

Rock 'n' Roll is here to stay

by Bart Becker

"WE GOT JUS' ONE T'ING T' SAY T' YOU F---N' HIPPIES. AN' DAT IS DAT ROCK 'N ROLL IS HERE T' STAY!"

*Yip yip yip yip
yip yip yip yip
mum um um um um uh
get a job,
sha na na na
sha na na na na.*

"Get a Job", The Silhouettes

How can you deny the social import of lyrics like that? The fact of the matter is you can't. The prophecy has come true and in 1972 it appears that rock 'n roll is here to stay.

The Rock 'n Roll Revival is the name the press and public most often tag it with. And it all started with those heavy-lidded, curl-lipped kids who might have been the boy next door (but any self respecting parent wished he wasn't). They're visiting Pershing Auditorium Saturday Night and they're the real thing—Sha Na Na.

They began as students at Columbia University doing what a lot of college kids do. Learn a couple licks on the old guitar, get together with a couple of the guys in the dorm, learn a few Grand Funk tunes lick for lick, and earn your way through college. Probably impress a few chicks and get laid a bit in the bargain.

But Sha Na Na didn't play it that way. They played what they loved—rock 'n roll—and parodied it at the same time. And somehow things got knocked all out of kilter and they jumped from playing fraternity houses and garage parties to become nationally recognized as the standard bearers of rock 'n roll in the Seventies.

And Sha Na Na has spawned all sorts of imitators and bastardizations of their act and music. Most prominent of the imitators is probably Flash Cadillac and the Continental Kids. Last year they made a tour that brought them to Omaha. And they pushed Don Rickles around on the Tonight Show to bring them a little more national recognition.

In a similarly satiric manner Frank



Zappa has produced music similar to that of the Fifties, complete with three-chord progressions and sobster lyrics. But people usually attributed that to Zappa's general weirdness. On one of the Mother's albums Zappa comments that one of the songs is "so greasy you should not listen to it. You should wear it on your hair."

As the Sixties wore on and people, including performers, began to tire of the "meaningful" lyrics and "improvisational" pieces the industry was feeding them, they began to have a yearning for some ass-shaking.

A few years ago Cat Mother and the All Night Newsboys scored a mild hit with a rock 'n roll medley. But the onslaught was yet to come.

John Lennon threw together a rocker-side of the first Plastic Ono Band Album, *Live Peace In Toronto*. And

Lennon, usually the rocking force behind the Beatles, has continued to include a few of his own rock 'n roll compositions in his subsequent albums.

Johnny Winter put out a live album with a rock and roll medley that had rooms full of listeners on their feet and dancin'.

So, in addition to those groups doing the songs of the Fifties, the Seventies also boost the popularity of groups that have bastardized the intent and kept the sound; the rockers. The most popular group in the world today is probably the Rolling Stones, and they're a good example.

There's no need to go into great detail here, but the Stones are not particularly advanced musically. Much of their attraction is the mysterious aura of impending violence that follows them