

Jeers for punk rock group as fans walk out

How the Sex Pistols misfired

By Steven Kendall
and Howard Corry

The great Sex Pistols' myth exploded in Leeds last night when a vile, disgusting show was met with derision, scorn and hoots of laughter from scores of fans.

Many walked out on the dreadful debacle at the Polytechnic and those who stayed were told by lead singer Johnny Rotten: "You're just a load of dummies. You're dead."

But, in fact, it was punk rock and its crude, mindless message that was dying.

With the group's violent reputation trouble was expected but the apathy was such that excitement was virtually non-existent and only one fan with a truncheon was carried out. The sole casualty was a girl who trapped her arm in a door.

CATCALLS

When the group waited among catcalls to do an encore, Rotten turned upon his fans and snarled: "Has the council banned you from clapping? If you don't like us, you know where the exit is."

The Pistols, who have drummed up so much controversy with their four-letter tirade on television, were left desperate and dejected; antagonistic in their brusque departure.

Earlier, they set the tone for their abysmal performance of depravity rock by dedicating the first number to "Councillor Bill Hudson, of Leeds, and Bill Grundy and the Queen." They immediately broke orders from their manager not to swear by using a string



Johnny Rotten at full throttle at the Leeds Polytechnic concert.



This punk rock fan at the concert wore a razor-blade ear-ring.

of obscenities. Then, at the start of the second number, Rotten took a swig of ale and spat it out all over the fans at the front.

Throughout the show, "Anarchy in the UK" at the start of a tour hit by cancellations, the group came across as musically bereft, verbally morose and crude.

'RUBBISH'

The beat, blasted out with ear-shattering force, was relentless and unimaginative. The lyrics were even worse, an abomination of bawled revolution like;

"God save the Queen, there is no future."

As Rotten continued his avalanche of atrocities, some of the 300 fans started walking out and their verdict was unanimous: "What a load of absolute rubbish."

Kevin Petch, The Nook, Birstwith, said: "I only came to see what all the fuss was about. I wish I hadn't bothered. It was the worst concert I have seen in my life."

Another fan, Karl Stevens, of Farsley, said: "I've never heard anything like it. They are so bad it just isn't true."

Steve Green, an official at the Students' Union, said: "It's not been a bad night. There has been no trouble, although many people walked out. I think many people came out of curiosity as a result of the Sex Pistols' reputation and the controversy surrounding them."

Supporting the Pistols on stage were three other punk rock bands, The Clash, The Damned and the Heartbreakers from New York. Their performances and punk rock in general were so similar that it was hard to tell when one finished and another started.