

**'ROBERT PLANT'**  
FROM PAGE 16  
because I thought it was very fresh, even though it is a 1948 song. It sounded great alongside all that contrived hero singing.

"If the Honeydrippers is the way I get the success that maybe my ego demands while my savage breast is being soothed with the *Shaken 'n' Stirred* department, then that's the way it is."

**On the solo LP:**  
"This is the best piece of music, the best collection of songs I've been involved in since *Physical Graffiti* way back. It's ambitious, it's left-of-centre. It's trying to continue the Robert Plant, can you classify him, thing. It's not possible and I like that.

"I had to take some songs to extremes. 'Doo Doo A Do Do' came out of a night I spent at a Puerto Rican discotheque in Spanish Harlem. It was an incredible evening; these people were dressed so remarkably and looked so beautiful. I'd never been in such sharp company before and I wanted to put that mood into a song. If you do that, you can't always expect hit records."

**On the LP title:**  
"I was going to call it *One In Peru*, but of course Peru has all those drug connotations. The real reason was that when I had my record sales charts back, I'd only sold one record in Peru. I thought that would make great copy, but I didn't want any drug or alcohol associations. *Shaken 'n' Stirred* really means I'm coming out of my corner — not virile, but I am! It's like bang, it's rock 'n' roll from my viewpoint."

**On hits and compromises:**  
"I guess I should be proud of my success. I don't make instant hit singles. For me to get a record on Top 40 radio is hard work. After the unusual success of 'Sea Of Love', a friend told me 'now all you have to do is write a song with a verse and chorus and just a little heavy metal guitar solo, you'll sell millions!' Phil Collins is a dear friend of mine and he sends me tapes of the way to do it, but I can't really plan it that way!

"Yes, my past does give me a little freedom. The door opens, if a bit reluctantly. Programme directors play it three or four times and don't quite know what they're listening to. And then it clicks, bingo, a hit, like 'Big Log'. That was an unusual record to be a hit; it was a cross between a spaghetti western theme and someone meandering about lost love. I'm in a fortunate position. What I do has an air of quality about it."

**On roots:**  
"We took our roots from Chicago blues and the first rock 'n' roll — Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran, Ronnie Hawkins. That stuff was really fresh, it broke through Rosemary Clooney and Frank Sinatra. We were also affected by Jack Kerouac, Camus and Sartre in a literary manner. It was a rebellion thing, an honest-to-goodness alternative to the comfort of the 1950s.

"Now the kids coming up in hard rock and metal bands don't have the same roots structure we have. In consequence they'll rely on Led Zeppelin and the like for their roots. The synth bands get their roots from Bryan Ferry and David Bowie and all those other old farts who wear suits."

"Now it's a culture gap, it's fashion for fashion's sake. Musically, Spandau Ballet and Depeche Mode aren't coming from something quite so gutter-like or from the street. Fashion and appearance are their roots."

**On the Willie Dixon case (Led Zeppelin are being sued by the bluesman for ripping off his 'Who Do You Love' and 'Whole Lotta Love'):**  
"Well, Dale Hawkins did a song called 'Suzie Q' years ago and Papa Charlie Jackson did another song in 1926 and they all sound very much like 'Whole Lotta Love'. Our version probably wasn't the first to use that theme, but I don't think Willie's was either. It's the same old story, someone hears that and goes 'Hang on a moment, that's mine.' I remember those Mormons, the Osmonds. They did something called 'Wild Horses' ('Crazy Horses' actually, Robert) that to me sounded just like 'The Immigrant Song'. But I thought, ah, let it be. There's nothing new under heaven.

"I saw an Eric Clapton record the other day with 'Crossroads' on it, and it said 'written by Clapton.' It's written by Robert Johnson! You see, after about 25 years, copyright sort of disintegrates and is up for grabs. So in about 10 years' time, someone can do 'Whole Lotta Love' and say they wrote it. Maybe Depeche Mode will do it!"

(More editorialising: Plant's rather flippant, cavalier attitude to the serious question of plagiarism is inexcusable. The story of white rockers getting rich using the ideas of often uncredited black musicians is not one of the most admirable chapters in music history.)

**On the tour:**  
"It will be the first time I work with horns — the Uptown Horns from New York — and I'm using Bette Midler's girls, the Harlettes. I think the whole mood of the show will be more light-hearted than anything I've done before. Not that it'll verge on cabaret, it'll just be more fun on stage.

"The tour is me sticking my toes in the water to test the temperature. If the audience has stayed with me through the changes I've made up to now, it should be great.

"The last tour was my first since Led Zeppelin and the feeling was incomparable to anything I'd ever felt before. Although Led Zeppelin started off in an underground way, it got massive acceptance very quickly. So subconsciously you got the feeling you couldn't fail. The last tour was like coming back again. The adrenalin was remarkable, all the possibilities either way."

**On keeping in shape:**  
"No, I don't work out. Mind you, my girlfriend arrived from London last night so it feels like I've been working out! The set is over two hours long, so it is quite demanding. I once talked with Mick Jagger about 'Oh God, can we still do it?' Every time Mick goes on stage it is as though he's still trying to prove he can. He's brilliant, but he always tends to over-parody the thing."

**On how he would like to be remembered:**  
"As the King of Cock-Rock! No, just as an ambitious person who wouldn't lie down."

**Kerry Doole**

# A PEEK AT AFFORDABLE EXTRAVAGANCE

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EXCELLENCE IN ELECTRONICS

# Letters

Post to 'RIU' Letters, PO Box 5689, Auckland 1.

**Fickled Pink**  
Your Chills cover, June 1985, instills the true sense of the band. Vanity has replaced spirit. They are drawing their music from the image of what they were rather than the people they are now. They will do well in England.  
**Charles Allison**  
**Simon Bendall**  
**Tim Robinson**

**Grisly Spectacles!**  
I'm not sure if it is Russell Brown that is so pathetic or just his review of the Johnnys. The man's reviews, and in fact his writing, of late, have become without substance. His paean to the Johnnys is exactly what one would expect Russell to write about a band that one would expect Russell to like. In order for Russell to like a band they have to be correctly dressed, correctly marketed and drinking men, such as himself.

There is no more grisly spectacle that I could imagine than to find Russell and Martin Philipps conversing. Two very little men hiding two massive egos behind two very obvious fronts of false humility. I guess my point is that I find (like a lot of people in Christchurch) that Russell Brown and his ilk should be put out to masturbation whilst there is still time.  
**Ray Pierce** Christchurch

**Ad Ethics**  
I've read all 95 issues which you've put out over the last couple of years and I remember the starting issues, yeah, intelligent, independent music information, always based somewhere on the critical alternative "revolutionary" ethic. Now I pick up the 40-odd pages volume and most of it only rates a casual glance, it's all adverts. Shit, I suppose you've got to make a living, but for fuck's sake, show a bit of critical discretion. I find it disgusting to pick up a supposedly young, alternative person's paper and find in it blatantly sexist advertising, especially the 'Body Double' advert you ran on page 35. The connection in that ad between sex and violence is obvious, and frankly alarming. Sex is not violence, rape is violence, and that advert oppresses women and so implicitly we're all worse off. Take responsibility for what you show in your magazine or lose the last of your already slim credibility. Cut the sexist crap.  
**Adrian Shields** Auckland

**Addiction**  
Great to read the review of *The Exciting Wilson Pickett*. But what about the release of *Animal Tracks* (1965), the Animals original?  
**Record Addict**

**Another One!**  
I am writing with an alternative viewpoint to the review in June's video section of *Suburbia*. I'm no film critic so my opinion is based from the point of view of an active participant in the punk culture today. My letter judges the film not by the merit or otherwise of its production, but on the way it portrayed the lifestyles and mentality of punks in general today. It occurred to me that the director and scriptwriter only relied on the weak image given to punk by the media as a way of ensuring that the movie would appeal to the majority.

*Suburbia* only covered a small and detrimental sector of punk activity today by showing them as weak and pathetic copouts, branded with "T.R." (The Rejected), indulging in the usual attention-seeking channels like driving round in a big car with an anarchy symbol typically spraypainted on the side, acting stupidly, being ignorant and poking fun at society in weak ways. Okay, so they acted with good morals by making the rednecks appear dumb by turning the tables on them but that just goes to make a good story doesn't it? I'm not saying that punk beliefs and ideas are the new messiah and should be protected at all costs, merely that the film gives a poor representation of the way we think.

PR., I'm not saying you were fooled by the portrayal of punk, just that we place different demands on its content, but I disagree that it "accurately documents modern punk philosophy." A much more worthwhile film in my opinion is *Another State Of Mind*, which covers a real live tour of two bands (Youth Brigade and Social Distortion) and accurately depicts both the faults and positive aspects of punk. Increasing numbers of people are becoming involved in bands, art and lots of other creative activity. These people all over the world are showing that they can do something intelligent and original without getting overly egotistical (most of the time). This worldwide underground network of people is striving to close the barriers that have always existed between people and break down the general public's attitude towards punk.  
**Simon Draper (Rites Tapes)** Auckland

**Over The Wall ...**  
I.D. — your video review of Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (June RIU) annoyed me. You have failed to see its "brilliance" by your own dim light of awareness. Hope I'm not getting too "deep" for you here I.D. But it is a movie that will stand the test of time and is already regarded by many as a "rock classic". Brilliant, moving and deep ...  
**Not A Madonna Fan** Manurewa

**Not Invisible**  
I've finally got motivated to write because Alf has finally got to No.1. People have been coming up to me saying: "Your fat tart has finally got to No.1. How the hell did she get there?" and so on. What the hell has being fat got to do with music? Right, Alison's a big lady; right too, she's just had a baby. But she's a damn sight more expressive and musical than a lot of other singers like Limahl, Bronski Beat, Duran Duran, Marilyn, Tears For Fears, Berlin and all that lot of teenie-boppers. What we need is some good soul!

**Alison Moyet's Diamond Earrings** Pukekohe  
PS: You've got a bloody good magazine going, thanks — are you ever going to do a cover on Alison Moyet?  
We had Alf on the cover of issue No.65, December 1982.