

“Rocket to Russia” The Ramones



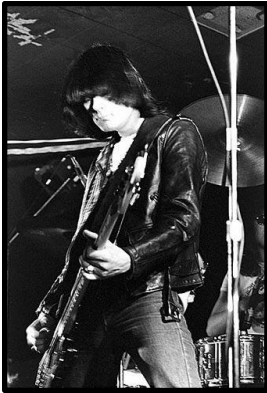
An American Punk Rock band often cited as the first true punk band. Formed in 1974 in New York. They were known for helping to establish the punk movement in the United States and other countries. Even though they weren't commercially successful, they are seen today as the most influential band of punk culture.

The band consisted of lead singer Joey Ramone (1951–2001), bassist Dee Dee Ramone (1951–2002), guitarist Johnny Ramone (1948–2004) and drummer Tommy Ramone (1949–2014).

- *Jeffery Ross Hyman*, known professionally as Joey Ramone (May 19, 1951 – April 15, 2001). He was the lead vocalist and one of the two original members of the Ramones until the breakup. His image and voice made him a countercultural icon.



- *Douglas Glenn Colvin*, known as Dee Dee Ramone (September 18, 1951 – June 5, 2002). He is the bassist of the band and known for writing some of the more well known songs from the band like "Chinese Rock", "Commando," etc.



- *John William Cummings* (October 8, 1948 – September 15, 2004), better known by his stage name Johnny Ramone. The main guitarist of the band and one of the two original band members who stayed until the breakup of the band.



- *Thomas Erdelyi* (born January 29, 1949 – July 11, 2014), known professionally as Tommy Ramone. The drummer for the Ramones and later becoming the band's producer. He was also the longest surviving member dying at age 62.



The makings:

On August 21st, 1977 the Ramones with producer Tony Bongiovi, T. Erdelyi started recording for the Album "Rocket to Russia" and was recorded in a former Episcopalian Church in Midtown Manhattan. Sire Records, an American label, allowed the band to use \$25,000 to \$30,000 to complete their album. The album was released on November 4th, 1977.

- Songs

- **"Locket Love"**

It's considered as a 2 minute work of art of pure rock n roll. It was remixed over and over until it was perfect according to the Ramones.

I liked the catchy rhythm and vocals better than some of the others like Rockaway beach.

Lyrics: <https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/96369/>

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLMTCbEUui4>

- **"Rockaway Beach"**

Based on a real place that was a hangout spot Douglas Glenn Colvin (Dee Dee Ramone) after escaping with his mother from his alcoholic father. Rockaway Beach was one of the first to be recorded.

It had the same beat throughout the song with an abrupt ending that I thought was best for this song.

Lyrics: <https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/96364/>

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaHgb6RJITw>

- **"Teenage Lobotomy"**

The song is a story about a teenager getting a lobotomy to fix his brain damage due to overexposure to Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT).

I think the rhythm mixes well with the story about the teenager being told in the song.

Lyrics: <https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/95925/>

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gjYqcwaklo>

- **"We're a Happy Family"**

The story in the song tells about a family with problems about the parents and between them, with the father leaving from the child's perspective.

The song's story really sets the imagery in my mind which I thought was great.

Lyrics: <https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/18334/>

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQ38g4X7WE4>

- **“Why is it Always This Way?”**

The song relates to the topic of somebody that one of the band members knew committing suicide.

The only unique part of the song was the fade out at the end.

Lyrics: <https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/96376/>

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2N4gOiq1v8>

Back Cover:

The back cover was sketched and drawn by Holmstrom and Johnny. They both eventually conceived a military theme with an anti-communist cartoon drawing featuring landmarks around the world like the Empire State building and Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow. The landmarks pertain to the global position with a “pinhead” riding a rocket from the States to Russia. The original back cover drawing now remains in the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.



My Personal Review of Rocket to Russia:

I liked most of the songs in the album with some I'll listen to on a daily basis, the continuous rhythm of the loud guitars and drums in the background gave me a rush of energy, and changed my view on punk rock. However there isn't much of a diversity of different beats and rhythms and most of them and the songs are at least 2 minutes long or less, but besides that it's a great album that everyone should try listening to. I would give this album a rating of 8/10.

Critical reception:

Many critics appreciated the album "Rocket to Russia" and was given mostly positive reviews because of the band's quality of sound recording and production value. Most reviewing sources such as the Rolling Stone Album Guide, The New York Times, and AllMusic have rated this album with 4 or 5 stars and with people like Stephen Thomas Erlewine an music critic at AllMusic stating the production "only gives the Ramones' music more force.". Even the UPI (United Press International) listed the album as the second best in 1977, writing that the Ramones are "the undisputed kings of American Punk."

Commercial Review:

Quoted From Wikipedia:

"The lack of record sales was largely due to fellow punk band Sex Pistols turning people off the genre "with their antisocial behavior," as put by author Brian J. Bowe. Rock music historian Legs McNeil relates: "Safety pins, razor blades, chopped haircuts, snarling, vomiting—everything that had nothing to do with the Ramones was suddenly in vogue, and it killed any chance Rocket to Russia had of getting any airplay."[44] Joey also insisted that the Sex Pistols were partially responsible for the low sale numbers, concluding that before 60 Minutes focused on the Sex Pistols, Rocket to Russia had decent airplay. After this, Joey asserted that "everyone flipped out and then things changed radically. It really kind of screwed things up for ourselves"

Sources:

- <https://www.sputnikmusic.com/review/31962/Ramones-Rocket-to-Russia/>
- <https://steveforthe deaf.wordpress.com/2018/09/26/loket-love-ramones/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocket_to_Russia