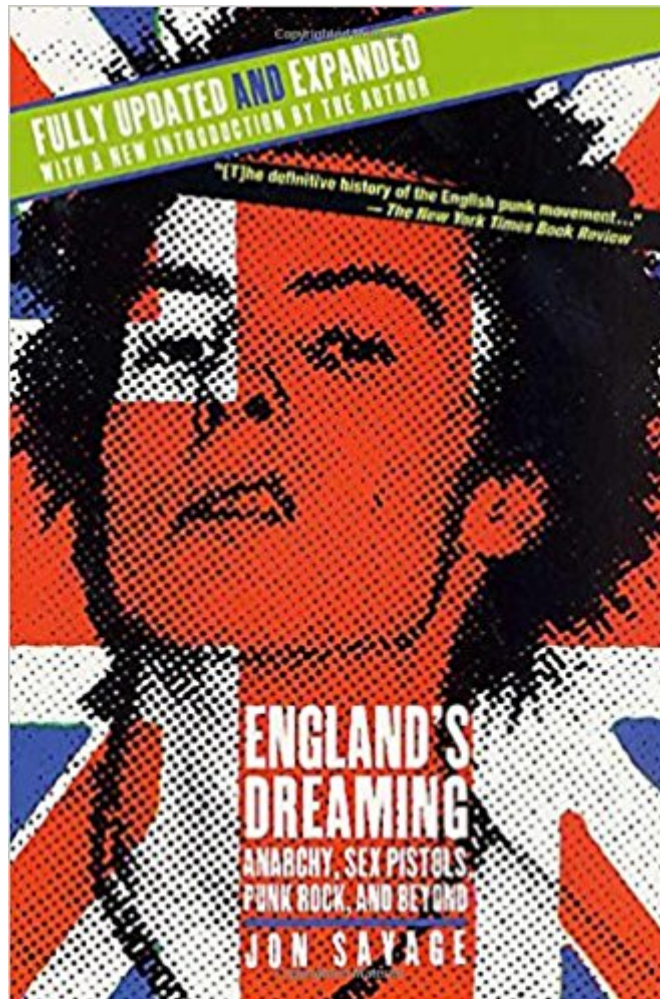


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England's Dreaming, Revised Edition: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock, And Beyond



Synopsis

England's Dreaming is the ultimate book on punk, its progenitors, the Sex Pistols, and the moment they defined for music fans in England and the United States. Savage brings to life the sensational story of the meteoric rise and rapid implosion of the Pistols through layers of rich detail, exclusive interviews, and rare photographs. This fully revised and updated edition of the book covers the legacy of punk twenty-five years later and provides an account of the Pistols' 1996 reunion as well as a freshly updated discography and a completely new introduction.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Punk Rock is an oft-misunderstood musical genre, usually seen as one-dimensional, inarticulate, and musically incompetent, made by angry young kids who have no regard for anyone but themselves. This all may be true, but to dismiss it as such is to miss a vital element of rock'n'roll. 'England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond' stands as the best book on its subject, and as one of the finest books on the sociology of music in general. Jon Savage was prescient enough to have kept his teenage journal from those long-ago days of London in the mid-to-late-70s, he is able to present us with a thorough, first-hand account to spice up his in-depth journalism. Throughout this work he quotes from it, giving us impressionistic, colorful glimpses of the time: "30.10.76: I go see my first proper punk group. I know what it's going to be like: I've been waiting for years, and this year most of all: something to match the explosions in my head. The group are called the Clash; everybody I talk to says they're the best.... Within ten seconds I'm transfixed; within thirty, changed forever. 23.11.76...fascism here won't be like in Germany. It'll be

English: ratty, mean, pinched, hand in glove with Thatcher as mother sadist over all her whimpering public schoolboys.25.12.76: A party... in the kitchen downstairs, members of the Damned, the Clash and the Sex Pistols sit around a large table.... Halfway through the evening, the Heartbreakers arrive, and install themselves in a tight corner near the telephone, which Johnny Thunders uses to make hour-long calls to the US. Not collect.25.12.78: Public Image Ltd, Rainbow Theatre, London. this, as expected, is mainly Rotten's show. Except now there is a new element of whining and self-justification....

Jon Savage is a wonderfully fluent writer of English, rock history, and language. At 43 years of age now I look back at my salad days, or what I remember of them somewhat awestruck. What is amazing is not that the revolution never really happened, but that so much has been written about what at the time seemed rather more like fun than civil disobedience. Dressing up in silly costumes, consuming too many drugs, and mashing up My Father's Place when the Ramones played etc. At the heart of it then, we really did think we could change the world, and if anyone actually did bring real change it was the Sex Pistols and their mastermind Malcolm McLaren. I'm writing 25 years to the week after Sid Vicious died in New York, and two years after Joe Strummer of the Clash passed on. These bands changed the way music could be done in a fundamental way. This book gives a detailed chronical in first hand reports of the early days of punk in London. For those of us who used to hang out at Club Mudd in the late 70's it is a mirror to look in to see ourselves in our self destructive glory. If you're too young to remember, or you're just into rock history this book is still important. I read this book when it first issued, then picked it up again recently, and both times thoroughly enjoyed it. Savage put a wonderful scholarly gloss on the artistic and social heritage of punk rock. Some of his analyses may be overwrought but however tenuous the links, it is undeniable that punk rock combined nihilism, socialism and the spirit of revolution in a way that is somehow unique in musical history. The first disenfranchised hip-hop generation of the late '80s is somehow a fair successor to the punk movement. Maybe I'm a crusty old rocker now, but everything else seems derivative somehow.

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