



# What Is Punk?

*Eric Morse , Anny Yi (Illustrations)*

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**One of *The Globe and Mail's* Best Books of 2015**

"A punk primer for the youngest set....Yi's incredibly detailed clay figures are a kinetic and inspired art choice. Their crazy creativity matches the expressive spirit of punk....As [Morse] points out, the best way to learn about punk it just to listen....If invested adults love the topic, a shared reading experience can't be beat."

-- ***Kirkus Reviews***

"Clay artist Yi molds...fantastically detailed Plasticine figures to create scenes of the birth of punk. Using a benign craft-project material for the skinny bodies and ragged clothing of Joey Ramone, Sid Vicious, and their rowdy, fist-waving audiences is very much in the spirit of punk (Plasticine is especially good for mohawks), and readers will spend long stretches inspecting her painstakingly modeled guitars, amplifiers, and safety pins."

-- ***Publishers Weekly***

"Why It's Wild: A history of punk music for kids illustrated in Gumby-esque claymation (minus the -mation)."

-- ***School Library Journal*** , 100 Scope Notes's "Wildest Children's Books of 2015"

"*What is Punk?* is fun, sophisticated and beautifully illustrated introduction to the music genre for kids--or adults."

-- ***New York Daily News***

"Reading *What is Punk?* to [my kids] made me feel as if I was passing on something truly significant. Morse and Yi have created a comprehensive and articulate...documentary about the roots of punk rock."

-- ***The Globe and Mail***

"An essential way to pass down to your son or daughter the lesson that pop culture can be political."

-- ***The Globe and Mail*** , 100 Best Books of 2015

"A cool book of punk history for kids by Eric Morse, with great clay illustrations by Anny Yi."

-- ***Slate*** , Mom and Dad Are Fighting podcast

"Eric Morse's book *What Is Punk?* explains the envelope-pushing genre to the younger set, and perhaps some adults, as well."

--**St. Louis Public Radio**

"Think Wallace and Grommet with liberty spikes and anarchy patches...While [Anny Yi's] images of Johnny Rotten and Henry Rollins are cute, they're presented as live action dioramas that are adorable, accurate and engaging."

-- ***San Diego City Beat***

"While *What Is Punk?* is undeniably a children's book, it can serve as a history lesson for potential fans of any age....*What Is Punk?* exposes the reader to the rebellious sub-culture in a friendly, educative manner."

-- *Alternative Press*

"A fun little book intended to serve as (rhyming) curriculum for little punks learning their Punk History 101....Sid, Glenn, and Milo meet Wallace and Gromit."

-- *Razorcake*

"Pairing Yi's Wallace & Gromit-style clay pictorials with Morse's rhyming ride through the history of punk music across the globe, the children's book is ready to raise the next generation of riot grrrls....You're going to want to give *What Is Punk?* as a gift at every baby shower this year. Just don't be surprised if your niece ends up bleaching her hair blonde and tearing up her leather jacket at age 6."

--**Bustle**

"Written by Trampoline House founder Eric Morse in classically Suessical iambic, the book is lusciously illustrated with photographs of Play-Doh recreations of all mommy's and daddy's favorite punk heroes: the Ramones, Iggy and the Stooges--and Debbie Harry, David Byrne, David Johansen, Tom Verlaine, and Lou Reed all standing in front of CBGBs."

--**Bedford & Bowery**

*What Is Punk?* is a must-read pop-culture primer for children--an introduction to the punk revolution, recreated in vivid 3-D clay illustrations and told through rhyming couplets.

From London's Clash and Sex Pistols to the Ramones' NYC protopunk, from Iggy Pop to the Misfits, this volume depicts some of our culture's seminal moments and iconic characters. A delightful read for kids and parents alike, illustrated in a truly unique visual style, *What Is Punk?* lays the groundwork for the next generation of little punks.

## What Is Punk? Details

Date : Published October 6th 2015 by Black Sheep (first published September 14th 2015)

ISBN : 9781617753923

Author : Eric Morse , Anny Yi (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Music, Childrens, Picture Books, Nonfiction, Punk

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# From Reader Review What Is Punk? for online ebook

## Amanda says

Another LibraryThing Early Reviewers success story.

This is an incredibly cute book telling of punk rock's history in rhyme with claymation type illustrations. While you could read this in less than 5 minutes, it's still worth picking up to read. Read it to your child and, maybe, play the music! Teach 'em young.

We start off at CBGB (David Johansen's claymation is even wearing high heels) with Blondie, Television, New York Dolls and The Velvet Underground - all bands I still listen to today.

Then we grab The Ramones. Hey ho!

Up to Michigan to meet Iggy (seriously, put on a shirt).

Then over to the UK for some Sex Pistols, Clash and Buzzcocks!

Don't forget the females of this movement: Slits! X-Ray Spec! Siouxsie Sioux! Go Gos!

Onward to Black Flag, Bad Brains, Circle Jerks!

Go read. Go listen.

(videos posted on my blog) <http://icedteadiaries.blogspot.com/20...>

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## Mark says

What is Punk? Well, if you have to ask, then you probably need this book. This punk primer is wonderfully illustrated with 3-D clay figures, that illustrate an important time in musical history. From Television to

Talking Heads; from The Clash to Siouxsie Sioux, this guide from Eric Morse is geared towards children, so that their punk parents can turn them on to music of *their* youth, but it's certainly suitable for all ages.

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## Edward Sullivan says

This is one of those books that makes me shout aloud: "DAMN!!! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THIS?" A picture book primer on punk told through rhyming couplets with 3-D clay illustrations.

"From the borough of Queens  
came contenders to the throne:  
in blue jeans and leather,  
four teens called the RAMONES.

They got straight to the point:  
a one, a two, and three four,  
'Hey ho, let's go,'  
two-minute songs—never more."

Goes on sale October 6th, my fellow aging punks.

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## Laura says

**"Punk is music, it's art,  
it's culture and vision.  
But if you really want to know punk..."**

I skidded to a full-stop, crashing halt in the middle of a crowded train station when I spotted this gem across the way. And as I made my way over to the corner bookstore, words and beats started jumping and humming in my head. HEY! HO! Let's GO! Punk rock for kids! Haha...Brilliant!

So where, when, and what is punk?

**"Did punk come from here,  
or way over there?  
Rise up from the dirt,  
spring out of thin air?"**

This rhyming and informative book breaks down punk perfectly for young readers. From NY to London and back again! The voices, sounds, and personalities pop to life on the pages in clay figures, colors, and movement. Henry Rollins and Iggy Pop in clay in a kids' book! How awesome is that?!!!

There has always been something about clay-mation or clay images that pulls me right in. I can't seem to look away! The look and texture of the clay faces and structures just fascinates me. *And* kinda creeps me out in a way. Haha...I can't explain why really—just does. So these pages had a hold of me at first sight. Every

single page lures you in with energy and curiosity. I keep going back for more. For just one more look! I think I'm waiting for them to move or jump off the page! :D

What Is Punk? by Eric Morse is a must for punk rock fans of any age. The perfect introduction to a movement and feeling that makes you jump up and move and LISTEN!

Go find this book and the music.

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## **Jawknee says**

I won a copy of this book from a Goodreads giveaway.

An excellent overview of the bands that helped form the foundation of punk.

I love the effect the clay model illustrations have on the writing.

At times the rhymes seem to not flow quite so well as others, but it's still great.

I read it along with my nephew and now he wants to know even more about these bands!

Pretty much all of the big names from the 70's-early 80's era make cameos here.

Unfortunately it all ends with Black Flag and Bad Brains, just as hardcore punk started coming out.

Maybe hardcore could be covered in a sequel.

"A new sound in punk was just underway

With the help of new bands, like D.O.A."

It writes itself!

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## **Ethan Minsker says**

This review is for ages 18 and up. We all know where “punk” came from. Coined by Legs McNeil and John Holstrom from Punk magazine, it was a term kicked around the prison system for a sex slave. So let’s be clear: not the UK. What Is Punk? is a primer for punks with kids. Its best function is to keep you, as the parent, from getting bored out of your skull with all the pink ponies you get to read about over and over. It was made for me. And unlike other “punk for kids” books, like Punk From A to Z, it leaves out the nasty words like “bollocks.” When reading to your kid, sometimes you are just too tired to act as a censor. You can read What Is Punk? on autopilot. There will be plenty of time for your kids to learn about the bad stuff out there like “piss off!” and “fucking hell!” This book references The Misfits, The Germs, and even fanzines. The artwork—3D clay characters and sets—brings me back to the claymation shows like Santa Claus Is Coming To Town, and all that Christmas stuff they had on in the 70s. There is something pure and innocent about the art, yet a little dirty at the same time—or maybe I can just imagine the smells at these shows, a mix

of sweat, piss, stale cigarettes and spilled beer. How great it would be if they turned What is Punk? into a show on Nick Jr. so I could watch something other than pink ponies that talk? I hate ponies, I love this book.

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### **Heather \*Awkward Queen and Unicorn Twin\* says**

Eh, this was okay. The illustrations are great, but the rhyming scheme is old and trite. And honestly, how hard is it to stick to the meter when the rhymes are so simplistic? Children's books everywhere are guilty of trying to force a shitty rhyme, and this is no exception.

Female punks were treated as an afterthought, stuck in gold frames on a pink page. Why can't ALL the punks just be together? Thanks for that discussion point on sexism, I guess.

As the book says, all you have to do is listen. This may give my children kind of a visual aid on punk, but they get a better education about it from listening to the actual music.

2.5 stars.

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### **La La - Everyone's Crazy Aunt says**

This would be a great idea for an adult novelty book written in Seussian style, but fails as a Children's story. To be a good book for children it takes more than just rhyming lines, the content also has to be of interest to a child. But even as an adult novelty the rhyming and reading rhythm were way off in several places. It really needs a rewrite to take care of these problems. The illustrations, however, are fabulous. The images were the only thing keeping me from giving it a one star rating. I was approved for this eARC through Edelweiss in return for an honest review. I will not be reviewing this title on my blog because it is less than four stars.

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### **Ashley Adams says**

I'm absolutely thrilled to have found this on the library shelves! This is the story of how punk got started, told in verse for children. The clay figures are absolutely splendid illustrations of legendary punk figures. Makes a great gift.

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### **Heather Snowe says**

I wish that I could review the text and the illustrations separately! The illustrations are amazing and compelling clayscapes. My 2.5 year-old was excited to just look at the pictures for a good 20 minutes. Given his attention span, that by itself is a good review. Unfortunately, I had a hard time figuring out the intended audience for the text. Sentimental children of the 70s and 80s reading to their own sprouts, I'd guess? There isn't any actual narrative, just a brief catalog of some of the more famous punk bands, and I wouldn't say that the question of what punk IS was actually approached. For an adult the rhymes are forced and a little annoying, and for a kid they probably aren't silly enough. This book is worthwhile for the illustrations, and will probably strike a chord with parents who want their children to know about the misfits. But it would be

better to just quote some lyrics to your kids in place of the text.

I received an advance copy of this book as a Goodreads giveaway.

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## **Jim says**

Punk is dad

My daughter and I have a game that we like to play.

We'll be listening to some music on the tape player in the car—lately it's been the psychedelic garage rock of Ty Segall, the brutal street punk of Belgium's Cheap Drugs or the thrash metal band from Virginia, Iron Reagan—and over the din of the crunching guitars and wailing vocals I'll ask her how she likes it.

Usually, she'll say that it's too loud, but I never actually hear what she says because I cut her off and yell, "What? Turn it up?" and jack the volume up even louder to levels pleasing to my perpetually 15-year-old brain.

This game never gets old, at least not for me.

Of course, it's not really a game. More like a taunt and probably a counter-productive one at that. If the goal is to indoctrinate my daughter to punk rock, this is probably not the best way to go about it.

Right now one of her favorite bands is Imagine Dragons. I'd like to make fun of Imagine Dragons but I don't know anything about them other than their music is everywhere: commercials, video games, the radio, etc. I do know that making fun of Imagine Dragons will only ensure that my daughter doubles down on her devotion to the band, so that's not an option.

My daughter and I have a lot in common. She shares my passion for eating chicken wings, watching pro football and reading books. It's too soon for coffee (she's only 12) but it's the perfect time to introduce her to punk. I've exposed her to a wide and deep variety from the classics to the contemporary, but it doesn't seem to be taking and I'm not sure I understand why.

Perhaps *What Is Punk?* by Eric Morse and Anny Yi from Black Sheep/Akashic Books can help. *What Is Punk?* is a picture book for kids that tells the story of punk through rhyming couplets and three-dimensional images of clay figures. Think Wallace and Grommet with liberty spikes and anarchy patches.

Though it's hardly comprehensive, Morse's rhymes touch on the punk scenes in New York, London and Los Angeles, with a few detours along the way:

Out West in sunny LA, they live close to the beach.

Bands like X and Black Flag had a punk gospel to preach.

Catchy right? But it's Anny Yi's figures that steal the show. While the images of Johnny Rotten and Henry Rollins are cute, they're presented as live action dioramas that are adorable, accurate and engaging.



I don't know if What Is Punk? is propaganda for kids or nostalgia for parents, but I'm giving it to my daughter anyway.

But do I really want my daughter to love punk rock? After all, punk rock and substance abuse go hand-in-hand. You could say that about any kind of music scene but I don't think my friends who listen to country (oh wait I don't have any friends who listen to country) or other genres have been to as many funerals as I have. I really don't want my daughter dropping f-bombs and calling me a fascist when I tell her to make her bed.

Punk rock has been one of the most positive influences in my life. Punk didn't just give me an outlet for my anger and aggression; it helped me understand it. Punk taught me that rebelling against the status quo was not only acceptable, but essential. Punk helped undo 12 years of Catholic school mind control and dictatorial discipline. Punk taught me that being out of step with society didn't make me a bad person, it just made me different, and in a school/town/nation full of sheep, different was the only way to be.

Punk rock also gave me skills. Interviewing bands and reviewing records for punk zines taught me how to write for an audience—something that was never discussed during my six years of college. And because I'm collaborating on a book with Black Flag cofounder and Circle Jerks frontman Keith Morris about his life in punk rock, punk has even contributed to my livelihood. Most importantly, punk has given me my best and oldest friends.

I haven't given up with my daughter. I'll keep beating the drum and if the message doesn't get through I'll just turn it up, but if you see me at an Imagine Dragons concert in the future, please know that I tried.

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### **Michelle Kelley says**

What to do with this book? As a sentimental punk fan, it was a really cool and fun trip down memory lane, as the book referenced some of my favorite high school bands and musicians. As an adult and a librarian who might want to share this with kids (who appear to be the intended audience), I would totally pass on this. It mostly just mentions band after band that almost no kids today are going to know or care anything about. I must say the Claymation art work in this is fantastic, and it could have really been a cool book for young'uns if it took a different approach. Like really paint a story of what punk rock was, the time, and about its audience. The laundry list of names that makes up most of the text doesn't really do much. And really, do you want to explain the Sex Pistols and Circle Jerks to a group of primary-grade students? No thanks!

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### **Julia says**

An interesting concept but truthfully there wasn't much to be provided by the book in my honest opinion. If the book was meant to educate those who don't know punk then it almost missed the head of the nail for the majority while giving a small tap to its purpose.

The book will capture many readers due to its freshness. The 3D clay illustrations are truly different while giving the book the right kind of appeal for its topic as it is the hook, line and sinker. And to add to the newness of the illustration-type the book comes in mostly rhyming verses (a few don't seem to rhyme at all) that are easy to read and a bit on the catchy side.

All in all if you are looking for punk band suggestions this book will provide you a stepping stone into that genre if you are interested.

**\*\*Received this book as part of the Early Reviewers at LibraryThing.com for free in exchange for a review\*\***

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### **Ardyth says**

Super fun clay figure illustrations. Could be a fun gift to the adult punk fan in your life... but pretty boring for kids.

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### **Aeicha says**

Eric Morse's What Is Punk? is a totally awesome journey through the world of Punk music! This captivating and informative little book will teach little readers all about the rise of Punk music and introduce them to some of the most famous and important Punk bands.

Morse's clever rhyming couplets will delight little readers and amuse parents. Anny Yi's phenomenal 3D-clay illustrations are pure perfection and bring the stellar Punk world to life. Readers of all ages will have so much fun exploring each wild 3D scene.

Charming, smart, and a lot of fun, What Is Punk? is the perfect read for the music lovers in your life!

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