

the archive of  
**music journalism**

[rocksbackpages.com](http://rocksbackpages.com)



# introduction

**Rock's Backpages** is the largest database of music journalism online.

The archive features over 50,000 articles on thousands of artists from ABBA to Zappa, plus over 800 audio interviews with legends from Jimi Hendrix to Kate Bush.

We've been going for over 20 years and work with hundreds of writers to archive their interviews and reviews for students, researchers and music-lovers.

The *Library Journal* praised **Rock's Backpages** as "an essential acquisition for large public and academic libraries," while *Variety* called it "an online museum that may well be the best hope rock has of being documented in all its fullness for future generations."

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# our archive: curation & content

All articles on **Rock's Backpages** are full-text, primary-source and fully searchable by artist, date, genre, publication and keyword.

The articles are taken from the widest possible range of music publications in the US and UK, from *Creem* and *Rolling Stone* to the *New Musical Express (NME)* and *Vibe*.

We also include pieces from fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue* and *Who Put the Bomp!*, underground papers such as *The Great Speckled Bird* and *World Countdown News*, and national newspapers such as *The Guardian* and the *New York Times*.

Each week, we add a minimum of 50 interviews and reviews from the pages of the greatest music publications, plus a newly digitized audio interview.

We also create free features, spotlight the work of one of our contributors, and pay tribute to departed artists on our weekly homepage and newsletter.

**“Rock's Backpages is hallowed insurance that all those hard-won interviews, priceless rarities and cultural snapshots will live forever in one grand gallery.”**

— CAMERON CROWE, Journalist and Filmmaker

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The Beatles



493 articles

List of articles in the library

By date | By writer | Most recently added

**Newcomers To The Charts: Liverpool's Beatles Wrote Their Own Hit**  
Profile by Alan Smith, *New Musical Express*, 26 October 1962

MAKING THEIR NME Chart debut with 'Love Me Do' this week are the Beatles, a vocal-instrumental group who hail from Liverpool, the birthplace of such ...

**Chart Chatter by June Harris: Frank Ifield Just Had To Hit That Top Spot!**  
Report by June Harris, *Disc*, 10 November 1962

THERE'LL BE no stopping Frank Ifield now! It HAD to happen that 'Lovesick Blues' would hit number one, and establish the Australian as our leading ...

**Beatles Find Show Biz Isn't All Fun**  
Interview by Jean Carol, *Disc*, 24 November 1962

THE BEATLES, newest British group to join the ever-growing list of outfits to challenge the Shadows, dropped into the DISC office just about 12 hours ...

**At a Recording Session with the Beatles**  
Report and Interview by Alan Smith, *Mersey Beat*, 3 January 1963

THE SECONDS tick away, high in the control room at EMI's recording studios in St. John's Wood, London. Through the glass panel I could see ...

**You've Pleased-Pleased Us Say The Beatles**  
Interview by Alan Smith, *New Musical Express*, 1 February 1963

THINGS ARE beginning to move for the Beatles, the r-and-b styled British group which crashed back into the NME Chart this week at No. 17. ...

**Beatles Beatles**  
Report and Interview by Wesley Laine, *Record Mirror*, 2 February 1963

WHETHER YOU like them or not, you've got to admit that the Beatles are just about the most talked-about group on the British beat scene. ...

**Why The Beatles Create All That Frenzy**  
Profile and Interview by Maureen Cleave, *The Evening Standard*, 2 February 1963

THE BEATLES are the darlings of Merseyside. The little girls of Merseyside are so fiercely possessive about their Beatles that they forced Granada to put ...

**The Beatles: Liverpool Group Takes Britain by Storm**  
Profile by June Harris, *Disc*, 9 February 1963

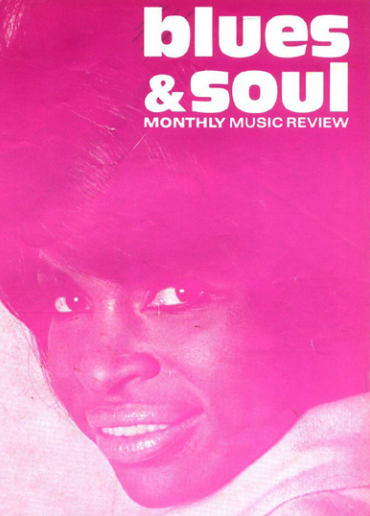
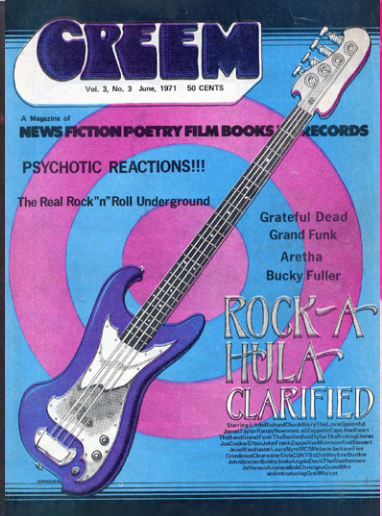
# artists

The 50,000+ articles in the **Rock's Backpages** database feature over 8,000 artists from Aaliyah to ZZ Top, and from classic rock icons to game-changing rappers. The articles range from short reviews and reports to long interviews and retrospectives.

The earliest article is from 1948, the most recent from 2022. In addition, the archive contains over 800 exclusive audio interviews, stretching from David Crosby in 1967 to Beck in 2019. It includes fascinating conversations with the following legends:

- 1969 **Little Richard**
- 1972 **David Bowie**
- 1975 **Bob Marley**
- 1977 **Fleetwood Mac**
- 1980 **Paul McCartney**
- 1986 **Chrissie Hynde**
- 1988 **Al Green**
- 1991 **Bob Dylan**
- 1993 **Snoop Dogg**
- 1998 **Joni Mitchell**
- 2002 **Madonna**
- 2005 **Stevie Wonder**
- 2015 **One Direction**

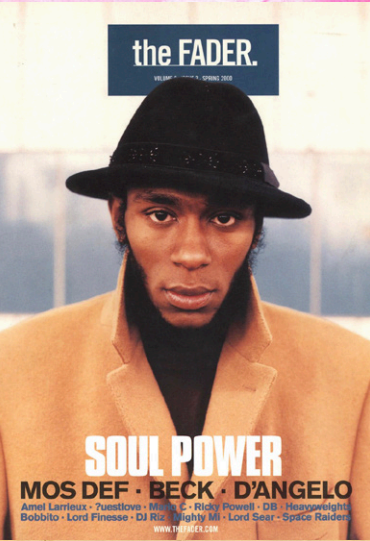
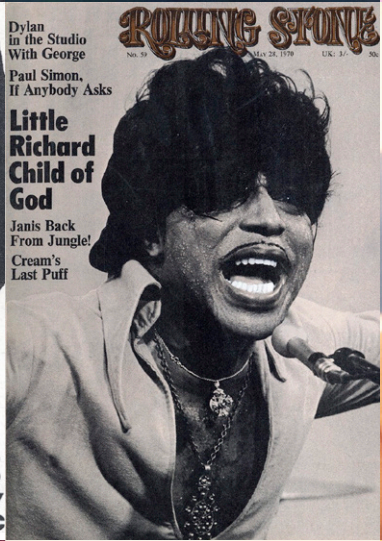




# publications

The **Rock's Backpages** library draws on a vast archive of over a thousand different publications, from *Crawdaddy!* and *Mojo Navigator* in the mid-1960s to *Echoes* and *Stylus* in the 2000s.

We also source articles from national newspapers, specialist magazines, trade publications, fanzines and websites from all over the world. Publications include:



## 1960s

- Blues & Soul
- NME
- KRLA Beat
- Rolling Stone
- Melody Maker
- The Village Voice

## 1970s

- Circus
- Sounds
- Creem
- Trouser Press
- Let It Rock
- ZigZag

## 1980s

- The Face
- Smash Hits
- Kerrang!
- Spin
- Musician
- The Wire

## 1990s

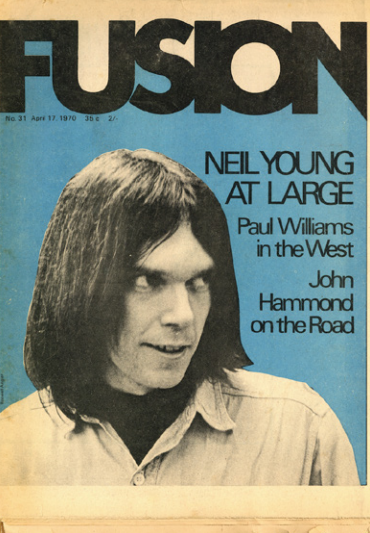
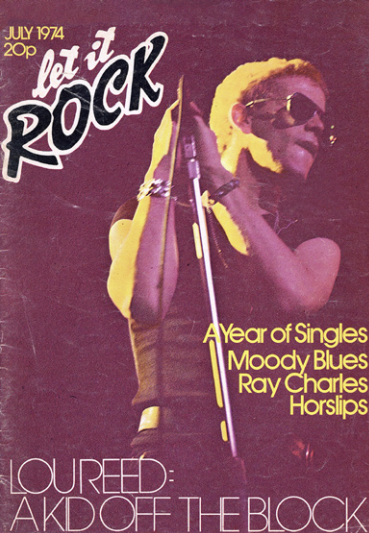
- Details
- Select
- Mixmag
- Uncut
- MOJO
- Vibe

## 2000s

- Complex
- Pitchfork
- Harp
- PopMatters
- Paste
- The Word

## 2010s

- Coup de Main
- NYTimes
- The Guardian
- The Quietus
- Line of Best Fit
- The Times



## subscriptions

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advanced search

## Carol Cooper

Dr. Carol Cooper (snapped in the late '90s with Eddie Palmieri) is a New York-based journalist and cultural critic who has been reviewing music, books, film, and live performance for over twenty years. Her work has appeared in national and international publications including *Actuel* (Paris), *The Face* (London), *Latin New York*, *The Village Voice*, *Essence*, *Elle*, *New York Newsday*, and *The New York Times*. Her essays have also been anthologized in following collections: *Rock She Wrote*, *The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, *Brooklyn, Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough: Essays in Honor of Robert Christgau* and *Rolling Stone Press: The '70s*. Her own collection of music, film, book, and nightlife essays *Pop Culture Considered as an Uphill Bicycle Race* is available internationally.



90 articles

### List of articles in the library

By date | By artist | Most recently added

#### The Black Music Association Movement Of Jah People

Report by Carol Cooper, *SoHo Weekly News*, 28 June 1979  
DURING A DEFINITIVE rendition of 'Exodus' which capped an hour-long show by the Wailers, Stevie Wonder joined Bob Marley on stage and moved 2,000 members ...

#### Jamaican Sunrise: The Promise, Problems and Ethos of Rasta Reggae

Essay by Carol Cooper, *The Black American*, 1980  
AS A BAROMETER of social pressure, and an indicator of public opinion, reggae music has no peer in the modern world of multi-media. As an ...

#### Joan Armatrading: Angel of Intrigue

Interview by Carol Cooper, *Musician*, April 1982  
Joan Armatrading has bartered her acoustic folk roots into a gutsy, punk maelstrom; her new album, *Walk Under Ladders*, crackles with aggressive electricity and sensual ...

#### Kid Creole & The Coconuts: August Darnell And The Creole Perplex

Essay by Carol Cooper, *The Village Voice*, 27 July 1982  
"The dominant feeling of the black poet is one of malaise, better still of intolerance. Intolerance of reality because it is sordid, of the world ...

#### Marvin Gaye: Midnight Love (CBS)

Review by Carol Cooper, *Musician*, February 1983  
UPON RELOCATING to England in 1981, Marvin Gaye complained to London's *New Musical Express* that his last Tamla release, *In Our Lifetime*, was flawed because ...

#### The Equals, Eddy Grant: Eddy Grant: A Reggae Popster Makes His Own Breaks

Interview by Carol Cooper, *Musician*, June 1983  
REMEMBER D.I.Y.? Remember all those fierce and earnest punk rockers who vowed to bypass the corporate monopoly and conquer the rapidly devolving Western world? It ...

#### Prince: Someday Your Prince Will Come

Essay by Carol Cooper, *The Face*, June 1983  
THE THING TO BEAR IN MIND is that Prince does not do interviews. He certainly didn't do this one, nor any of a dozen others ...

#### David Bowie Let's Dance (EMI/America)

Review by Carol Cooper, *Record*, July 1983  
A CONSUMMATE BLEND of everything Chic and David Bowie (in his Negro period) represent, 'Let's Dance' -- the title song of the latter's new album ...

# writers

There are over 800 writers on **Rock's Backpages**, covering all eras of popular music from the 1940s to the present day. These include many of the biggest names in the history of music journalism, from *Crawdaddy!*'s Paul Williams to *Shock & Awe* author Simon Reynolds. We launched the site in 2001 with the work of such legendary names as:

**Al Aronowitz**

*New York Post/Rolling Stone*

**Caroline Coon**

*International Times/Melody Maker*

**Simon Frith**

*Creem/Let It Rock*

**Charlie Gillett**

*Record Mirror/Observer*

**Vivien Goldman**

*Sounds/Melody Maker*

**Mary Harron**

*Punk/Village Voice/Guardian*

**Lenny Kaye**

*Fusion/Rolling Stone*

Subsequently we've added hundreds more writers whose work we preserve for posterity in the **Rock's Backpages** library, including:

**Lorraine Alterman**

*Detroit Free Press/Rolling Stone*

**Lester Bangs**

*Creem/Rolling Stone*

**Carol Cooper**

*Musician/Village Voice/The Face*

**Nick Kent**

*Frenzy/New Musical Express*

**Greil Marcus**

*Rolling Stone/Creem/Let It Rock*

**Lillian Roxon**

*New York Sunday News*

**Nick Tosches**

*Fusion/Rolling Stone/Creem*

Every year, we add many new writers to expand and diversify our historical and contemporary content.

# subjects

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The study of popular music history overlaps closely with the study of social history, politics, fashion, film, photography, technology, the music industry, and other disciplines.

For this reason, **Rock's Backpages** articles are tagged not only by artist, publication and writer but by subject, extending the application of our content far beyond music.

*Subjects include:*

Cultural studies and theory

Fashion, art, and design

Festivals and events

Journalists, authors and publications

LGBTQ+

Politics, race, religion and society

Women in music, feminism

**“Rock's Backpages [...] benefits not only music students and faculty, but those studying and researching journalism, history, English and pop culture. The inclusion of underground and street publications in addition to mainstream journals like *Rolling Stone* and *MOJO* makes it unique.”**

**LORI WIDZINSKI, University of Buffalo**

# genres

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Despite its name, **Rock's Backpages** covers almost every genre of popular music from the past 60+ years.

From gospel and rock 'n' roll to hip-hop and electronica, the library does not discriminate between punk and reggae, or between country and heavy metal. We believe there is incisive writing about all these musical styles and more.

*Genres include:*

Blues and rhythm & blues

Chart pop

Folk and folk-rock

Hip-hop, rap, garage and grime

Jazz and jazz fusion

Punk and hardcore

Soul, funk and R&B

**“Reading rock articles was a crucial part of my education, formation, and inspiration. The great thing about **Rock's Backpages** is that it's been done by experts, by people who've got a feeling for it. For me it's definitive...”**

**JOHNNY MARR, musician**



**E12: JENNIFER OTTER BICKERDIKE ON BIG STAR + PREFAB SPROUT** **E63: NEIL TENNANT ON SMASH HITS + PET SHOP BOYS + ANDY WEATHERALL**



**E105: NELSON GEORGE ON THE DEATH OF R&B** **E120: KATE MOSSMAN ON JONI MITCHELL + JIMMY JAM AND TERRY LEWIS AUDIO** **+ LOU REED + MORRISSEY & MARR**

# our podcast



The **Rock's Backpages** podcast began in November 2018 as a casual conversation between RBP co-founders Barney Hoskyns and Mark Pringle, shedding light on the articles and audio interviews added to the site each week.

Produced and co-hosted by Jasper Murison-Bowie, the podcast swiftly expanded into a one-hour-plus format featuring guests sharing personal anecdotes about their lives in music. These have included:

- |                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Neil Tennant</b>     | writer turned Pet Shop Boy    |
| <b>Midge Ure</b>        | Ultravox/Live Aid legend      |
| <b>Stewart Lee</b>      | comedian                      |
| <b>Alan McGee</b>       | Creation Records founder      |
| <b>Barbara Charone</b>  | celebrity PR                  |
| <b>Danny Fields</b>     | former Ramones manager        |
| <b>Bernard Fowler</b>   | Rolling Stones backing singer |
| <b>Nelson George</b>    | R&B/hip-hop writer            |
| <b>Mary Harron</b>      | film director                 |
| <b>Michael Zilkha</b>   | ZE Records founder            |
| <b>Jill Furmanovsky</b> | photographer                  |
| <b>Peter Guralnick</b>  | historian/biographer          |
| <b>Adele Bertei</b>     | postpunk icon                 |
| <b>Jez Butterworth</b>  | playwright                    |
| <b>John Harris</b>      | <i>Guardian</i> columnist     |
| <b>Vicki Wickham</b>    | former Labelle manager        |
| <b>Geoff Travis</b>     | Rough Trade founder           |

“A fantastic podcast from which I always learn so much. The **Rock's Backpages** team makes a point of tracking down and featuring unsung women pop journalists from the '60s and '70s. The guests are invariably great.”

**DAVID STUBBS**, author and journalist



# books & licensing

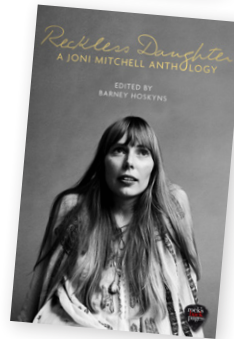
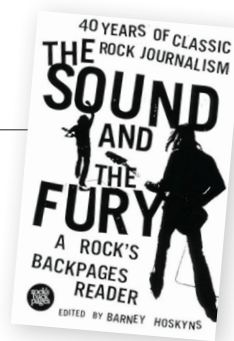
In addition to its online library, **Rock's Backpages** has produced a number of books and audio downloads over the years.

Bloomsbury published *The Sound & the Fury*, an acclaimed **Rock's Backpages** anthology of music journalism, and a partnership with Constable/Little, Brown led to anthologies of interviews with Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan and Radiohead.

We also license exclusive audio clips for use in TV, film and radio documentaries, and text articles for inclusion in books, magazines and album reissues.

Licensors of **Rock's Backpages** content include:

- Spotify** *Stay Free: The Story of the Clash*
- Epix** *Laurel Canyon*
- Parlophone** *David Bowie: Who Can I Be Now?*
- Sony Music** *Michael Jackson's Journey from Motown to Off the Wall*



# our story

**Rock's Backpages** is operated by Backpages Limited, a company set up in 2000 after *MOJO's* U.S.

correspondent Barney Hoskyns returned to London and teamed up with musician Mark Pringle, designer Martin Colyer and financial director Tony Keys.

The company has since been bolstered by the additions of Paul Kelly and Jasper Murison-Bowie. We recently celebrated our 20th anniversary online.

Although **Rock's Backpages** was initially conceived as a research tool for music writers, it soon became clear that it would be a fantastic resource for universities and public libraries. We attended our first American Library Association Annual Conference in 2005 and have subsequently exhibited at a number of other conferences in the USA, Canada and the United Kingdom.

"Little did we realize we'd still be going strong two decades after our launch party in 2001," says Hoskyns. "The idea was to create the definitive library of pop writing from all the great popular music publications — a library, moreover, that kept growing and expanding as all the best libraries do. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do."

**"Rock's Backpages is the best resource we have ever subscribed to. It's had a great impact on our library, especially for younger users — you need this!"**

**JO GUIDICE, Director of Dallas Libraries**

20 years  
of Rock's  
Backpages



# technical information

All content within the **Rock's Backpages** archive is presented with the full agreement and permission of the copyright holders or their estates. The vast majority of this material is exclusive to **Rock's Backpages**.

All text content is full-text, primary-source HTML which is designed to be used for academic purposes and includes auto-citations in APA, Chicago, MLA and Harvard formats, making for easy and accurate referencing.

The resource is OpenURL compliant and is discoverable via OCLC WorldCat, the EBSCO Discovery Service™ (EDS) and ExLibris ProQuest's Summon™ discovery service, easily embedding into your current library management system.



Authentication methods for access include Shibboleth, IP range to include proxy, library card login, PIN, referring URL and via username and password. Remote access is granted by default.

Usage Statistics are COUNTER Compliant Level 5 including SUSHI.



The articles are fully searchable by keyword utilising standard Boolean operators or faceted search by artist, date, genre, publication, subject, writer and article format.

# how to subscribe

**Rock's Backpages** is available by annual subscription and perpetual access purchase, with pricing based on the size and type of your institution. Access is unlimited, with no limit on concurrent users. Over 250 institutions around the world currently subscribe including:

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Stanford  
Yale

## Public libraries

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and many other universities and public libraries throughout Australasia, Europe and the USA.

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\*please note trials are available for institutional use only, for the purpose of evaluation.



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