

DISCLAIMER: This guide to being a rock star without in six to eight weeks is very specifically marketed. This book is not for young girls around the same age as Avril Lavigne, Hilary Duff, Britney Spears, etc, who may or may not be more talented than parents.

If you are slightly over the age considered appropriate for rock stars these days (eg 14-18) and you have made the mistake of getting a real job and a real life and family, then this book is for you!

Let's just assume for a moment that you are not between 14 and 18, you are not a flashy teenager with a crack writing team, a producer, manager, agents lawyers and a parents who are psychotically obsessed with your success. Let's assume that you don't live in New York and you're not blessed with the waifish, dangerously thin and unhealthy body that the kids seem to love so much today. How then do you become a rock star?

The answer is this: Being a star is all about appearance. You act like a rock star. You think like a rock star. But most importantly, you dress like a rock star. Have you seen how they dress? How hard is it for Avril Lavigne to find a stupid tie and put it on over a man's undershirt? Rock N Roll isn't about substance, it's about marketing!

You don't need money or fame to brush people off and look good doing it. Everything you need can be found at Value Village. Seriously. That's where I do my shopping. And that's where you'll do yours from now on.

Without the lawyers, publicists, personal handlers, makeup artists, assistants, record companies and millions of screaming fans, they're nothing!

And you'll be nothing too. A great big famous nothing. I promise.

## CHAPTER ONE: CHANGE YOUR THINKING

This is going to be kind of like method acting. Method acting was pioneered by the famous Russian theatre guru Stanislavky, and later perfected by Keanu Reeves in Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure. Not that fake method acting where Tom Cruise goes to weapons training for a couple of weeks and proclaims himself a stone cold killer in "Collateral". No, this is much deeper. We're talking about changing your entire thought process. We're talking about changing your entire personality to feed my- I mean your- deep seated need to be admired and approved by all around you for no real reason.

You have to wake up in the morning and feel like a star. You have to know it. Everything you do from now on must exude that cockiness, that world weary coolness and I'm-too-sexy-for-your-party attitude that rockstars exude. Like Tom Cruise, you must study a personality that heretofore has been alien to you. Unlike Tom Cruise, you must actually try to assume that personality, unlike what you did in your last film or any other of your films you no-talent-get-by-on-looks-image-obsessed-publicity leech...sorry, that was directed at Tom Cruise, not you. To begin your metamorphosis you must be a new person. You have to be the character you create.

For this you need a new personality. Someone that isn't you, would never be mistaken for you but who you will be from now on regardless. You need to unlock your inner diva. Or if you're a guy, your divo. Now not everyone can just come with a new personality; it takes some doin'. So let's examine some previously created personalities and steal all the best aspects of them. Don't worry about

stealing material from Rockstars. They've been doing it to other people and each other since rock was invented!

## Personality Types

- The Out Of Control Hedonistic Party-er:

- Now this one is pretty easy for the most part, although there are some interesting variations. One of the earliest out-of-controls was Jerry Lee Lewis, the madman piano playin' great balls of fire guy. He married his 13 year cousin, would jump up and down spastically on his piano while smashing the keys (a great trick if you don't know how to play piano), and generally smash bottles, heads, whatever was within reach. His mistake was that he continually offended his middle American baptist Christian audience and that did him in (publicity wise that is- he's still rich).

- Then of course there was Elvis, but you might not want to die on the toilet with your sequined pants around your ankles and a sandwich in your greasy hands. That's just personal preference talking.

- Jimi Hendrix: of course he raised the standards of debauchery to new levels. He also had his money stolen from him by greasy lawyers and died choking on his own vomit. He also transcended all previously imagined limits of technique and creativity on guitar before he died at 27. Too much work. Next.

- Jim Morrison: embodied most of the aspects of the Out-of-controls and created several new ones. He especially added to his mystique by appearing to be very knowledgeable and made a point of dressing in skin tight leather and making himself beautiful by being addicted to heroin. Yes, drugs are good for something. You don't even want to know how many rockstars got their sleek, feline appearances by just doing copious amounts of hard drugs. Is that all it takes? Sign me up! The drawback of doing Jim Morrison is that you basically have to ravage yourself to maintain your image. Morrison was famous for immediately popping whatever you handed him right into his mouth, and he died at 30 of a heart attack.

- Janis Joplin: Same deal, choked on vomit, lots of drugs, died young

- Keith Moon: Drugs, vomit, early death

- John Bonham, drummer Led Zeppelin: 52 Whiskey sours, early death

- Mama Cass, cheese sandwich.

Ok, well, it seems that the whole Out-of-control thing starts with drugs and ends with death. Let's try another type.

## Personality Types (continued)

- The Obnoxious Jerk Egomaniac:

- Now I would say that some of Rock's biggest stars are in this category. These are the people that will step over their dying mother to get to that all-elusive fame. These are the people who are the most cocky, arrogant overly self confident Prima Donnas who kick and scream and generally muck up the whole world around them when things don't go their way. It's great! But how do these people treat everyone like garbage and get away with it? The answer is confidence. They hold themselves like royalty. They slap their assistants because damnit, they deserved it. I've got a theory: If you act like the whole world owes you something, if you are so sure that you are indeed a Rockstar that God himself must have appointed you, then people doubt their natural urge to kill you off for the good of all society. Maybe there actually is something about you. Maybe, you just are a genius. It's quite powerful.
- Beware, though. It's a fine line you walk between moody arrogant genius and just plain asswipe. If you cross that line, the public backlash is powerful. Let's examine, shall we?

- Jennifer Lopez: Ah, JLO. It was reported that during a video shoot, she demanded a 40 foot trailer, white designer dresses, white designer workout clothes, a full gym, unlimited supplies of gourmet food (with a caterer), DVD players, a massage therapist (white), and all sorts of other things. And this was a charity video shoot to raise money for AIDS research! (or something like that).

- In addition to this, her self aggrandizing videos, her perfumes and her image in general all add up to one big fat asshole who is full of herself. Only you, JLO, could think that your "acting skills" could sustain what was certainly the worst movie of all time, Gigli. You lost millions of dollars for the movie studio, destroyed Ben Affleck's career but you still keep making them movies! Soldier on, Jenny. We love ya.

- The Gallagher Brothers: If you were near a TV or a radio or a stereo at a party in the 90's, chances are you've heard an Oasis song. In fact you probably know them by heart. You remember don't you? That moment when you saw them and said to yourself: "Wow, they look and sound like the Beatles, except they suck!" Yea, that's them. The leaders of the early 90's Brit pop explosion were Noel Gallagher and his psychotic brother Liam. When these two douchebags weren't slagging every other band in interviews, or drunkenly punching photographers or each other on stage, they were usually talking about how brilliant they were. The only thing brilliant about these guys was the way the sun reflected off of their nasty tobacco stained teeth.

- Michael Jackson: Wacko Jacko may not come off in interviews as an egomaniac, but consider this: When he released a greatest hits album, he promoted it by having gigantic statues of himself built and floated them down the waterways

of the major cities of the world. Also, when he was receiving a minor european-MTV award, he mistakenly thanked them for his "Artist Of The Century" award. Whoa, back it up Mikey! The award was for "funniest sound in a video" and the whole award ceremony was just an excuse to sell advertising! I'm not even going to talk about 2005.

- Maddonna: Ah yes, the queen of self-promotion. I think Maddonna has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that you don't need to be a talented singer to be a famous singer. You just need to be so ambitious that you'd step over your grandmother to get there. Whether it was her crappy movies, her shameless attempts to woo new fans by making out with Britney Spears on TV, her ridiculously fake British accent or her very public and ridiculous embracing of the Jewish mystic tradition of Kabbalah, Maddonna continues her lifelong mission to constantly be in the public eye. Think she'll put more naked photos of herself in a book when she's 64? Don't bet against it. When asked if she suffered from penis envy, she was once quoted as saying "No, I have a penis in my brain". I guess that makes her a dickhead.

- Paul McCartney: You may wonder what one of your beloved Beatles is doing in this category. Paul is so cute and squishy, and he wrote "Let It Be" for gosh sakes! Well, as I've said before, it's not what you say, it's what you do. For instance, when the Beatles broke up in 1970, Paul thought it might be a good idea to sue his bandmates for millions. Gee that's nice. Also, in later Beatles albums, on most of the songs that Paul wrote, he also played all of the instruments. Why? Because he didn't think that John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr were good enough to play on his songs? Finally, when the Beatles "Number 1's" album was released, McCartney made sure that in the writing credits, he and Lennon's names were reversed so that HIS name came first, as in " McCartney-Lennon" and not the alphabetically correct "Lennon-McCartney". Yea right. The post Beatles oeuvre of John Lennon includes "Imagine", "Jealous Guy", and "Give Peace A Chance". McCartney is best known for a song from a James Bond soundtrack. I think I'll let history judge this one.

- The Incoherent Genius:

- This is my favourite category, because most of my favourite singers are here. These are the tattered, incomprehensible writers that got by not only on the strength of their music, but also on the marketability of the bizarre behaviour. If suicidal career choices, dirty unmatched clothes, insane babbling in interviews and lack of hygiene is your thing, then this is for you. Something about these musical savants has always fascinated the public and continues to do so. My theory is that lack of social graces combined with any kind of talent equals some sort of mystical, spiritual effect on people. They just can't help but listen to what these weirdos have to say. Or they're just waiting for the guy to urinate on himself again.

- Bob Dylan: This category could contain nothing but Bob Dylan, and it would still be a definitive study. Bob Dylan wrote the book on the mysterious, erratic and smelly persona. He can take a brilliant song and make it so sound completely bad, it's never boring! Anyone that's ever covered one of his songs did a better job than him. From Jimi Hendrix to the Stones to Eric Clapton...even Avril Lavigne did a passable job of Knockin' On Heavens Door. Something about the way he manages to turn every single lyric into a question whether it was a question or not is worth studying alone. For example: "Once upon a time? You dressed so fine?? Threw the bums a dime??? In your prime???? DIDN'T YOU?????" There's only one line in there that was phrased like a question, but Bob, the master of the half-talking-half-meowing singing style, made every word he ever sang a question. Bob's incoherent-genius-disciples include Tom Petty, Ric Ocasek from the Cars, and Lou Reed.

- Tom Waits: Unlike Dylan, you can usually hear what Tom Waits is saying, but I'll be darned if I can ever figure out what the hell it means. Some of the lines from his magnum opus, Bone Machine ; " well the iceman's mule is parked outside the bar, where a man with missing fingers plays the strange guitar, and the German dwarf dances with the butcher's son" Iceman's mule? Missing fingers? German Dwarf? What the hell is he talkin' 'bout?? But aside from bizarre lyrics, Waits has developed one of the strangest stage personas ever. A sort of scraggly, gravelly voiced drunk-at-the-piano type demon from the wrong side of town. It's rumoured that Waits had a bottle of Whiskey and a pack of cigarettes every day for several years to achieve the grating, nails-drowned-in-alcohol voice you hear him "sing" with. His concert movie, "Big Time" made no sense at all. He must be a genius.

•Neil Young: The Canadian content in this strange menagerie, Neil Young can confound us with the best of 'em. Ever notice that he's worn the exact same outfit his entire career? Woo, he must be pretty stinky by now! That's ok, in this world, a bad smell can equal genius just as fast as great music. Neil Young is famed for his sudden and radical style changes that frustrate even his most ardent fans. After achieving huge success as a Rocker, he suddenly changed to hurtin' country music. Then he put out a 50's doo wop album. Oh wait, he's into techno music now! Oh, back to rock. Whew! What a crazy ride! But that's not all. He's well known for his bizarre political opinions, most notably his unexpected right wing turns. Leftist music, right wing attitude. Whatever floats yer boat Neil! But hey, he's Canadian, he's famous, and he's ours.

•Beck: Don't get me wrong; I love Beck. The way he completely mutates his sound from album to album is great. You never know what he's going to do. I saw a concert video of his on TV one night. There were dancing robots and all sorts of strange characters on stage. But damned if I could ever understand his stream-of-consciousness lyrics. He's been called the son of Neil Young. Just imagine the two of them together. Yea, that would be cool.

• Michael Jackson: Yes, the king of pop makes it into two categories. As well as his arrogant side, there are his utterly unexplainable tendencies. We all know about the plastic surgery, the pet chimp, the Elephant Man bones (and I don't want to know what he does with them), and of course his reluctance to grow the hell up. The final nail in Wacko Jacko's coffin the continuing allegations that he is a child molester. The world just doesn't seem to get it. Why would parents be worried that a 44 year emotionally retarded mega rich maniac was "just sleeping" in the same bed as their young son? Beats me.

The Reformed Out Of Control Hedonistic Party-er:

• You know these folks. They used to be famous for ingesting anything or fighting the cops or setting new standards for sexual depravity or whatever. Then suddenly bandmates starting dying of overdoses, groups broke up, and somebody else got famous. So they go through some sort of rehab, or religious

experience (Dylan and Madonna are converted Jews) and make a miraculous comeback. Now they're famous for their hemorrhoids. They have grandkids, clothing lines, criminal records, grey hair, and more money than they've ever dreamed of making. This is the phase of their career where they embark on massive "reunion" tours, and cash in on the songs they wrote -and had already cashed in on- thirty years ago. The songs are sold to commercials, waistlines expand and squeeze into jeans that used to fit.

- This is truly the best part of the career. I'd actually like to skip straight to this step if I could. The crowds are better, you have more people helping you and you have a cool tv monitor onstage so you won't forget the lyrics anymore. Awesome.

People In This Category:

The Who, The Rolling Stones, The Beatles (well the ones that are alive anyway) ,

Aerosmith -Andy Love- (his exploits with his "Harem" of girlfriends was legendary)

The Eagles, The Animals, Fleetwood Mac, Bob Dylan, Cher, Tina Turner, Aretha Franklin, Paul Simon, everybody else born in the 1940's....

Chapter Two

Your Public Persona

So now that you've decided what kind of Rock Star life you're going to live, what kind of Rockstar are you going to be? I mean, are you going to be a leather jacket wearin' rebel? Or maybe a cat? Or a sexy, slinky Marilyn Monroe-esque diva? How about a cat? Maybe you're a Rastafarian, Keats reading, vegetarian, Hindu shaman? No seriously, you could be a cat. I think Cher once dressed like a cat. I know Elton John dressed like a duck. Anyway, people are pretty gullible about this kind of thing so it doesn't even have to make sense.

Just take some disparate imagery, literary characters, religious icons, or anything trendy that you can make a part of your lifestyle to create your image. Remember, it's all in how people perceive you. These days, it doesn't even matter if you've been to jail. Any kind of publicity is good publicity. As long as you've had some sort of troubled past, you'll always have the public's sympathy. Let's look at some examples shall we? Yes, we shall.

Rockstar Style

Alice Cooper- Of course, was famous for his Hallowe'en type creature, costume thingy, with the Black Mascara under his eyes, and his very marketable image as a thing that parents should hate, he was most famous for apparently biting the head off of a bat. He later said he hadn't, but that Frank Zappa had phoned him after the "incident" and told him not to deny that he had done it. Zappa understood the incredible street-cred (that's hip talk for "credibility") that comes with negative publicity. If you can't be famous, be infamous. Marilyn Manson later channelled Alice Cooper in his persona. You see how you can use someone else's image? Everyone's doin' it!

Jim Morrison -"The Lizard King", . mysterious, dionysian, death obsessed, poetry, the "dark hippie" look. Goths, alternatives, and anyone dressed in black can thank Jim Morrison for making their look hip.

Steve Tyler And That Other Guy From Aerosmith: -"The Toxic Twins"-raised self destruction to new heights. Outrageous behaviour and outfits, lots of ribbons, tight spandex pants. Sexually ambiguous behaviour. That dude looks like a lady!

-Jimi Hendrix- "Hippie Freak" Star Child, Peaceful hippie, used drugs to take journeys to other worlds, anti war, pro-women, pro several women at one time...

-John Lennon: Peacey, hippie, guru, activist, prophet, save the world type, in favor of screeching Japanese artist for wife, gave him more hipness, changed to kindly hip college professor look with Ghandi style glasses

The Beach Boys: Clean cut All American California college frat boy look, famous surf band, but none of them knew how to surf

Bob Dylan: The classic, dirty, scruffy, unintelligible Dylan look is a tribute to Charlie Chaplin's "little hobo" . Includes a dirty old Woody Guthrie type hat, tattered looking jackets, and a harmonica strapped to your chin. Doesn't

matter if you can't play it (Dylan couldn't)

Gene Simmons, Kiss: ??????Some kind of Kabuki Monster, outer space alien freak with giant disco boots and spits blood and I don't know what the hell else. KISS took public personas to previously unheard of heights with costume and make up.

Alanis Morissette, "The Angry Granola Girl"-after her girlie-pop career was over at the age of 18, Alanis moved to Los Angeles, studied Ani Di Franco and wrote the safest angry- girl music ever heard and completely reinvented herself. She made scruffy long unkempt hair with wrinkly unmatched baggy clothes cool again. And if being angry and emotional and silly and naive and cute at the same time was going to sell millions of albums for her, then so be it. Her screechy weird lyrics, and live performances that looked like she was having convulsions became staples of her image. But maybe she just is that sincere. Hmmm....nah.

Sting- The White Guy World Loving Activist-World Music Embracer: This is a particularly new kind of category. There are a few others who have used this, such as David Byrne from Talking Heads, Peter Gabriel (who used to sing with Genesis) and Paul Simon. What you do is, when your career and your music start to get stagnant, find some music from a Third World country that you really like. It should be better and hipper and fresher than your music. Now just transpose it onto your own songs and image. Then you go help the country whose music you exploited and hire musicians from there to tour with you, who then become famous themselves because of being associated with you. It's great because you get to be more famous, and your music is more hip, and you get more hip because you were cool enough to discover them, and they get some financial help from you (while the media is paying attention anyway) and maybe some of their houses will get fixed. See? Everybody's happy! After you're done the album, it's best to ditch them where you found them and don't go to that country anymore.

Maddonna-"The Material Girl, virgin, catholic heretic, trampy Marilyn Monroe channelling- S&M dominatrix, Feminist voice, gay icon, pseudo English, Mystical Priestess-Earth Mother- Businesswoman-Cone- Boob wearin'....

Ok, basically Maddonna came along and rewrote the book on image development and media manipulation. She did what no one had done before; she completely changed her look, sound, attitude, complete image with every album! You name it, she's done it. No religious icon was too blasphemous, no sexual taboo was untouchable, no English accent was undoable. She's been everything you see in that list above and more. How did she do it? I have absolutely no idea. I suppose I should though, shouldn't I?

### Some Ideas, Random Symbols And Imagery You Can Steal And Use

Bhuddism (always a hip religion)  
Paganism (makes you seem ancient & primitive)  
Taoism  
Kabbalabablahblah  
Yoga (Sting does it to look sensitive)  
Convert to a radical branch of Islam (Cat Stevens)  
Cut all your hair, colour your hair, dye your hair  
Stop washing your hair, ie,  
Dreadlocks  
Anarchy symbols (put it on your shirts, you'll be cool with hippies)  
Peace symbol  
Cross of St George  
Star Of David  
Rhombus Of Doug  
Swastika (worked for Debbie Gibson)  
Anything saying "Free Tibet"  
Anything saying "Che"  
A dress made from the skin of young girls (risky but chic)  
Be addicted to heroin (the classic rockstar addiction)  
Be addicted to crack  
Be addicted to Meth  
Be addicted to Crystal Meth  
Be addicted to Lysol (cheaper than Meth)  
Be addicted to eating  
Be addicted to not eating  
Be addicted to not not eating

Be addicted to sex  
Be addicted to Hostess Cup Cakes  
Just be addicted  
Black Leather  
White Leather  
Pleather  
Feathers  
Pierce anything  
Be politically inscrutable  
Adopt an orphan from a third world country  
Makeup, makeup makeup!  
Cool scars (can be done with makeup)  
Plastic surgery (also, botched Plastic surgery)  
Have an affair with someone famous (if they're of the same sex, it's even hotter)  
Survive a life threatening illness  
Survive gunshot wound  
Survive watching Survivor  
beat up photographers  
beat your self up in public  
beat your self off in public (don't finish)  
Marry something other than a human  
wear a mullet (but ironically, for god's sake)  
Be on reality tv show for celebrities (But NOT repeat NOT the one with flavor flav and Brigitte Nielson and MC Hammer)

### Chapter Three

#### It's Time For Your Look!

Well, you've got your Rockstar type, and your Rockstar Image. Now it's time for the most important part of being a Rockstar. What's that you ask? The music? Ah, ha ha ha ha!!

Don't make me laugh!

The most important part is, of course, your look.

Ever since videos became the main promotional tool of Rockstars, the visual aspect of the Rockstar is the central aspect.

Now it's time to play a fun game. I'm going to go to a second hand store and get some clothes for myself so you can see how it's done. It's time to go shopping!!

## Chapter Four How To Write Rockstar Music

It's not too hard to write Rockstar music. Most elements of a Rock song are repetitive, predictable and unchanging through time. There key themes and even key words that you can always count on to score a huge hit. Let's explore them.

The Words You Use In Every Song: My scientists have researched this extensively, and when I say "scientist" I mean "me", and when I say "researched" I mean "thought up in my head just now".

This is what my scientists came up with in their research: There are six must-use words that need to be in every one of your songs. These innocuous little gems are worth their weight in gold. Well, no wait, that can't be right, they don't weigh anything. What I mean is you're sitting on a goldmine. Well, the words don't really exist as physical things, so that's not right either. Well, you know what I mean. Cash, that's what I mean. Money in the bank yo. Lets check them out.

"Sex"

"Baby"

"Girl"

"Dreams"

"Yeah"

"Love"

That's it. Those six little babies are going to pay for your kids college education and probably your Grandkids too.

You see, all forms of popular music like Rock, Country, Soul, Blues, Jazz, Salsa, Samba, Cuban, Arabic, Polka, Bembe, Klezmer and everything from everywhere else are being absorbed into that most malleable of music styles; POP.

So it makes sense that all the musical ideas should also be distilled into one bland, general theme that has been worked over and over until it is a shapeless mush.

The following is a transcription of a home video recording made while Avril Lavigne was in the studio writing her huge mega smash hit "Complicated" . Present in the room is her crack 22 person writing team, with the super cool

name "The Matrix":

The Matrix (speaking as one): WELL, WHAT KIND OF SONG WOULD YOU LIKE US TO WRITE.

Avril Lavigne: (stares at the giant mixing board in the control room): Why does everything look so complicated?

The Matrix: WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK. (They return in 15mins with a song)

You see, that was easy, and not only because the Matrix is actually a human-robot cyborg super computer! That only made it faster. The formula that they follow is the same every time. It's very consistent. And that's a good thing, because the sooner we get creativity, spontaneity and humanity out of music, the easier it will be to write more hit \$ingles.

So back to the six words: "sex, baby, girl, dreams, yeah , love."

So now we just randomly connect these words with stuff like articles, phrases, verbs, nouns, pronouns, subjects, objects. You know, sentencey stuff.

Like this: I had a \_\_\_\_\_. And a \_\_\_\_\_. And we had some \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

So you can put any of those words pretty much anywhere in there:

I had a dream. And a girl. And we had some sex and love YEAH.

But there's another really big word you need to put in there. It's more than a word, it's a concept. It's a philosophy. It's an entire state of mind and it's 12 hours of every day. What is it? It's tonight.

Everything happens tonight. It's the centre of the pop universe. The world of right now, the present, youth, danger, fun, rebellion, sex, excitement!! It all happens tonight.

## Structure Of A Pop Song

intro (if you have time)

verse

bridge

chorus

verse

bridge

chorus

chorus chorus chorus chorus chorus chorus...

There's an old saying in Pop music: "Don't bore us, get to the chorus!"

Damn right! In our disposable, short span-of- attention, unlimited choice, rapid sound byte culture, the shorter and simpler your song, the better.

There's another saying; known as the K.I.S.S formula: "Keep It Simple, Stupid." I'm not sure if the author of that meant that you should keep your song simple and stupid, or if he's telling you to keep it simple and then calling you stupid. Either way, it's songwriting gold is what it is.

SO:

**THE VERSE:** sets up the chorus. It's only function in life is to piss you off while you're waiting for the chorus. It sets up the inevitable emotional explosion by delaying it. You see? So you make the verse as bland and boring as possible. There should be no real ideas, or statements, or logical connected

thoughts. Just fillin' time until the big payoff, baby.

**THE BRIDGE:** is there to indicate that the verse is over and the chorus is coming soon! A very exciting part of the song. I remember Neil Diamond once making the near-fatal mistake of skipping the bridge to "Sweet Caroline" one night in concert because he was bored and wanted some "artistic satisfaction". So he went straight from the verse to the chorus. It was like the second French revolution that night (actually, more like the sixth. There was about five French revolutions. Wacky french) and whatever part of Neil Diamond survived the rioting that night never made that mistake again, I'll tell you that much.

**THE CHORUS:** Here it is, kid. Your ticket to fame. The big payoff. The emotional release that your audience is craving. You don't have to change it much (change is dangerous in Rock) but you always give it your all when the time comes. Think of the moon landing, or a giant explosion, or maybe a big bunch of flowers blooming really fast, like in those groovy time lapse filmed sequences. Or maybe it's like the first time in your life you ever experienced sugar, or TV. Yea, I remember my first time...watching TV. Awesome.

If your chorus is catchy and happening, if combination of repetitious melodies and funky rhythms burrows it's way deep into the public's consciousness so that people start jumping out of windows when your song comes on the radio for the millionth time, you know you've got it. The rest of the song doesn't even matter.

You know that part in "Takin' Care Of Business" by BTO? You know, where they repeat "takin' care of business...everyday! Takin' care of business...everyway!" That alone paid for Randy Bachman's mansion and every twinkie he's ever stuffed down his throat.... Oh yeah. It would've been even better if he had said: "Takin' care of business...tonight!" But you can't have everything.

## Chapter Five

### How To Get Signed

So you've got your look, your image, your style and the other miscellaneous details like the music taken care of. It's time to take this act to the big boys: The Lawyers. The biggest players in this industry, the ones who effect the most change, know the most people, and inspire the most fear and loathing are not the Executives or the Agents or the Publicists or the Producers. It's the Lawyers. The Lawyers are the ones who make the deals, sign the artist, write up the contracts, secure the money and protect the artists at every turn. A manager can rip you off, take on another band and make another twenty million dollars, but the lawyer will never leave you as long as the retainer is paid. They are

the ultimate mercenaries of the industry. Lawyers are completely powerful, because no matter how high up the food chain you are you always need a lawyer. In the words of Obi Wan Kenobi in Star Wars:

"A more loathsome hive of scum and villainy you will never find"

Ain't that the truth.

A good entertainment lawyer is all you need to get to the people you're trying to reach. Still wanna go it alone? Let's see if this changes your mind:

Without A Lawyer:

- Get a band together, record an amazing record.
- Play crappy gigs in hometown, bum rides because you can't afford a car.
- Slowly build up enough money while playing shows and working at Burger King to buy a car and book shows out of town.
- Play in out-of-town bars to virtually nobody because you can't afford to promote yourself.
- Continually play to nobody until after three years of thankless poverty you get some better gigs, play at slightly larger places
- your equipment is stolen and you can't afford insurance; you all move back in with your parents to save money and return to job at Burger King
- Three more years of thankless existence. Finally achieve modest success by scoring independent record deal with hip, up and coming independent record label
- Your hip, up and coming independent record label is swallowed up by Sony, you see no sales from your album and your promotion is stopped. The bank repossesses your van.
- You send your press package to every major label in the world. Since there are only four left, it doesn't take long. It also doesn't take long for your package to get seriously lost in the pile of the three million other packages that they all receive in a week.

•The executive of a major record label accidentally runs over you while you are bicycling to your job at Burger King. He promises to listen to your CD if you promise not to sue him. He likes what he hears and you get signed to a "development deal" wherein you record and do everything they tell you until the contract is up. You find yourself with a multitude of new haircuts and looks until you become marketable. You are then given a writing team who instructs you to sit in the corner and shut up, as your presence in the room

is all that is required to legally give you writing credit.

- You are thrust into the overcrowded mass consumer market and over-saturated into oblivion. The record company, the agents, the executives, the club owners, the radio stations and the tour bus driver all stack giant wads of loot. You come out with two faded hits and no money at all.

With A Lawyer:

- You find a hip entertainment lawyer at an incredibly chic party that you got invited to. He offers you free services for a 5% slice of you.
- He gives your CD to the CEO of Sony the next day while they are playing golf.
- Boo-yah.

I don't know. Personally, I think the second option is a little better. The lawyer inks you an ironclad contract and generally intimidates anyone that pisses you off. You get your fame and fortune on your terms and you get to control your image and product. No producer is going to mess with your artistic vision while your lawyer is standing behind him glowering.

So if we're in agreement about which road we'd rather take, the key to making it happen is to get into that party. This is the sole reason for your existence from now on. You've got to get in there or nothing else will happen. So how do you do that?

You've got to ask yourself (and then find the answers to) a few important questions:

- a) Where are the chic parties?
- b) How do you get to chic parties?
- c) What do they like to do there?
- d) What kind of people do they see as Rockstars?
- e) Will there be crab-puffs at these parties?

Actually, never mind asking. I'll just give you the answers:

a) The chic parties are in the chic places of course. You don't know where they are and nobody's going to tell you. You want to be near L..A, New York, Beverly Hills, Hollywood, London, Paris. You know, the cheap easy-to-live- in places.

b) You get to the chic parties by getting invited. How do you get invited? By knowing someone who will be at the party. Now, since you're still a nobody, you probably don't have any friends offhand that will be going to some swank shindig at the Playboy mansion. But there are more than just Rockstars, moviestars, pornstars, famous athletes and lawyers at these things. Oh no, there's a different element present which you can exploit.

c) What they like to do is drugs. Especially Lawyers and especially cocaine. No chic party is complete without drugs, and therefore drug dealers. THESE are the people in your neighbourhood. What you do is canvas the drug infested neighbourhoods you live in now, find the coke dealer and work your way up. Become friendly with as many people in organized crime as you can and find the dealers that supply the lawyers. Bingo, you've done it! Now get as close as you can to those dealers and soon enough you'll be along for the ride. You've made it to the party.

d) The kind of people they see as Rockstars is easy. They see Rockstars as Rockstars. It's time to take all the attitude, talent and especially hot outfits

and put them to work. You do not act like a fan. You do not ask for autographs, stare at the movie stars all around you open mouthed and scream: "I loved you in I, Robot!". You act bored, and worldly, and you drop names like there's no tomorrow. You mingle and bullshit and put your arm around people (don't worry, they're too high to notice) and you schmooze like your career depended on it. Because quite frankly, it does.

e) of course there will be little crab puffs there. Yummy.  
So that's it. Turn your Rockstar charm on and get the deal done. If you have to sleep with the lawyer, then do it. You'll do anything and everything to get your free pass to the big time and that's probably exactly what you'll end up doing. If you ever feel like this won't work or it's not worth it, just refer back the "Without A Lawyer" bit. You'll come around.

## Chapter Six

### How To Manipulate The Media

So we know how to act, how to think, how to write the songs, what to wear and how to wear it. You've got your record deal in hand. Oh- and you also wrote some music too... You're ready to take this show to the stage baby! And I'm not talking bout a concert stage, I'm talking about the biggest stage you'll ever be on: the media stage.

In this chapter we'll talk about your most important relationship; your relationship with the press. Why so important you ask? I'm glad you asked. It makes me look smarter. The media is the single most powerful entity in the universe. It is the mouth piece of humanity. It is the amplifier that transmits dreams to the heavens. It is the speaker and camera that transforms you from a schmuck to a living god.

The media has, over the years, become so embedded in the public's conscience that the public no longer thinks for itself. It now relies on the media to think for it. The publicity methods that drive today's entertainment has become so refined, so perfected that not even bad reviews can stop a charging PR machine at full speed. Seriously, have you seen some of these things when they reach their top speed. They're like frickin' rhinos, man.

So what aspects of your life involve the media? Why, all of them my friend! You can just forget any of the privacy that you enjoyed before as a regular shmoe that no one cared about. Your entire existence is under the microscope now! From the time you picked your nose in grade three to the "experimenting" you did in college, there won't be one single piece of your life that isn't dug up, picked and prodded, exposed fully in the light of day and published in colour all over the world. You will experience the wonderful world of stalkers, paternity suits, smear campaigns, backlashes when you're over saturated in the market, and of course the paparazzi. Better hope you're ready to have mud thrown at you from every direction!

Still wanna be a Rockstar?

Methods of Media Manipulation:  
Interviews (TV and otherwise)  
Touring

Publicity stunts  
Charity work  
Public feuds with other Rockstars  
Stints In Rehab  
Religious Conversion

## How To Do An Interview

Interviews are very important to you as a Rockstar. The trick about interviews (other than getting them) is to know which quotes will be printed, and which of your thoughtful, soul-searching, insightful quotes will be thrown in the trash. Basically it's any of your quotes that are thoughtful, soul searching and insightful.

Here's the rules of the game, kid: Entertainment writers are at best a sycophantic, cloying group of closet fans that worship the ground you walk on and will devote the thrust of their entire lives to making you look good. That's about %.000001 of Entertainment writers. The rest are a rotten bunch of jealous, unfulfilled scum- ridden vultures who rise from their coffins every night with the single purpose of showing you up in front of the whole world. Most of these "people" (and I use the term broadly) are failed Rockstars who were given such a rough ride on their heroic slide to nowhere that they decided to spend the rest of their lives exacting revenge on the undeserving dilettantes who passed them by; in other words, you! So you have to know the minefield you're stepping into with these people. Now, most of the biggest Rockstars have handlers, publicists, bodyguards and lawyers to accompany them on their interviews to intimidate the interviewer. Mick Jagger has raised this art to new heights by simply handing the interviewer (who is shaking in his\her boots by the time his entourage enters the room) a sheet of pre arranged questions, complete with Mick's pre arranged answers. He then leaves the interviewer alone to contemplate the pathetic nature of his life. Whereas Keith Richards, sans entourage will simply stare blankly into space, drool on himself and babble in some strange gibberish that is not identifiable as language. Both of these approaches work; Keith's is far cheaper to accomplish.

Whichever you choose, you must remember this: You're not there to give witty comments or wise remarks. The public has no interest in your ideas for a better world or your thoughts on the human rights situation in China. The public wants dirt! The public wants quotable sound bytes (paper bytes?) and juicy tidbits that confirm what they've been hoping all along: that you live a lavish lifestyle outside the moral boundries of society taboos. They want to know how you've been behaving badly. So it's best to make stuff up and never ever talk

about anything that's ever really happened to you.

Here are some examples of what I call successful interviews: Rockstars who know who they're dealing with and how to give people what they want while still maintaining their image.

Examples of successful interviews:

Ozzy Osbourne\ Rolling Stone, 1981:

Interviewer: Ozzy, there's been talk that now that the seventies are over, and MTV is firmly entrenched in the youth of today, that aging Rockstars such as yourself are on the way out. How do you fit into today's Rock scene?

Ozzy: Well, uh, they lak a dumbran echhy poo round Lancaster, but the rechi telly somp somp blEEAAAHH!!! (eyes wildy rolling into his head)

Interviewer: I see. Critics have roundly dismissed your solo efforts as tired, banal, and generally lacking the quality of Black Sabbath.

Ozzy: (vomits on floor).

Interviewer: Do you think that your drug addled ways can sustain what is essentially a spent career?

Ozzy: whuuu! Whuuuu! Rock n Roll baby! Yeauuuu! (Bites head off bat)

Interviewer: Thank you for your time (wipes Ozzy's vomit off his face)

Ozzy: SHARRRRRRRONNNNNN!

As you can see from the get-go, the interviewer is goading Ozzy to become angry and actually say something negative about Rock n Roll. Ozzy however, was a consummate interviewee, and well versed in the art. He reinforced his image as an Out-Of-Control Nightmare Halloween type character without revealing anything personal at all. His fans think they know him better now but the truth is they don't know anything about him at all.

Lenny Kravitz, Spin Magazine, 1994:

Interviewer: Well Lenny, your album "Are You Gonna Go My Way" is topping the charts and your world tour is sold out. Where do you go from here?

Lenny Kravitz: Well, in addition to my supermodel girlfriend appearing in my next video, I'll be wearing the new Armani leather pants, visiting orphanages in Calcutta and having an affair with Tom Petty.

Interviewer: Fascinating. And what do you think of the new Oasis album, which sold a million more copies than yours?

Lenny Kravitz: Hey man, I love those guys. In the end, it's not about album

sales man, it's about spreading love to the world (Kravitz coughs. Hundred dollar bills fall out of his jacket)

Interviewer: Do you disagree with small dogs being sold to meat shops in Asia to stave off the incredible poverty that exists?

Lenny Kravitz: I believe in Peace, Love and Understanding. I believe that Asia is good, little dogs are good and poverty is bad. If everyone ate Tofu like I do, there wouldn't be a problem.

As you can see, the Spin guy tried everything to box Lenny into a corner and force him to express a true opinion on something. But each question thrown at him was skillfully deflected back and modified to make Lenny look better. The tofu flip was particularly brilliant. Without actually answering the question, he gave the impression that world hunger could be solved if everyone just adopted one facet of his lifestyle. After the interview was published, worldwide sales of tofu skyrocketed.

Prince\ MTV 2000:

Interviewer: So is this yet another comeback for Prince?

Prince:

Interviewer: Don't the disappointing sales from your last three albums discourage you and make you think that, maybe it's time to hang it up?

Prince:

Interviewer: (getting worried): Where did you get your hair done?

Prince:

Interviewer: (really sweating now) Is this new album as brilliant as your previous work and better than anything out there today?

Prince: (indecipherable mumble )

Interviewer: Wonderful! I think that your new album will change this generation forever and for generations to come. Do you agree?

Prince: (vaguely acknowledges the flea in his presence )

Interviewer: Oh thank you great one. May I fall on my knees and worship you for the rest of this session?

Prince: (whispers something to 300 pound bodyguard. Bodyguard nods "yes" )

Interviewer: Oh thank you mighty one. (Prostrates herself on the floor. They sit in silence for twenty minutes)

Wow, what a brilliant performance! What started out as sarcastic underhanded needling ended up with an interviewer with dirty knees and a new god. Prince is the undisputed master of media intimidation and is in fine form here. And he did it without saying a single word. He just let the poor girl wither in his Princely presence. Genius. The bodyguard probably helped too.

Here's An Example Of An Unsuccessful Interview:

Sting\BBC 1\1998:

Interviewer: well Sting, you haven't done a new album in two years. People are starting to say that you've lost it.

Sting: Well I've been spending the last two years trying to save (looks at piece of paper) the Brazilian Rainforest.

Interviewer: So have you found any new source of inspiration there?

Sting: Absolutely. I've been living with (looks at paper again) the Watutu tribe in the Northeast, and I've found them to be a (looks at paper) wonderful, spiritual...(shows paper to interviewer) can you read those last words?

Interviewer: ...artistic...

Sting: ...artistic...

Interviewer: ...culture.

Sting: ...culture.

Interviewer: I see. It must be very rustic living out there, not what you're used to.

Sting: actually, it's been lovely. I've been working with them during the day and writing songs about it during the night while I'm having sex with Tom Petty.

Interviewer: Isn't he having an affair with Lenny Kravitz?

Sting: uh-I meant...David Bowie. I was having sex with David Bowie.

Interviewer: What else are you doing there?

Sting: When I wake in the morning, I eat organic granola, do yoga and Buddhist meditation, then I have lunch and sex with David Bowie and go out and save the (looks at paper) Rainforest.

Interviewer: It must be very spiritual and enlightening.

Sting: (looks at paper for a long time).....yes.

Sting skillfully kept the conversation on his activist, earthy new agey side but mentioning sex with Tom Petty was a sizable mistake. He should take better notice of who other Rockstars are having sex with before making such claims. It was just a careless slip, and those kinds of things get pounced on. The Rainforest thing has generated a lot of momentum for Sting's Hug-The-World image, but he needs to start learning the facts of the Rainforest by heart. Like where it is. Clever, but not too believable.





