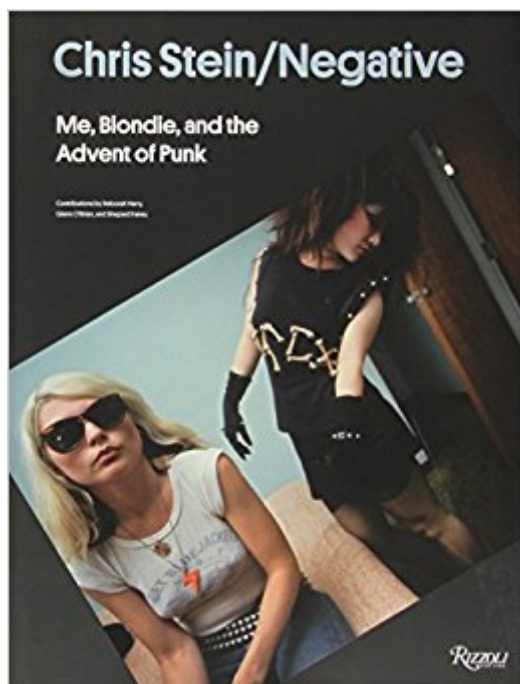


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# Chris Stein / Negative: Me, Blondie, And The Advent Of Punk



## Synopsis

INDIEFAB Book of the Year Awards -- 2014 Finalist

On the occasion of Blondie's fortieth anniversary, Chris Stein shares his iconic and mostly unpublished photographs of Debbie Harry and the cool creatures of the 1970s and 1980s New York rock scene. While a student at the School of Visual Arts, Chris Stein photographed the downtown New York scene of the early 1970s, where he met Deborah Harry and cofounded Blondie. Their blend of punk, dance, and hip-hop spawned a totally new sound, and Stein's photographs helped establish Harry as an international fashion and music icon. In photos and stories direct from Stein, brilliant writer of hits like "Rapture" and "Heart of Glass," this book provides a fascinating snapshot of the period before and during Blondie's huge rise, by someone who was part of and who helped to shape the early punk music scene—at CBGB, Andy Warhol's Factory, and early Bowery. Stars such as David Bowie, the Ramones, Joan Jett, and Iggy Pop were part of Stein's world, as were fascinating downtown characters like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Richard Hell, Stephen Sprouse, Anya Phillips, Divine, and many others. As captured by one of its greatest artists and instigators, and designed by Shepard Fairey, this book is a must-have celebration of the new-wave and punk scene, whose influence on music and fashion is just as relevant today as it was four decades ago.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Since Blondie formed 40 years ago, one thing has remained constant: if the

band's co-founder Chris Stein isn't onstage with a guitar slung around his neck, chances are he's off somewhere with a camera, taking pictures. Now, the results of his four-decade-long hobby have been compiled in a new book, *Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk*. Though the photographs in the book span the band's four decades, they're rooted mostly in the punk scene that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, paralleling Blondie's rise. Looking at them, it's easy to imagine how much fun the duo had not just making pictures, but also making music. The pictures capture the essence of a lost, romantic moment in New York history.

— New York Times T Magazine "[One of the] best books of the year" — American Photo — "Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk, an art book being published to coincide with the band's 40th anniversary. The book contains scores of photos, many of them never before published, of Blondie, the Ramones, the Talking Heads and other pioneers of the 1970s New York City rock scene. That aesthetic comes through in Stein's unfussy, mostly black-and-white images, which capture Harry, David Bowie, Joan Jett and other musicians in spontaneous, revealing moments.

— CNN — "In 1974, New York City was the home to a potent burgeoning punk and new wave scene. Blondie's Chris Stein was there for all of it: his guitar in one hand, his camera in the other. As Blondie celebrates its 40th anniversary, Stein is releasing his first book of photographs, *Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk*, which documents his life on stage, on the road and at home, including portraits of his friends who made the downtown scene: Iggy Pop, David Bowie, Andy Warhol, Joan Jett, Jean Michael Basquiat and many more.

— Time Magazine — "To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Blondie, Chris Stein is releasing his treasure trove of his photographs from the New York City music scene of the 1970s and early 1980s in his new book, *Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk*.

— Smithsonian — "Hearken back to the era of punk and new wave music with these snapshots. Chris Stein was at the center of the burgeoning punk/new wave scene in 1970s New York City as the lead guitarist for Blondie. Cutting edge bands such as Talking Heads, the Ramones and Television were establishing their sound at clubs like the now-defunct CBGB. And as a member of one of the leading groups on the scene and a recent photography graduate of New York's School of Visual Arts, Stein was uniquely positioned to document the musical pioneers of that time and place.

— Hollywood Reporter — "Chris Stein, has released a new photography book remembering its glory days. Though Stein claims to have thousands of photographs in his archives, the way he describes his photographic process is surprisingly casual. *Chris Stein / Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent*

of Punk, chronicles the early punk scene, featuring not only rare photos of Debbie Harry, but also Joan Jett, Iggy Pop, the Ramones, and Andy Warhol. [New York Magazine](#) "Blondie" guitarist and songwriter Chris Stein released the almost self-titled *Chris Stein / Negative*, a handsome photobook featuring shots that begin in the mid-Seventies and end with a picture of Debbie Harry and Philip Glass taken at Lou Reed's memorial service. [Rolling Stone Magazine](#) "Less than a month after the release of *Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk*, the coffee table debut from Blondie's co-founding member went on backorder. In case there was any doubt, that's how beloved they still are 40 years into their career." [Vice](#) "Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk," culls from Stein's private collection going back to the early 1970s, with cameos by the Ramones, Joan Jett, Iggy Pop, and William S. Burroughs, among others. Harry, though, lures you in, every inch the glamorous rock star but also at ease in candid settings. [Boston Globe](#) "I'm loving the new book of largely never-before-seen Blondie photographs from Chris Stein, out now from Rizzoli. So. Cool." [The Fashion Spot](#) "On the occasion of the band's 40th anniversary year, *Chris Stein/Negative: Me, Blondie, and the Advent of Punk* offers a revealing look back at one of the most trailblazing and influential bands of our time and the punk scene that they pioneered. From Blondie's early days, to their world travels and sold-out shows, to their legendary musical counterparts, it is all shown from the inside view of Chris Stein." [Life and Times](#) "Along with the iconic Debbie Harry, Chris Stein is the driving force behind the influential 1970s punk/New Wave group Blondie. In addition to his talents as a guitarist and songwriter for the group, Stein is an accomplished photographer, as demonstrated in this new book. It not only features photos of Blondie throughout the 1970s to mid-80s, but also captures the mood and feel of New York City in throes of the punk rock scene defined by landmarks such as CBGB and the Mudd Club. The book also includes photos Stein took of city scene-stealers like Basquiat, Richard Hell and Stephen Sprouse as well as fellow bands such as the Ramones, the New York Dolls, and Siouxsie and the Banshees." [Brooklyn Based](#) "With this anniversary, Chris Stein, guitarist for the band, has released his book, showcasing a grungier New York and documenting Blondie's road to success. While Debbie Harry, singer for Blondie and Stein's former girlfriend, remains the star of this book, Stein also captured some of the most influential punkers and rockers to come out of NYC's music underground. Every picture tells a story, and along with his snaps, Stein has plenty of stories." [NewYork.com](#)

Chris Stein's work has been featured in galleries and press around the world. Deborah Harry is the iconic lead vocalist and cofounder with Stein of Blondie. Glenn O'Brien is the author of *How to Be a Man* and writes about art, fashion, love, and philosophy.

I must confess, I am pretty much a lifelong fan of Blondie. I was 11 years old in '78 when I first heard *Heart of Glass* on AM radio, growing up in Florida. I was brought up on country music and up to that point, obsessed with another blonde, Dolly Parton. Until I laid eyes on the first image I'd ever seen of Debbie Harry. My world changed after I discovered Blondie. I read every magazine article I could find about them, mostly *Creem* Magazine stuff. Through Blondie I discovered so much more.

Ramones, The Talking Heads, The Pretenders, Devo and more, Punk music that most of my peers didn't even know existed. Images of Debbie Harry have been a part of my life for the last 36 years. I've been looking forward to this book's release for awhile now, but I thought I've seen most of these images before. From internet articles about the book, many of the images in this book were used in *"Making Tracks, The Rise and Fall Of Blondie"* By Debbie Harry, Chris Stein and Victor Bockris (Another Great Book). I was wrong. So many images new to me, and not just of Debbie, but some amazing pictures of other artists like you've never seen them before (Joan Jett, for instance). Chris Stein is a noted photographer and historian, there from the very beginning of the New York Punk Rock scene. He is of course also the guitarist and founding member of Blondie and with Debbie, chief songwriter. If you know anything about the New York Punk scene you've seen Chris Stein's pictures before. *Negative* is a must have for anyone who has an interest in the birth of Punk. The pictures are amazing, but the captions written by Stein are really a fun read. Remembrances of each photo, what was going on at the time and sometimes anecdotes about the subject. Kindly remembering some who are no longer with us. So yeah, I'm a fan and always will be. I'm not just a Blondie fan though. I'm a bit of a Punk historian myself and this book is something I will treasure. Thank you Mr. Stein for giving us this book, not only showcasing your photographic talents but also helping to commemorate 40 years of Blondie and 40 years of punk.

Rock and photography, two of my favorite things, so I kind of had to buy this book right away. I also did so because I am fascinated by the 70's New York punk scene. Overall the book is great. I had not known until recently that Chris Stein of Blondie was such an active photographer. While some of the images are quite well known, there are a lot I see for the first time. I was never a great fan of Blondie, I liked them, but found them a tad limited (they did some fantastic songs though but the albums do not hold up as wholes). The pictures capture quite nicely the spirit of the times. While

there are some short liner notes to the pictures, some more text would have been helpful but I guess this is more of a foot book than a biography. While he has clearly a lot of talent and the pictures are quite striking, he does not have a real style per se. The nicest pictures are the candid of the group on the road or of Harry. Of course there are a lot of fabulous pictures of Debbie Harry as the title says, but there could have been a few more from the early punk scene: the cover picture with Harry and Anja Philips is great. Anyone interested in this period should get it since it is quite unique. I am not so certain why he called it negative: while it is true that in punk there was some negative attitude, we see pictures from quite a "positive" scene and the pictures are reproduced quite well. It is always a nice addition to books such as *Please Kill Me* about this scene. Also, I did now know that he had down the fantastic cover of one of my favorite albums, *Exposure* by Robert Fripp: in the book we get the explanation on how tis cover picture was down by Xeroxing and also see some additional shots and that was quite a treat.

Blondie rocked my world in a way no other band before or after has. Rock 'n roll had become something huge. Something almost unwieldy in its giant, self-important social relevance. Disco created a hopelessly vapid environment where people could meet, dance, mate and move to the suburbs to raise their kids. Punk was something else entirely. Punk was an arrogant upstart that didn't know its place and didn't care. "Chris Stein/Negative" chronicles that moment in time when punk hurled itself into our collective consciousness. There is a distinct visual quality to punk that is almost as important as the music. The look of punk was put together at a thrift store and held together with safety pins. It was inspired by B-movies, cartoons, stuff fished out of the bargain bin and junk found at the back of grandma's closet. Punk was born out of poverty, anger and the urge to create. All performed against the background of the dirty, depressed late 70's, before urban renewal priced everybody out of the cool places. Chris Stein captures that in this book. There is a picture in this book that explains the impact of punk and Blondie. Clem and Debbie walking down a street looking wildly distinct from their surroundings and people turning to stop and stare at them. ("People stop and stare at me...". Sing it. Go ahead. You know you want to.) Stein ruminates as to whether people were staring at them because they recognized Clem and Debbie, or because Clem and Debbie looked remarkably like they'd just arrived from a hipster 2013 fashion show. It is all there in one photograph. The incredible impact of punk announcing its irreverent arrival at the end of the 1970's. The future. Chris Stein managed to capture that impact in one picture. That's why you need to buy this book.

If you have any interest in the 70s punk scene you must check out this book! Not only is it full of AMAZING photos, including many of Debbie Harry, but Chris Stein's comments and memories that accompany the photos are just plain great. I have several coffee table books on punk including the history of CBGBs and The Best of Punk Magazine but this is my new favorite!!

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