

Fool About My Money: A Cultural History of *Rip It Up* Magazine
1977-2009

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Amberleigh Patricia Jack _____

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ABSTRACT

Rip It Up, New Zealand's longest-surviving music magazine, was founded by Murray Cammick in 1977. During its history *Rip It Up* has faced numerous musical and cultural trends that have affected music journalism in many ways. Since 1977 new ideas, styles and genres of music have spread through the global popular music industry and have affected New Zealand's music culture. From early punk rock to post-millennial dubstep, *Rip It Up* has been a significant part of these musical trends. The magazine has been a major force in New Zealand's music scene for more than 30 years, and many of its writers have made successful careers built on their time as a "rock scribe" for *Rip It Up*.

This thesis analyses the history of *Rip It Up* magazine from 1977 until 2010. It follows the magazine's development from a free newsprint fanzine-style paper to a glossy commercial entity owned by a corporate media conglomerate. It discusses the magazine's history in terms of cultural trends as well as global issues that face music journalism such as gender representation, political economy and credibility. Over the period examined by this thesis, journalism has changed radically in how it is made and consumed from ink splashed newsprint to the soft glow of a tablet computer screen. The history of *Rip It Up* is a microcosm of the history of New Zealand's popular culture over these three decades, and offers insights into how journalism and music have changed as new economic, social and cultural forces have affected the production and consumption of global popular culture. *Rip It Up* links the past with the present and points to an uncertain future as print media becomes increasingly weightless, massless and instantly everywhere in the age of digital publication. The music is by no means over yet.

INTRODUCTION

If you're a rock journalist - first, you will never get paid much. But you will get free records from the record company. And they'll buy you drinks, you'll meet girls, they'll try to fly you places for free, offer you drugs... I know. It sounds great.

- Philip Seymour Hoffman as Lester Bangs, *Almost Famous* (2000)

Nick Kent, music journalist for the Guardian, described Lester Bangs as “a typewriter-trashing Jim Morrison who helped invent the whole punk rock aesthetic,” (Kent, 2002)

Lester Bangs is one of the most well-known music journalists of the past 40 years, and was admired for his passion for everything rock and roll, from the music to the lifestyle.

Bangs wrote fervently about his experiences for both *Rolling Stone* and *Creem*

magazine, before dying of a drug overdose in 1982. Bangs was a journalist who, due to his often outrageous gonzo-style journalism, himself had a fan base, much as music stars themselves have fans (Shuker, 1994).

Rock criticism, Nick Kent added, “never recovered from his passing. The genre quickly fragmented – much like the music it was reporting on – and most of the old school became content to pen windy, academic appreciations of their old favourites” (Kent, 2002). It seemed that Bangs belonged to an entirely different age of music journalism than when Kent wrote in 2002.

This age was depicted in the film ‘Almost Famous’ (2000). Set in 1973, the movie chronicled the early career of *Rolling Stone* writer Cameron Crowe, and his attempts to write about rock and roll while touring manically with a rock band, discovering sex,

drugs, groupies and music along the way. The early 1970s are regarded by some rock writers as the golden era of music journalism, when a passion for a compelling music read took precedence over budgets and constraints or demands set by record companies (Draper, 1990). Former *Rip It Up* editor Karl Puschmann agreed with this in a 2009 article titled 'The Hand that Feeds'. Puschmann saw the 1970s as a time when the music press was given greater access to bands, in terms of touring with an artist or spending time in an important recording session. This kind of access, Puschmann wrote, "extraordinary access that would, and indeed could only, result in extraordinary stories." The closest that many journalists get to a musician now is often a 15-minute phone call, according to Puschmann. It is a trend that, he wrote, "does, in fact, lead to the doom, death and destruction of quality music journalism" (Puschmann K. , 2009, p. 10).

While the film *Almost Famous* is set in 1973, a similar music journalism aesthetic existed when the New Zealand music magazine *Rip It Up* was founded in 1977. Photographer and student Murray Cammick, together with law student Alistair Dougal, released the first issue of *Rip It Up* magazine in June, in Auckland. Named after a Little Richard song, the magazine was set up to cover music that Cammick believed encapsulated the wild and carefree spirit of rock and roll and its fans (Cammick & McLennan, 1988).

While trying to find a title that would sum up the magazine's ethos, Cammick found the song 'Rip It Up' (1956) by Little Richard – one of the first rock and roll stars. The song's

energy and wild performance appealed to Cammick. The chorus lyrics, “Gonna rip it up / Gonna tear it up” seemed to sum up the free-spirited attitude that Cammick believed would appeal to the magazine’s potential audience. The choice of the song was important for the magazine in ways that Cammick likely had not expected.

Cammick launched *Rip It Up* just as the punk movement began breaking through to the mainstream and gathering momentum in New Zealand (Dix, 1982). Punk was anti-establishment, anti-corporate and favoured a ready-made, do-it-yourself approach to music. *Rip It Up* took up those values as well and established a look and image that was built around non-conformist attitudes. *Rip It Up* looked like a punk zine with its amateur layout and cheap newsprint. The magazine’s coverage of the nascent punk scene added to its air of defiance. The air of violence and revolution that was part of the popular image of punk also tuned into the idea of ‘ripping it up’. Cammick’s steal from Little Richard was a timely choice when music revolution was in the air.

Another point that the song made was in the lyrics, “Fool about my money/Don’t try and save” which summed up the attitude of many members of *Rip It Up* readership. Russell Brown, a *Rip It Up* writer in its early years, summed it up when he said that the magazine’s readers would spend their money on two things; “They’d buy music or beer” (Brown R. , 2010). Saving for the future was not an important part of these young people’s lives. Just as the song’s lyrics went: “But I don’t care if I spend my dough/Cause tonight I’m gonna be one happy soul”. In later years, the lyrics may have also applied to the magazine’s finances which were never too stable, according to

Cammick. In its early years the magazine was a free giveaway and survived mainly on liquor advertisements. *Rip It Up* carefully staked out its turf outside New Zealand's mainstream media.

Rip It Up magazine in 2013 is a far cry from its early years. Now a glossy magazine owned by a media conglomerate, Satellite Media, and focusing largely on popular artists, the magazine is run by its first female editor, Leonie Hayden, formerly of the New Zealand Music Commission. Much of the magazine's content is online, with a newly revamped website and regularly updated Twitter and Facebook accounts. News and videos are updated daily on the website and the magazine also has the online side project *Rip It Up TV*, a collection of video interviews and showcases by various artists, also available online (Staff, *Rip It Up*, 2012). While the magazine has undergone numerous significant changes, after 35 years it is still an important part of New Zealand's music scene and journalism history.

This thesis provides a cultural history of *Rip It Up* magazine from 1977-2007. There is little historical research concerning New Zealand print media and as yet, there is nothing available on the history of specific entertainment or youth magazines.

Publications such as *Hot Licks*, *RTR Countdown* and, indeed, *Rip It Up*, have been described as culturally significant to the history of print media and music in New Zealand (Dix, 1982) (Shuker, *Understanding Popular Music*, 1994) (Shute, 2008).

However, little has been written in depth about any of these publications. This thesis is a study of one of these publications in terms of its wider cultural significance.

During the 35 years since *Rip It Up* was founded, the magazine has undergone a number of changes. At least eight editors have been in charge of the magazine since its conception - each bringing changes to style and tone. The magazine has also gone from being an independently-owned and operated street-press style magazine to a glossy magazine owned by a corporate conglomerate and covering mainstream music. During the changes in ownership the magazine went through a number of financial difficulties and what seemed to be identity crisis as cultural and musical trends ebbed and flowed with the globalisation of New Zealand's culture. This thesis will discuss these changes in relation to the cultural significance of *Rip It Up* magazine as a whole.

Rip It Up's early years are often championed by early readers and music fans as being something new and exciting (Wratt, 2010). However, it is important to position the magazine in the international print media and worldwide trends since it was founded. As Peter Gibbons suggests, New Zealand is not isolated to the point of having its own unique culture, separate from the rest of the world, but instead needs to be studied in relation to international cultures and trends (Gibbons, 2003).

At the time *Rip It Up* was founded, New Zealand would receive information about music trends and ideas through magazines months after they were released internationally. The general trends and bands that became popular in New Zealand emulated those that were taking place internationally. As previous editor Scott Kara said, ideas for *Rip It Up* were influenced by international magazines such as *Q*. "The idea of lists, like 50 best drummers or whatever, was something that *Q* did, and did

well. We didn't copy those magazines, but we adopted some of their trends (Kara, 2009)." While Kara suggests the magazine did not copy these magazines, features such as the lists he mentioned were prevalent throughout the period of Kara's editorship. This idea of adopting trends, however, is not uncommon and numerous magazines featured article ideas and features that became common and popular throughout different periods of the magazine's history.

Rip It Up was also affected by a number of global trends and issues that signified the magazine's struggles and changes throughout its 35-year history. Themes and issues such as gender, political economy, fanzine culture and the internet's effect on music journalism will be discussed throughout this thesis and in conjunction with the magazine's chronological history.

The study of *Rip It Up* magazine is important in terms of the general importance of music magazines. As well as providing the role of gatekeeper between the music-buying public and the music industry, music magazines provide a platform for dialogue, through letters to the editor and, more recently, online debate. This dialogue generally takes place between readers of the magazine and other fans and readers rather than between the magazine and the readers. Often debate is sparked by an article printed in the publication and can take place over numerous magazine issues, or a significant time period with online debate. Media, including music media, also spark debate further than their own columns, reader comments or online forums, but between readers themselves. The cultural importance of music magazines is significant, in that

they provide a cultural identity in terms of music as well as, often, politics and social issues (Jones S. , 2002, p. 2).

As the longest-lasting music magazine in New Zealand, *Rip It Up* magazine's history is an important piece of New Zealand youth culture.

Numerous cultural historians such as Burke (Burke, 2008) and Greene (Greene, 2008) have noted that the significant difference between history and cultural history lies within the research questions asked. While historians will attempt to answer the questions 'why' and 'how' in terms of historical events, cultural historians instead will attempt to answer the questions "what does this mean in a cultural context?" (Cowan, 2006, p. 19).

Rather than produce this thesis based on themes to be discussed, this study has been produced in chronological order, revolving around significant changes made to the magazine since its establishment in 1977. When researching the magazine, it was discovered that numerous themes and issues that arose throughout the magazine's history were often related to outside social or political issues during a specific time period. It is for this reason that chronological order was chosen, rather than structuring this thesis around specific issues that *Rip It Up* faced. The chapters, rather than covering a single decade, have been broken into significant events throughout the publication's history, and will cover the 35 years between 1977 and 2012.

While the history of music journalism can be traced back over centuries, the history of music journalism for this thesis will be concerned only with 20th and 21st century

journalism. The reasoning behind this is that the topics covered in this thesis relate to popular music journalism – one of the first of these popular music periodicals being the UK's *Melody Maker* (1926). Originally starting as a jazz magazine, *Melody Maker* covered the jazz and pop markets, with focus on the industry itself, becoming one of the first periodicals to feature a sales chart. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, popular music journalism has been described as teetering on “the brink of schoolboy fandom” (Mistich, 2011) with the emergence of fanzines as well as “professional” music journalism through *Melody Maker* and *New Musical Express* in the UK, as well as the early periodicals in the United States such as *Cash Box* and *Billboard*, which had a tendency to provide uncritical coverage of music and have been described by David Sanjeck, former BMI archives director, as little more than publicity branches (Sanjeck, 1992).

The approach to music journalism changed in the mid-1960s, with the emergence of more critical publications aimed at providing an opposing voice to that of the music industry. With the emergence of publications such as *Crawdaddy!* In 1966 – a publication that founder Paul Williams attempted to cover rock music as a serious business, featuring intelligent, critical coverage of music (Lindberg, 2005, pp. 106-107). In a similar trend, the San Francisco publication *Rolling Stone* was founded in 1969 by Jann Wenner, which went on to become one of the most influential popular music titles globally, with a focus on music but also politics, culture and social issues (Draper, 1990). *Rolling Stone* magazine is often credited with the rise of new journalism in the 1970s – a style of music writing that focused heavily on longer think

pieces, with the writers being as involved and well-known as the bands and stories themselves. Both *Rolling Stone* and *New Musical Express* adopted this style of writing, with big name writers such as Lester Bangs, Nick Kent, Robert Christgau and Hunter S. Thompson emerging from these publications. These writers moved on to careers in the wider media industry, and Bangs moved on to becoming editor of *Creem* magazine, another publication that became known for critical commentary of serious popular music (Draper, 1990, p. 12).

It was the 1980s that saw the emergence of glossy magazines such as *Smash Hits* in the UK, covering the growing popularity of new pop with glossy pages rather than the black and white newsprint of the 1970s inkiess (Hill, 2007). It was with this rise of the teen glossy magazines that Eamon Forde describes as all featuring the same corporate-driven ideas and tone throughout the 1980s (Forde, 2001) that the inkiess and critical magazines took a step back to their roots, choosing instead to focus heavily on rock and alternative serious music rather than following the popular new wave or teen pop bands (Toynbee, 1993). It was also during the 1980s and 1990s that competition in the form of music publications grew steadily internationally, with *Smash Hits*, *Q*, *The Face* and *Spin* magazines among many others becoming popular among music fans.

The future of journalism has come under question since the late 1990s with the pervasiveness of the technical age and the ease of information and music on the internet (Hirst, 2011, p. 2) and music journalism can be assessed in a similar way to

wider print media. Both international and local magazines (such as *New Musical Express*, *Rolling Stone* and *Billboard*) have, in the past five years, revamped websites to include more feature articles, reviews and blogs, rather than survive solely with a print magazine.

Numerous magazines have also ceased print publication and chosen instead to publish only online content. One example, *Spin* magazine, announced in July 2012 that the magazine's final print issue would be published in September of the same year (Zara, 2012). The reasons for the closures and effects of the internet on music journalism will be explored further in chapter four of this thesis.

Music magazines can generally be defined in terms of five categories. Fanzines, inkiess, glossy teen magazines, style bibles and critical glossy publications (Horn, Laing, Oliver, & Wicke, 2003, p. 39). Throughout its history, *Rip It Up* can be defined by a variety of these categories, so it is important to give a brief history of each.

Fanzines

While the criteria for what makes a fanzine is difficult to pin down to a universal set of rules, Spencer suggests that the traditional fanzine was often hand-written, typed or drawn, and stapled together (Spencer, 2005, p. 15). The lack of corporate ownership meant that editors and writers had freedom to write what they felt comfortable with, often pushing cultural boundaries with a more underground topic or style of music than mainstream magazines and often with a lack of censorship in terms of language and imagery (p. 17). While fanzines were initially produced in the 1940s and aimed at

a niche science fiction market, throughout the 1970s, music fanzines gained momentum and popularity within the underground music culture. This was particularly prominent with the punk explosion in the late 1970s, with a large number of punk-related fanzines emerging throughout the UK and the USA. Of the significant volume of zines published, a small number of these became widely-read and ultimately became known for their influential and ground-breaking style, content and ethos. These zines include *Sniffing Glue* as well as *Crawdaddy!* - one example of a zine that was later negotiated through a commercial publisher and published as a glossy magazine (Christgau, 2003, pp. 140-143).

Inkies

Inkies was a genre that became prevalent in the 1970s and incorporated serious critical music journalism and was so-named as these magazines were printed on newsprint - the ink of which was well known to come off on the hands of readers (Gudmundsson, 2002). The well-known magazines that sat in this genre include the UK's *New Musical Express*, *Melody Maker* and the American publication *Rolling Stone*. Inkies were well-known for producing writers that would write essay-style pieces and became almost as well-known as the bands they were covering, such as Lester Bangs, Greil Marcus and Cameron Crowe (Vandelay, 2010).

Glossy teen magazines

The glossy teen magazines became prevalent in the early 1980s with publications such as *Smash Hits*, *Shake!*, and *Top of the Pops* focusing largely on teen-oriented pop artists such as Jason Donovan and New Kids on the Block (Forde, 2001). These titles had no real critical element and incorporated features such as posters, stickers and advertisements for cheap and teen-focused products and musicians. One of the most well-known and successful teen glossy in New Zealand was *RTR Countdown* – a magazine started by the *New Zealand Listener* to provide for the growing teen pop market in the 1980s (Bourke, 2010).

Style Bibles

The style bible is a genre that was first invented by *The Face*, which was first published in May, 1980 (Shuker, 1994), and became a genre that incorporated the fashion and popular culture that surrounds music, as well as the music itself. The point of difference with *The Face* was its incorporation of fashion and art with music, popular culture and politics. *The Face* claimed to be “the world’s best dressed magazine” (Logan, 2011) and became well-known for giving recognition to an entire sub-culture in terms of music, fashion and culture, rather than simply the music. Known for its style-conscious writers and image-heavy pages, *The Face* became the first of many similar magazines, such as *Flux* magazine (www.flux.com) and, on a local scale, *Pulp* magazine that began publication in 1995 and continued until its publisher Pulp Media went into voluntary liquidation due to an advertising slump in 2010 (Slade, 2010). The style bibles

were known for covering a wider popular culture rather than simply music. Former contributor Kevin Braddock recalled the magazine would feature topics, “as diverse as the epidemic in cocaine usage, French pop music, young Conservatives, the emerging ‘freestyle wheelbarrow’ scene, and the rehabilitation of the moustache in men's fashion” (Braddock, 2004).

Critical Glossies

Prominent from the late 1980s onwards, critical glossies maintained the aesthetic of magazines such as the teen glossies, but provided in-depth and critical analysis of “serious” music (Horn, Laing, Oliver, & Wicke, 2003). Magazines such as *Spin*, launched in May, 1985 (Brod, 2011) and UK rock magazine *Kerrang!*, launched in 1981. With music journalism no longer simply being a form of information for the 18-25-year-old age bracket, many of the critical glossies, such as *Mojo* and *Uncut* are aimed at an older audience, and focuses heavily on critical commentary of the “hey day” of rock and roll, providing retrospective coverage of bands and scenes that were popular in previous decades (Lindberg, 2005).

In New Zealand there has been a sparse and scattered history of music journalism within the print media. In terms of specialist music magazines, early publications, with the exception of *Rip It Up*, were relatively short-lived. Throughout the 1960s a Wellington-based pop magazine *Groove*, was the only local magazine available that specialised in music coverage. Following *Groove's* closure in 1972, publisher Alistair Taylor founded *New Zealand Rolling Stone*, which, according to Dix was little more than

“the American mag, with half dozen additional pages of local info” (Dix, 1982, p. 156).

A lack of sales forced the magazine’s closure within two years and *Hot Licks* - the most well-known and popular predecessor of *Rip It Up* was first published in 1974. The magazine was founded by Roger Jarrett and Kerry Thomas and was printed as a free giveaway magazine that focussed heavily on supporting local music. Industry support and advertising revenue, however, wasn’t enough to keep the magazine alive and *Hot Licks* folded in July, 1976 after being forced to add a 40c cover charge to the publication in 1975 (Dix, 1982, p. 156).

In the years following *Rip It Up*’s arrival to the print media industry, perhaps the magazine’s biggest competition came with *Real Groove* magazine, a critical publication that began in 1989, which had a similar aesthetic and style to *Rip It Up*. The magazine, like *Rip It Up*, began as a free newsprint style publication, which shared coverage of underground, student bands (Bourke, 2010).

Another free music magazine was *NZ Musician* which was founded in 1988. This bi-monthly magazine was set up to promote local music and has remained a free magazine since its first issue. According to Cammick the magazine was never in competition with *Rip It Up* as it was never highly critical and in terms of local coverage the two magazines worked together (Cammick, 2009).

As far as competition for *Rip It Up*, according to Bourke (2010), this instead came from general interest publications such as the *New Zealand Listener*, which has always had a strong music coverage with columns by journalists such as Nick Bollinger from 1988

and Gordon Campbell throughout the 1970s (Bourke, 2010). The daily newspapers such as the *New Zealand Herald* as well as weekend papers also provided the majority of popular music coverage throughout the 1970s (Bourke, 2010).

The history of *Rip It Up* magazine will be discussed in this thesis, in terms of its history within the wider journalism and popular music journalism history.

Chapter 4, Section 1 – Rock, Records and Revolution: 1977-1984

Chapter one of this thesis will examine *Rip It Up* (RIU) magazine from 1977-1984. This chapter explores the founding and initial years of RIU. The magazine was launched as the music industry was invigorated by the rise of new genres such as disco, punk rock and new wave (Cammick, 2012). It was a free monthly magazine that relied on advertising to pay its costs. There was little money to pay contributors (Brown, 2010). RIU established itself as a credible source of information for local music fans and this was an important factor in the magazine's survival. This chapter examines the ways in which RIU built up credibility and a sense of community among its readers.

Chapter 4, Section 2 – Pin-ups, Passion and Poverty: 1984-1994

Former *Rip It Up* editor Russell Brown recalled the magazine changing with the major changes in New Zealand culture throughout the 1980s (Brown R. , 2010). This chapter will discuss the ways that *Rip It Up* dealt with the changing music culture and widening competition in terms of style, content and band coverage, as well as the struggles the owners had with keeping the magazine in print due to financial struggles throughout

this period. The chapter will discuss the growing globalisation of music and privatisation of local media sources and the way that these affected *Rip It Up* magazine and its fight to continue making revenue.

Chapter 4, Section 3 – Taxmen, Takeovers and Truebliss: 1994-2001

The years covered by this chapter saw the international music scene and youth culture fragment into a varied mass of genres and subcultures. Rock music alone was a maze of different styles – punk, post-punk, and grunge to name a few. This in turn saw *Rip It Up*, at least on the surface, struggling from a crisis of identity. This thesis will discuss *Rip It Up* throughout this period and its attempt to increase readership and revenue in relation to the changes of ownership and the fragmentation of popular music. It will also discuss how *Rip It Up* responded to the rise of hip hop and electronic music – two genres that the magazine had previously not covered in significant depth.

Chapter 4, Section 4 – Sex, Satire and Social Media: 2001-2007

From 2001 onwards the entire music and journalism industry in New Zealand changed dramatically with the growing popularity of web 2.0. The final chapter of this thesis will discuss *Rip It Up* magazine's adaptation to the digital age and the various methods it used to create an online culture, as well as maintaining a print magazine during a period where print journalism was struggling as a whole.

This study of *Rip It Up* can relate to a wider industry of journalism in New Zealand.

Many of the struggles and issues that *Rip It Up* magazine faced throughout its 35-year

history are shared by the wider print media. The following study of the cultural history of *Rip It Up* magazine can provide insight into the inner workings of independent journalism as a whole in New Zealand.

This thesis will discuss *Rip It Up* magazine's history in terms of the issues pertinent to its survival between 1977 and 2007. It will discuss the magazine's history in terms of political, economic and social cultural history, rather than provide an anecdotal biography that is commonly seen in celebratory New Zealand music books and films. This thesis will provide a history of one key player in New Zealand music journalism beyond the picture depicted by Hoffman in 'Almost Famous' as being an industry where, "you'll never get paid much. But you will get free records from the record company".

LITERATURE REVIEW

The body of literature available on the subject of music journalism is vast and varied. A review of this material however shows that there is still a significant lack of studies in a number of areas. As this thesis is concerned with the history of a specific publication within New Zealand music journalism, an understanding of the literature available concerning many aspects of music journalism is needed. Through a review of the available texts, four areas of study stood out as important and relevant to this study. These areas are the role of music journalism and music journalists, gender issues within music journalism, the political economy of music journalism and the culture of fanzines.

This literature review will discuss the above relevant areas of research, as well as a review of non-academic texts relating to music journalism and finally, a review of the current literature available on New Zealand music journalism. Through an analysis of the available research, evident gaps in the literature will be discussed and how this thesis relates to the current literature. The second section of this review relates to the body of work relating to New Zealand in terms of broader journalism. This section will cover published works on the subject of New Zealand journalism and discuss the areas that are not widely covered or researched.

There are many published academic texts available on music journalism. These generally discuss popular music journalism and mainly cover British and United States music publications such as *New Musical Express*, *Melody Maker* and *Rolling Stone*, as

well as individual critics and journalists. These academic texts tend to be issue-driven, with common themes relating to gender, political economy and fanzines, which will be discussed further in this literature review. Interestingly, the analysis and critical thought is largely based on the writers and critics of music journalism, rather than analysing the roles of owners or editors as decision-makers for content.

The published material that is available is generally focused on a critical approach to music journalism, rather than the entirety of specific publications or the ownership and sales figures of specific publications. Despite various works being published on the topic, as Jason Toyne suggests the topic is still largely understudied and there is a definite lack of work in relation to audiences, the place the music press holds in the general realm of journalism and media and the concept of community and fandom within the realm of music media (Toyne, *Policing Bohemia, Pinning up Grunge: The Music Press and Generic Change in British Pop and Rock*, 1993). The academic works that have been published about popular music journalism, however, have tended to concentrate on the aesthetics and mechanics of musical criticism or the commercial constraints on music journalism as a whole as opposed to examining the many roles that these magazines play within popular culture (Bannister M. , 1999) (Atton, 2009) (Frith & Goodwin, 1990).

One attempt to bring together critical essays on music journalism was by Steve Jones who gathered essays on the topic for his book *Pop Music and the Press*. Jones suggests that there is a serious lack of research within the field of music journalism but it is an

important area of study for both the wider field of journalism and the greater music industry (Jones S. , 2001). The one area that Jones did not attempt to cover concerns effects of the internet on music journalism. This is an area that has yet to receive much academic attention despite its importance to current music journalism. Although this is an understudied area academically, there are varied non-academic published works on the idea of music blogs and e-zines. A typical example is a piece by Simon Reynolds from the *Guardian* that discusses the fanzine's shift into the digital age and how it has survived (Reynolds, 2011).

While there is little academic research available on the internet and music journalism, when the topic is broadened to include journalism in general, a large amount of research is found. One typical example of such work is Martin Hirst's *Can Journalism Survive the Internet?* Hirst discussed numerous issues that arise for journalism from the internet such as social networking and its potentially negative affect on the need for instant breaking news, at times over the need for accuracy and in-depth analysis (Hirst, 2011, pp. 130-131), the increase of "citizen journalists" and their impact on professional journalism (p. 110) and the overall decline of profits for print media and the need for new business models (pp. 52-54). While Hirst's discussion is relevant to news media, it can also be seen as equally relevant to print magazines and music journalism. This overall decline in profits and shift in general running of news media can be seen to be the same with music journalism, illustrated in various opinion pieces such as a piece about the decline of UK magazine *New Musical Express* (Sturges, 2002) and the website magazinedeathpool.com that illustrates the high rate of magazine

closures since 2000. The ways in which music publications have adapted to the rise of the internet is explored in this thesis, using *Rip It Up* as an example.

One theme that is prominent in the current literature is the effect of gender in the production and consumption of music journalism. Helen Davies (2001) attempts, like many other academics, to argue that gender roles play a large part in music journalism and that it plays a significant role in both journalism and popular music studies. Her argument is based on the concept that music journalism is a canon aimed at men, written by men and focuses on the idea of the male rock god figure, diminishing females to the role of groupie or pop star (Davies, 2001). Davies is not the only academic to have found a correlation between the role of music journalism and gender. A number of studies have examined the concept in other ways. A recent example is a study of historical *Rolling Stone* covers, which concludes that the majority of covers featured male artists. Female artists, when featured, were shown in seductive poses (Hatton & Trautner, 2011). Mariel Bentencourt arrived at similar conclusions in her study (Bentancourt, 2008).

As well as such studies about gender and its relation to music journalism content, a notable amount of literature analyses how power and authority in the structures of music journalism affect roles within the field. This is often referred to as an “old boys’ network” (Evans, 1997). Devon Powers believes that music journalists are often a subsection of the music cultural scene in general and are predominantly white and male (Powers, 2005). McLeod expands on the concept of the old boys’ network and believes

that the music industry, more than any other is run by a rule of “who you know” (McLeod, 2001). Davies also suggests that in order for a woman to succeed as a music journalist she must almost conceal her identity in order to fit in with the “boys” (Davies, 2001).

The concept of gender is important to this thesis as *Rip It Up* is one of many popular music magazines that emerged during the 1970s, and it followed the trends of other international publications. It was not until 2010 that *Rip It Up* magazine hired its first female editor. The critical discussions on gender within music journalism, as an important aspect of critical discussion on music journalism are, therefore, important to the research conducted for this thesis.

The roles of music journalism and journalists are discussed widely among academics, usually in the context of the political economy of the music industry. Music journalists have been described as both gatekeepers (White, 1950) and, more commonly, as cultural intermediaries. Cultural intermediaries was a term first established by Pierre Bourdieu (1984 p 539) and is often used to describe the journalist’s interpretation of the music and relate this to a wider audience. Laing suggests that the term cultural intermediary is more apt to that of the role of a music journalist, as the music journalist functions less as a gatekeeper when it is the journalist’s role to provide personal opinion of “good” or “bad” music in criticism (Laing, 2006).

Laing is not the only academic to discuss the idea of the music journalist as a gatekeeper, and numerous academics have analysed the journalist’s role within

journalism and the music industry and generally agreed with Laing's ideas (Forde, 2001) (Christgau, 2003) (Atton, 2009). Relationships between journalists and readers are closely related to the relationship between the music industry and the music world. Frith was also interested in relationships between journalists and readers and argued that in the UK the music press shaped popular music opinion, focussing largely on top 40 artists and mainstream music (Frith & Goodwin, 1990).

Some studies have examined the relationship between music journalism and external economic pressures. This relates largely to where the music press fits into the music industry, or, put another way, whether they are motivated by commerce or art.

Fenster suggests that the relationships between the music industry and the publishing industry affect the ability to provide honest criticism, thus affecting the credibility of such reviews (Fenster, 2002). While he claims perks from record labels such as free albums, concert tickets and other associated gifts do not necessarily affect the critical tone of any review, "the fear of being cut off by an important label or club is a real one" (p 84). Frith argues that the commercial constraints of mainstream magazines hurt the credibility of these magazines and that it is the underground aspect of criticism that gives it credibility. He argues that throughout the 1950s magazines complied with market demand, focussing on popular artists and chart topping hits (Frith S. , 1983, p. 166) and followed the trend of emerging United States magazines from the 1960s when self-critical music itself was becoming more popular and magazines, in turn, treated music as a serious art form (p. 169). Magazines such a

Rolling Stone, Frith suggests, were torn between being a magazine for the music fans and one for the music industry, supported financially during the early years by record companies and promoters (p. 171). Following on from this idea, he believes that it is the writers rather than the publications themselves that give the mainstream magazines credibility (Frith S. , 1981, p. 77). According to this view, credible rock criticism is a delicate balancing act between the demands of commerce and those of art.

Gudmundsson believes that this battle between art and commerce became more evident throughout the 1980s when music journalism became increasingly commercialised. Younger, less experienced journalists were replaced by “star” journalists, and, “finally, the *Sniffin’ Glues* of punk were exchanged for glossy new magazines, designed to blur the line between editorials, text, pictures and ads” (Gudmundsson, 2002, p. 55). Gudmundsson claims that by 1986 the publications such as *New Musical Express* and *Rolling Stone* had style guides and target audiences firmly in place, and there was less room in music publications for “think pieces”, with more of an “elitist” approach toward editorial content and criticism. Writers such as Lester Bangs were excluded from this new corporate journalistic style.

The concept of the lines being blurred between music journalism and music publicity is something that Roy Shuker agrees became prominent following the 1980s, with the need to guarantee strong readership to advertisers often overriding the need to produce critical analysis and reporting of music (Shuker, 1994, p. 92). Frith further

suggests that it was a common trend for publishers to hire ex-publicists as writers, with many often performing both tasks simultaneously (Frith S. , 1983, p. 173).

Gudmundsson suggests that music journalism took off in the underground scenes of the United States and United Kingdom, with some fans, who were also amateur writers, becoming professional writers. These journalists often proved to be the most knowledgeable and powerful fans (Gudmundsson, 2002). The style and tone of writing in music journalism throughout the past forty years, and the changes that have taken place, are important to the study of music journalism, and will be examined in this thesis.

The concept of political economy, fandom and commercialisation is an important aspect of this thesis, as it relates closely to the issues that *Rip It Up* magazine faced during numerous ownership and stylistic changes during its history.

One area of study that is closely related to the political economy of music journalism, yet is important enough to discuss on its own is the concept of fanzines, and the cultural significance of these to music journalism as a whole. There is a wide range of material published on the subject of fanzines and this area holds significance to this thesis, as *Rip It Up* itself spent a number of years being produced in a similar manner to that of a fanzine, rather than a glossy magazine.

Much has been written about fanzines by both non-academics and academics. The non-scholarly texts tend to be anecdotal and provide little in the way of critical analysis. But collaboratively, these texts provide a strong background and reference

point for the present study. The vast majority of these texts are histories of specific fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue* (Perry, 2000) and histories of fanzines in general (Triggs, 2010). As well as histories a strong collection of work is comprised of selected writings and visual collections of fanzines (Korine & Gonzalez, 2008).

Fanzines have also been much studied by scholars. The majority of this research is based around an analysis of the concept of fanzines and the non-commercial ethos behind the creation of the magazines and analysis of why these publications have had longevity within the music journalism industry.

There is disagreement about the criteria used to characterise fanzines, but Spencer suggests that the traditional fanzine was often hand-written, typed or drawn and stapled together (Spencer, 2005, p. 15). The lack of corporate ownership meant that editors and writers had freedom to write what they felt comfortable with, often pushing cultural boundaries with a more underground topic or style of music than mainstream magazines and often with a lack of censorship in terms of language and imagery (p. 17). While Julie Bartel (2004) believes the concept of the fanzine has been around since the 1800s (p. 5), when discussing the history of fanzines Stephen Duncombe (1997) argues that the fanzine as a distinct medium has been around since the 1930s (p. 6).

While it could be difficult to establish a clear distinction between a fanzine and “garden-variety hobbyists” Duncombe believes that fanzines are fuelled by political and social self-consciousness, and that this is clear through the material produced (p.

4). It is this political awareness perhaps that tied the fanzine concept closely with the punk community, especially throughout the 1970s.

Fanzines are motivated largely by an ethos similar to that of punk, according to O'Hara (1999, p. 62). She also claims that as well as sharing the same ideas, fanzines were the primary source of communication for the punk community before the internet. It is this community amongst fans that Duncombe believes makes fanzines so important to the culture of 'Do It Yourself' (DIY) music scenes. The importance of fanzines to a youth music culture is also discussed by Hodgkinson who believes that the fanzines and their writers play an important part in the wider music culture and provide a powerful insight into music and fandom outside of the structured music or journalism industries. It is this personal approach that Hodgkinson argues is what allows fanzine to thrive outside of the mainstream music media (Hodgkinson, 2004, p.226). Savage suggests that as well as the personal approach to fanzines, there were no constraints over deadlines, censorship or subediting, and often the authorship itself was anonymous in order to avoid the social welfare authorities or employers (Savage, 1991).

Spencer defines fanzines as publications designed to build and maintain communities within a specific sub-culture. Creators of the zines would often receive letters and articles from readers and these letters would often be responded to by other readers; not necessarily in the form of letters to the editor, but through personal posted correspondence (p. 20). Teal Triggs, who discussed the aesthetics and design of fanzines agrees that the do-it-yourself aesthetic of these publications were closely

related to the community-driven, do-it-yourself punk culture at the time (2006, p.69). One of the significant factors of a fanzine, according to Spencer is the lack of commercial motivation of the publications. This is a concept that Rowe believes was driven by the virtual monopoly of mainstream media in the 1970s, and the formation and growth of fanzines was a way to counteract this (ibid. p161). As Frith says, "Fanzines accumulate rock facts and gossip not for a mass readership but for a small coterie of cultists, and they are belligerent about their music (Frith S. , 1983, p. 177). While there is a diversity of opinions on what defines a fanzine, it is clear through the current available research that there are definite common features. These include a strong community-driven ethos, a non-professional aesthetic and tone and lack of commercial motivation. Understanding the literature relating to fanzines is important to the topic of this thesis, with *Rip It Up* spending a significant number of years being produced as a free, newsprint-style publication.

Another prominent type of work published about music journalism consists of accounts of individual magazines or journalists over the past 30 years. Many of these are either anecdotal or biographical works which cover the histories of both magazines and journalists (DeRoagatis, 2004) (Meltzer, 2000). An example of this is the *Rolling Stone: The Uncensored History* (Draper, 1990) or the recent *The history of the NME* (Long, 2012). This work provides narrative account of the magazine's history with many anecdotes. There is little analysis or critical commentary about the magazine's role in popular culture. Similar books have been written for glossy magazines such as *Spin*

(Hermes, 2005), and *Creem* (Matheu, 2007) as well as independent publications such as *Sniffin' Glue* (Perry, Petty, & Baker, 2000).

As well as the histories of publications that are available, a number of collections of music writings have been published, including the *Best Music Writing*, an annual collection of music journalism pieces (Ross & Carr, 2011) and *The Dark Stuff*, a collection of rock writing (Kent, 2002). There is also a strong selection of memoirs of previous or current music journalists (Selvin, 2010). These include collections of written work by journalists such as Lester Bangs (Bangs, 1988) and Hunter S Thompson (Thompson, 2012).

One area that academic works about popular music journalism have tended to concentrate on concerns the aesthetics and mechanics of musical criticism as opposed to examining the roles of these magazines within popular culture (Bannister M. , 1999) (Atton, 2009) (Frith & Goodwin, 1990). This thesis will discuss the role of music journalism within the wider scope of journalism, using *Rip It Up* as an example.

New Zealand's music journalism has yet to be studied in any depth. In fact, New Zealand journalism in general is still understudied in many aspects.

There are various works published on New Zealand journalism, although the majority of these are non-academic, histories, manuals and collections of works. The histories tend to be based on narrative accounts, rather than analytical (Day, 1990) (Christchurch Press, 1963) (Curnow, Hopa, & McRae, 2002). No histories as yet have been produced on popular magazines such as the *New Zealand Listener* or *North and*

South. A number of books have been published on the history of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* such as *New Zealand Woman's Weekly, 70 Years: From Pavlova to Prime Ministers* (Lynch, 2002). These are well-illustrated collections of articles taken from various stages of the magazine's history. These anthologies are low on analysis or in-depth history. Other texts are available that provide collections of published material such as *Dear Dot: I Must Tell You*, which features a collection of children's letters written to the *Otago Daily Times* during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Scott, 2011). With the exception of the recently published history of the *New Zealand Truth*, a narrative account of the paper's history written by a former staffer (Yska, 2010), few in-depth narratives have been written on New Zealand publications. Other published texts on New Zealand journalism tends to be "how to" manuals, such as Jim Tully's *Intro* (Tully, 2008). There are a few texts available that analyse Maori newspapers (Hopa & McRae, 2002). However, these tend to be compiled collections of published articles and discuss issues such as cultural identity and minority reporting.

As for music journalism in New Zealand, there have been no systematic studies of the field to date. Some writers and magazines are given passing mentions in general accounts of New Zealand's popular music history (Dix, 1982) (Eggleton, 2003) (Shute, 2004).

One work which does discuss the role of music journalism in New Zealand's wider culture is Joanna Woods' biography of Charles Baeyertz. Baeyertz was an important

music journalist and critic who edited the arts magazine *The Triad* during the later years of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century. Woods places Baeyertz in the context of his times and outlines the effects his journalism had on musical culture in New Zealand. This work is an interesting example of the sort of study otherwise lacking in the field of New Zealand media history (Woods, 2008).

The New Zealand music press is also discussed by Shuker, with mentions of local publications such as *Rip It Up*, *RTR Countdown* and *Shake*, and their different audiences (Shuker, 1994, pp. 80-83). In his student textbook, *Understanding Popular Music*, Shuker compares *RTR Countdown*, aimed at teenage fans of popular music to *Rip It Up*, a more “serious” music magazine which, at the time, relied heavily on industry support to survive and remain free (p. 83).

This lack of material available highlights the need for more research to be undertaken on New Zealand journalism, particularly music journalism. As *Rip It Up* magazine has been a prominent feature of New Zealand’s musical culture for 35 years, this study is one way that music journalism can be studied. This thesis is intended to analyse *Rip It Up*’s role in New Zealand’s popular music history and also to contribute to the study of New Zealand’s media history.

METHODOLOGY

For this thesis an historical method of research was used. Qualitative analysis of primary and secondary sources was undertaken, with interviews being conducted with significant *Rip It Up* staff and members of the music industry. The qualitative analysis involved a content analysis of the magazines themselves from 1977–2012, other magazines and newspapers were searched for mentions of the magazine and letters, sales and distribution figures and other assorted official documents were analysed in an attempt to get the most accurate and comprehensive history of *Rip It Up* as possible.

When conducting historical research Busha and Harter (1980) suggest it is necessary to take note of the core criticism principles created by historians Oldon-Jorgensen (1997) and Thuren (1998). These principles suggest ways to increase the reliability of the data gathered in research where significant data is gathered through anecdotal material and letters rather than current and factual data. The principles include the knowledge that documents and sources may be forged and therefore any source that is shown to be the original will increase its reliability. Other ways to increase a source's reliability include; if the source is one of many that state the same idea or message, if any potential bias of the source is identified by the researcher and minimised as much as possible and the closer a source is to the actual event in question, the more reliable it will be. These principles were taken into account when selecting both archive research material and interview subjects. Every effort was made to gather more than one source

proving or disproving ideas and facts, by means of correspondence and interviews. As well as this, copies of *Rip It Up* magazines were used as a major primary source, particularly in terms of discussing stylistic features such as feature length, band coverage, writing tone and editorials. In terms of interviews, all subjects were chosen due to their direct connection with *Rip It Up* magazine or their credibility and prominence within the music industry. The potential for bias with these interviews was identified, and was averted by omitting any personal opinion not relevant to the data being gathered and by attempting to obtain more than one opinion on a specific idea in order to increase that idea's reliability.

The research used a range of primary research sources. These included 366 issues of *Rip It Up* magazines from 1977 to 2012, as well as material relating to the magazine including readership figures, flat plans, business plans and financial statements, personal correspondence and other magazines and news articles. According to Howell and Prevenier primary sources are less credible if they are narratives, such as personal letters and other correspondence as opposed to articles, statements or official letters (Howell & Prevenier, 2001). As a large amount of the material used for this study was of a personal nature, possible inaccuracies were attempted to be rectified through archive magazine material as well as interviews. It is because of these criticisms that all efforts have been made to back any analysis up with factual and specific data by way of paperwork, official letters, articles or available readership and circulation figures. Interviews conducted for this research have played a major part in the overall process

of this thesis. This was important as, due to the changes in publishers and editors over the years, much of the physical evidence of certain time frames and moments of the magazine's history are unavailable except in the form of personal opinion through personal knowledge of those present at the time. Even in this case, many people who worked with *Rip It Up* at the time in question were not willing to speak on record. While much of this research is based on interviews with subjects who are asked to recall events and moments of the magazine's history, all efforts have been made to receive more than one opinion and memories of a specific time frame or significant event and strong personal opinion or personal attack has no relevance to the research and was simply not presented as data within the final presentation of the research. Rather, they were used to gather information and to add credibility to information regarding societal trends, the inside working of *Rip It Up* offices and reasoning behind decisions made by the owners of the magazine. Interviews with significant contributors to the magazine, as well as musicians and people working within the music industry, who could provide insight into the cultural importance of the magazine both as a journalistic work and as a major part of the New Zealand music industry, were used for this thesis.

Secondary sources were also used throughout this study. These included news articles, blogs and opinion pieces. While these sources are not as reliable as primary sources, they were generally used to back up or add strength to an idea rather than as major sources for this investigation. Due to this, the inaccuracies or bias was generally discounted.

Structured and unstructured interviews were used within the research. Structured interviews differ from unstructured in that they often draw from literature and research so that questions can be formulated and arranged in order to get the best response in relation to a specific area within the research topic (Bryman, 1988, p. 77).

The free flow interviews were based on discussion involving three main aspects:

- a) The chronological history of the magazine**
- b) The importance and relevance of the magazine in terms of general journalism in New Zealand**
- c) The importance and relevance of the magazine in terms of New Zealand culture**

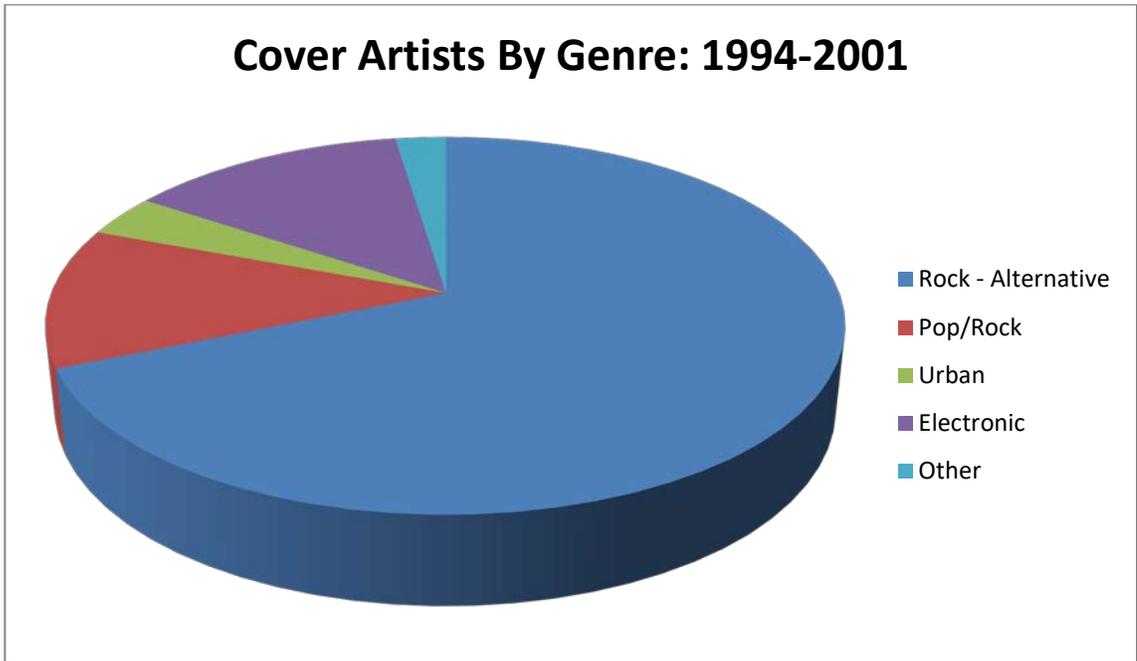
The semi-structured interviews were set within a series of questions involving the above themes and were used with current and ex-staff members of *Rip It Up*. The set questions asked are listed below:

- a) For the record, can you please state your full name, the organisation you work for and your job title?
- b) At what time were you employed by *Rip It Up* magazine?
- c) What was your job title during your time at *Rip It Up*?
- d) What previous journalistic or editorial roles have you held?
- e) Can you describe *Rip It Up* magazine (In terms of popularity, staff morale, financial aspects) at the time that you worked there?
- f) How much of the printed content was influenced by outside advertisers and record companies?
- g) How important is music knowledge, credibility passion of writers of the magazine?
- h) To what extent was there a conscious effort to maintain a certain amount of New Zealand content?
- i) How important was it for the magazine to maintain a certain amount of independent/local content?
- j) How important were cultural trends to the content and style of the magazine?
- k) How much creative freedom did editors and contributors have in relation to content?
- l) Where do you see *Rip It Up's* role in New Zealand journalism?
- m) What effect has *Rip It Up* had on New Zealand's music culture?
- n) How does *Rip It Up's* relevance today compare to that of its past?

Aside from interviews, the major sections of research involved researching archived magazines, news articles and letters, correspondence and other materials pertaining to the magazine's history. These were initially used to gather dates and basic information regarding significant events throughout the magazine's history. Once this information was gathered, a timeline was created to serve as a basic chronological draft for this thesis.

From there, further, more in-depth research was conducted with archive material including correspondence and magazine and news articles to build information and ideas surrounding these events and how they fit with cultural trends at the time in question. Interview transcripts were also used to build these ideas.

A content analysis of the back catalogue of *Rip It Up* magazines was then conducted. A content analysis is regarded as a reliable way to gather information regarding specific themes, ideas and events within the magazine's contents (McRay & Chanmugam, 2009). This research method was used to gauge style, editorial stance and choices, tone and general content of the magazine. As well as qualitative data collection from the magazines, a small amount of quantitative data was gathered during the process of this research, including the number of cover artists by genre and the number of cover artists by race and gender. This information was gathered and converted to graphs for simple access and understanding. A sample of one of these graphs is presented below (Graph 1).



Graph 1: Research Chart - Genre Coverage 1994-2001

As this thesis covers a total of 35 years it was not practical to study each published issue in-depth. It is because of this that three issues were randomly chosen per year to study. A form with key concepts and ideas covered was used to cover each year of the magazine. The template for this form can be found below (Chart 1).

Magazine Research Form – Annual

Year:

Ownership:

Editor:

Magazine format:

Major events (Magazine)	
Cultural trends	
Bands covered	
Editorial style	
Advertising style/layout	
Interviewees	
Significant staff	
Letters – Style/number	

Chart 1: Research Form (Annual)

Once the magazines had been studied and analysed the annual forms, as well as information gathered from other primary sources, were used to complete general information for each time frame correlating to a chapter within this thesis. The forms used to gather this information are below (Chart 2 and Chart 3).

Year Range	1977-1984	1984-1994	1994-2001	2001-2009
Cultural Trends				
Tone/style/layout				
Editorial content				
Ownership				
Editor/Staff				
Columns/Editorial				
Music Genres				

Chart 2: Research form - Magazine data

Year Range	1977-1984	1984-1994	1994-2001	2001-2009
Cultural Trends – Music				
Cultural Trends – Pop Culture				
Cultural Trends – Other				

Chart 3: Research Form - Cultural Trend

Although various criticisms of the qualitative style of research performed for this thesis have been voiced by academics, every effort was made to address these potential downfalls and pre-emptively overcome them where possible.

Bryman suggests that with any qualitative research, especially that involving interviews, has the possibility of misinterpreting the information gathered and ultimately end up misrepresenting research participants.

There is a tendency towards an anecdotal approach to the use of dates in relation to conclusions or explanations in qualitative research. Brief conversations, snippets from unstructured interviews ... are used to provide evidence of a particular contention. There are grounds for disquiet in that the representatives or generality of these fragments is rarely addressed (Bryman, 1988, p. 77)

In order to overcome this possibility, all transcripts were shown to participants and they were given the opportunity to build on quotes, correct them or veto any information and ideas they may have previously said on the record. As well as this, personal opinions that were not relevant to the subject in question were automatically discounted.

Another criticism of research conducted through a qualitative method is the possibility for perceived lack of validity and reliability of the data collected, as much of the research was conducted through an interpretive method (Kirk & Miller, 1986). The possibility of this being the case with this thesis was minimised in two ways. The first, as noted above, with interview transcripts being checked by participants for errors and misinterpretation. The second way is that various sources were gathered in order to

verify facts and ideas that emerged. For instance, if a “fact” emerged during an interview, this would be double-checked through the magazine itself, news articles, correspondence or any other material containing similar information. In cases where no hard-copy evidence was available, the ideas were brought up with other participants in order to gauge reliability. While all effort has been made to ensure validity of ideas and facts, there were some instances where, due to commercial sensitivity and lack of paper trails covering certain time-frames, this was simply not possible. In such cases, any ideas presented are done so only after clearly stating that the information could not be verified.

While possible bias and other criticisms were addressed before research was conducted in order to preemptively eliminate or minimise potential problems with the research, as the research took place, various issues did arise. Most of these involved a lack of data or relevant archive material from which to build information surrounding specific time-frames. In these instances, the majority of research was conducted through the magazine archives themselves. While this was not the desired way of conducting this research, at times it was the only viable option. In situations where there was a significant lack of research material, this has been clearly stated in the analysis in this thesis.

Analysis

Section One – Riots, Records and Revolution: 1977 - 1984

In 1977 the newly formed punk band, the Suburban Reptiles, were regularly playing shows in Auckland bars and were the subject of many adverse media reports. The *Auckland Star* described the band as likely to “kill seagulls” and the *New Zealand Truth* ran many articles about the punk band, and suggested that at one stage the Victoria Arts Festival had been ruined by these punk “hooligans”. The *Truth* also focussed on the band’s Nazi memorabilia worn at one show and how the punk scene in general was something to be feared and shunned by the general public (Grigg, 2007).

The above example is indicative of the youth culture in New Zealand during the 1970s. The punk scene was growing and the arts and music culture was growing with it. This could perhaps be a result of the unstable economy and the fact that New Zealand, at the time, was led by the conservative National Party prime minister, Robert Muldoon. Regardless of the reasons behind it, activism and freedom were key features in the youth of the late 1970s, and this was apparent particularly in the music and arts created at the time (Dix, 1982).

This chapter will cover *Rip It Up* during the years 1977-1984, when the magazine began publishing, and will discuss the magazine’s connection to youth and youth culture in New Zealand at the time. It will discuss *Rip It Up* in terms of its fanzine features and how this enabled the magazine to create a community around the popular culture in New Zealand.

In June, 1977 the first issue of *Rip It Up* was released at a time the record industry as a whole in New Zealand was suffering (Staff & Ashley, 2002, p.99).

The first international oil crisis was occurring, having an adverse effect on the New Zealand economy. As well as this, Prime Minister Robert Muldoon had recently introduced a sales tax increase on certain goods including boats, electronics and records. This resulted in a total sales tax of 40 percent on records nationwide, at a time when the New Zealand public was already struggling due to an unstable economy. These circumstances led to a decline in the New Zealand recording industry throughout the 1970s, with 1977 seeing a dramatic downward shift in sales. Things were so tight that the New Zealand Music Awards were not held in 1977 (Staff & Ashley, 2002, p.99). It seemed a bleak time to attempt to launch a new music magazine in New Zealand.

In 1977 media coverage of popular music in New Zealand, either in print or other media, was sparse (Bourke, 1999). Both the *New Zealand Listener* and daily newspapers, such as the *New Zealand Herald*, featured music columns and critics, with the *New Zealand Listener* containing a music column by the well-known journalist Gordon Campbell, whom Bourke describes as the “Robert Christgau of New Zealand journalism” (Bourke, 2009). The only local print specialist publication that had been available was the recently-defunct popular music-based *Hot Licks*. The magazine, when founded, was a free music publication until 1975. It then released 11 issues at a cost of \$0.20 before the magazine’s owner Direction Records folded and the magazine was forced to end publication (Cammick, 2007).

In terms of print media available, New Zealand's music journalism model ran differently to both the US and the UK. In the US, music print media was available in the form of specialist publications such as the *Rolling Stone*, *Crawdaddy*, *Spin* and *Creem*, before the daily newspapers reacted similarly, including music columns in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* as late as the 1970s (Christgau, 2009). The point of difference with the specialist music publications in the US was their concentration on rock authenticity over simply providing publicity for bands and record labels, and employing soon-to-be famous writers such as Lester Bangs, Cameron Crowe and Hunter S. Thompson to do so. Music journalism in the UK followed a similar trend to that in the US, with music magazines such as *New Musical Express* and *Melody Maker* establishing themselves before the daily print media began focussing on music criticism within their publications. Throughout the US and the UK and Australia, a strong underground presence of non-commercial fanzines was also providing an alternative for niche markets. In terms of radio in New Zealand, local music in particular was rarely heard and it was not until the 1990s that a broadcasting New Zealand music quota was introduced by the Labour government. Because of this there was no specific rule for the broadcast of local music. Chris Bourke recalls the lack of local music, with the exception of the occasional hit song. He said commercial radio would only play one hit a year and recalled hits such as Dave Dobbyn's 'Slice of Heaven' and 'You Oughta be in Love' being unsuitable for radio due to rawness or over-production.

There was an entrenched anti-New Zealand music thing in commercial radio. They'd hired a couple of American radio consultants to show them how to do top quality commercial radio and they said 'well, throw that shit out for a start' (Bourke, 2010).

As well as the shortage of options with radio, the New Zealand public in 1977 had the choice of only two television stations, and the local music and rock and roll coverage was lacking, with only two shows being broadcast regularly. The first was *Ready To Roll*, which featured top 10 artists at the time and the second was *Radio With Pictures*, which initially contained 45 minutes of, "cheap videos and live clips, without a host" (Bourke, 2007). *Radio With Pictures* was later hosted by various personalities with strong New Zealand accents (which differed significantly from the traditional British sounding broadcast voices of the time), such as Karyn Hay. While the international print publications were available in New Zealand, such as *Rolling Stone* and *New Musical Express*, they were two months out of date by the time they reached the sales stands due to shipping times (Cammick, 2009).

When *Hotlicks* ended its publication in 1976, Murray Cammick and Alastair McDougal saw a potential gap in the music media market. The decision to produce a magazine, and do it quickly, came when the pair heard that Jeremy Templer, the previous editor of *Hotlicks*, was planning to produce a music publication following his current role at the *New Zealand Listener* (Cammick, 2007). It was then that Cammick and Dougal decided to start producing a publication. Both Dougal and Cammick put \$500 each toward getting *Rip It Up* off the ground. At the time Cammick was studying teaching at

Auckland Secondary Teacher's College and therefore worked part-time with the magazine while Dougal took the role of editor. Dougal remained in this position until May 1979, when he left to study law, where Cammick took the role of editor (Cammick, 2007). Cammick did not leave this position until the 1998, following the sale of the publication from Liberty Press to an independent owner, Tim Connell.

Despite *Rip It Up* starting as the punk scene in New Zealand was growing strongly, the magazine's title was not a punk slogan, according to Cammick, but arrived at through Dougal and Cammick's shared love for artists such as Little Richard and Chuck Berry. When browsing the song titles of these artists, the name was chosen from the Little Richard song of the same name (Cammick, 2007). While the publication began as a more soul-oriented publication, with the first issue containing a photo of the Commodores on the cover (*Rip It Up*, 1977), Cammick says he quickly incorporated the punk and new wave scene, as this was growing steadily in New Zealand at the time (Cammick, 2009). As well as this the promotion of the magazine saw Cammick quickly playing on the title and the punk scene with the promotion cards being ripped and torn to give the magazine a more DIY and anti-corporate feel (Cammick, 2011).

The early issues of *Rip It Up* were 16 pages long, in newsprint style. They were distributed through local record retailers around Auckland and the wider New Zealand. Scott Kara, who would later become editor, says he still recalls waiting for new arrivals of the magazine in stores as a teenager (Kara, 2009). In 1977, the only available printing capacity for smaller publications was not through major publishers in

Auckland, but rather through smaller community publishers (Cammick, 2007). It is due to this that *Rip It Up* was originally printed through a smaller publisher, Putururu press (Cammick, 2007). This worked in the magazine's favour, according to Cammick, as his aim for the magazine was to push the boundaries of the more mainstream press and be more accessible to the younger, more alternative audiences. Using a smaller, less mainstream printer allowed *Rip It Up* to get away with using words such as "fuck" within the publication; something that, at the time, simply was not done in commercial publications.

From its conception, *Rip It Up* kept a strong local focus to the content of the magazine (Dix). Although the publication would feature international acts such as Tom Petty, the Sex Pistols and the Clash throughout the magazine, it was the independent local bands such as the Scavengers, the Suburban Reptiles and Hello Sailor that were given prominent coverage. The local aspect of the magazine was strongly evident in the late 70s when Cammick and McDougal made the decision to only place local artists on the cover. This caused a few issues with major record labels, according to Cammick, especially when international artists would tour New Zealand (Cammick, 2009); although he says that many of the smaller, locally-owned labels were generally supportive (Cammick, 2011). It did cause problems during the production of the magazine, however, such as the decision of whether to run an international cover-page obituary when Elvis Presley died in 1977. They decided against doing so and *Rip It Up* became one of the few publications, music-based or not, that did not feature the rock artist on the cover. Instead, *Rip It Up* went to print with local band Hello sailor on the

cover of the magazine as the band had a New Zealand tour later that year. Eventually, Cammick said, *Rip It Up* staff kept to their own rules and decided instead to put local act Hello Sailor on the cover as the band had a New Zealand tour later that year (Cammick, 2009).

The style of the magazine changed very little in the first five years of *Rip It Up*. While the masthead changed slightly over the years (from block lettering to bubble font), it remained in the same position, taking prominent space at the top of the cover. The layout was simple and text-busy in newsprint style. It was a magazine that Cammick says was based largely on the UK's *New Music Express*. There were few pictures and plenty of advertisements. The pages within the magazine contained numerous columns and news briefs, with one or two longer features. The cover images were grainy and for the first year in black and white. As publishing any magazine was expensive and printing was more difficult than it is with today's technology, many publications such as the *New Zealand Listener* and *Metro*, were thick and printed on newsprint, with only the covers and some advertisements being printed in colour.

During the late 1970s the cover imagery was printed in one colour and by the 1980s the imagery was slightly more professional looking, with multi-coloured images taking the front cover position (Rip It Up, 1981). For the first eight years the magazine contained no leader article and a letters page appeared only sporadically. Whether it was the aim of the magazine publishers or not, this lack of editorial space or details of editor or publisher further gave the magazine a local fanzine feel and fit with the

concept of *Rip It Up* simply being a magazine written by and for music fans, as opposed to a commercially driven music magazine. The style was newsprint and the number of pages varied between issues, ranging from about 16 pages to more than 30.

Throughout the first ten years the layout and format of the magazine was also irregular. Issues were often late being printed or missed completely, such as with issue 34, May, 1980, which is advertised on the cover as being a “Special Edition” issue, covering the months of May, June and July. No contents were featured and often reviews and features were found in different sections of the magazine between different issues. While there was usually a photo featured on the cover of the magazine, there were times where a simple drawing or cartoon would take its place instead. Even in cases where cover photos were press photos or promotional images that seem to have been supplied by a band or label, these were of relatively low quality. While this low-quality print cover was partly due to the cost and lack of availability to print technology, it also helped to authenticate *Rip It Up* as a credible rock magazine (See fig. 1.1). This low-quality style of imagery was common among independently produced fanzines during the later 1970s. *Rip It Up* was placing itself alongside the fanzines rather than the glossy magazines.

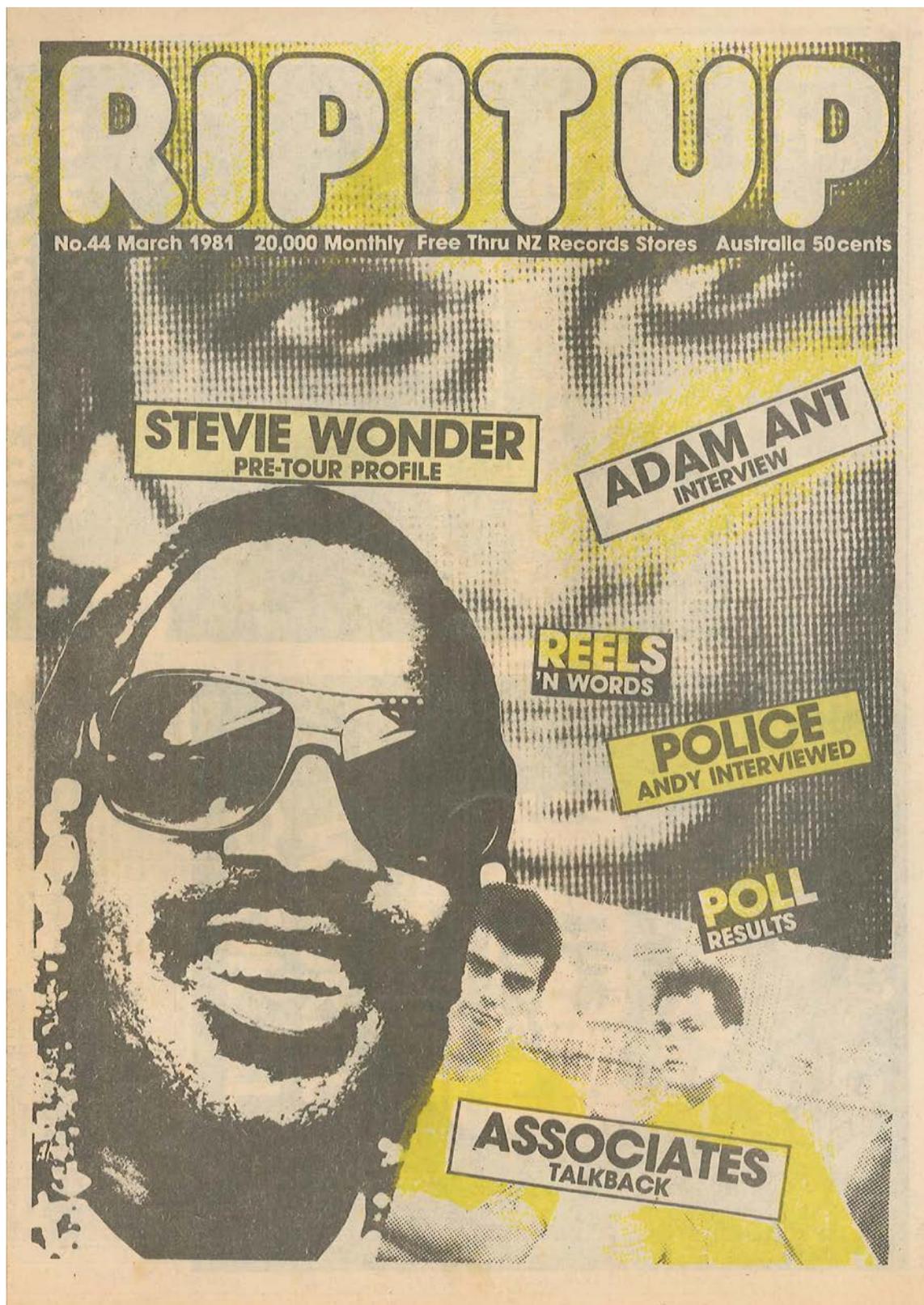


Fig 1.1: *Rip It Up* issue #44, March 1981. The early issues of *Rip It Up* often featured grainy images in one or two colours.

What *Rip It Up* may have lacked in professionalism, it made up for with music knowledge, according to Cammick (2010) who explained that one of the main features of his writers was that they had a strong passion for and knowledge of music. Within the pages of the magazine was a large amount of music-based information, usually pertaining to rock and underground scene rumours, news and features. Reviews and album reviews featured heavily, and the magazine gained a reputation for having a heavily New Zealand-focused viewpoint, with a less patronising tone than other magazines at the time were perceived to have (Dix, 1982). The style, as well, of the magazine changed little throughout the Dougal and Cammick years, with the general tone of the magazine being relatively formal and very music-based rather than using gossip or tabloid-style writing. The musical knowledge of the *Rip It Up* writers is showcased throughout most of the feature articles and reviews within the magazine in its first eight years. This is highlighted in various articles and reviews featured throughout the magazine's first few years. A typical example is a review of an album 'Tears' by The Crocodiles printed in issue 34, May 1980.

They dip into their ragbag of their quite phenomenal past experience to come up with a disconcerting array of styles. In particular, Fane flaws and Tony Blackhouse, very much the on-stage main men, insist on singing lead on all but three of the ten songs, depriving most of them of maximum impact, and the album of focus that lead singer Jenny Morris could have brought to it (p. 18).

Similarly, with feature articles and interviews the focus is on music and the musicians.

While gossip and rumours feature heavily throughout the magazine, this is more focussed on dramas involving narcotics or record labels rather than that seen more commonly over the last decade of weddings and sexual partners. A typical example of

this is illustrated in 1977 with a news article depicting the Sex Pistols and their signing to A&M records.

It seems the sex Pistols, whose recording contract was revoked for uttering obscenities on a live TV show, subsequently got themselves signed by A&M for 50,000 pounds ... However, high spirited lads the Sex Pistols got a bit excited and indulged in various pranks such as spitting in the company limousine, drawing swastikas on framed pictures, breaking windows and threatening various employees, while throwing others in the toilet ... A&M paid them 25,000 pounds to go away.

This somewhat formal yet musically knowledgeable and often subtly sarcastic tone is largely, in part, due to the fact that as editor, Cammick believed his writers were talented enough to not have their copy edited in a major way, and often simply let them run to print as sent in. Former writer Russell Brown recalls being given complete creative freedom in terms of writing style and suggests this is one of the reasons many of the writers at the time had such a respect for Cammick (Brown, 2010).

News and features throughout the magazine's early years focused on rock and underground music and trends, with feature articles and interviews of artists such as Lou Reed, Malcolm McLaren and Tim Finn. Reviews, as well, featured artists that fit into the more underground rock culture and seemed to have no specific word limit, ranging from about 500 words to fewer than 200. Despite being a small New Zealand publication, much of the news content is timely for the appropriate issues, such as the briefs pertaining to the Sex Pistols bassist, Sid Vicious' murder accusation and fatal drug overdose.

While *Rip It Up* was small and fanzine-like in presentation and had limited budget and finances (or perhaps precisely because of that) *Rip It Up* magazine managed to attract a

number of passionate music writers, most of whom were willing to write for free (Bourke, 2010). Perhaps the willingness to write for no money was due to the fact that many writers were amateur writers with little or no experience, many of whom came directly to *Rip It Up* from studying journalism such as Bourke, Campbell and Brown. It seems *Rip It Up* served as a training ground, with a number of writers moving directly on to more mainstream publications, in particular, the *Listener*. When the magazine began, the bulk of the contributors, including Louise Chunn, Dougal and Frank Stark, as well as Cammick himself, had begun their journalistic career at University of Auckland student publication *Craccum*, before arriving at *Rip It Up*. The magazine also recruited Ken Williams and Duncan Campbell from the Radio i newsroom (Cammick, 2007). Many of these writers later moved on to make careers within the journalism field. According to Chris Bourke, who began his work with *Rip It Up* in 1983 (before becoming editor in 1986), the whole reasoning behind wanting to work for *Rip It Up* was its credibility and the knowledge of the music scene that the writers seemed to have.

The first issue I saw was the second and I loved it immediately. It wasn't until 1982 that people were saying, "You've got to come to Auckland and introduce yourself to Murray". All that time I'd been reading it devotedly but I didn't feel confident. I didn't think I knew enough back history. All the writers seemed to know the history of the bands. I [went to see him] and he asked me to do some things for him (Bourke, 2010).

The writers were a vital feature of the magazine for Cammick and he was insistent that he create exclusivity within the magazine and its staff. Because of this Cammick did not allow his writers to contribute to other magazines, and would not accept copy from writers of other publications. While he says that a number of writers were "pissed off"

at his decision, it helped the magazine to develop the names of *Rip It Up*'s contributors. The contributors, according to Cammick, were important to develop for the reader's sake as, "It really helps the reader to know the writer. If you think a certain writer is a fuckwit, if they like a record, you know you'll dislike it" (Cammick, 2011). This focus on writers was typical with international critical magazines at the time, with magazines such as *Rolling Stone* and *New Musical Express* known for grooming writers such as Nick Kent, Lester Bangs and Cameron Crowe who became successful while at these publications and who moved on to impressive careers in the wider media industry.

The focus was on New Zealand music, a niche market that was largely ignored by radio stations and mainstream press. According to Bourke there was a general "cultural cringe" when it came to local content among the wider journalism industry and *Rip It Up* "was covering New Zealand music the way it should be covered. It was doing it because it was good music. It had this pro-New Zealand music [attitude] that was unheard of" (Bourke, 2010).

Local acts such as Hello Sailor and Split Enz would often feature on the cover and a significant number of pages within the magazine would be dedicated to local gig reviews and rumours from each major centre in New Zealand. There were few double-page spreads featured within the magazine, with perhaps one or two full double page articles in each issue.

When the magazine first began, interviews generally followed a question-and-answer format and the rest of the magazine was heavily filled with reviews, rumours and news

briefs. While he made a conscious effort to keep up to date with international publications, Cammick stated that these magazines would not be available to purchase in New Zealand for at least one or two months following their UK print date. Because of this Cammick began corresponding with editors and writers based internationally, in order to swap news and content ideas as well as records (Cammick, 2010).

Although the magazine featured little in the way of feature-length pieces, a second version of the magazine was published in October 1980 titled *Rip It Up Extra*. The publication would be published bi-monthly, in addition to *Rip It Up*, with a cover charge of \$0.75 (Rip It Up, 1980). This additional magazine, according to Cammick, provided the opportunity to print longer, more heavily researched pieces on the local scenes and culture that *Rip It Up* itself was not printing. One contributor to this was Simon Grigg who wrote feature-length pieces on the local punk scene and emerging acts such as the Suburban Reptiles, the Screaming Meemees and the Scavengers (Grigg, 2007). This publication did not last long, however, and ceased publication within six months of first being published.

Rip It Up had little in the way of competition with other publications (AGB:McNair, 1980). The *Listener* included popular music articles and reviews as well as maintaining the majority share of the magazine readership market as a whole (McNair, 1982), but according to Chris Bourke the two magazines maintained a friendly relationship rather than a competitive one (Bourke, 2010). Perhaps it was because the publishers at *Rip It Up* knew that a cheaply produced independent niche magazine could not compete

with a state-owned publication, but Bourke claimed the writers were in relatively close contact with each other (Bourke, 2010). While this was a relationship that would, according to Bourke, change quite rapidly in later years, in the early years it seems the *Listener* and *Rip It Up* held a mutual respect for each other.

Other magazines, such as *Metro* and *Craccum* took notice of the independent fanzine-style magazine as well. Often these were in a slightly negative form according to Cammick, but he believes it was an indicator of other publications' realisation that *Rip It Up* was reaching a strong a loyal following within the music-loving community of New Zealand (Cammick, 2010). In the early 80s Auckland University student paper, *Craccum*, produced an 8-page mock up issue of *Rip It Up*, which they titled 'Ript Up' (Craccum, 1982). Other magazines responded to *Rip It Up* in more traditional forms, such as a letter the publication received from Metro magazine in 1981.

I have just read your unfair review of AUCKLAND METRO in the June *RIP IT UP*. It must have been easy to select four items from 116 pages and be clever with them but it might have been more honest to have reviewed and perhaps even given some credit to people starting out in a new venture in a market dominated by mediocrity. You should know what it's like ... As for going down the tube – I doubt it ... Dream on (Roger, 1981).

As with the publishing industry, the music industry similarly had mixed feelings about the new *Rip It Up*, according to Cammick (2010). The independent companies such as Flying Nun and WEA regularly advertised in the magazine (*Rip It Up*, 1980) (*Rip It Up*, 1981). Other major labels, however, according to Cammick were less eager to respond positively. This is illustrated in a letter address to *Rip It Up* in 1978 from John Potter,

EMI Auckland Promotions, in regards to a review printed on the new album by Wings, 'London Town'.

I feel that the sarcastic remarks in the review were nothing but a personal and biased opinion. The recording industry in general is enthusiastic over the contributions that "*Rip It Up*" has made in the business. Should your magazine wish to sustain this respect I suggest that your review page revert back to valid and constructive coverage from your contributors (Potter, 1978).

According to Cammick the tense relationship with some of the major labels continued for a few years, making it difficult for the magazine to pick up enough advertising to keep the publication making money. While some of the major labels took some time getting onside with *Rip It Up*, it was the relationship that Cammick built with the independent labels that ultimately contributed to the magazine's survival on a number of occasions. According to Bourke new magazines would start up occasionally to attempt to compete with *Rip It Up* but it was the relationships that Cammick had built within the industry that meant the magazine did not suffer. As he suggested, "The record companies would always give someone else a go but not to the detriment of *Rip It Up*" (Bourke, 2010).

As well as this, Russell Brown recalls record labels "bailing Cammick out" on occasions by taking ad space when Cammick had not sold enough (Brown, 2010).

Financial hard times were common for *Rip It Up* magazine, despite having a loyal and strong list of advertisers (Cammick, 2010). The reason for this could be put down to the niche market advertisers that the magazine would attract, with the majority of the

magazine for the first few years featuring advertisements from record labels, instrument stores and liquor companies, and these were printed in black and white, often with a cheap-looking, DIY style and tone (see fig 1.2 and 1.3). According to Cammick the magazine survived largely on liquor advertisements, and the legal issues the magazine would later run into because of this would put the magazine's future at risk (Cammick, 2010). While in 1983 *Rip It Up* began featuring coloured advertisements, these were reserved for the back cover and were usually taken by alcohol companies or full-page record advertisements. This ultimately indicated that, while the magazine was advertisement-heavy throughout issues, the money received from such advertisements did not create a large financial gain for *Rip It Up* magazine. This financial difficulty led to *Rip It Up* missing occasional issues and, according to Bourke and writer Russell Brown, pay cheques to staff were often not regular, or missed entirely (Bourke, 2010) (Brown, 2010), with Brown recalling having to pay wages from his own credit card at times when Cammick was out of town.

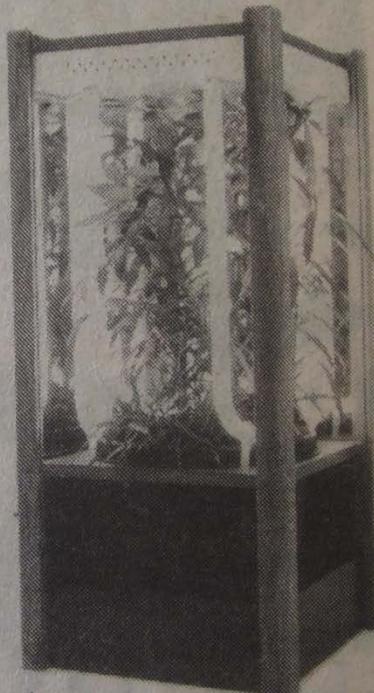
Fig 1.2: *Rip It Up* issue #46, May 1981. The black and white advertisements were typical of *Rip It Up* during its early years.

**Enjoy A Good
Smoke ???**

Want to save money ??? Invest
in an Easy Grow Greenery and
Grow Your Own
tobacco all year
round in the
comfort of your
own home !!!

- * Spectrumly balanced to
reduce stem length so that
a 6-8 ft tobacco plant will
only grow to 2 ft but without
reducing output.
- * Doubles your growth rate.
- * Double the potency of your
tobacco or herbs.
- * Suitable for all plants.
- * Guaranteed.

For a free brochure write to:
"Mr Gree's Greenery"
P.O. Box 15423 New Lynn Auckland



**MR GREE'S
Easy Grow
GREENERY**

Phone (09) 8200 133
11 / 164 St. George Rd, Avondale.

Fig 1.3: *Rip It Up* issue #40. The cheap looking advertisements were typical of *Rip It Up* throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

It was not the money, however, that kept most of the staff on board at the publication, but a love for the ethos and belief behind the magazine, Bourke recalls. “You’d just roll your eyes really. You knew it would come in a few days” (Bourke, 2010). If *Rip It Up* was not producing a credible and honest musical coverage of the New Zealand scene, said Bourke, many of the staff would not have remained as long as they did (Bourke, 2010). While this may have been the case, there was also the opportunity that writing for *Rip It Up* magazine presented. While it was catering for a niche market and was relatively easy to enter into in terms of writing opportunities, many previous writers managed to move on to larger, more mainstream publications, and this could have been more of a driving force behind writers not being overly discontented with missing pay cheques while at *Rip It Up* (Bourke, 2010).

It is likely that it was the credibility and passion portrayed by the writers of the magazine that resulted in *Rip It Up* developing a strong and loyal community of readers throughout its first decade. Both Brown and Bourke recall being fans of the magazine before joining the staff and the publication itself used a number of techniques within the publication to build this community. The publication was a bridge between audience and the magazine through classified advertisements, in which readers were encouraged to trade records and form bands. As well as this, according to Bourke, the popular music culture was a small and tight one between 1977 and 1984, with bands, industry members and fans all knowing each other and attending the same clubs and gigs within the local scenes. Although the creative industry was a tight one, there was

little in the way of creative outlets and *Rip It Up* managed to cater to the entire pop culture audience (Bourke, 2010).

As well as this, the magazine was never far from the readership itself, as Brown recalls, he would often run into them personally when out on the town (Brown, 2010).

Letters to the editor were also used to build a community through *Rip It Up*. Most of the letters printed were addressed at previous writers or contributors to the magazine in regards to material printed in the magazine, and often expressing an opposing view. These viewpoints were heavily focussed on music, bands or local music scenes, and were of a similar style and tone to the magazine itself; casual, brief and often sarcastic in order to get a point across. A typical letter is similar to one found in issue 38, September 1980, where one reader expresses his dismay at a review of an album.

Okay Mr Ken Williams you can take the cotton wool out of your ears now, and listen to Terence Boylan's *Suzy* again and discover how bloody good it really is. I also think Newz suck, does that mean Auckland loves me? (Barry, 1980, p. 15)

Or in issue 36, July 1980, where one reader, in a similarly casual and tongue-in-cheek tone, informs the readers of his band's demise.

We thought you might like to know that our band, Green Acne, has split prior to forming, due to internal conflict. Sorry to all you future fans (Legal, 1980)

Most letters were concerning reviews that had been written, albums being released, bands forming and breaking up or writers within the magazine and debate around ideas presented within *Rip It Up*. This fitted the magazine's style, however, with most social or political debate printed within the publication pertaining to music politics,

rather than larger socio-economic issues within New Zealand in 1977. While *Rolling Stone* magazine in the US, with writers and contributors such as Lester Bangs and Hunter S. Thompson, often provided a social commentary on issues surrounding events such as Woodstock or elections, *Rip It Up* failed to focus in any depth on issues surrounding New Zealand youth culture during the late 1970s and early 1980s such as the recession or the Springbok rugby tour of 1981. In terms of politics surrounding music and popular culture, however, *Rip It Up* was often used as a sounding board for managers and other industry members. This is illustrated with one notice from band manager Mike Chunn in which he used half a page to announce the plan to form an “executive committee” comprised of industry experts and bands to address, “a lot of concern which has been expressed ... with respect to the many problems we face in this industry” (Chunn, 1981, p. 8). The magazine also regularly featured industry and radio news relating to the Australasian Performing Right Association Limited (APRA), radio and record label staff members joining or leaving various companies (Issue 61, August 1982). The magazine also managed to incorporate its own protest against corporate affairs and mainstream events concerning music. One such example is in issue 88, November 1984 in the front music news section where the coverage of the New Zealand Music Awards (traditionally a very industry-laden corporate and mainstream event in New Zealand) was featured, although the article’s title, “1984 NZ Music Awards”, blacked out the winning artists’ names, making them unreadable (see image 1.4).

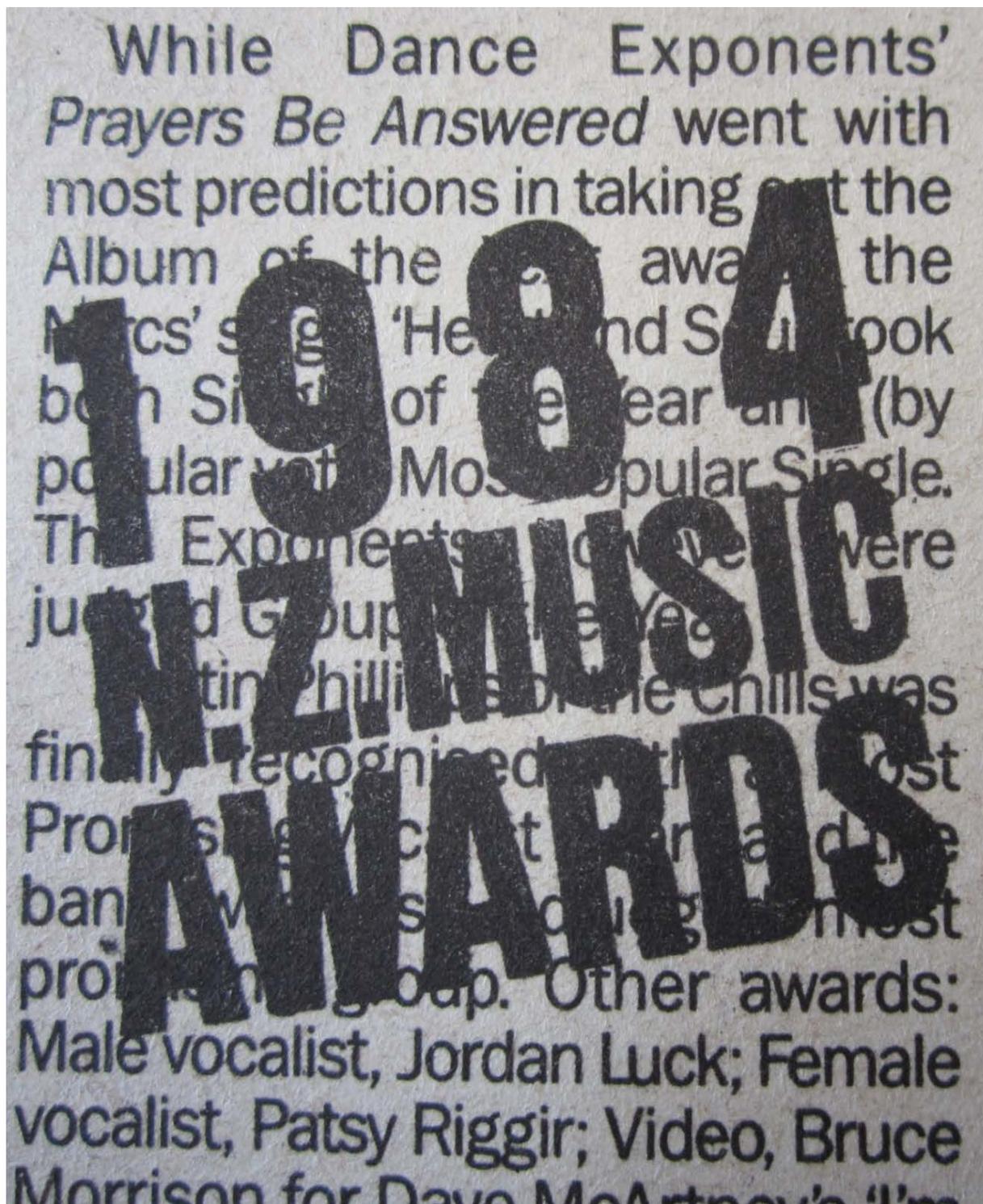


Fig 1.4: *Rip It Up* issue #46, May 1981. The blacked out names of artists in a piece about the New Zealand Music Awards is typical of *Rip It Up's* anti-music industry stance in its early years.

This anti-corporate attitude is something that *Rip It Up*, and the wider youth culture deemed important at the time, according to Brown. He suggests there was a definite desire to not be “captured by the industry or be too commercial” (Brown, 2010).

Between 1977 and 1984 *Rip It Up* managed to immerse itself into the popular music culture of New Zealand, using a number of techniques similar to those of fanzines, with passionate and knowledgeable writers, and as an open sounding board for its readership, both through letters to the editor and through its contributors being involved with the industry itself. While the magazine struggled financially in its early years it quickly built a reputation as being a pro-New Zealand, music publication aimed at the University-aged music-buying public of New Zealand. With New Zealand culture changing rapidly during the 1980s, with the Springbok tour of 1981 and the snap election in 1984 changing New Zealand significantly and opening its access to global culture, *Rip It Up*, also had to change with the times. With pop music becoming more popular with the teenage audience of New Zealand, *Rip It Up* faced a wider market than it catered to and a stronger demand for pop acts. Over the next decade, from 1984-1994, Cammick would attempt to maintain *Rip It Up's* credibility while also catering to the advancement of popular music.

Section Two – Pin-ups, Passion and Poverty: 1984-1994

In 1984 New Zealand Prime Minister Robert Muldoon called a snap election which resulted in the fourth Labour Government coming into power. Under the influence of Roger Douglas, Minister of Finance, changes were made to the New Zealand economy. Publically-owned organisations were privatised as the New Zealand economy was opened to a global market (Eggers, 1997). With the resulting international mergers and takeovers many of previously public organisations became a more active part of the global economy and, in turn, New Zealand's popular culture was more instantly able to emulate international cultural trends.

In 1985 music journalist Nick Kent described the 1980s as a music period that was a "treacherous image-bloated clone-zone of pop" (Kent, 1985). It was during this decade that the international music press, previously dominated by "serious" inkies such as *New Musical Express* and *Rolling Stone* or underground fanzine publications such as *Sniffin Glue*, began covering the teenage pop gap in the market, with a growing popularity of numerous teen glossy publications such as the UK's *Smash Hits*, which formed in 1979 and had increasing sales and readership figures throughout the 1980s (Shuker, 1994). This is a trend that was emulated in New Zealand, with New Wave and pop bands such as Duran Duran and the Eurythmics being extremely popular, especially among a teenage audience. As *Rip It Up* magazine had a reputation of covering more underground artists than these and had initially gained its reputation for coverage of the punk scene, these increasingly popular artists for teenagers did not fit

with *Rip It Up*. This chapter will discuss the expansion of Murray Cammick's company *RipItUp Publishings* with his decision to start two new magazines, *Shake!* and *Cha Cha* in an attempt to accommodate to the growing global pop culture in New Zealand. It will also discuss the financial pressure this placed on *Rip It Up* magazine throughout the period covered within this chapter. *Rip It Up* magazine will also be analysed in terms of editorial and advertisement content.

In 1983 Murray Cammick, made the decision to start two new publications; *Cha Cha* and *Shake! Rip It Up*, at this time, was "limping along" according to former *Rip It Up* writer and editor Chris Bourke (Bourke, 2010). However, the high popularity of artists targeting teenage audiences, and the more female-oriented popular-culture, did not fit with the current target market of the magazine. *Rip It Up* itself covered the 18-25 niche market, but there was little in the way of music press to cater for teenage or female audiences.

In 1983 Cammick provided struggling fashion designer and journalist Ngila Dickson with a "desk he made himself" (Dixon, 2011) and \$2000 to start a fashion-oriented magazine, The newly-founded *Cha Cha* magazine quickly became popular with the fashion-conscious female magazine readership and was later been described as, "an incubator for talent and the style bible for Aucklanders" (Regnauld, 2010). The arrival of *Cha Cha* was timely, given that the British publication *The Face* had been launched three years earlier in 1980, and had already proven the potential success for what were

now being called 'Style Bibles', with high sales figures and readership (Shuker, 1994 p. 88).

In a similar way that *Rip It Up* had done with a music-oriented audience, *Cha Cha* resonated with, and found a cult-like following with the fashion conscious consumers. The magazine was later discussed in *The Dress Circle*, a history of the New Zealand fashion history.

The timing of *Cha Cha's* production coincided with the burgeoning interest in and market for independent designers, expanding retail and nightlife environments, a generational shift from the politics of Muldoon in 1984 and a stock market boom that both fuelled and reflected the growing urban confidence of a previously rural economy and cultural identity (Lassig, 2010, p. 28).

Lassig highlighted Cammick's sense of timing and awareness of the market. Cammick claims that each of his projects maintained a strong readership and were well regarded by readers, and that it was instead his lack of business knowledge and poor decision making that caused the demise of his magazines (Cammick, 2010). *Cha Cha* remained in distribution for four years before Cammick shut it down in 1987, leaving only *Rip It Up* and his other side project, *Shake!*, still in print.

Cammick started *Shake!* magazine in 1984 to fill another perceived gap in the market: the coverage of pop music for teenagers. In issue 88, November 1984 of *Rip It Up* a full-page feature advertisement ran promoting the first issue of *Shake!* magazine (p 17). *Shake!* was designed attract teenage readers, with the first issue featuring artists such as Pseudo Echo and Tina Turner. The magazine had a glossy format and, like many of the international teen glossies, had regular features such as film and fashion news as

well as posters included in the magazine. Unlike *Rip It Up* which was struggling financially, *Shake!* was intended to generate a profit for Cammick and was marketed with leading brand products in mind. *Shake!* was sold with a cover price of \$2.50. Initially *Shake!* enjoyed a relatively strong readership with little competition, with the exception of the female teen-oriented magazine *Dolly*, which began in New Zealand in 1986 (AGB:Media, 1987). In 1987, according to the National Readership Survey, *Shake!* maintained an 8.4 percent share of its target 10-19 aged audience, where *Dolly* had a readership 10-19 share of 2.3 percent.

Starting up two new magazines put pressure on the already struggling company, *RipItUp Publications*, which employed only three full time staff working from the *Rip It Up* offices to publish all three magazines (Cammick, 2010). As both *Cha Cha* and *Shake!* were new magazines there was a struggle to attract new advertisers and readers.

Bourke recalled that money was tight at *Rip It Up* (Bourke, 2010).

Financial pressure was increased by “Black Tuesday”, the 1987 stock market crash on October 20. With shares dropping by more than \$5.7 billion in four hours, the market struggled for a number of years to recover (Grant, 2010). Cammick’s *Cha Cha* magazine failed to survive Black Tuesday, and despite its popularity with those in the fashion world, the magazine went under not long after the crash, with the final issue being printed in early 1988 (Dixon, 2011).

Financial pressure was also increased for Cammick with the arrival of *RTR Countdown* in October, 1987. The magazine, backed with more money, staff and advertising

revenue than Cammick could provide, would soon become *Shake!*'s and ultimately *Rip It Up*'s strongest competition. *RTR Countdown* was produced by the *New Zealand Listener* as a counterpart to the television show of the same name, produced by TVNZ. As the magazine was started by a state-owned magazine already controlling the majority share of the New Zealand magazine readership, *RTR Countdown* was immediately released with a glossy, professional look and enjoyed an advertising contra deal with the also state-owned TVNZ. Almost immediately *RTR* took majority readership share of the target market 10-19 year olds, with the 1989 National Readership Survey showing *RTR* as having 32.4 percent of the share, with *Shake!* And *Rip It Up* showing 17.6 percent and 7.6 percent respectively (AGB:Media, 1989).

Shake! continued to decline in terms of readership figures and, subsequently, advertising revenue. Because the owners of *RTR* had a larger budget and access to better technology, Bourke suggests this magazine gained the majority share of advertisers rather than *Shake!* This could be largely responsible for the financial decline of *Shake!* that ultimately neither of Cammick's publications would recover from.

Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, *RTR Countdown* was not the only competition for Cammick's magazines. International print media were becoming easier to obtain quickly in New Zealand and the local magazine *Tearaway*, a free publication aimed at 13-19-year-olds, was introduced in 1986. The content of the magazine was largely written by members of the target audience and quickly gained a strong readership and circulation. During the 1990s the print media market widened further

with the introduction of various magazines competing for similar readerships and advertising revenue. *Stamp*, *Pavement*, *Pulp*, *Real Groove*, *Swerve* and *Lava* were all magazines introduced to the same market that *Rip It Up* had formerly had to itself. These publications also branched out into a wider market, by focussing also on fashion and other popular culture ideas. (Bourke, 2007) *Rip It Up*, however, continued to focus solely on popular music. In 1989 *Real Groove* Magazine was first launched with a free fanzine design and concept, which would soon become *Rip It Up*'s biggest competition in terms of style and target audience.

While Cammick was largely focussed on his role as editor and publisher of *Shake!* when it began, he was also continuing as editor of *Rip It Up* until Chris Bourke was hired for the position in 1986 (Bourke, 2010). Bourke suggests, however, that Cammick still remained focussed on *Rip It Up* and contributed to major decisions. At this time, *Rip It Up* enjoyed a relatively large circulation of about 90,000, although finding advertising revenue was still a struggle for the publication (Cammick, 2010). Russell Brown was due to leave and Bourke remained as editor from January 1986 until August 1988 (Bourke, 2010).

While *RTR Countdown* enjoyed a majority share of the teenage readership until 1993, the magazine ceased publication in November 1993 when it was closed down by Wilson and Horton (Cammick M. , 1993). Although this opened an advertising revenue gap for *Shake!*, by this stage Cammick was corresponding with Inland Revenue in an attempt to keep his company, *RipItUp Publishings*, from being shut down.

The 1980s is often regarded as a strong decade in terms of corporate advertising and glossy publications, especially in terms of magazines (Frith, 1989). While *Rip It Up* magazine did have a high volume of advertisements throughout this period, the free and cheap-looking style of the magazine may have been a reason behind many of these advertisers being bands, student radio or other non-corporate companies. One of the problems with running such advertisements, Cammick recalled, was the difficulty in ensuring the advertising was paid for after publication (Cammick, 2010). The fact that the magazine remained free throughout the 80s could explain its longevity during a decade that saw a large number of New Zealand publications fold. However, *Rip It Up's* inability to make enough money to sustain Cammick's company *RipItUp* Publications, proved to cause problems, especially with Cammick's other magazine *Shake!* falling short in terms of advertising and readership figures. This, as well as the general state of the economy throughout the 1980s helped shorten *Shake!'s* lifespan as well as bring *Rip It Up* to near collapse.

Difficult financial times in New Zealand had two major consequences for both *Shake!* and *Rip It Up*. The first was that advertisers were careful about who they chose to advertise with, and unfortunately for Cammick, *Shake!* often lost out to *RTR Countdown*. The second consequence was that people were careful with what they spent their money on, often forsaking luxury purchases such as magazines for more essential purchases. This ultimately meant that Cammick struggled throughout the decade, especially with the new magazine that he was trying to successfully launch (Bourke, 2010).

In terms of layout and style, *Rip It Up* did not change significantly throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. The cheap looking newsprint layout remained and the magazine continued to be free between 1984 and 1994. However, while the newsprint style of the magazine continued, the cover photographs took on a glossier look than in the 1970s, using sharper colour photographs. While this could simply be due to increased technology resulting in photography and printing being made more widely available at a cheaper cost, this did give the magazine a more professional look. The inside of the magazine remained largely newsprint, with the exception of occasional glossy advertisements and the magazine still folded out to A3 size, averaging about 35 pages per issue.

The language and imagery used during this time period was similar to that of overseas music magazines at the time such as *Rolling Stone* and *NME*. During the mid-1980s popular music journalism predominantly covered “white rock music” (Gudmundsson, 2002) and was generally written by journalists who, themselves, were white, male rock fans (Gudmundsson, 2002). This trend was emulated in New Zealand, with *Rip It Up* magazine focusing largely on music by white rock artists, although Cammick’s passion for soul music still was evident within the publication with cover artists such as James Brown in January 1988 still being given prominent coverage.

However, with *Rip It Up* covering a large section of the New Zealand music scene, many of these artists happened to be of Pacific descent. In these situations, the fact that these bands were not white rock artists was often pointed out within the editorial

content. One typical descriptive piece was found in the November, 1985 issue, with the announcement of a new record label, Stimulant, and their latest artist, Princess.

First release from new label STIMULANT features the vocal talents of this young woman, PRINCESS ... It's typical of the sort of black music Stimulant aims to bring to NZ. (Anon, 1985, p. 2)

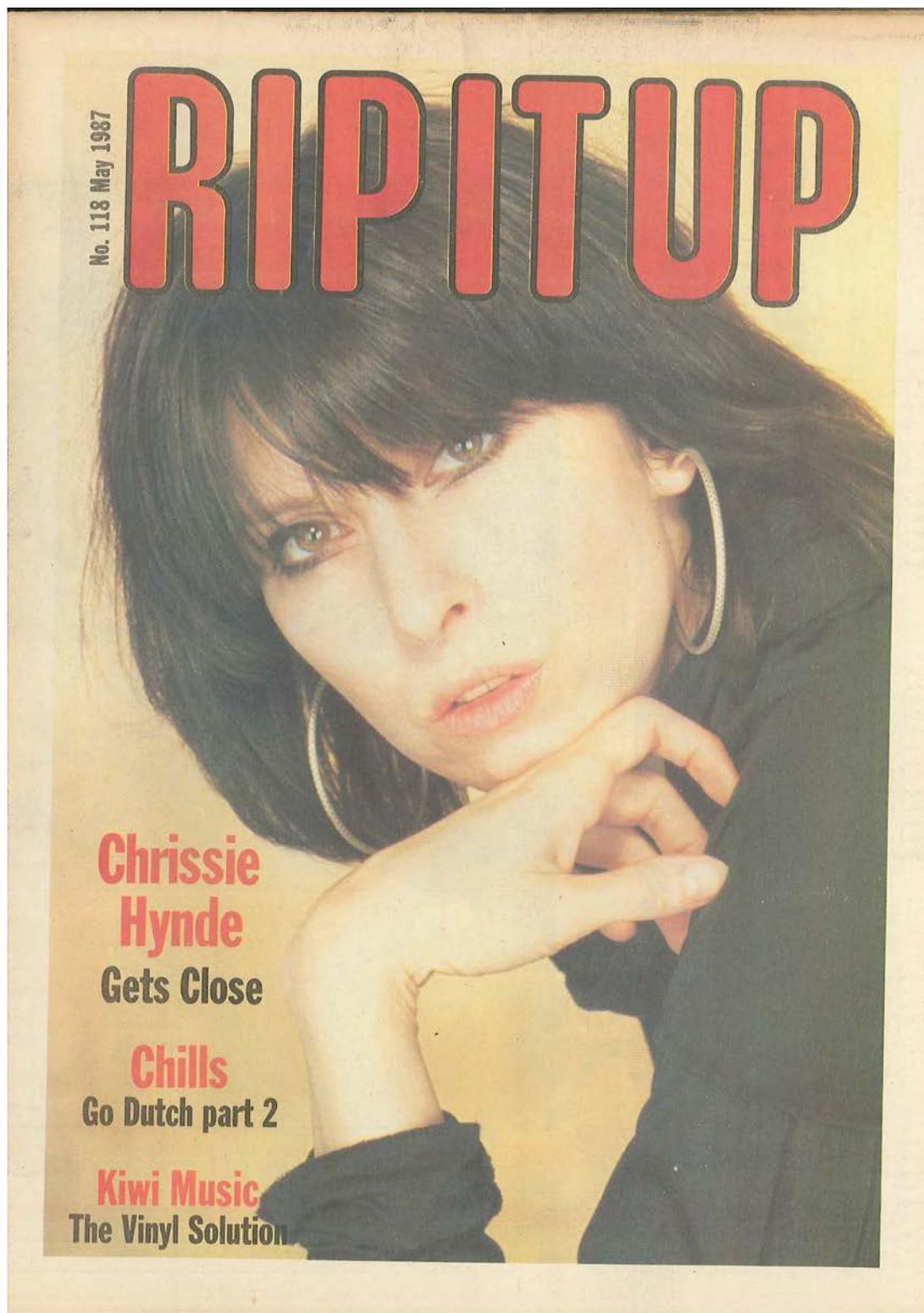
Interestingly, and perhaps as a way to justify the coverage of Māori and Pacific artists, many of the arts featured were written about in terms of their perceived rock credibility. A typical example of this was an article about the band Herbs in issue 88. In the article mention is made of the band's intention to take the music overseas and also talks about the group's more guitar-inclined direction, describing the new sound as, "the guitaring assumes Santana-like proportions", and also describing the group in terms of rock credibility. A recent gig at Otago University was mentioned, for example, and the crowd described as, "meagre". This observation is followed with, "But Herbs gave the impression they'd have played the same in front of 40,000 screaming hooligans at Western Springs" (Langston, 1984).

The perception of rock-credibility was similar in the way that female artists were covered in the magazine during the 1980s. As with international magazines at the time, that would cover female artists by depicting them either tough and masculine or extremely sexy and seductive, *Rip It Up* featured cover artists such as Debbie Harry, and Chrissie Hynde in a similar fashion. The coverage of female artists was similar to the reggae and hip hop acts, in that the articles gave the artists a rock credibility and the photos were featured in either seductive, sexy poses (*Rip It Up*, 1987) (See fig. 2.1) or tough-looking rock poses (*Rip It Up*, 1989)(See fig. 2.2).

Throughout this time, however, *Rip It Up* maintained its strong local coverage that it had developed in the late 70s, with acts like Dave Dobbyn and Crowded House featuring on the cover throughout the decade.

Although coverage of local content was proving to be something that *Rip It Up* no longer had a monopoly over during this time period, the introduction of more local content in radio and print media is something that *Rip It Up* encouraged (Cammick, 2010). The formation of New Zealand Music Commission and the commission's attempts at promoting ideas such as a radio quota for New Zealand Music could have meant that readers no longer had to turn to *Rip It Up* to find out about local scenes and bands, but Cammick suggested that this was something that worked well in conjunction with the magazine, as opposed to in competition with it (Cammick, 2010).

Throughout the period between 1984 and 1994 *Rip It Up* continued to maintain its traditional focus on music. In terms of the magazine's editorial content, music columns and news featured heavily throughout the magazine.



Fig

2.1: *Rip It Up* issue #118, May 1987. The Chrissie Hynde cover is typical of female artists being represented with a seductive pose.

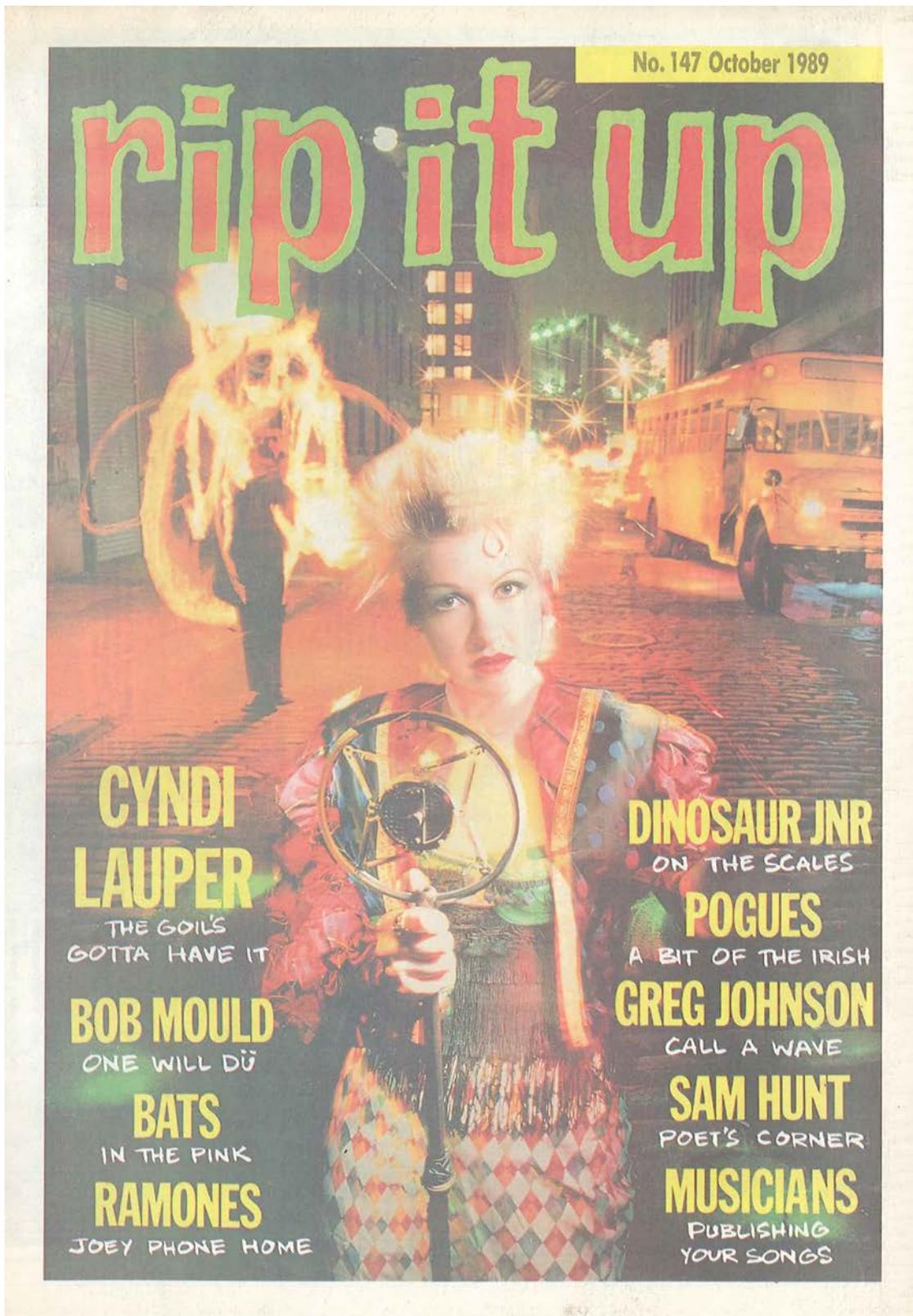


Fig 2.2: *Rip It Up* issue #147, October 1989. The Cyndi Lauper cover is typical of female artists being represented in tough poses or situations.

Interestingly, while international magazines at this time, such as *New Musical Express* and *Rolling Stone*, were still featuring a new-journalism style of writing, with journalists writing themselves into stories and the writers becoming almost as well known as the musicians they covered, *Rip It Up* attached writers' names to columns and features but mostly did not make mention of publisher or editor details for the majority of the 1980s. There was no editorial column throughout this period. This was more indicative of the fanzine-style publication from the 1970s as opposed to the more self-promotion style of magazines throughout the 1980s. In 1988, with Murray Cammick acting as editor of the magazine, the publisher and editor details were finally printed in the magazine, near the front, either on the same page and rumours, news or letters to the editor.

The 'letters to the editor' section was given more space between 1984 and 1994, although during this period there were also often issues with no letters published at all such as August, 1985 and January, 1988.

The publication had a strong community feel within the magazine, with a prominent section devoted to letters to the editor, which often featured responses from the editor. The use of letters to the editor to promote music debate was something that was common with international popular music magazines at the time, with reviews and articles often starting debate between the magazine and readers on music taste (Frith, 1989). This differed from other music publications such as teen glossies that would generally print letters either praising the magazine's content or bands (Shuker, 1994).

This use of letters to print serious debate could be seen as a way for *Rip It Up* to prove its credibility within the serious music press.

Throughout this period, however, *Rip It Up* did have a largely cynical tone for a large part of the magazine. The magazine also followed trends of other publications at the time by including opinion pieces and columns within the pages of the magazine. These opinion pieces fit with the style of new-journalism that was prominent with international publications, with the writers themselves being as important as the content that they wrote. From 1989 *Rip It Up* began featuring two columns, "Elvis Slag" and a regular column by Nick D'Angelo, "Pump Up D'Angelo". These columns were not solely music-based and their writers discussed issues and popular culture outside of music. The content of these columns would often be cynical in tone and be critical of other publications and media. One typical example of this featured in Nick D'Angelo's column in issue 175, February, 1992, entitled "The 1992 Nick D'Angelo Awards". Throughout this column, D'Angelo cynically describes the New Zealand media through the presentation of various "awards". One example mentioned *Metro* magazine and a piece the publication ran about the cost of advertising in New Zealand media.

Also in its December issue METRO "think you should know" that to get your product mentioned on TVNZ's *Today Show* will cost \$2,500. What it didn't say was that to get your product mentioned in METRO's Shop Window section will cost \$735 for a "small" photo, \$1050 for a "medium" photo, or \$1350 for a "large" photo (prices do not include GST). Nowhere in the section does the word 'Advertisement' appear, as it does on the *Today Show*. METRO prefers instead to feature the American Express logo (D'Angelo, 1992, p. 38)

The advertising in *Rip It Up* magazine began changing from 1984, despite a continuation of small, cheap looking advertisements for bands and small record companies and record stores. These advertisements were black and white and often featured text only without images. Frequent advertisers in such a format were the *Record Exchange* (Record Exchange, 1984) and various local bands. Cammick continued to place these cheaper-looking advertisements throughout the *Rip It Up*. However, the mid-1980s saw the magazine including more full-colour, professional-looking advertisements for major record labels and liquor companies (See fig. 2.3). The number of advertisements did not change significantly within the magazine during this period, but the considerable increase in colour, full page, professional-looking advertisements did make them stand out more within the magazine. This fact was noticed by readers of the magazine, with letters to the editor reflecting this. One example of this entitled “Ad Ethics” and was printed in issue 96, July 1985. It was written in response to the amount, and style, of advertisements in the magazine.

...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 little critical discretion (Shields, 1985, p. 20).

The letter continues to complain about the “blatantly sexist” content of one particular “Body Double” advertisement of a previous issue.

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 (Shields, 1985).

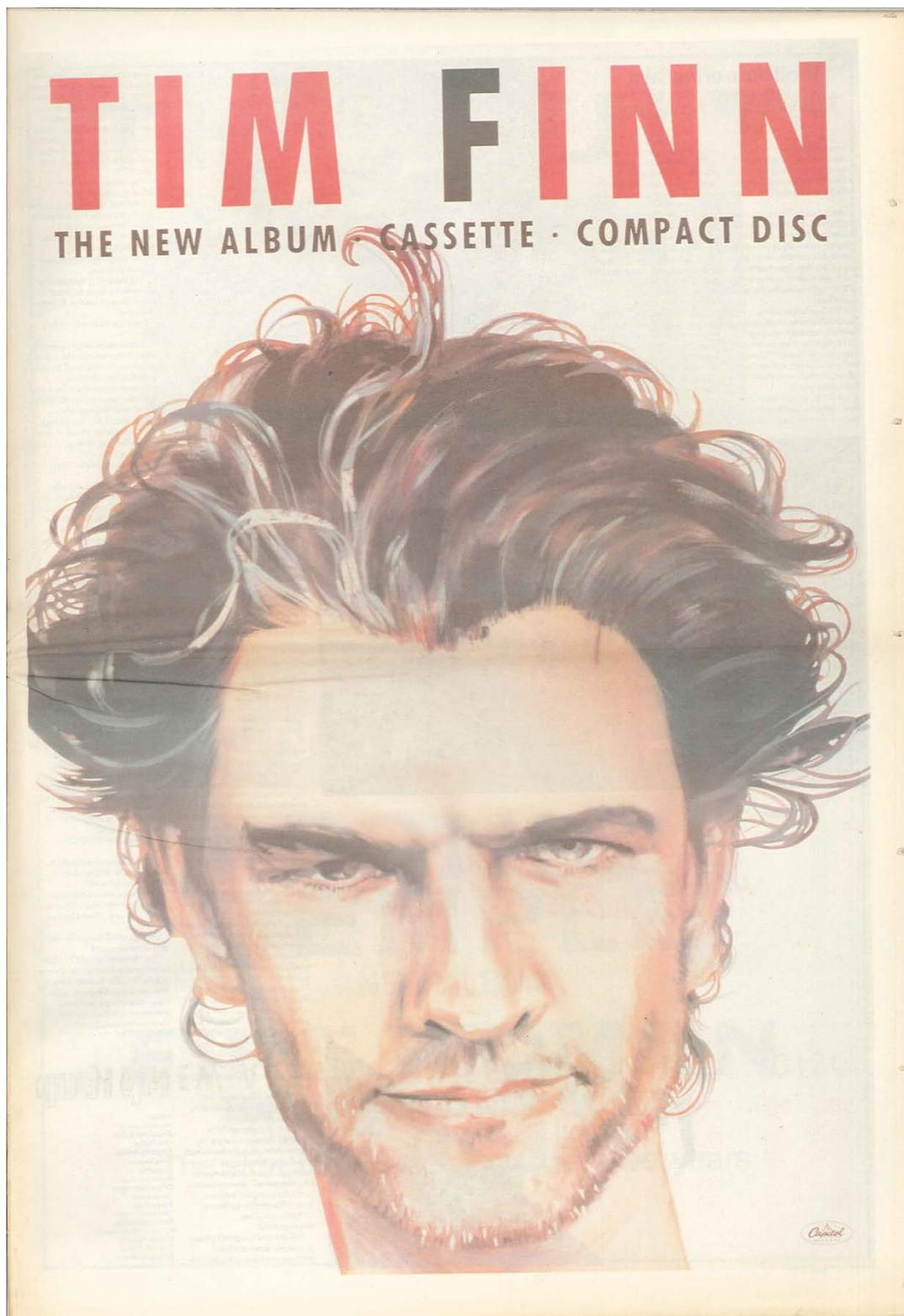


Fig 2.3: #141 April 1989 - Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, Rip It Up survived largely on full page advertisements for the recording industry.

This complaint in regards to advertising was one of many that the magazine received, although the majority of major complaints were during the late 80s and early 90s, and were generally regarding the liquor advertisements running through the magazine (Cammick, 2011).

It seems likely, with the majority of cheap-looking advertisements throughout the early 1990s that *Rip It Up* was struggling to attract large-business advertisers. This in turn meant that the regular liquor advertisements were even more important to the survival for the magazine. Brown recalled Cammick being well aware, during this time, that if the liquor advertisements were to be lost, the magazine itself would be in significant trouble (Brown, 2010). Cammick (2010) says the magazine “survived on booze ads” during this time. It was, therefore, disturbing for Cammick when complaints about such advertisements were not only being sent to *Rip It Up*, but were being sent to the New Zealand Press Council (NZPC). Coruba Rum, Jim Beam and Jack Daniels whiskey were heavy advertisers and often placed full page prominently positions advertisements (See fig 2.4). While the official target market for *Rip It Up* was adults aged 18-24, there was no official age rating on the magazine and it was available for anybody to pick up for free at any music store throughout the country. It is the advertisements depicting specific alcohol resulting in happy, popular and wealthy lives that came under fire through various complaints to the NZPC.



Fig 2.4: #199 March 1994 - A large amount of Rip It Up's revenue came from printing middle-spread, colour liquor advertisements.

While *Rip It Up* had been advertising liquor for numerous years, there are several possible reasons why the number of liquor advertisement complaints increased during the early 1990s. The decade saw the rise of 'moral' groups who lobbied for conservative social stances. *Rip It Up* magazine was also being kept in university libraries and record stores and was freely available in a variety of places. This in turn meant that the magazine was no longer available and of easy access to simply university art students and music fans, but a broader audience range, many of which did not share the liberal mindset of *Rip It Up's* earlier audience (Bourke, 2010).

A typical example of a complaint regarding liquor advertising was submitted by the Health Action Group in Nelson regarding an advertisement for Coruba Rum in the July, 1994 issue of *Rip It Up*. In a letter to Cammick the NZPC stated that the complaint suggested that *Rip It up* was advertising liquor to young people and was therefore in breach of advertising codes in new Zealand.

This magazine is aimed at young people and the advertisement clearly targets the young. I believe it breaches both rule 6 of the code of advertising alcoholic beverages and rule 4 of the code for people in Advertising (Penfold, 1990).

The offending material in the advertisement was a Coruba Rum advert that looked too much like editorial content. While other magazines ran liquor advertisements, such as the *New Zealand Listener* and *Metro*, the fact that *Rip It Up* was a music magazine, and music is often regarded as a "youth" phenomenon could explain why the magazine received such a high number of complaints.

The above complaint was eventually dismissed by the Advertising Council and in a response letter to the complaint Cammick suggested that *Rip It Up* was targeted at an adult audience, with magazines not being distributed or promoted through schools but rather universities and cafes. It also, according to Cammick, avoided printing material on “teen” acts such as ‘New Kids on the Block’ (Cammick M. , 1990). In the same letter Cammick also touched on the cultural significance of *Rip It Up* and its credibility as a music magazine.

‘RipItUp’ is a valuable part of our music industry and our contemporary culture. Its ‘serious’ music commentary is respected internationally. If this health action group wants to hit magazines with significant under18 9or under 15 age groups, they should target such “family” mags like readers DIGEST and NZ LISTENER who rate highly in 10-15 years section of the AGB McNAIR readership survey (Cammick M. , 1990).

While the complaint above was not upheld it was not the last complaint that would be received in regards to the magazine and, in years to come, the complaints would become more public and less easy for the New Zealand Press Council to dismiss.

The magazine did not solely survive on liquor advertisements during this period, however. With the advancement of technology from 1986 onwards, stereo systems, blank cassettes, keyboards and synthesisers became more available to the general public (Dix, 1982). This increase in global technology opened the advertisement opportunities for *Rip It Up* from 1986 to expand in the magazine, with companies such as Technics and Roland becoming regular advertisers. This in itself increased the glossier image of *Rip It Up*.

The advertising would, at times, cover political issues that were not given editorial commentary throughout the magazine. One such example of this was in Issue 88, November 1984, with an advertisement taken out by the Record and Cassette Warehouse in response to the 1984 budget in which Roger Douglas announced the removal of Robert Muldoon's earlier 40% tax on records. The advertisement led with the headline, "Ten Good Reasons to Thank the Labour Government", and announced an instant decrease in record prices by \$1.00 (p. 17). Similarly a piece ran in March 1985 advertising a benefit concert for Greenpeace following the Rainbow Warrior bombing earlier that month. Although advertising was growing between 1984 and 1994, there were still not enough corporate advertisers to see *Rip It Up* through the numerous complaints and lack of finances that would eventually see the magazine's independence threatened.

Between 1984 and 1994, Murray Cammick retained ownership of *Rip It Up* magazine and continued to publish the free magazine independently through his publishing company RipItUp publishing.

While he was the owner of the magazine and worked full time for the publication, Cammick refrained from taking on the editor role for a number of years after the conception of the publication, citing a lack of experience and skill with editing and proofing (Cammick, 2010). When co-owner and original editor Alistair Dougal left in 1983, Cammick took the role of editor until 1986, although he said his style of editing

was basically to allow writers freedom over what they wrote and how they chose to write it.

Chris Bourke took over the role as editor in 1986. According to Bourke, Cammick had approached him a few years earlier but Bourke turned the role down in order to spend a few years writing for the *New Zealand Listener*. After his time at the *Listener*, as would often happen with a number of the magazine's writers, Bourke returned to *Rip It Up* to write full time about music. Bourke said at first he was unsure about taking the role as he did not believe he had the same amount of music knowledge in terms of band and genre history that *Rip It Up's* writers seemed to possess. Finally, however, Bourke agreed to take on the editor role, after being persuaded by Cammick (Bourke, 2009). Under Bourke's editorship, both Cammick and Russell Brown contributed to the magazine's content.

It was a time when staff morale was reasonably high, according to Bourke, although the times financially for the magazine were tough, and often the company failed to pay its bills on time and staff wages were often late and sometimes not handed out at all (Bourke, 2009). It was because the staff members were so passionate about the music and the magazine that Bourke believes kept them happy and continuing to work for the magazine, but Bourke says there was a constant question as to how long the magazine would last on the minds of the staff members (Bourke, 2009).

With Brown having worked closely with Bourke and Cammick during his time writing for the magazine, Brown took the role of editor following Bourke's decision to leave in

1988, and remained in the position for one year, after which Cammick returned to the position after the closure of both *Shake!* and *Cha Cha*. Cammick remained in the position and continued to battle advertising complaints, as well as a tax bill that would eventually cripple Cammick's publishing company.

Throughout the period between 1984 and 1994 Cammick proved to have a skill for finding gaps in the publishing market. His magazines went on years later to be referred to by industry experts and fans alike as having had substantial impact on the journalism and creative industries in New Zealand (Dix, 1982) (Bourke, 2007) (Shute, 2008).

It was, however, his lack of business experience when setting up both *Shake!* and *Cha Cha* as well as the large number of advertising complaints between the period of 1984 and 1994 that resulted in *Rip It Up* magazine failing financially by the early 1990s. By 1994 Cammick owed more than \$200,000 in GST taxes to the Inland Revenue Department which was now threatening legal action. It was a bill that Cammick could not afford to pay and the future of *Rip It Up* looked very bleak.

Section Three – Taxmen, Takeovers and Truebliss: 1994-2001

Popstars, the television reality show, first aired in New Zealand during April 1999. This show introduced a new reality show-driven teen-pop phenomenon that caught on around the world. Auditions for potential singers were held in December 1998 throughout the major New Zealand cities (Toepfer, 1999). The television series, running over nine 30-minute episodes in 1999 was important for the growing success of reality-television creating pop stars worldwide. The show followed the creation and success of the for-television manufactured female pop group Truebliss and was created by independent television producer Jonathan Dowling who eventually sold the concept of the show to Screentime Australia. Following that *Popstars* was eventually sold to more than 50 countries worldwide (Zanda, 2008). After the *Popstars* show aired, various made-for television pop stars were created on shows such as *American Idol* and *X-Factor*. When the first Truebliss single was released following the conclusion of the show, 'Tonight' topped the New Zealand Music Charts and the album received double platinum sales figures (Zanda, 2008).

This show is illustrative of a pop phenomenon that grew throughout the 1990s, with artists such as Girls Aloud and the Spice Girls topping charts worldwide. Although the 1980s had seen an influx of teen-pop group finding chart success in New Zealand, the audience-driven, instant and interactive success of these bands was entirely new. The global fascination for these artists was in part due to the growing availability of new technologies and digitalised television as well as the growing popularity of the internet,

meaning that New Zealand was no longer behind countries in gaining access to successful acts.

As well as this, the growing popularity and availability of the internet meant that the costs in creating bands and releasing music reduced significantly and the number of acts available to the public were growing which led to the music industry becoming more fragmented with sub-genres and sub-cultures growing at a rapid pace (Eggleton, 2003).

The number of new genres and the increase in popularity of dance music meant that magazines such as *Rip It Up*, which had always covered rock music, had to adapt to a rapidly changing music industry. This chapter will discuss the changes to *Rip It Up* magazine during the period of 1994-2001 in terms of ownership, layout, style and content. It will also discuss how *Rip It Up* responded to the growing pop idol success and its coverage of mainstream acts. It will analyse the coverage of the culture at the time in terms of politics and personal opinion of social issues in *Rip It Up*. Although various interviews were conducted and a great effort was made to find paper trails of the magazine between 1994 and 2001, there were few available and a number of people interviewed or contacted did not want to speak on the record due to commercial sensitivity. Attempts were made to locate and contact key staff of *Rip It Up* from this period such as Barry Colman, Richard Cooke, David Long and Tim Connell but this was not possible. It is because of this that details of ownership and editorship as well as reasons behind a number of decisions and changes within the magazine during

this period cannot be confirmed in some instances. Some details are also vague due to a lack of evidence available. Although an effort has been made to verify all information given, at times this was not possible.

In January, 1994, *Rip It Up* came close to closing down, when the Inland Revenue Department set a date to apply to the High Commissioner to disestablish Cammick's publishing company Ripitup Publishings (Barber, 1994). In a series of letters between Cammick and the IRD, Cammick's tax bill consisting of unpaid GST between 1990 and 1991 and a large amount of subsequent fines from the lack of payment was discussed as reasoning for the court proceedings. While Cammick had been paying and arranged payment of \$500 per week, a number of these were missed and Cammick's letters to the department asking for leniency were dismissed. "I have a phobia of tax, but I have got over this and now understand the importance of paying tax," Cammick wrote in one letter (Cammick, 1993).

The court date was set for January 20, 1994 and an article in the *New Zealand Herald* on January 18, 1994, suggested that Cammick was hopeful that a "eleventh hour bid" was going to save the magazine with a last-minute meeting to be held with the IRD the following day (Barber, 1994). It was at this meeting that it was decided that Liberty Press would purchase the magazine for an undisclosed amount.

Over the next decade, *Rip It Up* would undergo numerous ownership and editor changes. As there is no paper trail associated with these changes and very few interviews were able to be conducted, the following information regarding owners and

editors has been deduced from the information available in the physical magazines themselves and through interviews with staff that were able to be reached. Because of this some dates and exact information could not be verified.

A number of members of the music industry publicly and privately attested to the significance of the magazine for New Zealand's popular music culture. A memo was sent from Flying Nun Records stating that that *Rip It Up* was "incredibly important" to the music community and that attendance to concerts and record sales could drop if the magazine ceased to be published (Barber, 1994). In letters to Cammick following the sale various other industry members voiced their support for *Rip It Up*, such as Richard Thorne, the editor of *New Zealand Musician Magazine* (Cammick, *Rip It Up*, 1994).

Liberty Press was a publishing company owned by ex-journalist Barry Colman. Colman had started Liberty press in 1977 with a community newspaper in Hamilton (Staff, 2012) and the company's portfolio included the reputable publication, the *National Business Review*. *Rip It Up* was no longer an independent magazine but was now part of the stable of a publishing corporation. The magazine's style and content would undergo numerous changes over the next six years.

While this would be the case in years to come, at the time it simply meant that *Rip It Up* would continue to be published, as producer and Operations and Marketing Director for Virgin retail Asia/Pacific, Victor Stent, suggested in a letter to Cammick following the sale.

We feel confident that with the professionalism and resources of an organisation such as this behind you, the future of Rip It Up will be much more secure and free of any debt to the industry (Stent, 1994).

The magazine announced the sale in the February, 1994 issue, under the heading 'Music News'.

"*Rip It Up* changed ownership January 19 having been sold to Liberty Press, publishers of the National Business Review. The sale was an 11th hour rescue of the 17 year-old title as Inland Revenue sought to wind up the RipitUp publishing company in the High Court January 20. The editor Murray Cammick and staff will stay on. *Rip It Up* will publish issue No. 200 in March." (Cammick, 1994)

As Cammick remained as editor of the magazine following the sale, the content and tone of *Rip It Up* remained relatively similar to that of the early 1990s, with knowledgeable writers and commentary on serious rock artists and a strong local coverage remaining.

The publication still folded out into broadsheet size newspaper layout, although images throughout the publication were more evident than before Liberty Press owned the magazine. Feature articles remained a largely question and answer-based style as opposed to full feature articles and the typical story ran for approximately one page (Doole, 1994, p. 12). The major focus of the magazine at this time was still the 'Rumours' and news sections which took up approximately one third of the editorial space of the magazine as a whole (Rip It Up, 1994).

The most significant change immediately following the sale to Liberty Press was the change from a free magazine to costing \$2 per issue. There was also an aesthetic change to the publication, with a glossy cover and advertisements taking the space of the first pages of the magazine (Rip It Up, 1994). As well as this cover images were printed in full colour with a less grainy, more high-quality tone than those than were printed before Liberty Press took ownership of the magazine (See fig 3.1). The cover images again fit with the prevailing styles of the time with bright colours and basic graphic designs being used to illustrate the cover images.

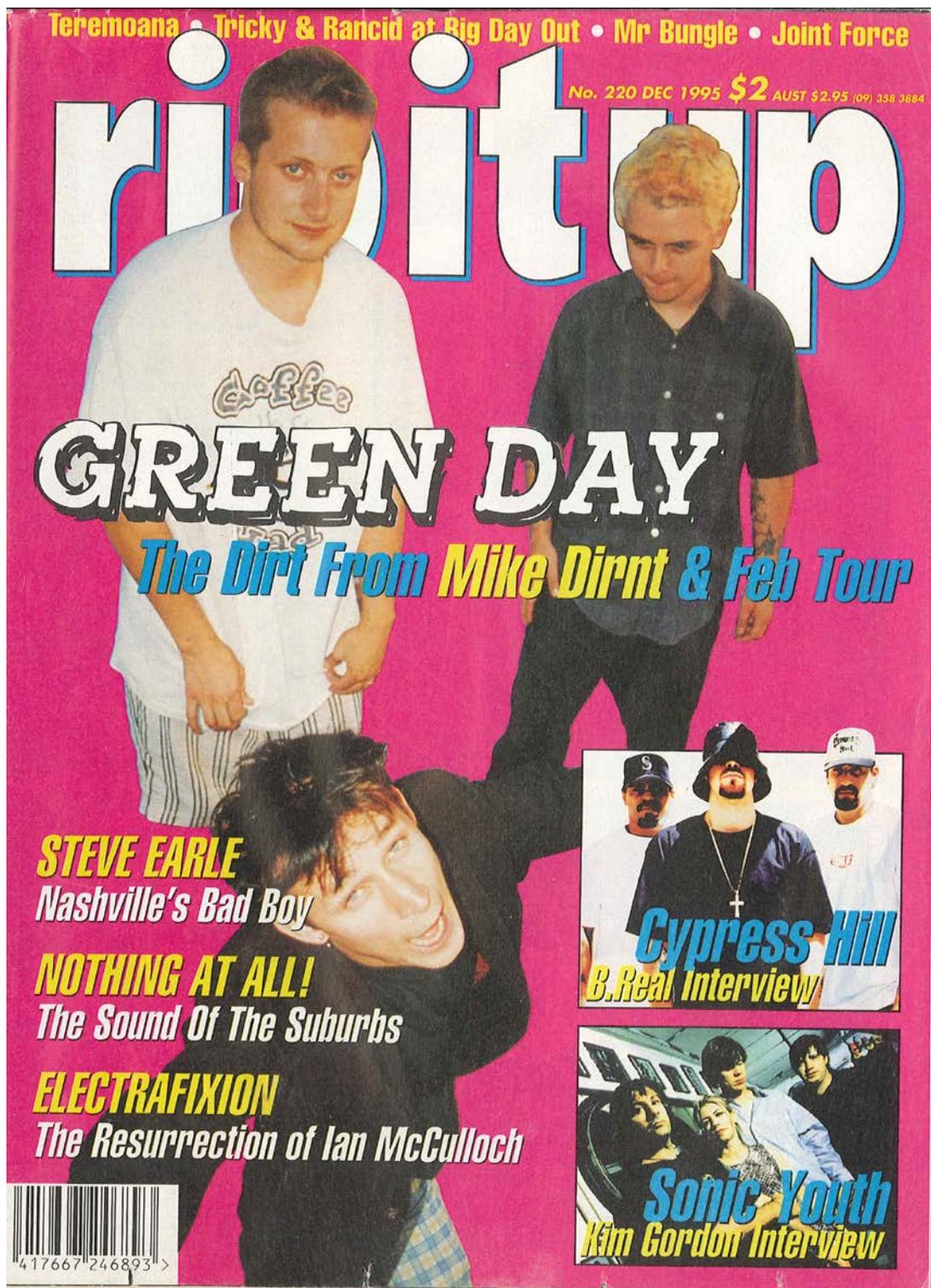


Fig 3.1: #220 December 1995 - The glossy, brightly coloured cover images were consistent with music publications at the time

Following the sale of the magazine to Liberty Press, the distribution and readership figures remained relatively stable, despite the magazine no longer being free of charge. Between September 1995 and August 1996 the magazine sold 65.86 percent of the magazines supplied to distributors, with a total of 86,778 being sold to the public over the 12 month period. While the figures fluctuated somewhat, the publication was selling approximately 6000-7000 per month (LTD, 1996). The highest selling issue over this period was the May, 1996 issue, which featured rock act Soundgarden on the cover (Rip It Up, 1996).

Although readership figures were solid, the advertisements printed in the magazine were still significantly dominated by record companies and liquor companies (Rip It Up, 1996) and according to Cammick the magazine was falling short in terms of advertising revenue (Cammick, 2010).

In 1998, while Liberty Press still owned *Rip It Up*, musician David Long took the role of editor in the magazine and Cammick's role was listed as assistant editor. By the end of the year, according to Cammick, Liberty Press passed the magazine ownership on to Tim Connell, who began publishing *Rip It Up* under the company name of Molten Media. The sale price is unknown, although it can be assumed it was a small amount, as Cammick recalls he was initially offered the magazine back from Liberty Press for \$1 NZD (Cammick, 2011). Interestingly, this was the same price that Colman paid for his biggest title, *National Business Review* in the late 1980s (NBR Staff, 2012).

Long remained as editor and following the change of ownership to Molten Media, the magazine's first editorial since being founded in 1977 was printed. However this was written not by Long but by the owner Tim Connell (Connell, 1999, p. 6). This piece focussed on the change of ownership and hailed *Rip It Up* magazine as "the most recognised music magazine in the country". Following this issue, Long did not write any editorials for the magazine during his brief stint as editor.

Aesthetically and stylistically, however, the magazine underwent significant and sudden changes under Long's editorship, with the cover price rising again to \$2.95 (Rip It Up, 1999) and the magazine now being printed fully on glossy paper. Stylistically, the feature articles were image-heavy and usually about a page long (Rip It Up, 1999, p. 12) and the magazine itself was far brighter and more colourful than in previous years.

Long remained as editor of *Rip It Up* for less than a year, with the magazine being owned under the publishing name IT Media in 1999. The owner of the magazine, however, was still Tim Connell so it can be assumed that he simply changed the name of his company. Connell could not be contacted for this thesis and there is no paper trail available of the dealings of *Rip It Up* at this time so these details cannot be confirmed. When the magazine began publishing under the company name IT Media in October 1999 writer and publisher Richard Cooke took the role as editor. Cooke was the owner of Back Dog Publishing and owned a weekly free magazine *the Fix* during this time. His magazine was founded in March 1993 and continued to publish until August 2005. While this could, in some instances, be seen as a conflict of interest as

the two magazines were music publications, there was no mention of this in *Rip It Up* when Cooke took the role.

Following Cooke's placement the magazine changed fairly dramatically in terms of style and tone, from the editorial through to the articles themselves. This was the first time that editorials had been regularly featured in the magazine and Cooke's tone was flippant, with editorials often making a joke of cover stories and interviews (*Rip It Up*, 2000, p.6) or including fictional and satirical material. An example of this was with Cooke's final editorial in issue #267 where Cooke tells a fictional story about forming a rock band and leaving his position as editor to continue a career as a rock artist (Cooke, 2000, p.7).

Following Cooke's departure as editor, ex-*New Zealand Herald* journalist Scott Kara took the role in February, 2000 (*Rip It Up*, 2000). Under Kara's editorship the magazine had yet another stylistic change, with his editorials being more music-based and serious than Cooke's. Often in his editorials, Kara would be defending his choice to print a specific article or piece to the readers. One typical example of this was featured in issue #276 which featured a special on female rock artists. Kara defends the magazine's stance as more than "tokenism" and claimed that there were various credible reasons for featuring a special on female artists, and that each artist deserved to be there on her own merit (Kara, 2000, p. 8).

The feature articles and stories under Kara's editorship were longer and were articles rather than question and answer interviews that were common in previous years.

For a magazine that had remained relatively stable since being founded in 1977, with founder Murray Cammick being the sole owner and also editor for the majority of the 17 years prior to the sale of the magazine to Liberty Press, the changes throughout the period of 1994 to 2001 were rapid and frequent. It is likely this would have been difficult for the magazine to maintain consistency throughout these changes and it is obvious through the style and tone of the magazine that at times it struggled. It seems to have struggled to maintain consistency also through its coverage of bands and genres throughout this period – something that could also be attributed to the changes in ownership, but also to the musical culture at the time.

In a blog about music writing, former editor of *RTR Countdown* magazine and former *Real Groove* contributor Gary Steel recalled the state of music and journalism throughout the 1990s. It was a time, he wrote, that was seeing new genres emerge on a regular basis. The result of this, he suggested, was that fans no longer wanted a magazine covering genres they weren't interested in but instead, "they wanted something specific to their interest in rap, or metal, or grunge, or dance music" (Steel, 2010).

This fragmentation of audience was evident with *Rip It Up* throughout the 1990s and its band and genre coverage during this time seemed to suggest a lack of identity of sorts. The magazine seemed to attempt to maintain a strong coverage of rock music and retain its identity as a serious rock magazine, although various advertisements, cover images and columns seemed to contradict this at times.

The New Zealand music charts between 1994 and 2001 saw a steady growth in the popularity of female artists. The cover artists on *Rip It Up*, however, do not reflect this with a total of 11 females featuring on the cover out of a total of 79 issues released during this period. The majority of these are as members of bands or “tough” rock artists such as Courtney Love, lead vocalist of grunge-rock act Hole, who features on a total of four covers. The majority of these covers were featuring Shirley Manson, lead singer of rock act Garbage or Courtney Love. Both of these artists were pictured either with their band members or solo, with serious “tough” looks on their faces and pictured as serious rock artists (See fig. 3.2).

The growing popularity of dance music and club culture globally was also emulated in New Zealand during the 1990s with numerous clubs emerging within the main city centres across New Zealand. Throughout this time DJs such as Greg Churchill, Che Fu and Nathan Haines were becoming popular within the dance music scene in New Zealand (Grigg, nd).

The cover artists featured throughout the period of 1994-2001 did not reflect the mainstream music trends during this period and, instead, focussed heavily on grunge and alternative rock bands, many of who were considered authentic and “good” by serious music critics and fans, but were not necessarily charting or selling significant units. This coverage of the more alternative and underground acts became more apparent during the years of 1996-1999, when the bands covered were similar to the alternative bands playlisted on student radio.

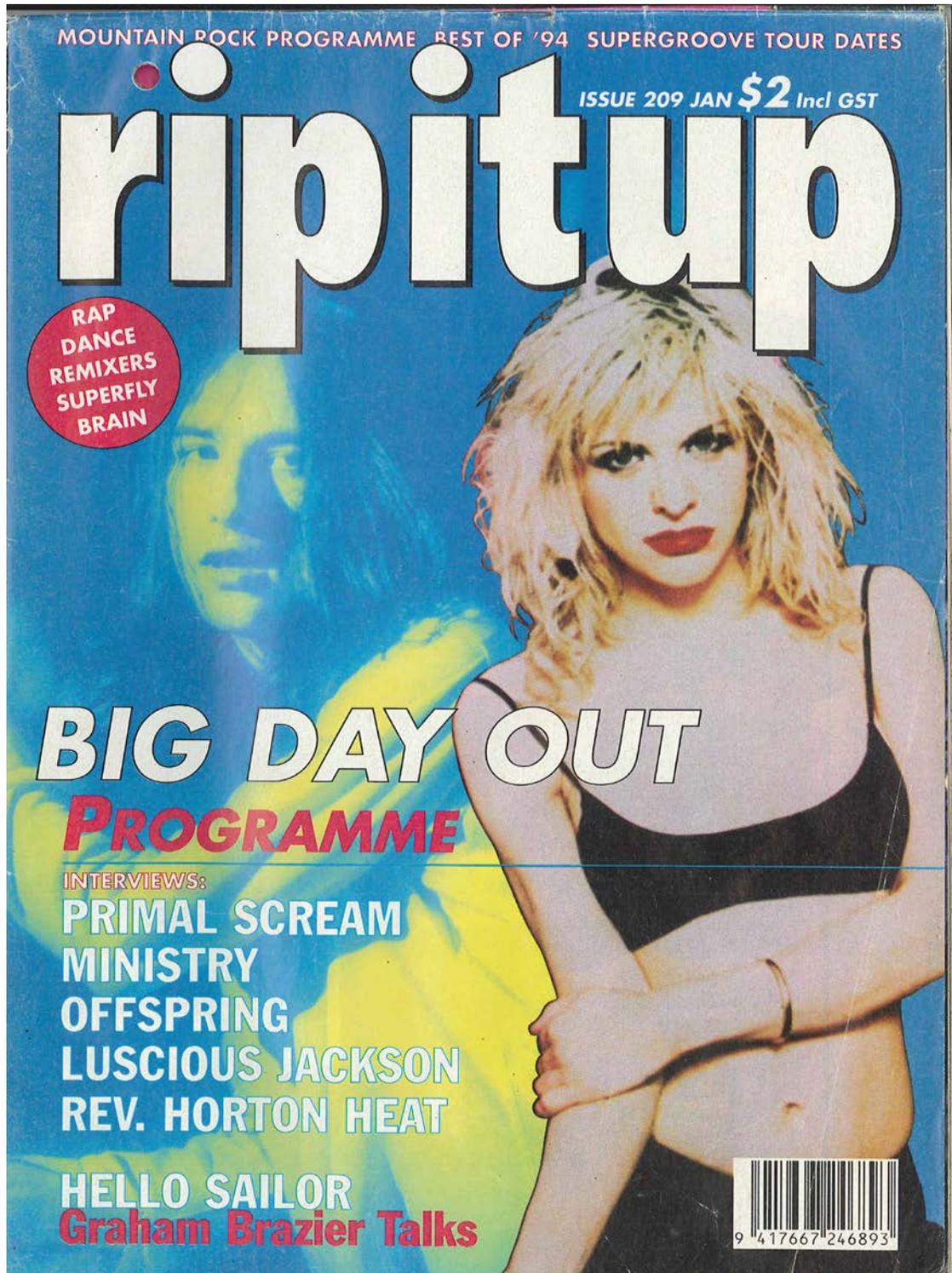


Fig 3.2: #209 January 1996 - The Courtney Love cover is typical of female cover artists, showing a tough disposition

One interesting example of the white-rock leaning of the magazine during this time was seen an editorial featured in issue 254, October 1998, where Cooke comments on the cover choice for the magazine. The choice was a difficult one, he suggests, between rock act Shihad and hip hop act Che Fu. Both artists were New Zealand artists performing well at the time. While Shihad were popular with the alternative rock fans, Che Fu represented a fast growing hip hop and DJ scene in New Zealand, and despite having chart success at the time, was also popular with an evolving alternative club culture.

Cooke wrote of the decision to place Shihad on the cover in his editorial but does not choose to give reasoning behind it. In fact he seemed to give reasons for Che Fu to be chosen instead. There was a new album, Cooke stated, as well as a, "huge local expectation and strong international interest add up to Che Fu being definite cover material. So what to do? (Cooke, 1998, p. 5)

Despite a supposed choice of featuring both artists on the cover, Shihad instead featured solo. This is typical of *Rip It Up* throughout this period in that the magazine featured no hip hop artists on the cover. This is one way that *Rip It Up* differed from the 1980s when the magazine's editors responded to the increase in hip hop and reggae popularity by printing the artists in question on the cover.

While the magazine seemed to portray itself as very seriously into alternative music in terms of genre coverage, at times this was not reflected in other parts of the magazine. This was especially noticeable with advertisements and sponsorship. This coverage of a

more alternative rock youth culture clashed at times, however, with the advertisements published in the magazine. One example of this is a full-page Spice Girls advertisement printed in 1998 – a very different target market to what the magazine’s band coverage seemed to portray. Another example of advertising that did not fit to the band coverage was with corporate page sponsorship. This was particularly apparent with one section of the magazine titled ‘Pepsi Profile’. This was a two-page spread featuring an interview with a band sponsored by Pepsi – a brand and image that seemed at face value to be contrary to the ethos and imagery of the magazine itself (Hoeflich, 1999, pp. 20-21). Perhaps it is because of this corporate page sponsorship (See fig. 3.3) that the interview itself features a significant amount of swearing and the commentary mentions drinking, rebellion and speaks of the interviewer being incredibly drunk at the time of the interview. This could be seen as an attempt to prove that while advertising money was coming from corporate brands such as Pepsi, the magazine and editorial content was still “rock and roll”.

The above examples gave the impression that the magazine was simply taking any advertisements that were available. While this could be understandable from a financial point of view, especially considering the number of significant ownership changes and the apparent lack of advertising revenue the magazine was making during this period, in terms of rock authenticity it could also have been perceived as selling out.

One rumour of exactly this involved an apparent deal made with two major record companies, Warner Music and Sony. The deal, General Manager Nikki Streater suggests, was made when the two record companies agreed to “bail out” *Rip It Up* from financial difficulties, under the condition that they would have a specific amount of control over the cover artists.

do you want a haircut?

INTERVIEWED BY HANS HOEFLICH TRANSCRIPT BY RICHARD

Rage Against The Machine's killer self-titled first album hit the Auckland streets like a bomb, 'Evil Empire' didn't quite have the same impact and now just prior to the release of their third, 'Guerilla Radio', we're all wondering if the Rage is about to return.

Brad the drummer was doing a brief publicity trip and Rip It Up thought there couldn't be a more appropriate interviewer than Hans Hoeflich, an instrumental DJ in breaking these rebellious swearing protagonists roughly 8 years ago. That was back in the days when Attacca was expiring as Auckland's hard rock mecca and the infamous Bob was taking over. A time when Alternative rock still meant something.

Hans still mixes both drinks and music and is now a dedicated professional but this was his first weekend off for 6 months and thus a midday Saturday interview was likely to be interesting... I pulled up to the Stamford Plaza to find Hans in his finest nighttime attire and looking very much like a fellow who could do with a coffee. Pedro the man in the white shirt supplied us with our elixir but all was not well...

Promotions were quite nervous but I managed to supply enough calm and persuasive talk to ensure it went ahead and we all got in the lift bound for the tenth floor. It was in this confined space that I realised Bourbon was the winner last night, but a man of Hans' stamina was far from beat. The fact that he hadn't listened to his 5 track sampler seemed to be of no concern to him, "I'll just have a chat, it'll either go really well or... really badly"

Brad turned out to be one of the most amicable angry young men I've ever had the pleasure to save an interview with. We initially talked bikes; Brad had recently purchased a 1200cc Harley Sportster, I had parked my 125cc Vespa out front and Hans had recently beaten a porsche from a standing start. Hans mentioned that Brad "looked so... Polynesian, hey we could be cousins" and recieved a rather curt "Oh really?" response so I mentioned that Hans was one of the first people in town to play and play and play RATM. "So you're the guy, you're the guy that made it all happen?" Brad was impressed and we were under way.

H: You lost momentum in between the first and second album?

"Brad turned out to be one of the most amicable angry young men I've ever had the pleasure to save an interview with."

B: I think that the band in general went through a really dark period and we wrote a really dark album, we didn't really give a fuck and we took four years to do it, we toured a bit but didn't like each other very much and then took some time off. We were going to call it quits but then realised that, fuck this is really important to us... and that just breathed some life back into the band, we

realised that the music and the message was very important to us.
H: And what was that message? Well our general philosophy was 'don't fuck with me, I know who I am and I'm not taking any shit' but on a larger level there's a lot of injustice and bullshit happening to people that can't even experience it because they're being either sedated or blanketed or fucked with in some way. We saw that and realised it was important for us to convey that it's happening all over the fucking world you know... and using the power of music, going to a show and making that connection... it's just a natural thing that happens when the four of us play.

H: So why do you guys pick up on social issues and push them thru?

"... have you ever been teargassed? it's fucking intense, you're amazed when you get through it and you're still alive."

B: Because it's not just about having a good time, not at all, we all like to have a good time but fuck there's so much more to life, just having a good time is fucking boring man.

H: How much longer can you keep up the rage?

B: I don't know, we have no plan, I don't want to put on any expectations or limits, we'll know when it's not for real and that's when we'll stop... I mean, how many times can you say 'fuck you I won't do what you tell me?' I think we say it sixteen times on that track but so far I've never felt we've had to fake that song, or any song for that matter.

H: Have you got a one sentence message for us?

B: Get in the face of injustice, whatever the fuck that is, be it your life or your surroundings and fucking deal with it... whatever you consider injustice, deal with it and don't be held down.

H: So is this the album that you come back with, is this the one?

B: Yeh, it's the best record we've made, the fact that we've been playing together for 9 years and we've dealt with success and we've dealt with making a record when maybe people expected us to make a different record and now this is coming round full circle, with each other, with a fanbase and with a record company, that's where we're at right now. There's a lot of pure emotion coming off of it, and the emotion that you get off this album is just a little broader than before, it has incredibly tense moments and also has even beautiful moments, quite melodic but tied right into the same song that has ballistic emotions....

It became quite clear Brad wasn't into divulging any dubious road stories even though Hans was quite willing to share his, instead Brad spoke about when they toured Denmark and wanted to play Christiana which is basically a Christian commune with it's own

ASK
FOR
MORE



Fig 3.3: #265 November 1999 – The Pepsi sponsorship was one example of corporate advertising during this period

While there is no written proof of this, and nobody working at the time was willing to go on the record regarding the deal, there is an increase in Sony and Warner Music artists advertised throughout the late 1990s and throughout 1999 a significant number of Sony and Warner artists featured on the cover of the magazine, including Shihad, REM, the Feelers, Creed, Trent Reznor, Stellar*, Oasis and the Smashing Pumpkins (Satellite Media, 2002). It is difficult to ascertain the number of cover artists that were signed to either Sony or Warner as the specific dates of the period in question are not known. Between the period of January 1998 and January 2000, however, 22 of the 24 cover artists were either Sony or Warner artists. While it seems likely that the covers may have been purchased, there is also the chance that these were simply the musicians of choice, as both of these labels were releasing high-selling bands and artists at the time. Editor Scott Kara could not confirm the rumours but recalls record labels “throwing their toys” when there were unable to “purchase” covers following the magazine’s sale to Satellite Media in 2001 (Kara, 2011).

As well as the fragmentation of music and perceived financial difficulties of the magazine, *Rip It Up* in the 1990s was faced with an increase in outside media covering both local and international music of both mainstream and underground music and sub-cultures. While the general magazines such as *The Listener* and *Metro* maintained their position leading sales figures and distribution, *Rip It Up* now faced direct competition with popular culture magazines such as *Pulp*, to a lesser extent, the freely distributed youth paper *Tearaway*. Perhaps *Rip It Up*’s fiercest competition, however, came in the form of a new music magazine, *Real Groove*, published by the owners of

Real Groovy Records, at the time one of the most well-known and respected record stores in the country. The growing number of print publications during this time meant that readers had more choice to choose material for their specific needs, rather than a jack-of-all-trades publication. The advancement of the internet during this time also ensured that access to news and information was more readily available and it can be assumed that *Rip It Up* no was less of a necessity to its readership wanting music information.

As well as direct competition from magazines and print media, the 1990s was a time where music media in general boomed in New Zealand. Mainstream television channels were airing new video release shows and hit shows on TV2 and TV4 such as locally produced *Homegrown* and *Top of the Pops* (Satellite Media, 2009).

As well as this, the introduction of music-based television stations such as Max TV (later to be replaced by MTV) and Juice TV being introduced (*Rip It Up*, 1998) further increased access to music on both a global and local basis.

Radio stations had more freedom in terms of music playlists, and the recent addition of NZ on Air funding to television and radio shows meant that more specialised and music-specific shows were being broadcast more regularly. Rather than view the increase in music coverage as competition, however, *Rip It Up* worked with the increased media, with additional advertising and cross promotion (*Rip It Up*, 1998, p. 7). Radio stations such as the alternative youth station Channel Z which networked

nationwide from Auckland in 1999 worked closely with *Rip It Up* in terms of cross promotion and sharing ideas, according to programme director Rodger Clamp (2010).

From 1994 to 2001, the music industry underwent a dramatic change in New Zealand, with new technologies and the introduction of the internet playing a major part in the overall fragmentation of the music culture in New Zealand. The introduction and advancement of numerous genres and sub-cultures meant that the readership of *Rip It Up* now had a choice in exactly what they wanted to read and listen to (Steel, 2010).

As well as this the significant number of owners and editors that had control of the magazine during this period meant that at times the magazine could not sustain the continuity and consistency that the magazine maintained since 1977.

As well as this, the commercialisation of a number of genres such as dance, hip hop, grunge and alternative rock (Eggleton, 2003) that had, until this point, remained somewhat underground, meant that *Rip It Up* was forced to alter its style to cater to a more mainstream or more alternative readership.

The growing popularity of the internet and the increased competition from other magazines as well as online sources meant that *Rip It Up* had to create a point of difference in order to retain readers and therefore advertising revenue.

Section Four – Sex, Satire and Social Media: 2001-2012

In early 2001, A&M records (with various other record companies such as EMI and Universal) filed a lawsuit against the online file-sharing company Napster. The lawsuit, attempting to have an injunction placed on Napster to stop the file-sharing of the labels' copyrighted material, was the first internet-driven copyright court case and became important in the following years, as online access became more widely available. The case resulted in the injunction being granted and in July 2001 the company was ordered to cease operating until Napster could ensure that the injunction could be upheld (*A&M Records, Inc v Napster, Inc, 2001*). In September, 2001, Napster settled with publishers and song-writers and agreed to pay \$26 million USD. In May 2002 the company filed for bankruptcy and Napster ceased to operate (Reid, 2003).

While file-sharing boomed in the early 2000s, it was social networking in the mid-2000s that was to also have a major effect on the way the music industry ran. UK pop star Lily Allen is one example of the way that performers used social networking and video-sharing sites as a means of promotion, rather than relying on record companies. Having created various demo songs by 2005, Allen used the social networking site MySpace to share her music with the public, rather than the traditional means of nationwide pub and small venue tours. With the MySpace views on her site reaching more than 10,000, record label Regal Recordings signed the artist and her debut album, released in 2006, went on to sell more than 2.6 million copies (Cieslak, 2006).

The increasing popularity and availability of the internet did not simply change the ways in which musicians could promote the music they created, it also meant that information and news was instantly available to the public through music news sites, blogs and forum sites. Communities no longer needed to be built at a pub concert; they could be created through the internet. This, in turn, meant that magazines such as *Rip It Up* were not the sole source of information for fans of music. In fact, as a bi-monthly publication from 2001 onwards, *Rip It Up* could not realistically expect to be the main source of current information for readers of the magazine. This chapter will discuss *Rip It Up* and its relation with, and reaction to, the digitalised world from 2001 to 2009. It will focus on the sale of the magazine to Satellite Media and, through an analysis of editorial content, editor influences and online profile of the magazine, it will analyse the attempts *Rip It Up* made to compete in a largely online environment.

In 2001 the magazine was sold by IT Media to corporate Media conglomerate, Satellite Media. The sale was made for an undisclosed amount, which also included an advertising deal between *Rip It Up* magazine and IT Media (Streater, 2010). Formed in 1999, Satellite Media at the time of the sale had no publishing experience, and instead was a media company responsible for TV shows such as *NZ Idol*, *Top of the Pops* and *Squeeze*. Along with these shows the company also incorporated an internet and event organisation section, which, for the first time, would see *Rip It Up* heading into an online environment. Managing Director of Satellite Media at the time, David Rose, said that owning the magazine would provide a cross-promotional opportunity between the television and online components of the company with the magazine (Hendery, 2001).

The interactive division of Satellite Media has grown since 2001 and in 2009 hosted major clients such as Vodafone Music and Coca cola. Despite having no experience in the publishing industry, current general manager Nikki Streater said the company decided to buy the magazine for sentimental reasons because, “David bought the magazine because he couldn’t bear to see it go under. It’s very dear to New Zealanders’ hearts” (Streater, 2010).

As well as difficulties in regard to the relationship with labels that had become prominent throughout the 1990s, Streater said the entire administration side of the magazine was in “disarray” by the time Satellite Media took over the publication (Streater, 2010).

When *Rip It Up* started being published by Satellite Media, the magazine instantly launched its online website and the web address was printed on both the cover of the magazine and throughout the front pages. The website did not give access to material published within the magazine, with the exception of music, game and film reviews. Instead, the website seemed to be used as a way to keep up to date with news and features, with daily music news updates and additional question and answer format interviews exclusive of the physical magazine. *Rip It Up’s* website was re-launched in 2005 with additional blogs by various media and music industry members such as DJ Sir-Vere and The Edge’s Sharyn Wakefield (Satellite Media, 2010). As well as providing additional content, the website gave the chance for readers to voice opinions through user generated comments and email.

In response to the growing popularity of social networking websites, a *Rip It Up* MySpace page was also created, with regular updates, news and competitions being published on this. The MySpace page further created a community between the magazine and the readership, with the public able to be “friends” with *Rip It Up* online and comment instantly, not only on the magazine’s profile, but with the availability to post photographs and videos online also. As the social networking phenomenon grew in New Zealand, so did *Rip It Up*’s online presence, with a Facebook and Twitter profile being created in 2009 (Satellite Media, 2010). The additional social networking presence of *Rip It Up* saw the magazine “interacting” with its readers, through online competitions, news and instant “conversation” almost recreating the community aspect of the magazine in 1977. As well as this, the online presence of *Rip It Up* meant that while the magazine was published bi-monthly, the magazine itself was able to act, in part, as a daily source of music news and information.

Although the popularity of the internet gave *Rip It Up* the opportunity to grow its presence, it also meant that as well as traditional media forms, the magazine was also competing with online sources, which were growing at a rapid pace. Traditional magazines such as *Rolling Stone* and *New Musical Express* were also showing a strong presence online. As well as this, the popularity of blogs, forums and “online magazines” meant that *Rip It Up* could not possibly dominate the music scene, either internationally or locally. In New Zealand, websites such as *Punkas* and *NZ Hip Hop* built communities of local niche fan bases and focussed on covering these markets through forums, news and interviews. These websites proved popular and in essence

widened the gap between *Rip It Up* as a commercial enterprise and the fans of the music, as these websites were run by music fans and contribution came from fans within these niche communities. As well as these websites, journalists such as ex-*New Zealand Herald* writer Graham Reid set themselves up online with magazine-style sites, writing and publishing their own blogs, reviews and news (Reid G. , 2013).

These online sites did not simply have the potential to draw readers of *Rip It Up* away from the magazines, but also had the potential to affect the magazine's access to artists and advertising revenue from record companies. Tony Cowper, General Manager of Australian-owned record company, Liberation records, suggests that local labels in particular will often use online journalists to promote their albums, rather than purchase an advertisement in a glossy print publication such as *Rip It Up* (Cowper, 2010). Rather than compete with many of the online music sources, however, *Rip It Up* seemed to use them as a way of cross-promotion, as the magazine did in the 1990s with the growing music coverage on traditional media. This was illustrated with the advertising of music-based websites such as cheeseontoast, with creator Andrew Tidball becoming a feature reviewer in 2005. While the online presence of *Rip It Up* was growing strongly, the physical magazine continued as a bi-monthly publication and remained the main source of *Rip It Up's* revenue (Streater, 2010).

According to former *Rip It Up* editor, Scott Kara, the online presence of the magazine did not take off in a big way while he was working in the magazine (Kara, 2011). With the exception of the website and the majority of correspondence to the magazine

happening through email, it was with social networking that the interactive aspect of music media occurred to a large extent. Kara suggested that the physical magazine was the major component of his work while editor of the magazine (Kara, 2011).

Following the purchase of the magazine to Satellite Media, both major and subtle changes in the physical magazine were made quickly. Streater suggested the alterations in content were largely due to the changes in editor throughout the study period (Streater, 2010). The changes can, however, also be assumed to be in part a reaction to the increase of media sources available to readers and a need for the magazine to widen its potential audience as well as compete with online sources. The magazine was largely popularised in terms of artists covered, with a significant increase of charting and high-selling cover artists appearing on the magazine such as Robbie Williams and Kings of Leon. The magazine, from 2006 also branched out to cover a wider popular culture in terms of cover artists, with actor Will Farrell featuring as a cover image (See fig. 4.1). Many changes within the magazine also occurred during this time, largely as editors changed.

Rip It Up magazine has had a rapid turnover in editors since being owned by Satellite Media. This, according to Streater, is the reason for the style changing numerous times throughout the years. According to Streater it is the editor, rather than the publisher that determines many of the stylistic and editorial changes throughout the issues.

When the magazine was first purchased by satellite, current editor Scott Kara remained as editor. According to Streater, this was one of the reasons the magazine managed to

retain a great amount of its credibility (Streater, 2010). The cover price increased to \$7.95 and the overall style of the magazine changed to a more professional look, with larger gloss print and *Rip It Up* became, for the first time, a largely image-focussed magazine with more multi-page feature articles and a large number of columns and short editorial pieces. The overall style of the writing and the types of bands covered remained much the same.

According to Kara the inspiration for many features was taken from overseas magazines such as *Q*, which accounted for the large number of lists such as the “Top 50 names in NZ Music” and the “Sexiest Men/Women in Music”.

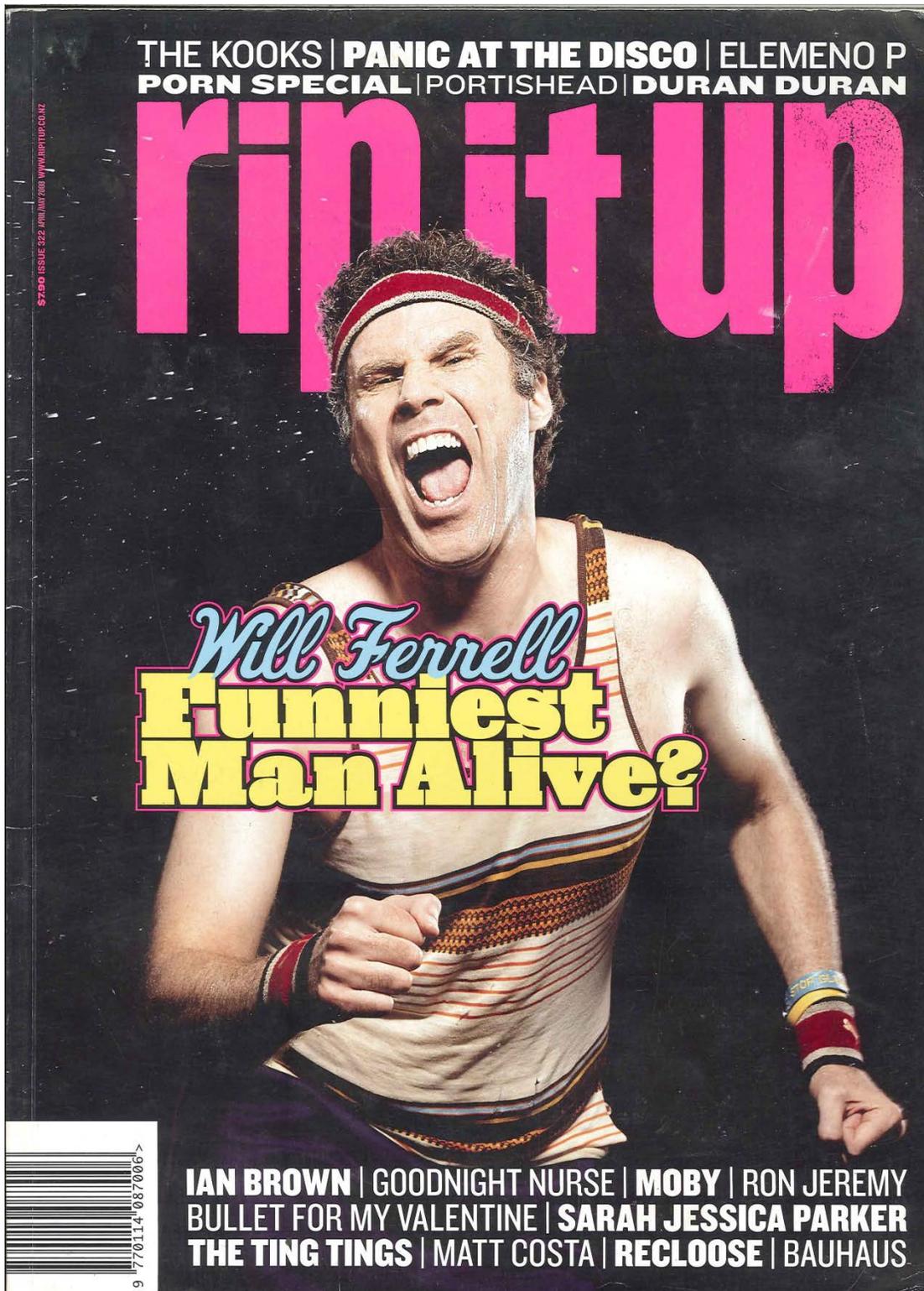


Fig 4.1: #322 April/May 2008 - *Rip It Up* changed its focus to cover a wider popular culture than simply music with cover artists such as Will Farrell

Kara said these features proved successful in overseas magazines and was something he chose to add to *Rip It Up* (Kara, 2011). Other than that the magazine was very music-focussed under Kara and his editorial style was extremely knowledgeable. He also often used his editorial space to defend certain decisions in regards to changes to the magazine or stories written and artists covered. In fact it was through an editorial that Kara addressed the original sale to Satellite Media.

The magazine was sold recently to Satellite Media Group. This is good news for the readers because it remains an independent music magazine, with added support from the company's Friday night music show *Space* and *Squeeze on a Sunday*, the only TV show committed entirely to Kiwi music. So, no, we haven't gone corporate, and yes, we are still New Zealand's original music magazine (Kara, 2001, p 5).

Under Satellite Media's ownership, *Rip It Up* did branch out in terms of music coverage, often focussing often on popular mainstream acts and performers such as Britney Spears and Lily Allen. Kara admitted there was often pressure from outside sources such as record labels and advertisers, but he often justified his decision to readers in his editorial. One typical example was Kara's justification for featuring pop act Robbie Williams in which case Kara suggested to readers that Robbie Williams may not be a traditionally "serious" or "credible" musician, but instead his credibility comes from having no pretence and being completely honest about simply being an entertainer. His life translates to a good story, Kara suggested, adding that, "a good story is what we're after" (Kara, 2001, p. 7).

While Kara did justify decisions to readers, the concept of credibility did not necessarily inform his editorial decisions. Rather than credible in terms of knowledge and questions asked by reporters, Kara maintained that the ability to keep readers interested in a story was the most important factor and his concern was with being credible in terms of being trusted to provide a good read (Kara, 2011).

This type of entertaining article featured heavily under Kara's editorship, whether in a humorous way with features such as "69 Extreme Nude Moments in Music" (Rip It Up, 2004) where cynical and humorous comments featured such as, in response to Alanis Morissette, "How did that album end up selling at all? Does anyone know?" (p. 54) and, about punk act Blink 182, "These punksters love showing off their naked bodies about as much as they do their platinum records" (p. 53), or in full feature articles where writers were encouraged to bring themselves into the story.

Scott Kara resigned from the position of editor in 2004, to focus on writing for the *New Zealand Herald*. The reason for leaving, according to Kara and Streater, was that Kara himself was a writer who did not want to focus on the business side of being an editor (Kara, 2010). This is something that Streater said the magazine found on occasion with hiring writers as opposed to business-oriented editors to run the magazine (Streater, 2010).

Martyn "Bomber" Bradbury, radio personality, took the position of editor from 2004-2005. The style of the magazine changed dramatically under Bradbury, giving *Rip It Up*, for the first time since its beginning, a strong political theme. Editorials and front

section material was very politically minded and a number of interviews with artists such as Tom Morello and Strike Anywhere had a strong political skew. The Letters to Editor followed this lead and featured political themes, with a significant number being focussed on politics and political issues. As well as adding a strong political theme, Bradbury often used his editorial and other sections of the magazine as a sounding board for his own political views.

In the April/May 2005 issue of the magazine, the winning letter was written in opposition to the demise of alternative rock station Channel Z. Bradbury had worked at *Channel Z* as talkback host and night show presenter, which had been replaced by *Kiwi FM*, a station playing only New Zealand music. The letter included the line, "I miss the things that Late Night Talk back with Bomber taught me." The end of *Channel Z* came up repeatedly over the following months in the pages of *Rip It Up*. Bradbury's editorial in the June/July 2005 issue was titled "Is the Future of New Zealand Music Safe?" and included a section about his feelings of the station's closure (Bradbury, 2005, p. 8).

In the last decade there has only been one radio station that has led that airplay – Channel Z. I really think that Channel Z served an important role between the b-net and the commercial stations. If Channel Z played something for six weeks, other commercial stations would feel more confident adding the song to their playlist, as the risk of breaking a track had been eased. Sadly, this isn't the case under Kiwi; the station's new format seems to lack the influence of Channel Z's playlist on other stations (p 8).

This was the first time that statements within *Rip It Up* had a direct conflict of interest with the magazine's advertisers. A number of the advertisements within *Rip It Up* were for stations owned by media company *Radioworks*, who also owned *Kiwi FM*. A similar

potential conflict of interest occurred when the television series *Pop Idol* appeared in a later issue, when *NZ Idol* was a show produced by Satellite Media, the owners of *Rip It Up* at the time (Bradbury, 2005, p. 9). Bradbury left his position as *Rip It Up* editor shortly after, because he stated that he was given the opportunity to run alternative, independent TV music station ALT TV (Bradbury, 2009).

The style and tone of the magazine dramatically changed again when ex-AUT journalism graduate Karl Puschmann held the role of editor from 2005 until 2009. Puschmann immediately ended the political focus of *Rip It Up* and focussed more on satire, while keeping the magazine heavily focussed on music. Under Puschmann's editorship *Rip It Up* included numerous features with more social and popular culture themes, such as "Tattoos" (Jack, 2008, pp. 50-52) and "Porn" (Farrier, 2008, pp. 52-54). These features saw *Rip It Up* take a similar tone to overseas publications such as *Rolling Stone* which have featured strong social and pop-culture oriented style since the 1960s. This occurred at a time that many international magazines were covering a wider popular culture, perhaps in an attempt to broaden the readership when news and music information was readily available outside of print publications.

While Puschmann often focussed heavily on topics to do with the music industry, particularly the complex issues involved with digital networks and social media, he did so with a largely satirical tone. Through editorials Puschmann did not, as many editors do, comment heavily on the content of particular contents of *Rip It Up*. Instead he used the space as a sounding board for his own thoughts, and comments, although these

generally were very music focussed. One particular example of this was in the August, 2008 issue where Puschmann lamented the fact that Phil Collins was in the top 40 music chart due to his single 'In the Air Tonight' being used for a Cadbury television commercial featuring a gorilla playing the drums. "We're the only country in the world where the gorilla's reached the top spot," Puschmann wrote (Puschmann K. , 2008, p. 12). In his editorial space Puschmann would also often print satirical poetry or sketches (See fig 4.2). It would seem from these editorials that Puschmann, like Kara, was more focussed on entertainment for readers and providing a credible source of music information and opinion than selling different stories and features that the magazine contained.

Despite the often humorous tone that Puschmann took with his editorials, he also used the space to respond to issues that he felt personally strongly about. In one editorial he responded to a trend within record companies of offering short phone interviews to journalists. In the editorial, entitled "The Hand that Feeds" (Puschmann, 2009, p. 10) Puschmann referred to the limited access to bands for the journalists of the magazine. Puschmann's editorial responded to recent offers of 15-minute phone interviews being offered. "15 lousy minutes to cover everything worth covering ...You can't. It's quite impossible", he wrote. He continued to state that by accepting the growing lack of personal access to artists, that music journalism was declining in quality.

The country's other magazines and papers trot blindly to their eventual demise and the promised downfall of the print industry. Playing their own small part in fulfilling that internet-fuelled prophecy (Puschmann, 2009)

A'REBOURS
NEVERMIND

Editor: Karl Puschmann



i'm sure i've forgotten something ...

WRITE & WIN!
Have something you want to say? Submit your letter to the editor - best letter wins a new pair of Vans SK8-Hi True Whites. Send your letters to karl@satellitamedia.co.nz or post to **Satellite Media** PO Box 90 736 Auckland



12

Fig 4.2: #322 April 2008 – Puschmann’s editorials often had nothing to do with the magazine or music

Puschmann refers, in other editorials, to the changing state of the music industry and the effect that the internet and technology is having. In issue 320, December/January 2008, Puschmann's editorial makes a satirical commentary on the debate over file-sharing and the effect it has on artists and publishers, stating that the new trend is to "simply log onto the net and download all those *Rip It Up* articles you wanted to read for free" (Puschmann, 2008, p. 12). In a tongue-and-cheek manner, Puschmann related the illegal download debate to journalism and focuses on the growing trend of independent musicians releasing music without the backing of a record label.

Rather than being tied to a publishing company there are writers who are now releasing their features online themselves., setting up websites for fans to download either just the hit sentences or, if they prefer, the whole feature and then allowing the reader to choose to pay what they want for it ... whatever money they've earned from these legitimate sales is going straight into their own pockets, rather than their publishers (Puschmann, 2008, p. 12).

The effects of networked digital technologies were being felt in New Zealand. There were important issues at stake for the music and publishing industries and Puschmann often incorporated these debates into his editorial content.

In 2009 the decision was made by Satellite Media to merge the company's two magazines, *Rip It Up* and the urban-focussed *Back to Basics*, into one publication. The reasoning behind this was, according to Philip "DJ Sir Vere" Bell, *Back to Basics* editor, in a blog published after the decision was announced publicly, that the two magazines were similar enough to have cross-over content and be fighting for covers (Bell, 2009). Although the magazine kept to the name *Rip It Up* when the merge occurred, Puschmann was made redundant and Bell was appointed as overall editor.

Under Bell's editorship the style and content of the magazine once again changed significantly. The obvious and immediate change was the increase of urban content rather than the rock-heavy material that *Rip It Up* generally kept to (See fig.4.3).

Bell also increased the already prominent coverage of different aspects of popular culture rather than have the magazine focusing solely on music. Bell continued to expand the movie and television coverage through reviews and mini-feature articles and also included comedy-based features around the time of the annual comedy festivals in Wellington and Auckland. Bell also included cover stories about television and film personalities rather than musicians. This was an important step for the magazine to take, according to Streater, in order to widen the potential market for *Rip It Up* (Streater, 2010). It is also understandable that a magazine such as *Rip It Up* would take this angle with the publication, especially when the closure of popular culture-focussed magazines such as *Pulp* and *Pavement* in the early 2000s opened the market for such content.

Despite the magazine being owned by Satellite Media, Streater suggested that maintaining *Rip It Up's* reputation as a credible source of music information and news was vital to the new owners of the magazine. According to Streater, this is why editors were given a lot of freedom when the company purchased the magazine. It is also why Satellite Media kept Kara in his role of editor when the purchase was first made.

Essentially we trade on Scott's credibility or Phil's [Bell, current editor] credibility. It comes down to our writers and our contributors. I don't think any reader goes, 'Thank goodness Satellite Media is publishing that', but we do get

letters if our reviews are wrong. I think [credibility] is crucial to our readers. I don't think it's as important to our advertisers, but to our readers it's everything (Streater, 2009).

RIHANNA | TOOL | FREE BALCONY TV DVD

ISSUE 338

rip it up

SOUNDS OF SUMMER

WIN 400+ PRIZES

METALLICA
ONE ON ONE WITH LARS

NICK CAVE

ALOE BLACC

THE JIM JONES REVUE

LADY GAGA

JULIA DEANS

SHAPESHIFTER

DUDLEY BENSON

REGGAE NZ
THE NEXT GENERATION

MUSIC AND FOOD
COOKING WITH THE STARS

FREE MIXTAPE
THE REAL INGREDIENTS

9 770114 087006

Foot Locker

WHO'S NEXT? SETH HAAPU | GARETH THOMAS | BANNERMAN

Fig 4.3: #338 December 2009 - The covers of Rip It Up featured more urban artists after the merge with Back to Basics

With the style and tone of the magazine changing dramatically to those of a glossy publication, it is possible that Satellite Media felt the need to maintain its perceived credibility to prove to its readers that *Rip It Up* was still serious about music, despite an increase in pop artists and advertising within the pages of the magazine. One way Streater suggests Satellite Media combated this was to ensure that editors had a strong knowledge of the magazine's history.

She insisted that Bell and Kara were hired, in part, due to their strong music knowledge but also for the fact that they were very conscious of the magazine's history and heritage (Streater, 2009). Kara and Puschmann were also readers of the magazine in its early years (Kara, 2010). Streater also suggested that it is for this reason the magazine would not hire an international editor. It would be difficult, she said, to force on them an interest and appreciation of the magazine's history (Streater, 2009)

While it is likely important to the magazine's readers that the history of the publication is appreciated, for Satellite Media it makes financial sense, at least as far as advertisers are concerned. As a media company focussed on contracts and picking up clients, *Rip It Up* is the company's only asset that they own themselves. And, according to Streater, *Rip It Up* as a brand is now a vital component to the company's profile.

This appreciation of the magazine's heritage as means to a financial agenda was illustrated when the magazine celebrated its 30th birthday issue, with current editor Puschmann and founder Cammick both pushing publicity for the magazine, doing interviews together on radio stations such as National Radio in 2007.

Cammick has had a role in the magazine since Satellite Media took control of *Rip It Up* with his own column space which he uses to nostalgically recall the early days of the magazine and the bands or musicians he had the chance to interview and write about. His regular column is placed in the front of the magazine and can be seen as a way for *Rip It Up* to increase its perceived credibility by celebrating the magazine's fanzine years, while still producing a profitable glossy publication.

The concept of nostalgia is a common indicator of credibility and authenticity within rock music (Frith, 1981) and this nostalgic look back at the heydays of *Rip It Up* was taken advantage of with the two birthday issues during Satellite Media's ownership of the magazine.

Under Kara's editorship the 25th birthday issue was celebrated with a collage of past cover issues making a large "25" on the cover and a free poster for readers of every magazine cover published in the magazine's 25-year history (See Fig 4.4) This cover gave the impression that the magazine had a strong history of music knowledge and appreciation, and this nod to the strong history of *Rip It Up* added to a sense of credibility for the publication.

Another example of this was the 30th birthday issue, which was double the size (in terms of page numbers) and featured reprints of interview quotes, news and reviews from each year the magazine had been published. As well as this Cammick wrote a two-page spread on the history and beginning of the magazine (Cammick, 2007, pp. 18-19). (See fig. 4.5)



Fig 4.4: #318 August/September 2007 - Murray Cammick wrote a nostalgic piece about *Rip It Up's* early days for the 30th birthday issue.



Fig 4.5: 2003 The 20th birthday issue of *Rip It Up* included a poster which featured every cover image since the magazine started in 1977

The pressure from record labels and advertisers was an issue for *Rip It Up*, according to Puschmann, who said he also felt pressured to feature popular and mainstream artists. To Puschmann, however, music credibility was vital to the magazine and his justification for printing features on “pop” artists was to simply focus the interviews on a music-based theme, rather than the entertainers themselves. This was prominently featured in a cover story of female pop stars where the writing typically focussed heavily on music and musical influences (Puschmann, 2009). Within the issue an article by long-time music writer Barney McDonald was published on the growth on pop music and made the claim that many of these artists should still be respected if they contribute to their own song writing and music making as well as have control of their own public image. This leads into the interviews with various female pop artists and made the claim that the reader should, “decide for yourself if the following four acts fit – and foot – the bill” (McDonald, 2009, p. 57).

The articles themselves did make mention of the artists’ control, or lack thereof, of their own image and song writing. One example is Benji Jackson’s interview with Australian pop duo the Veronicas. The interview leads with the intro that suggested the article would “find out just how involved the pair is in the song writing process and in the production of their music”. The article itself also makes the claim that the pair, “have a solid hand in writing their own music” (Jackson, 2009, p. 61)

The concept of credibility is a common one within the music press, particularly due to its close association with music and the idea of authenticity within music. The battle for

credibility was one that Satellite Media needed to overcome, in order to maintain a reputation with music fans in New Zealand. *Rip It Up* is not the only magazine to have struggled with the idea of credibility in recent years, with international magazines such as *New Musical Express* and *Rolling Stone* having been accused of losing credibility through similar circumstances to *Rip It Up*, following the shift from inkie to glossy magazine, an increase in advertising and record label pressure, a decline of personality journalism and sales to major media conglomerates (Lamb, 2009). To overcome these issues, *Rip It Up* acted in a similar way to the international magazines, with cynicism, nostalgia, hiring staff who are vocally passionate about music and by featuring “serious” rock artists within the magazine.

One typical example of this is Alicia Brodersen’s Foo Fighters article in the October 2007 issue where mention is made of vocalist Dave Grohl’s earlier years in grunge act Nirvana, the fact that the band had spent “12 years of hard work” with the Foo Fighters and refers to earlier successful albums and the fact that Grohl is passionate about rock music numerous times throughout the article (Brodersen, 2007).

The extended focus on more mainstream artists did mean the readership demographic was broadened and a number of younger, teenaged, readers began reading the magazine with the magazine being distributed to high school libraries and featuring artists that had a generally younger target market. Interestingly, the idea that *Rip It Up* would have a young readership was one of Cammick’s fears at the time when he was

editor and owner, due to the numerous complaints over liquor advertisements (Cammick, 2009).

Following Satellite Media's purchase of the magazine, that necessity was no longer an issue and the magazine broadened its potential audience with subscriptions to school libraries and stores that younger people frequent. While the younger potential audience for the magazine may have been a positive for the company in terms of sales figures and potential advertising market, it did open the magazine up to complaints about the language, advertisements and content that was aimed at an older audience than that of 13-17-year-olds.

One particular example of complaints pertaining to *Rip It Up's* extended and younger audience was in response to a Sex Issue published in April 2003 with a semi-naked woman on the cover (See fig. 4.6) and the same image only with breasts exposed inside the front cover. The focus of the entire issue was music and sex, with all interviews and headlines referring to sexuality, sexiness of certain artists and sexual exploits of bands and artists written and commented on. Examples of this include pop artist Christina Aguilera being referred to as "Genie in a g-string" – a play on her single 'Genie in a Bottle' (Rip It Up, 2003).

This particular issue was written about in publications such as the *New Zealand Herald* due to the number of complaints from high schools with some educators even going as far as to ban the issue from school libraries with the content being labelled by the school as "pornographic" (RNZ, 2003).

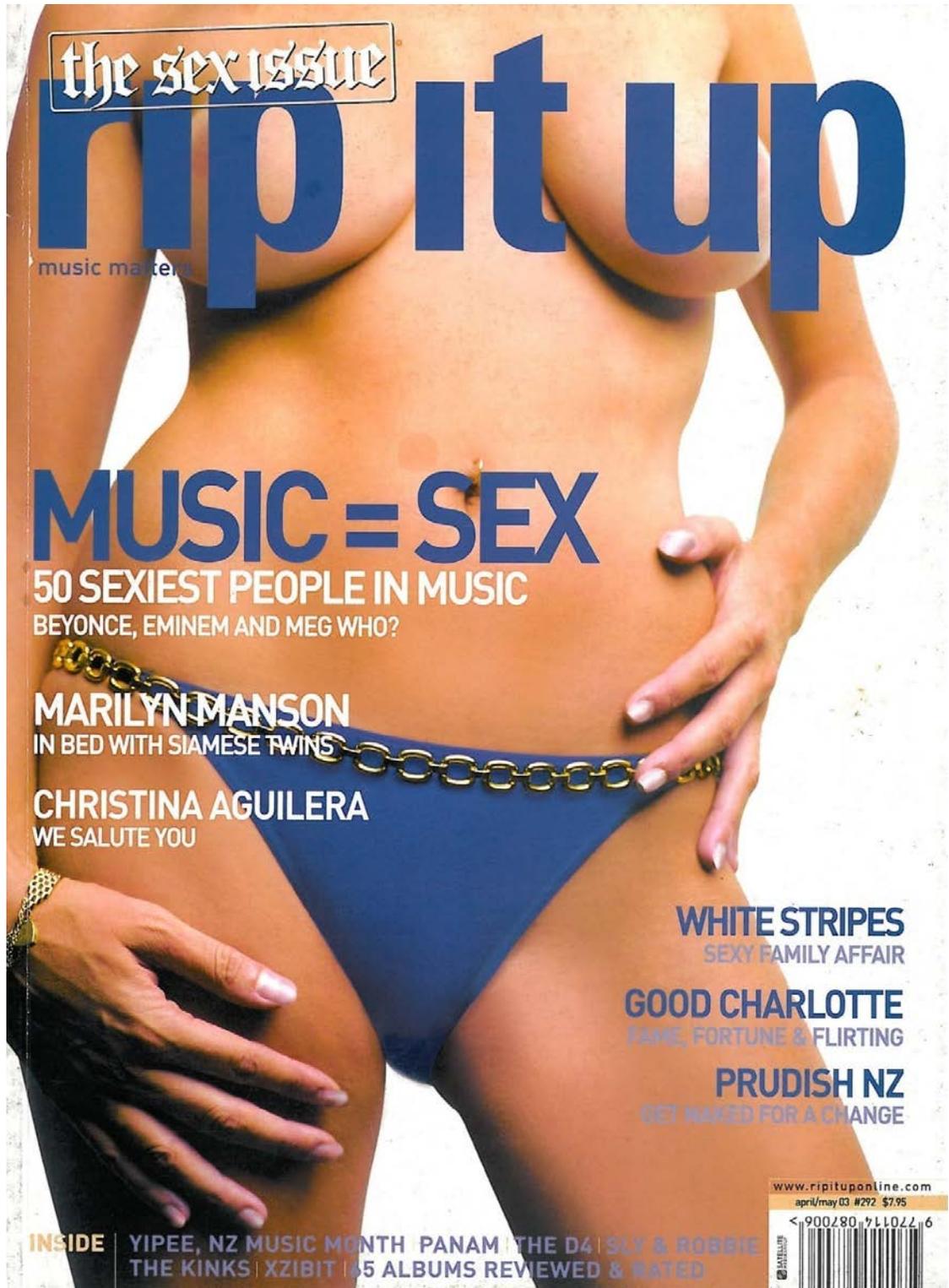


Fig 4.6: #292 April/May 2003 - Controversial magazine covers such as this resulted in complaints from schools and libraries.

Streater defended the magazine publicly however, stating that the concept of sex and music co-exist as part of the one music industry. Streater claimed at the time that the Sex issue attempted to represent that co-existence (Streater, 2010).

Despite the defence of the magazine and the publicity the particular issue received, Satellite Media found they had to extend a number of school's subscriptions by two months in order to make up for the one issue that many of these schools banned. (RNZ, 2003)

It was not simply the content of the magazine that drew complaints with Satellite Media-owned *Rip It Up*. Similar to when Cammick owned the magazine, complaints were received regarding the advertising featured in the magazine. This was not only in response to alcohol advertisements, of which there were many – mostly in the fashion of corporate sponsored pages and features such as the Export Gold Gig Guide – but also with advertisements relating to other assorted adult paraphernalia. One example of a typical complaint of this nature was published in the April/May 2005 issue. Within the letters to the editor section a scanned copy of a complaint letter was printed, sent from Dunstan High School in Alexandra, voicing concern about the advertisements in the magazine and their appropriateness for a high school-aged audience.

We received our first copy last week, and while finding many of the articles would be suitable for students, we strongly object to some of the advertising. Because of that, we have decided to cancel the subscription. I suggest if you wish to target schools, that advertisements for Playboy Playstations and vibrators are inappropriate (Paterson, 2005, p. 12)

Technically the magazine's target audience was still 18-25, and the general style, tone and content of the magazine was aimed toward an audience older than high school-aged. By printing reviews on websites such as radio station the Edge and advertising pop music aimed at a younger audience, however, the publishers were directly targeting a younger readership. This was enhanced by Satellite actively inviting schools to subscribe to the magazine.

Martyn Bradbury, the editor at the time, was well known to young people due to his high-rating "Youth Talkback" radio show on Channel Z. It is because of this that many of his listeners of a young age would have been likely to follow him to *Rip It Up*. It could be assumed that Satellite Media's technical target audience and their actual audience seemed to conflict a considerable amount, at least during Bradbury's years as editor.

One factor that has become apparent with the changes in technology throughout the 2000s is the effect this has had on *Rip It Up's* importance to the wider music industry.

Leon Wratt, Programme Director of the Edge, said that during the 1990s, the magazine was a large source of information for radio in terms of new and current bands. However the need for the magazine in that sense is no longer there.

Magazines aren't as important in radio as they were when I started. Internet wasn't really around and the way you got info on music was only a few sources. At that stage *Rip It Up* was one of the few sources (Wratt, 2010).

Rodger Clamp, More FM programmer and ex-Channel Z programmer, agrees that music magazines no longer hold the importance to the music industry that they once did. He said that during his Channel Z days the station would make an effort to work closely with *Rip It Up* by sharing discoveries of new bands and keeping a close eye on what was covered in each issue (Clamp, 2010). While the importance and brand recognition may not be as strong as it once was, Wratt claimed that it is still a significant part of the music industry, especially in terms of its local music coverage.

To me every media source is important to the local industry. I'm sure some people believe their careers were destroyed or created by being on the cover of *Rip It Up*. It would definitely have some influence. At the end of the day the most important thing is people hear your music. It's an important building block. I would dread the day we didn't have local music magazines (Wratt, 2009)

The reasons for this loss of relevance within the music industry and among the public can be due to a number of outside influences. The recession in 2008-2010 would likely have meant that fewer people were spending money on luxuries and companies were spending less on advertising in general, and Wratt said this was definitely the case in terms of radio (Wratt, 2009). The other important change since Satellite Media purchased the magazine is the pervasiveness of the internet and new technologies in every aspect of music. According to the Wratt, while music magazines were once a vital source of information for others within the industry, these days it is far easier, and often quicker to get information from the web (Wratt, 2009).

Possibly as a way to combat this loss of importance within the industry, and due to the importance of the internet to the media industry, Satellite Media enhanced and

updated *Rip It Up's* website, allowing readers the ability to comment and debate over stories, blogs and reviews. As well as this, *Rip It Up*, from 2007, started having reviews and interviews from the magazine featured on various outside media websites, such as *The Rock* and *TV3*. This could be seen as a way for the magazine to increase its visibility in terms of audience, but also to increase its importance to the wider music media industry.

The content of *Rip It Up's* online presence has been enriched since the launch of its website in 2001. By 2007, the website was the magazine's only source of news content, with the section being removed from the print version of the publication. Streater said the idea of news and gig guides in a bi-monthly published magazine was no longer relevant to readers, especially since daily updates can be found on other local and international websites such as Yahoo, nzmusic.com, nme.com and websites attached to entertainment sections of daily newspapers (Streater, 2010).

In 2009 the *Rip It Up* website was revamped to include competitions, blogs and videos, as well as links to the magazine's social networking pages including Twitter and Facebook. The updated website is similar to international sites from magazines such as *Billboard*, *New Musical Express* and *Rolling Stone*, that all have strong and colourful websites with features such as reviews, news and interviews being regularly updated. The addition of the website also could have helped to return *Rip It Up* to the interactive community vibe of its earlier years, with the availability of readers to comment and

discuss various aspects of the website and again opening up the community aspect of the magazine with its inclusion in the social networking aspect of the web.

The other aim with the digital aspect of the magazine, according to Streater, is to reach the internationally-based “ex-pats” of New Zealand. This international aspect of the magazine almost sees the publication returning to its roots with a strong focus on New Zealand artists and bands (Streater, 2010). With the strong presence of international magazines, music fan sites and social networking, it is possible that idea could work for the magazine’s coverage of local music, but not so much with its international coverage.

The growth of internet usage between 2001 and 2009 saw the music industry changing and evolving rapidly, with the most obvious trend to affect *Rip It Up* magazine being the growth of online magazines and user-generated music news and coverage. This chapter has explored the magazine throughout this period in terms of style, content and online presence. By creating profiles and websites online and incorporating new technology and developments into the magazine, *Rip It Up* has attempted to maintain its profile and brand. Despite decreasing sales figures during this period, the physical presence of the magazine remained.

CONCLUSION

Rip It Up magazine, as the longest-last music magazine in New Zealand, is an important part of New Zealand's music and journalism history. This thesis studied the cultural history of *Rip It Up* magazine from 1977 to 2009. It has discussed cultural trends that have played a part in shaping the magazine and how *Rip It Up* developed and maintained a sense of identity and credibility as a source of music information throughout various cultural changes.

The years 1977 to 1984 saw the establishment of *Rip It Up* magazine as a fanzine style publication, which was distributed freely throughout music stores and other areas in New Zealand. Fanzines and early inkiies thrived on their credibility throughout the 1970s and early 1980s and therefore the magazine faced the problem of maintaining its credibility and a sense of community while surviving as a commercial entity and securing enough advertising revenue to cover costs.

Murray Cammick, *Rip It Up's* first editor, maintained a sense of credibility through strong coverage of New Zealand's music scene and employing writers who were knowledgeable and passionate about the music they were covering. Cammick sustained the magazine's credibility by publishing *Rip It Up* as a free giveaway and making its appearance look rough and gritty. The ethos of *Rip It Up* appeared to be non-commercial, even anti-commercial, which was in line with the ideas behind much of the music the magazine featured. The fear of appearing to be "selling out", that is appearing to be a professional or corporate publication, lay behind many of the choices

made in terms of layout, content and tone. During this period *Rip It Up* survived largely on advertisements from the music industry and liquor companies and this ensured that the magazine was not “selling out” with advertisements from major corporate organisations.

A sense of community was also part of maintaining *Rip It Up*'s “no sell-out” stance during its early years. The magazine published many letters from its readers and these in turn engendered more communication as people responded to each other via the magazine. These exchanges could be lively and competitive as readers argued back and forth with each other and *Rip It Up*'s writers. Some of these discussions and exchanges happened in person. Russell Brown, a former *Rip It Up* writer, pointed out that the readers would get to know many of the writers at concerts and shows (Brown, 2009). *Rip It Up* established a reputation for credibility and authority about musical culture during these early years that has been part of the magazine's myth, even after it passed from independent to corporate ownership.

By 1984, the popular music industry had changed both locally and globally since the founding of *Rip It Up* in 1977. The ideas about musical credibility and the anti-establishment ethos of punk movement had been diluted by the rise of genres such as new wave and new fashion styles such as the New Romantics. Pop music was back in fashion and Cammick responded to these trends by starting a new teen-pop magazine *Shake!* While *Shake!* was not intended to compete with *Rip It Up*, its establishment meant that Cammick had to keep two magazines financially secure while keeping

overheads extremely low. This diversion of both energies and finances meant that *Rip It Up* did suffer in the end. During the mid to late 1980s, *Rip It Up* faced mounting financial pressures and a sense of uncertainty as both popular music and culture became more complex and varied compared to the first few years of the magazine's career.

From 1984 *Rip It Up* saw further changes as the economic trends at the time resulted in a more globalised market in New Zealand, meaning that international trends were now having a strong influence on New Zealand popular culture trends (Jesson, 1997). With the economic trends heading toward a free-trade market, the availability of international publications, media and popular culture meant the music trends became more international-sounding and the fragmentation of New Zealand's music culture began (Shute, 2008). For *Rip It Up*, this meant that while it was still acting as a free street-press-styled magazine, the advertising became more prominent in the magazine, with glossier and instantly obvious advertising replacing the black and white cheap looking advertising that had previously been prominent in the publication.

While this could have been an issue in terms of credibility, these advertisements were still not major corporate advertisers and the music coverage remained knowledgeable and passionate. The magazine retained its strong local coverage and continued to focus largely on rock music, a common trend with inkiies on a global scale at the time. During the period of 1984 and 1994, *Rip It Up* remained aesthetically consistent, although the

financial struggles that Cammick was facing with the inclusion of *Shake!* Magazine made the future of *Rip It Up* uncertain.

The dramatic fragmentation of music genres was obvious by 1994. Genres were no longer confined to rock and hip hop. New sub-genres were created and, in turn, sub-cultures evolved with their own styles and rules (Sanjek, 2000). The rapid growth of sub-cultures resulted in lines being blurred between styles of music and their fans. Genres were no longer separated easily, with advancing technology making it easier for styles to merge, with hip hop and rock artists often combining to create new popular sounds (Garafalo, 2011). All these uncertainties and fragmentations were reflected in the course of

Rip It Up's fortunes between 1994 and 2001.

During this period the publication had a number of different owners and editors, all of whom tried to change the magazine in various ways. However, despite the turnover of owners, *Rip It Up's* main focus continued to be on rock music at a time when the genres of popular music were increasing in number and variety. This was seen as a weakness by many readers and members of the music industry and contributed to a sense that the magazine had lost its mana as New Zealand's most important popular music publication.

The tone and style of the magazine changed rapidly during these years according to the ideas of the different editors and owners who ran *Rip It Up*. The magazine had been a free giveaway since its inception in 1977 but in 1991 a cover charge of \$2.00 was introduced. This cover price changed numerous times over the next few years, reflecting a lack of purpose and direction for the magazine. The writing was often cynical rather than serious, and the magazine became a glossy publication with corporate sponsors such as Pepsi. Printed on glossy paper with corporate sponsors, private owners and a cover charge, the *Rip It Up* of the 1990s was a far cry from its original form as a street-wise fanzine delivering the low-down on alternative and local music. The rise in popularity of the internet during the late 1990s seemed to be yet another threat to the magazine's existence.

Since its purchase by Satellite Media in 2001, *Rip It Up* has become more pop-oriented and increasingly integrated with the online worlds of the internet. With the future of many magazines being in doubt with the growing popularity of the internet, *Rip It Up's* owners have responded to this threat in a number of ways. Longer feature articles appear in the offline version of the magazine which provides rich content and expanded coverage of musicians and music rather than the sort of immediate news items that can be found from many sources. This boosts *Rip It Up's* credibility as a source of measured and thoughtful information and harks back to the original establishment of the magazine's writers as authorities on popular music and culture. As well as this, *Rip It Up* maintains its credibility by focussing on the magazine's

heritage, with founder Murray Cammick having his own retrospective column and birthday issues being celebrated by focussing largely on the publication's history.

Along with these developments, the magazine's website has been developed as a source of information that complements the paper version, with the addition of blogs, videos and social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter. These digital fora allow *Rip It Up's* readers to interact with each other in real time and on a one-to-many basis. Multiple discussions, arguments and interactions can happen online with little effort needed from the magazine's staff. The ephemera of popular music and culture such as news items, rumours and gossip suit the dynamic and constantly updating capabilities of the internet. Just how long the print version of *It Up* can survive is a question faced by many publications at a time when popular culture and personal communications and interactions are rapidly migrating to the internet.

For 33 years *Rip It Up* has been altered and adapted to suit cultural trends. At times the magazine's shift or, at times, failure to adapt to changes, has seen the publication lose vital revenue and readership. This thesis has analysed how one magazine has adapted to the cultural trends and advancing technology of recent years. While *Rip It Up* is important to New Zealand's music journalism history, it is just one example of any number of magazines worldwide facing similar challenges. The history of *Rip It Up* illustrates the complex ways in which New Zealand's popular musical cultures are part of a global system of production and consumption. Publications such as *Rip It Up* are important parts of this system in that they supply information for consumers and

provide platforms for interaction and community building. *Rip It Up* borrowed its name from a song released by Little Richard in 1956. The song's first listeners heard it from vinyl 45s, radios and films. Now the song *Rip It Up* is available on Youtube and countless internet sites. The magazine *Rip It Up*, like the song, links the past with the present and points to an uncertain future as print media become increasingly weightless, massless and instantly everywhere in the age of digital publication. The music is by no means over yet.

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