

= Pleasant Dreams =

Pleasant Dreams is the sixth studio album by the American punk rock band the Ramones released on July 20, 1981, through Sire Records. While the band members wanted Steve Lillywhite to produce, Sire chose Graham Gouldman in an attempt to gain popularity through a well @-@ known recording manager. The recording process brought about many conflicts between band members, most notably the strife between Joey Ramone and Johnny Ramone, where Johnny began dating one of Joey's ex @-@ girlfriends. There were also disputes about the overall genre of the album, with Johnny leaning towards hard rock and Joey towards pop music. Ultimately, the album incorporated a high production value and a variation of tone throughout the album. Pleasant Dreams featured songs such as "We Want the Airwaves," "She's a Sensation," and "Come On Now," strayed from traditional punk rock and took on different styles.

The album was not commercially acclaimed, which came as a surprise to Sire since they had insisted the band record with Gouldman in an effort to increase fan @-@ base; it peaked at number fifty @-@ eight on the Billboard 200 and only charted outside of the US in Sweden. The album was not critically acclaimed either, as it received several mixed articles by reviewers, who insisted the album to be less playable than their first four albums.

= = Conception = =

The writing process for Pleasant Dreams began in January 1981. With Sire Records management being insistent on allowing a celebrity record producer to work on the album, they hired Graham Gouldman, songwriter and musician for the British band 10cc, to produce the album. Prior to working with Gouldman, the Ramones had been with audio engineer Ed Stasium to record several demos and, though Sire rejected, the band had intended that Steve Lillywhite produce the album. The studio recording process began on March 30, 1981, and initiated several conflicts between band members. This tension was partially due to Dee Dee Ramone's drug addiction. Additionally, Marky Ramone and Joey Ramone were both developing alcohol problems, resulting in the frustration of Johnny Ramone. These conflicts and differences became evident in the song writing, as each song was credited to individual rather than multiple members; Pleasant Dreams was the first album in which writing is acknowledged this way.

The time period of recording was a high @-@ point in musical style for both Joey and Johnny, though they directed their sound towards different styles of music: Joey's inspiration by pop music became evident in his writing, while Johnny's keenness of hard @-@ rock guitar riffs are apparent in much of his performing on the album. Johnny thought that this did not result well for the band's sound, saying: "I knew going in that this was not going to be the type of album I wanted. It really could have used another two of three punk songs ... All I want to do is keep our fans happy and not sell out. I'm fighting within the band. They are trying to go lighter, looking for ways to be more commercial. I'm against the band for doing that." Joey countered Johnny's point of preventing the band from selling out by explaining: "By Road to Ruin [and] End of the Century, I was doing the majority of the songwriting. I started feeling that the Ramones were faceless; there were no individual identities in the band." He went on to say that this method worked well in the beginning of their career, but would later annoy Joey since "everything [he] wrote, the band would take credit for."

During early stages of the album's development, Joey was dating Linda Danielle. After the album was released, however, Danielle left Joey and became Johnny's girlfriend. Ramones' road manager Monte Melnick relates: "Joey was devastated. It affected him deeply. Johnny knew it was bad and kept Linda totally hidden from that point on. She didn't come to many shows and if she did he'd hide her in the back; she wouldn't come backstage. He'd run out to meet her and leave as soon as they were done." While Johnny would eventually marry Linda, Joey held a strong grudge against them both, and, though they continued to perform and tour together, the two rarely talked to each other. Joey explained that Johnny had "crossed the line" once he started dating Danielle, and noted that "he destroyed the relationship and the band right there." Johnny

defended himself by stating that had Danielle not left Joey for him , " he wouldn 't have even been talking about her and saying how much he loved her because he wouldn 't have been obsessed about it . "

= = Composition and lyrics = =

The album opens with " We Want the Airwaves , " which has instrumentation that strays from traditional punk rock and more so towards hard rock . Music journalist Chuck Eddy described the song as " a sort of Black Sabbath punk rock . " Though rumors of the album 's third track , " The KKK Took My Baby Away , " being about Johnny stealing Joey 's girlfriend have circulated in the music business , the song was actually written some time before Joey had reportedly found out about this . Joey 's brother Mickey Leigh relates : " The fluky connection between Johnny and the KKK raised a specter that keeps friends and fans speculating to this day . At the time , though , it had to be an unusual situation for him being that , as often happens with song lyrics , his words now took on a whole new meaning . " The following track , " Don 't Go , " was described in *Musician , Player , and Listener* as " Spector @-@ ish , " referring to the song 's high production value through Phil Spector , the infamous producer of the band 's previous record , *End of the Century* . According to the book , the lyrics detail " an archivist 's sense of young love . " Everett True , author of *Hey Ho Let 's Go : The Story of the Ramones* (2005) , explains that the album 's fifth track , " You Sound Like You 're Sick , " is very bass incorporated , saying that it " returns to the bassist 's traditional institutionalised theme . " Side A ends with " It 's Not My Place (In the 9 to 5 World) , " which was described by music critic David Fricke to be " driven home " by drummer Marky 's " feisty , Bo Diddley @-@ style " drum beat , and noted that it borrows the middle eight (of thirty @-@ two @-@ bar form) from The Who song " Whiskey Man . "

Side B of the album begins with " She 's a Sensation , " which was said by author Dave Thompson to have a 60 's melody which " melts through the hard rock . " The next song , " 7 @-@ 11 , " deals with dating at a young age where the couple goes on dates to places like convenience stores and record swaps . The lyrics follow a boy who meets a girl by a Space Invaders machine , and eventually has to let her go after she dies in a car crash . True relates : " You can lose your heart within the singer 's torched ' 7 @-@ 11 ' . Joey details in time @-@ honoured girl group fashion the beauty of young love that takes place among the most mundane , humdrum of surroundings . " " You Didn 't Mean Anything to Me , " written by Dee Dee , reflects the desolation and vacillation which the bassist was feeling in his personal life as well as while he was with the band . This is evident through lines like " Every dinner was crummy / Even the ones for free . " The pop @-@ oriented song " Come On Now " was described by True as a " sparkling rush of blood to the head from the " comic book boy , " and said that it ranged alongside songs from The Dave Clark Five and 1910 Fruitgum Company . The eleventh track on the album is titled " This Business Is Killing Me , " and was written by Joey to detail how everyone expects him to please others , but he simply cannot please everyone all the time . *Pleasant Dreams* concludes with " Sitting in My Room , " which contained lyrics quoted by David Fricke in the conclusion of his review on the album , saying : " ' It 's us against them , ' sneers Joey in " Sitting in My Room . ' ' They just wanna worry ... / They just wanna be so lame / Maybe they should try and sniff some glue . ' Or put *Pleasant Dreams* on the box and crank it up to ten . "

= = Reception = =

Released on July 20 , 1981 , the album was not commercially acclaimed , failing to spawn a single hit . Though Sire Records had merged with Warner Bros. Records , none of the singles from *Pleasant Dreams* were released in the US . Sire had insisted that the album be produced by a celebrity producer , hiring Graham Gouldman to the job expecting this to help expand the band 's fan @-@ base . Joey relates : " The record company told us the album would bomb if we didn 't use Graham Gouldman , so we worked with Graham--and the album bombed anyway . " The album would only chart in the US and Sweden , peaking at fifty @-@ eight on the Billboard 200 and thirty

@-@ five on the Sverigetopplistan chart ? the singles released from the album failed to chart .

Pleasant Dreams received mixed reviews by critics , with many pointing out that the high quality sound production made the band stray from their roots even more so than the change in style . Stephen Thomas Erlewine , senior editor for AllMusic , noted that Gouldman steers the band 's style away from " bubblegum , British invasion , and surf fetishes " and toward " acid rock and heavy metal . " He went on to say that the sound quality is " too clean to qualify as punk " and sad that the music on the album " has lost sight of the infectious qualities that made their earlier records such fun . "

Music critic Robert Christgau said that the album " comes off corny " compared to the band 's first four releases , which he described as " aural rush and conceptual punch . " He also said that the songs featured on the album were better than End of the Century and claimed the album was " less focused " compared to Leave Home , but " fun anyway . " David Fricke of Rolling Stone began his review by writing " Pity the poor Ramones , " and went on to give it a mixed review . He deemed the album a " comic relief " and noted its contents of " fortified vocal harmonies , an occasional dash of keyboards , a certain production gimmickry . "

= = Track listing = =

The following track listing can be verified with AllMusic .

= = Personnel = =

The following personnel can be verified with AllMusic .

Ramones

Joey Ramone ? lead vocals

Johnny Ramone ? lead guitar

Dee Dee Ramone ? bass guitar , backing vocals

Marky Ramone ? drums

Additional musicians

Dick Emerson ? keyboards

Dave Hassel ? percussion

Graham Gouldman - backing vocals

Russell Mael - backing vocals

Ian Wilson - backing vocals

Deborah Harry - backing vocals

Kate Pierson - backing vocals

Cindy Wilson - backing vocals

Production

Michael Somoroff ? photos

Sire Records ? label

Graham Gouldman ? producer

Guy Juke ? uncredited cover art