

# Vicious romance

## Movie gives sympathetic, realistic account of punk-rock anti-hero

Once upon a time, in faraway England, there lived a couple named Sid and Nancy. For one shining moment, they reigned as the king and queen of the punk scene — but all similarities between the classic fairy tale and the film "Sid and Nancy" end at that point.

**Marty Michaels**  
Cinema

As their relationship developed, so did its negative aspects. Sid and Nancy shared emotional immaturity, violent tendencies and, eventually, regression into heroin addiction. At bottom level, they were kids whose cravings were too intense to allow them to ever grow up normally.

Sid Vicious was the bassist for the premiere punk band, the Sex Pistols, and Nancy Spungen was his drug-addled girlfriend. Although the media had followed the two through their connection with the vanguard Sex Pistols, true notoriety struck when Vicious stabbed Spungen to death and was himself dead of a drug overdose two months later.

A prominent question involves why Alex Cox, the successful director of the quirky classic "Repo Man," would undertake such an ambitious project as "Sid and Nancy." Recreating this pair of unlikely anti-heroes was no simple task. He depicts the couple with all their seamy realities intact, yet manages to elicit a genuine sense of understanding. The success of the project lies in the fact that although Sid was punk's most notorious casualty, he was also its most enduring symbol.

The movie follows the couple through the course of their tumultuous relationship. Sid, dubbed "Boy Outlaw" by the British press, was more than happy to adopt the nonconformist stance of the Sex Pistols. When he met Nancy, an erstwhile groupie from Pennsylvania, his amoral nature consolidated completely. Together, the two fell into a cliff-edged lifestyle of drugs and desperation. Yet, in the strong-willed Nancy, Sid also found an unexpected companion who shared much with him.

The film follows Sid and Nancy through the streets of London and New York, from vague "squats" and hotel rooms to stages in countless clubs. After the sudden demise of the Sex Pistols, Sid had difficulty facing the collapse of his own status. Nancy faithfully followed him, attempting to get him gigs. Yet they carried each other further into the anonymous world of drugs and apathy. In one of the movie's most striking scenes, Sid and Nancy go to a clinic in a half-serious attempt to cure their addiction. The clinic attendant questions their alleged belief in anarchy. How, he asks, can they shock a generation into change when they are too stupefied to get out of bed?

Their vision became increasingly limited as they spent stagnant days in the famous Hotel Chelsea in New York City. The desperate love which somehow held them together began to manifest itself more violently. Nancy's death-wish became increasingly apparent, and the eventual outcome of the movie will surprise no one.

The media headlines seemed to make the final statement about Sid Vicious, but director Cox had the insight to consider their lives as

something more than pathetic caricatures. "Sid and Nancy really hung together like a decadent Romeo and Juliet," Cox said. "They were doing something really stupid, but they were in love."

"Sid and Nancy" brings out parallels between the collapse of the punk scene, the pair of lovers and the band. The Sex Pistols may have been the first and last punk band, unleashing a nihilistic energy onto the pop scene of 1977. Yet that energy quickly lost its power as a revolutionary force, becoming the battle-cry of bored middle-class kids.

This world of crumbled idealism is portrayed with grim determinism. Gary Oldham and Chloe Webb are exceptionally strong in their roles as Sid and Nancy. Both characterizations were physically and emotionally demanding. Johnny Rotten, the true visionary of the Sex Pistols, is played by Drew Schofield. Although Schofield gives a decent performance, he does not convey much of Rotten's cynical intelligence. The musical soundtrack is very good, with re-recordings of many Sex Pistols songs, as well as incidental music by Joe Strummer, the Pogues and Pray for Rain.

All things considered, Cox and his production team have done a great service by so accurately portraying Sid and Nancy. It was time for someone to get to the bottom of their status as cultural anti-heroes. Cox commented, "I think (the film) romanticizes Sid and Nancy. I don't think it glorifies them. They had big fantasies that they would go out in a blaze of glory together, and yet they never did." Importantly, the movie shows them realistically while imparting a sense of emotional depth.



One-time Sex Pistols member, Sid Vicious (Gary Oldman) re-records his version of "My Way"

# RAs describe running hall as toughest job they'll ever love

By ANGELA HAMPTON  
Staff Writer

Have you suddenly been inspired to become involved on campus? But have book prices, telephone bills and February sales that were too good to pass up left you seeking employment rather than searching for a club to join? If the College Budget Blues have you reading help-wanted ads, then the University Department of Housing may have an appealing alternative to bussing tables or washing dishes.

Each year, the Department of Housing accepts applications for the positions of Resident Assistants from juniors and seniors maintaining a 2.5 GPA. For several students, working as RAs has proved rewarding, both personally and financially.

Barbra Schaughency, a senior business major, is an RA in Cobb Residence Hall. She said that she feels she has gained much practical experience from her job. "I've become a lot more assertive. I can get my point across and can constructively discipline."

Training sessions sponsored by the housing department on listening and

leadership, as well as on certain responsibilities such as running hall meetings, have had an impact on Schaughency. "It's really strange when you know you're a person on the hall that people will come to. It makes you watch what you do in front of other people."

Being an RA offers students a great opportunity to become involved on-campus. For Amy Flowers, a junior education major, becoming an RA in Ehringhaus Residence Hall has given her new responsibilities and new people to meet. "You're supposed to be a role model," said Flowers. "It can be really time-consuming, but . . . (the residents are) my friends."

Flowers has been pleased with her location at Ehringhaus because she has been able to meet many out-of-state students as well as athletes. "I love it," she said. "There's a good mixture of people."

Doug Schmidt, a senior business major and an RA in Hinton James Residence Hall, wanted a chance to share some of the knowledge and experiences the University has given him. "The best four years of my life

have been here. I wanted to give back some of the knowledge UNC has given me."

About 70 percent of the residents that Schmidt oversees are freshmen. Schmidt said he likes helping the new students become more adapted to university life. "An RA acts as a liaison between the administration and students," he said. Schmidt, who is also a Clef Hanger and a coach for a community basketball team, said that he "has to be doing something all the time." However, he added, "I've learned through experience how to not over-commit myself."

Schaughency, Flowers, and Schmidt all agreed that despite the many advantages of their jobs, being an RA can have its pitfalls. "I've become friends with everyone," said Flowers. "It's hard to tell friends they're doing something wrong." Schaughency added, "It's hard to enforce rules that you don't really agree with or other people don't understand. Like visitation — it's completely for security reasons."

RAs are assigned to residence halls, which can be good or bad,

depending on the RA. "The roughest things about James," said Schmidt, "are the noise, because it's a high rise, and the walk — which I remedy with a Moped."

There are many responsibilities involved in being an RA as well. Counseling, keeping residents informed, being on duty, and providing three social and educational programs each semester for students are the main duties.

However, these RAs definitely felt that the benefits outweigh the hardships. Along with the personal and social advantages, being an RA pays off economically. The University pays RAs a salary every other week and offers them a single room for the price of a double room as well as free telephone installation. Granville Towers operates a little differently by offering free room and board, a free meal plan and free telephone installation rather than a paid salary.

Being an RA has many advantages, but it may not be the job for everyone. Creativity, dedication and objectivity are three important requirements for the job. "You have

to let your residents know that you can be counted on," said Flowers. Schaughency added, "Being an active listener, having the time to be on the hall and being assertive

enough to confront situations that you'd rather not confront all enter into being an effective RA. But to people who are willing to sacrifice a few things, it's really worth it."

## Elections

from page 1

Although somewhat disappointed about being disqualified, Doepner says that he does not plan to appeal the Elections Board's decision.

Doepner said, "I've looked at the situation and I've decided that I'll

let it stay. But I do wish someone from the graduate district I'm in could represent us. I hate the fact that we don't have a representative now."

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