave together some interesting tales that shouldn't be missed by any Ramones™ fans. If you're a fan, this one is a must read. If you're just curious, I'd recommend Mickey Leigh's, I Slept With Joey Ramone, Monte's, On the Road with the Ramones and/or Vera King's, Poisoned Heart before this one. But, honestly, I'd recommend taking an ALL OF THE ABOVE approach. Each of these books add insight to the band and every single one of them, including Marky's, are incredibly entertaining and invaluable to Ramones™ fans the world over. Gabba Gabba!

My wife's reaction when I started reading this book pretty much sums it up: "You're reading ANOTHER Ramones book?" Like a lot of fans, I've read em all- Johnny Ramone's book, Dee Dee's, Mickey Leigh's, Monte Melnick's, and several other general bio books of the band. That on top of watching the End of Century and Raw documentary DVDs, left me wondering what other stories could be left. Well, this book proves that there are plenty more great stories about the Ramones, and Marky Ramone's got em. All the anecdotes in this book are either totally new to me, or offer new details on well-told tales. For example, Marky's account of the Phil Spector sessions adds a whole different perspective from any other version. In short, full of stuff you probably haven't read before, even if you're a hardcore Ramones fan.

All I can say is WOW!! Although I have known Marky personally for over thirty years and thought I knew a lot about him, I could not put this book down! It was brutally honest and showed that success does not happen by chance or overnight. It comes with a lot of sacrifice, hard work, determination and constant pursuit of achieving your dream at all costs and never giving up. He told the truth.....all of it! The good, the bad and of course the ugly, as we all know how it really was. His longtime wife Marion is the woman behind every great man as they say, and deserves so much credit for "hangin in there" between all the ups and downs that come with living with a Rockstar. It's not easy and she has stood by her man through thick and thin. I truly recommend this book to all Ramones fans and others who enjoy reading rock n' roll books. In my opinion, it is one of the best

rock biographies ever written to date. BRAVO! to you Marky Ramone! You are an AMAZING drummer and truly a living legend in our time. "Keep Rockin" buddy and making rock history! RAMONES forever!GABBA GABBA HEY!!

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