Project B: Album Ratings

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Doing project B, the goal of my code was to create a function that would read the HTML text from the site Pitchfork, and return the review and rating of an album. The code I have presented does just this.

The URL of an album review on Pitchfork enters the function as a string. Which then gets parsed as an XML object by `read_html()`. This allows me to extract the desired data from a specific section of the page, using `html_nodes()` where the argument is the class of which the data is stored. For each album review, the review text is tagged as 'contents dropcaps' class and the rating is tagged as 'score.' This allows R to obtain the exact data I desire. The rating variable returns a numeric value of the album rating, as desired. The `text` variable, however, contains a character string of the review with extra text and format. Thus, using `gsub()`, I replace the line breaks (`\n`) and the last line of the review page.

After accomplishing this, the function returns a data frame object of the album review and rating. Which can be outputted using review*textandreview*rating, as shown below:

```
# Test 1
source("MidtermQ3.R")

## Warning: package 'rvest' was built under R version 3.5.3

## Loading required package: xml2

## Warning: package 'xml2' was built under R version 3.5.3

## Warning: package 'stringr' was built under R version 3.5.3

review = pitchfork('https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/ratboys-printers-
devil/')

review$text

## [1] On their earliest releases Ratboys tagged their sound “post-country,”
but you really had to squint to hear the country. The twang on their 2017
album GN was more implied than explicit, and the music cozily straddled the
line between woozy guitar pop and homespun folk. The whole album seemed to
exist in a blissful state of in-between. GN was a gem, the kind of album
that’s hard to replicate, and on their follow-up Printer’s Devil, Ratboys
don’t even really try. Years of sharing stages with punkier bands like PUP
and Dowsing has thickened and toughened their sound, as has the
solidification of a full-time rhythm section after years of touring with
rotating drummers. Printer’s Devil is Ratboys’ first album as a four-piece,
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and there’s no mistaking the difference. That riff-forward makeover brings them closer to the alt-pop of bands like Charly Bliss and Speedy Ortiz. On the surface that’s a step toward anonymity—not a lot of bands shared GN’s tender, ephemeral reimagining of Americana, while plenty share Printer’s Devil’s debt to the Veruca Salt lane of ’90s alternative. But it rips convincingly: The classic rock-spiked “Look To” is pure speaker candy, the kind of unabashed windows-down moment that GN’s muted production didn’t allow, while the guitars on “Anj” sizzle like early Paramore. Even when working with less-novel sounds, singer Julia Steiner has individuality to spare, both as a vocalist and a songwriter. She’s not a howler. Instead she works her frayed voice like a pair of kitchen shears, doing her damage not through broad swipes but well-placed snips. Her warmth and whimsy seeps through even Printer’s Devil’s grungiest songs. Like Doug Martsch, Jenny Lewis, and David Byrne before her, she captures how childhood confusions linger into adulthood. And like those songwriters, her cleverness never masks her vulnerability. On “I Go Out at Night,” one of the record’s rare softer numbers, she pictures herself in “a job uninstalling ’90s payphones,” a wry image but also a wistful metaphor for growing up. Ratboys demoed the album in Steiner’s empty childhood home just after it had been sold, which she’s said was as emotionally taxing as you’d expect. That experience may account for the extra ache in these songs. Steiner fills Printer’s Devil with half-remembered snapshots of adolescence—sprints down hills in the summertime, a ride on an airplane simulator at the mall—juxtaposed with images of overgrown grass, vacated lots and other innocuous signifiers of the passage of time that carry weight only in the rare moments we pause to consider them. The effect is comforting and sobering all at once, like revisiting your elementary school’s playground as an adult. The swings are still there; you can sit on them, even. But whatever you’re hoping to reclaim is long gone.
Levels: On their earliest releases Ratboys tagged their sound “post-country,” but you really had to squint to hear the country. The twang on their 2017 album GN was more implied than explicit, and the music cozily straddled the line between woozy guitar pop and homespun folk. The whole album seemed to exist in a blissful state of in-between. GN was a gem, the kind of album that’s hard to replicate, and on their follow-up Printer’s Devil, Ratboys don’t even really try. Years of sharing stages with punkier bands like PUP and Dowsing has thickened and toughened their sound, as has the solidification of a full-time rhythm section after years of touring with rotating drummers. Printer’s Devil is Ratboys’ first album as a four-piece, and there’s no mistaking the difference. That riff-forward makeover brings them closer to the alt-pop of bands like Charly Bliss and Speedy Ortiz. On the surface that’s a step toward anonymity—not a lot of bands shared GN’s tender, ephemeral reimagining of Americana, while plenty share Printer’s Devil’s debt to the Veruca Salt lane of ’90s alternative. But it rips convincingly: The classic rock-spiked “Look To” is pure speaker candy, the kind of unabashed windows-down moment that GN’s muted production didn’t allow, while the guitars on “Anj” sizzle like early Paramore. Even when working with less-novel sounds, singer Julia Steiner has individuality to spare, both as a vocalist and a songwriter. She’s not a howler. Instead she works her frayed voice like a pair of kitchen shears, doing her damage not through broad swipes but well-placed snips. Her warmth and whimsy seeps

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```
review$rating
```

```
## [1] 7.7
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```
# Test 2
review = pitchfork('https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/ozzy-osbourne-ordinary-man/')
```

```
review$text
```

```
## [1] Since the mid-’90s, Ozzy Osbourne has been so famous he only needed to show up. In 1996, by then years removed from his last great album, he launched the annual metal circus that borrowed his name. He soon became an early star of reality television, a lovably mumbling patriarch in a family of salacious misfits. He no longer needed to strive to make great music; he just had to be on time for an annual summer of sets and, like, get really bummed about jogging on his birthday. Despite becoming a global brand, Osbourne’s solo records have always been surprisingly audacious, as if the man most synonymous with heavy metal itself still had something to prove. And so it goes with Ordinary Man, his first LP in a decade and his finest in two. Produced and co-written by Andrew Watt, the name behind recent pop hits by Cardi B and Justin Bieber, and featuring a murderers’ row of veteran hired guns like Red Hot Chili Peppers drummer Chad Smith and Guns N’ Roses bassist Duff McKagan, Ordinary Man is an enormous record. Full of gospel roars, symphonic swells, and massive hooks, the music cuts between doom, pop-punk, and even a little hair metal. Even as Osbourne, now 71 and recently diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, croons “When I speak my final words/What will it feel like,” he sounds as ambitious as he’s been for half a century. Osbourne has often flirted with trends without actually chasing them. For 1995’s Ozzmosis, he mined the same sad soulfulness as one of his acolytes, Chris Cornell, whose own more tensile version of Osbourne’s yearning voice made him a superstar. And 2010’s Scream—his most recent studio album, as uneven as a season of The Osbournes—reimagined him for audiences that loved Disturbed or alternative rock. (Aiming for Foo Fighters, he only got close to Collective
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Soul.) For Ordinary Man, Osbourne and his coterie of co-writers pursue a more conceptual trend: the playlist. These 11 songs feel like a loose mixtape, flitting among a half-dozen moods and motifs in what feels like a methodical quest for streaming placement. For most of Ordinary Man, that approach provides inspiration for the restless Osbourne. As unlikely as it seems, “Under the Graveyard” is one of the most memorable doom spirituals ever from the singer who practically invented them, the lamentations of a lost soul coiling into a triumphant chorus. Half a plea for the release of death and half a reckoning with the solitude he imagines it will entail, it is a paean to perpetual dissatisfaction—with sobriety or indulgence, life or death, heaven or hell. Despite the shadow of age, disease, and mortality, there’s childlike glee here, too. “It’s a Raid,” a thrashing hardcore tirade about state surveillance featuring Post Malone, explodes in an ecstasy of rebellion. The irrepressible boast “Straight to Hell” is delightful, if only because of the way Osbourne rhymes “celebrate” with his vow to make you “defecate.” Resist all you’d like, but it’s hard not to smile when he mutters “I’m on the menu/Are you hungry?” like some impudent schoolboy during “Eat Me.” Mining the bluesy sway of Down and a dozen other Sabbath-loving Southerners, the band matches this bravado line by line. But the lack of focus means that the misses—when Osbourne aims for “November Rain” grandeur or “Iron Man” menace, for instance—are flagrant. A duet with Elton John, the title track is a maudlin ballad about surviving the excesses of fame only to realize you’re going to die, anyway. “I don’t wanna say goodbye/When I do you’ll be all right,” Sir Elton solemnly swears. Pompous and overwrought, the song is so self-serious it mostly makes you glad you’re not a frail old rock star, too, anticipating your own eulogies. “Scary Little Green Men”—a paranoid tantrum about how the aliens are creeping into your mind, bro—awkwardly seesaws between Foreigner-style rhapsodizing and Motörhead-lite browbeating. Noncommittal and unconvincing, this is Ozzy, desperate for topical #content. That quest for relevance highlights the deepest issue with Ordinary Man, the feeling that haunts you even as you enjoy it. Osbourne has struggled with intelligibility for decades, but he somehow sounds like he’s 25 here, flying and diving inside his historic range like the drinks and drugs never happened. You can’t help but remember the way Rick Rubin captured Johnny Cash or Joe Henry showcased Solomon Burke, showing the wrinkles inside their legendary voices during their final years. Ordinary Man instead feels like a preemptive holographic interpretation of Ozzy, a digital patchwork of his voice standing in for the real thing. He sings about decades of hard living and the nearness of death, but his voice bears no evidence of that wear and tear. Yes, Ozzy sounds great, but that sound leaves you wondering, once again, if he had to show up at all.

Levels: Since the mid-’90s, Ozzy Osbourne has been so famous he only needed to show up. In 1996, by then years removed from his last great album, he launched the annual metal circus that borrowed his name. He soon became an early star of reality television, a lovably mumbling patriarch in a family of salacious misfits. He no longer needed to strive to make great music; he just had to be on time for an annual summer of sets and, like, get really bummed about jogging on his birthday. Despite becoming a global brand, Osbourne’s solo records have always been surprisingly audacious, as if the man most synonymous with heavy metal itself still had something to prove. And so it

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```
review$rating
```

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## [1] 6.5
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