

## POP

Kitsch culture has always relied on a careful balance of irony and genuine reverence. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* isn't really a good movie. But it's a great movie. The B-52s are so cool because they're so bad.

3000 and *Beavis and Butt-head* fanatics in what he has labeled "the ironic audience." Because it makes us feel superior, we're fascinated by the ridiculous. Moon boots. *Miami Vice*. Samantha Fox. Reagan.

Any glorification of '80s bubblegummy bliss is just one big ego stroke as far as Nachbar is concerned. "We're not reminiscing because the '80s were that monumental, but because it fills us with notions of superiority," he says.

# The Late, Great '80s



The Ramones: Sedated in the '80s.

But no other phenomenon tests our resolve more than the recent 1980s nostalgia kick. There is very, very little to sincerely admire about that gallstone of a decade. So why are skinny ties coming back?

Jack Nachbar, professor of pop culture at Bowling Green State U., pairs '80s revivalists with *Mystery Science Theater*

"We get in the habit of listening to stuff with the assumption that we're superior to it," says Nachbar. "So we go back to it with some sense of contempt. We enjoy *Beavis and Butt-head* because they're stupid and we know we're smarter than they are."

Granted, there aren't many of us who

can put on a Devo record or an old Blondie 45 and honestly say to ourselves, "Now that's some deeply poignant, alarmingly intellectual song writing." With Devo reminding us to not only whip it, but whip it good, it takes a rare breed of music enthusiast to take this whole scene seriously.

Still, ironic or not, these things will never fully go away. Like '60s nostalgia and '70s revival, the '80s have the right to a second chance. Especially the music.

Although somewhat submerged under a sea of beefy trailer park rockers (think Foreigner, Boston, *et al.*), such '80s new wave as Modern English's "Melt With You" are fixtures in today's alternative radio.

Jill Heinrich, a junior at Michigan State U., hosts an '80s retro music show on the student radio station, WDBM-FM. "The '80s at 8" runs every Friday at, cleverly, 8 p.m.

"They're not looking to hear depressing music or metal," she says. "They want something fun they can party to. People in college right now grew up with this kind of music, so I think it has a lot to do with nostalgia."

None of this sounds ironic to David McLees, co-producer of Rhino Records' *New Wave Hits of the '80s: Just Can't Get Enough* — a 360-song, 15 CD set of all things '80s.

"I think even the most cynical grunge rockers, if they allow the 13-year-old part of them to come out once in a while, might find a

guilty pleasure or two," says McLees. "If you admit you like Duran Duran's 'Girls on Film,' it doesn't mean you can't listen to Nirvana."

True enough. The '80s have left us with a strange and ambiguous legacy — yet no one can deny the primal pleasure of dancing with yourself to a Billy Idol song. Do we really like Wall of Voodoo, Kim Wilde and A Flock of Seagulls? Or do we just think we do?

"Eighties music is totally cheesy," says Heinrich. "It's like the Velveeta vinyl decade. People were pulling anything out to be weird, to be different. Devo — now come on, that's pure cheddar."

■ Wes Orshoski, *The University Times*, U. of North Carolina, Charlotte

## TEST YOUR POP CULTURE OBSESSION!

Listed below are 15 one-hit wonders of the '80s, along with the songs that made them (briefly) famous. See if you can match the artist with the song. In an effort to challenge all but the most obsessive college DJs, we've avoided the obvious (Soft Cell, Adam Ant, etc.) Answers are printed below.

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Josie Cotton         | a) Too Shy                |
| 2) The Waitresses       | b) I Eat Cannibals        |
| 3) Musical Youth        | c) Never Say Never        |
| 4) Taco                 | d) I Know What Boys Like  |
| 5) Total Coelo          | e) Turning Japanese       |
| 6) The Tubes            | f) Johnny, Are You Queer? |
| 7) Kim Wilde            | g) Love Plus One          |
| 8) The Vapors           | h) Puttin' On The Ritz    |
| 9) Oxo                  | i) Goodbye To You         |
| 10) Scandal             | j) She's A Beauty         |
| 11) Kajagoogoo          | k) I Predict              |
| 12) Japan               | l) Pass The Dutchie       |
| 13) Haircut One Hundred | m) Whirly Girl            |
| 14) Sparks              | n) The Art of Parties     |
| 15) Romeo Void          | o) Kids In America        |

1f:2d:3l:4h:5b:6j:7o:8e:9m:10i:11a:12n:13g:14k:15c

## TECH

Point and click in one area and you'll be connected to Montreal, listening to Darth Vader seduce Luke to the Dark Side. Click elsewhere, and you'll see photos of Jupiter taken by the Hubble Space Telescope.

by simply clicking on highlighted text or pull-down menus. Logon protocols, passwords and advanced computer skills are not necessary to use Mosaic — just lots of free time once you're hooked.

With Mosaic, you can view photos and compressed video, listen to audio and read text — everything from show biz gossip to federal communications regulations.

Mosaic and several other software

# Untangling the Web

These are just two choices among thousands on the World Wide Web — the latest information service on the Internet. Based on a technology called hypertext, the Web is the first tool to make multimedia on-line information easily accessible — even to the technologically challenged.

The key to the Web is a software package called Mosaic — the latest hot property on the Infobahn. Mosaic allows users to cruise from site to site around the world

packages that will soon be available are cross-platform applications — they work and "look" the same way, whether you use a Macintosh, Windows or X Windows system.

Use of the Web has been increasing at an incredible rate, with some 3,000 Web servers existing today, says Richard Koman, co-author of *The Mosaic Handbook* (O'Reilly & Associates Inc.). Only 50 were known to be in use when Mosaic was released by the National Center for



Tim Wurst, Indiana Daily Student, Indiana U.

Cyberspace: The final frontier.

Supercomputing Applications in January 1993. "It seems like every student at NYU has their own page," he says.

Mudit Vats, a sophomore majoring in computer information science at Ohio State U., says creating a home page is easy: "It probably took me 10 minutes to read [the tutorial] and 15 to lay out the page."

If you aren't a techie, don't worry. Help's available. The Beginner's Guide to HTML [Hypertext Markup Language] provides a lot of good information, Vats says.

As popular as the program is, access is limited because of the connection needed to run it. "Universities have the easiest access. Students should really take advantage of it while they can," Koman says.

■ Damon Taylor, *The Lantern*, Ohio State U.