

00:00:00	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.
00:00:12	Music	Transition	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> “Huddle Formation” from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:20	Jesse Thorn	Host	It’s <i>Bullseye</i> . I’m Jesse Thorn. The band Gang of Four formed in the British city of Leeds, in the late ‘70s. They were contemporaries of other post-punk bands from that era, like Joy Division, Wire, and The Fall. Maybe you’ve heard of Gang of Four, maybe you haven’t. Either way, it won’t surprise you when I say that Gang of Four influenced a lot of rock bands. That just kind of goes with the territory of being a successful post-punk band, which Gang of Four is. <i>[Music fades in.]</i>
00:00:54	Music	Music	They were abrasive, danceable, and unapologetically political. “Ether” from the album <i>Entertainment!</i> by Gang of Four. <i>(Each day more deaths)</i> <i>Dirt behind the daydream</i> <i>Dirt behind the daydream</i> <i>The happy ever after</i> <i>It’s at the end of the rainbow</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:01:05	Jesse	Host	What’s unique about Gang of Four, though, is the sheer breadth of their influence. You’ll hear that influence in indie bands, like Liars and Block Party, but also in the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Nirvana and R.E.M.. And you’ll hear Gang of Four songs sampled in the music of Moby or Frank Ocean. <i>[Music fades in.]</i>
00:01:26	Music	Music	Or even on the new Run the Jewels. “the ground below” from the album <i>RTJ4</i> by Run the Jewels. <i>The God killer, this Tokyo, and I’m Godzilla</i> <i>Playing blackjack versus death, gun on the card dealer</i> <i>Just bought a Demon, I’m screaming up out the car dealer</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:01:34	Jesse	Host	Gang of Four carried on in a handful of iterations, but the core of the band remained more or less the same: guitarist Andy Gill and vocalist Jon King. Gang of Four never really disbanded until last year, when Gill died suddenly at 64 of pneumonia and organ failure. His widow suggested he may have been an early victim of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, the indie label Matador Records is reissuing the work of Gang of Four.

Gang of Four 77-81 is a four-record boxset that revisits and elevates some of the band's most important releases, including their debut: *Entertainment!*. Ahead of release, my friend Jordan Morris sat down with the singer, Jon King, to talk about the band, its legacy, and what it was like playing danceable music at punk rock shows.

[Music fades in.]

00:02:31 Music Music

Here's another Gang of Four classic: "Damaged Goods".
"Damaged Goods" from the album

*I always knew it would
Sometimes I'm thinking that I love you
But I know it's only lust*

*Your kiss so sweet
Your sweat so sour*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:02:50 Jordan Morris Host

Jon King, welcome to *Bullseye*.

[Jon greets him.]

00:03:15 Jon Guest

So, Gang of Four gets categorized as a punk band or a post-punk band, but there's so much going on in the music. It is such a—it is such a rich, hearty soup. There is, you know, R&B. There is funk. There is dance music. There's disco. I wanna hear about the music you were listening to around the time the band got started.

Um, Andy and I have quite similar tastes. We've known each other since we was young teenagers. And at the beginning, we deified Jimi Hendrix. So, Jimi Hendrix was an enduring love. I mean, even now, I play "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" probably every week.

[Jordan laughs.]

And I'll so play it my entire life. So, *Electric Ladyland* was kind of like the template for it. And actually, when Jimi died, Andy wore a black armband to school, 'cause we went to the same school together. So, there was—there was Hendrix, to start off with. And the other outfit that I absolutely adored was The Band and their songs, or American Life and Bob Dylan, of course. But along with that was this really strong love of reggae and funk and so the—sort of everything by James Brown, electric blues, Muddy Waters. And in fact, when we started off, we used to do a couple of Muddy Waters covers and—not very well. But that was something that was really inspirational. So, African American music was really, really important. And we loved dancing. So, we always—and reggae in particular. I don't think it happened in the—in the US in the way that it did in Britain, but one of the records that was played to death by both me and Andy and Hugo and Dave was *The Trojan Story*.

[Jordan agrees enthusiastically.]

Which was sensational. And all those tracks by bands like Skatalites and *[inaudible]* and so, reggae music was really important, and you know, it was inspirational. But of course, when you're a bunch of white guys, you don't wanna be ripping off someone else's tradition, but you wanna learn from it and be inspired by it. Like more or less every single British musician has ever since. They just—they listen to blues records, like Led Zeppelin did, and make a record that's kind of developed from that, or—Hugo, his great love was Sir Freak and we all shared a common love of the drumming of Simon Kirke. And of course, the spare guitar work, you know, that was there. So, it was sort of James Brown, funk, reggae, and the other band that I think more than any other band inspired us at the beginning was Dr. Feelgood. And Dr. Feelgood was this stripped down, dry bunch of drunks from Canvey Island. *[Stammers]* I'm being unkind.

[Jordan laughs.]

00:06:21	Jordan	Host	You know, Wilko Johnson was the model for Andy's guitar playing for a while. And Lee Brilleaux, who is this singer that, you know, was someone I admired hugely. So, we liked all that stuff. And I'm curious about the term "post-punk", which a lot of people use when they talk about Gang of Four. Do you remember when you first heard that, and do you feel like it's a good way to describe the band?
00:06:34+	Jon	Guest	<i>[Sighs heavily.]</i> I'm not—I think with all of these labels, there's a conundrum. You know, we all want to find some way of clumping stuff together. But they are always applied after the event. I mean, when—I think it is true that you can see sort of mental affinities between sort of a band like us and New Order and Public Image as... as operating in—sometimes in the same sort of vocabulary—musical vocabulary. But I mean, when—the music that actually inspired me in order to get going and form a band was the New York bands, which were certainly not post-punk bands. You know, 'cause we went out in '76 and we were going to CBGB's every night and it was bands like Richard Hell and the Voidoids, you know, and Television and early Talking Heads and the like.
00:07:47	Jordan	Host	And so, I don't know that it's—I don't know how useful it is. But I can see why people do it. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> If that's a good answer or not. No, no, it's a—it's a—it's a great answer. It's one of those things where it's like it's not perfect, but you know, sometimes you need words like that to talk about music. So.
00:07:57	Jon	Guest	Yeah. I mean, I—we had to form very strong friendships with Pylon and R.E.M., who were our support bands for quite a while, out of Athens, in Georgia. And, you know, there's certain places you go to where you feel an affinity. And I felt an affinity to Athens, at that time. And the B-52's were from there. You had an idea that there was a creative energy. One of my favorite—also favorite bands were the Ramones. I love the Ramones. I saw them loads of times. And I loved—I loved The Feel Goods. But what I didn't really like is chords. I didn't really like—actually, it was—it was the Ramones of course sounded like the Beatles with—you know—that grungy stuff underneath it. And years later, you know, you think of bands like Black Rebel Motorcycle Club. And so, I picked up on that—on that vibes.

And—but the Sex Pistols’ music was really exciting at the time, but it’s really conservative. I mean, it’s Black Sabbath with challenging lyrics.

[Jordan chuckles and agrees.]

00:09:08 Jordan Host But—yeah... “Pretty Vacant” is really a Sabbath song speeded up and with those lyrics
So, when your band was starting out, England was going through some really tough economic times. Did that situation affect what you were doing in the band in any way?

00:09:21 Jon Guest It’s not an original thought to say that best art is made when things are really bad. I’ve—there’s a film called *The Third Man*, which was made in 1948, and it’s Orson Wells. It’s one of his great movies. And he plays someone who sells adulterated or fraudulent drugs and penicillin to the people, at the top of a reel. And they have this—he has a shot face-to-face with a police officer or the military guy who wants to arrest him or execute him. And he says—he says, “Italy through the Renaissance is war, famine, death, poisoning, betrayal. The result: Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rafael.” And then he says, “Switzerland. 400 years of peace. What do you get? The cuckoo clock.”

[Jordan chuckles.]

And so, I think we were lucky enough to live in the former.

[Chuckles.] It wasn’t lucky. I mean, Leeds was a—Leeds was really, really bad. Britain was really bad. I—at the beginning on the boxset, I wrote a little kind of introductory, one-page essay about if you went to the center of London, Leicester Square, there was garbage piled 14, 15 feet high. There were—the gravediggers had gone on strike. And so, there were—they had run out of places to store the corpses, so they were renting refrigerated trucks to store stacks of corpses. Animals were starving on the farms. There was—one in four adult males was out of work. I mean, it was—it was pretty intense. And I think because I and we wanted to write about the world that we lived in, then, it didn’t seem to me to be an interesting subject to write songs about girls and cars.

00:11:24 Jordan Host Yeah, it is interesting when, you know, you do hear the Gang of Four takes on the love song, at that time.

[Music fades in.]

I’m thinking about “Love Like Anthrax”, specifically.

[Jon agrees.]

00:11:45 Music Music And, you know, that being such an anti, dark love song.
“Love Like Anthrax” from the album Entertainment! by Gang of Four.

*Woke up this morning desperation a.m.
(Love crops up quite a lot as something to sing about)
What I've been saying won't say them again
(‘Cause most groups make most of their songs*

*About falling in love or how happy they are to be in love)
My head's not empty, it's full with my brain
(You occasionally wonder why these groups)
The thoughts I'm thinking
(Do sing about it all the time)
Like piss down a drain
(Piss down a drain)*

*And I feel like a beetle on its back
(It's because these groups think there's something
very special about it)
And there's no way for me to get up
(Either that, or else it's because everybody else sings about it)
Love'll get you like a case of anthrax
(And always has. You know, to burst into song you have to be
inspired)
And that's something I don't want to catch
(And nothing inspires quite like love)*

*[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades
out.]*

00:12:12 Jordan Host It is interesting how you guys were—you know—taking some of this familiar stuff and putting it through the lens of what you saw going on.

00:12:22 Jon Guest Yeah, I mean... again, something I put in the book was a great quote from Bertolt Brecht. He said, "How can you write songs about trees when the woods are full of policemen?" And it's—you know, those are the—those subjects were really real to us all. You know. Sometimes like—songs like "Natural's Not in It", you know, you're sitting there thinking, "How did I end up like this?" I feel—actually, having done "At Home He's a Tourist", I remember about a year after that, Talking Heads came out with that one—*[mimicking the cadence and American accent of the opening of "Once in a Lifetime" by Talking Heads]* you know, "You may find yourself in a beautiful house."

[Jordan laughs.]

Which is that subject, you know, that you're—you suddenly get this moment of existential strangeness. You think, "How on earth did I get here?" You know? "How did—was it—was it going through that door or another door?" You know? "How on earth did my life end up—?" It's this series of random events, and yet you are wherever you are. And it's quite—can be quite disconcerting. You wonder whether you're an actor in some cosmic play in which you've actually just been reading your lines from the word "go", and it's a sort of—can be a disturbing moment for lots of people, and I get that.

00:13:48 Jesse Host We'll finish up with Jon King of Gang of Four after a quick break. We'll talk about what it's like to hear your band sampled by Frank Ocean and Run the Jewels. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye*, from [MaximumFun.org](https://www.maximumfun.org) and NPR.

00:14:02 Promo Clip **Music:** Bright, cheerful music.

Speaker: On NPR's Pop Culture Happy Hour podcast, we talk about TV, movies, and more. Like the new Marvel, Disney+ series,

The Falcon and the Winter Soldier, and a definitive ranking of the best Muppets. All of that in around 20 minutes every weekday. Listen now to the *Pop Culture Happy Hour* podcast, from NPR.

00:14:23	Promo	Clip	<p>[<i>Music fades out.</i>] Music: Cheerful guitar.</p> <p>John Moe: Hey, it's John Moe. And look, these are challenging times for our mental and emotional health. I get it! That's why I'm so excited for my new podcast, <i>Depresh Mode</i>. We're tackling depression, anxiety, trauma, stress, the kinds of things that are just super common but don't get talked about nearly enough. Conversations that are illuminating, honest, and sometimes pretty funny, with folks like Patton Oswalt, Kelsey Darragh, and Open Mike Eagle.</p> <p>Open Mike Eagle: I have this public-facing self and then I have my emotional self that tends to stay hidden. It was about finding a way to communicate to somebody that, like, there's terrible shh going on, back here.</p> <p>John: Plus, psychiatrists, psychologist, and all kinds of folks. On <i>Depresh Mode</i>, we're working together: learning, helping each other out. We're a team! Join our team! <i>Depresh Mode</i> from Maximum Fun, wherever you get your podcasts.</p>
00:15:15	Jesse	Host	<p>[<i>Music fades out.</i>] Welcome back to <i>Bullseye</i>. I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, our guest is Jon King. He was the lead singer of the hugely influential post-punk band, Gang of Four. He's being interviewed by Maximum Fun's Jordan Morris.</p> <p>The band just released a boxset looking back at some of Gang of Four's earliest recordings, including their 1979 debut, <i>Entertainment!</i>. Let's get back into it.</p>
00:15:39	Jordan	Host	<p>Something interesting about Gang of Four's music is that, you know, you have these danceable beats, and you have these great melodies, but also just there's a lot of noise. There's a lot of noise and, you know, the rhythms kind of like break down and put themselves back together and they—you know, they kind of hit you in a way that you don't expect. I wanna talk about that dissonance that's in some of the songs and why you thought it was important to have that in the music.</p>
00:16:09	Jon	Guest	<p>Andy was a brilliant, brilliant guitarist and he was a brilliant non-technical guitarist. And so, he had this fantastic ability to tease a sound out of some steel strings. And just like, you know, if you ever listen—everyone's listened to it, but you listen to, you know, the early document of rock and roll is, you know, Robert Johnson's recordings of the late 1920s. You can hear the strings. You can hear the scrape of it. You can almost hear the touch of his fingers on the—on the struts. You've got a physicality about it. And some of those noises are so gorgeous, you know, like on the great—there were underground tracks. You know, on the [<i>inaudible</i>], they were underground meets Nico. Trying to find noises that sound like the end of the world. And to do that was, you know—Andy's genius on the guitar was to pull out those noises, which start off somewhere</p>

between Jimi Hendrix and Wilko Johnson and end up this other—this other place. But to make things that have got that dissonance and, again, you know, a band thing—sometimes we say we want a song without any key changes. There are no chord progressions in quite a lot of the songs.

[Music fades in.]

00:17:38 Music Music

And so, what you needed was this incredibly propulsive and powerful rhythm section. So, Dave and Hugo would come up—I think a good example of that is, um... “What We All Want”. “What We All Want” from the album *Solid Gold* by Gang of Four.

*This wheel spins, let me off
It's not for lack of trying
Can't put my finger on it*

*You can't help being hard up
Can't trust the god we trusted
Don't think that's any insurance*

*Could I be happy with something else?
I need something to fill my time
Could I be happy with something else?
I need someone to fill my time*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:18:19 Jon Guest

Dave was—he'd learned to play the bass by listening to The Meters, you know, one of the world's greatest ever bands. You know. He would—I think when I first—not the first time I met him, but pretty soon, I remember he and I getting so excited about listening to “Cissy Strut” over and over again, by The Meters. And that's how he learned it, from listening to “Cissy Strut” and reggae. But there was also this sound of the Can—you know, the German noise band. So—and that used to be in that kind of crowd rock thing of that sort of propulsive driving on thing. And so, he played his funky stuff, 'cause he used to be in—of course—in a covers band. You know, where it played, you know, R&B and country and western and stuff. And it was applying what Dave and Hugo were brilliant at: applying the aesthetic of funk, where you get a groove and you lay it down and you've gotta stick with it. You've gotta be on the one. And then you're with the one and then when you go away from the one, it's a thrill. And you know, like James—the master, himself, James Brown.

But the way James Brown was all about the one, we started being about where you went—when the one was there. And so, Andy would then improvise like mad over this screwed down *[mimicking guitar]* bam-boom-bum-bum-bum-bum-bombum-bum-bowm-boowm. Really popping along. And then Andy would, like, be careening around the place, knowing that he could always come back to the one. And that's when the dissonance works, because if it's just... if everything dissonant, it doesn't work. I used to listen to quite a lot of jazz music, and I could never really get on with free jazz, too much. Because it was—it was actually too much being

dissonant against each other. You know. A failing of mine, not of the art form. But—so, the dissonance is really thrilling. It's thrilling if you've got a one. Or it's thrilling if you've got a four, even. But it is not thrilling if it's all a mess. You know.

00:20:27 Jordan Host

I heard that Gang of Four was invited to play on *Top of the Pops*, which at the time was a—you know, huge TV show that really drove record sales and I think the story goes that you guys walked off. I would love to hear that story and you know if there were repercussions down the line.

00:20:47 Jon Guest

Top of the Pops was, certainly in Europe, the most influential TV show there's ever been. I mean, you—if you got onto that show, you were gonna have a top 10 single. And they had very strange rules that you got on—this was to avoid payola and bribery and corruption—you got on the show if you had a single that had gone into the top 30 and you—therefore, you had to be offered a slot. If you were going down the charts, you weren't on the show. The only person that could stay on the show, if they were in the same position, was number 1. Everyone else, if you stayed in the same position or you went down, you weren't on the show. So, we had released the incredible pop classic of "At Home He's a Tourist"—talking about dissonance—to the amazement of [inaudible], had gotten to the top 30. And this record that sounds like someone sort of—a train derailing in Grand Central Station. Yeah. And this wonderful guitar row at the beginning, which is fantastic. And following those rules of the screwed down rhythm section and the guitar going off on its holidays.

And the program used to go out at, like, I think like 7:30 or 8 o'clock at night. Basically, anything goes after 9 o'clock. That's when you hear the "C" word and the "F" word and all that kind of stuff that—there are no limits, really, to what happens there anymore on TV. But up until that point, it's the watershed. Up to that point, you've gotta be kind of delicate and you can't use profane language and stuff. And the lyric on the chorus was, "The rubbers you hide in your top left pocket." 'Cause it was—it's not a very challenging idea that people go to clubs and music halls to get laid. And if they do—if they do, having a condom in your pocket is quite useful and quite socially responsible. Anyway, so I chucked this in, 'cause it was all about the commercialization of people's sex lives. I tossed in the American slang—'cause British people didn't use the word rubbers. They used the word johnnies, at that time. So, "rubbers" was not—was not a British slang word. It's a bit like, in the olden days, when *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* was on. They would always use British slang like "bollocks", because they thought Americans didn't know what it meant. And I remember when I first came to America they were like, [in an American accent] "What are you saying?"

So, the—so, that lyric—in the charts, we had to be given a slot. The BBC said, "You've got the slot, but there's a—there's a rule." Which was the Musician's Union said you have to rerecord the song that you're on the charts to comply with the Musician's Union. So, you have to go into the studio and rerecord the track that's in the charts. But they said, "You've gotta rerecord it, but we don't like the word rubbers. You've got to sing it differently." So, we had a bit of a discussion about this, and I think we all agreed that the opportunity was big. "Okay, let's change the word."

So, we rerecorded the track. In fact, we didn't rerecord the track. We just rerecorded the word "packets". So, dropped in the word "packets" over the original thing and then handed it over. Went into the studio and the producers were going nuts. And the producer said, "We asked you to change the word!"

And I said, "Yeah, well we have changed the word. It's—now it's 'the packets you hide in your top left pocket.'"

And they said, "We can't say that, because it still means the same!"

And I said, "Yeah, it does mean the same."

They said, "But the other thing is, you can hear that you've changed the word. We would like you to have used the word 'rubbish'." So, we had a very heated argument in which language was used that you wouldn't use before the watershed. So, we really—and we had a big—and we told them—we told them, you know, really pretty much where to—where to go. And we were thrown off the show and the record was banned! And that was that first of our records to be banned.

[Music fades in.]

00:24:53

Music

Music

To be followed, years later, by "I Love a Man in a Uniform", which was banned, of course, in the UK.

"I Love a Man in a Uniform" from the album *Songs of the Free* by Gang of Four.

*I love a man in a uniform
I love a man in a uniform*

*To have ambitions was my ambition
But I had nothing to show for my dreams
Time with my girl I spent it well
(you must be joking, oh man you must be joking)*

*The good life was so elusive
Handouts, they got me down
I had to regain my confidence*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:25:28

Jordan

Host

Why was that song banned?

00:25:31

Jon

Guest

That's much later. That was on *Songs of the Free* and that was banned because having written a song called, "I Love a Man in a Uniform", which was—you know—much more of a pop song than before, than we had written before, but it was about, you know, a guy whose life choices were so limited from a working-class background, he had no choice but to get in his uniform. So—and the chorus was, "I love a man in a uniform." And it was—it was—it was quite sexy, and it was quite cool and all that stuff, but the—and it was being played a lot, on the radio in the UK, until an event happened that was so, you know, left-field. Which was the year

Argentinian government invaded the Falklands Islands, Islas Malvinas. A place that I'd never even heard of.

And because it mentioned a uniform, the sensitivity and the censorship was so strong, we went to do a TV show and we turned up and the producer—to promote this thing, which was charting, and the producer said, “Oh, well, we know you were gonna play ‘Uniform’, but we—you can play anything you like from your oeuvre, but you can’t play that.”

And we said, “Well, we’re here to promote that, because it’s in the charts.”

Said, “Well, we can’t because we’ve heard that our boys are going into invade the island, to retake the Falklands.” And it was taken off the radio. It was banned, because it mentioned a uniform.

00:27:05 Jordan Host

We are talking because there is a new Gang of Four boxset that collects some of your earliest recordings. Are you someone who revisits that old music regularly or, you know, was doing it for this boxset something that, you know, you wouldn’t normally do?

00:27:23 Jon Guest

I don’t—I think like lots of musicians—I don’t really like listening to my old things at all. And it was good to listen to, but I don’t like to listen to it very much, no. But it reminds me of all of the things and it—I was impressed by the rigor of it all and it reminded me so much of what we were doing. The main sensation I had, emotionally, was how close we all were as a unit. You know, we were all incredibly good friends. We made each other... do the best work that we could. And we also made each other laugh. I think one of the key things about the photographs in there is how many of them showed the four of us clearly entertaining each other and enjoying it.

The music of that period that I still like to listen to—I love listening to The Slits, for example. Like Typical Girls. I prefer to listen to what they were doing than to what we were doing, ‘cause I don’t wanna—you know, listening to your own work is a bit strange, I think.

00:28:30 Jordan Host

It’s interesting to hear you talk about, you know, how close you were and what a unit you were and that makes me want to hear your thoughts about Andy. Obviously, Andy passed away this year and I just wanna hear a little bit about him, from you. What will you always remember about him?

00:28:51 Jon Guest

Uh, well, our lives were very—our social and working lives were very interwoven. I mean, I’d been friends of his since I was like 15. Actually, my wife had known him since she was 11. He used to go around to her house at the age of 11 and play chess with her older brother. *[Chuckles.]* So, when—and we were at the same high school together. I mean, we went to a school, between the age of 11 and 18, called *[inaudible]* school, and we all were—the group that we were in were all keen on art. There was me and Andy and there were three other people: Kevin Lycett, Mark White, and Tom Greenhalgh, who formed The Mekons. All in the same class. And Paul Greengrass, the movie director. And Adam Curtis, the documentary filmmaker were all in the same class. And so, I went off to Leeds with Kevin, ‘cause I was in a year above Andy, and then Andy went up. And then he and I had flats next door to each

other, in this horrible house. You know, rented house, like classic student squalor. And he had an acoustic guitar, and I had a cassette recorder and we used to sit there drinking cheap wine and writing joiner songs, really. For a while.

And then together, when I got a research grant to go to New York, Andy came along and we then stayed together with—we crashed with Mary Harron, who was then a journalist on the *New York Magazine*. Then later on she directed *American Psycho* and *The Notorious Betty Page*. But Mary had just broken up I think with the drummer of the Patti Smith Group, who were then unknown. And she had a flat in Saint Marks Place, in New York. And so, we used to go to CBGB's every night and we got in for nothing. So, we hung out. So, Andy and I hung out with Richard Hell and the Voidoids and The Dead Boys and all that lot. Talking Heads and Blondie and everyone, you know, we were all in this crappy bar.

And so, when we came back, it was—Andy and I had become sort of baked—become baked together. So, we were very kind of... entertainingly chalk and cheese. You know. And, you know, I'm a terrible, terrible guitarist, but you know I love playing words. You know. So, it was—we would trade off each other. You know. We could do what the other one couldn't do. And it was a—it was very good. And I think we made each other laugh. I mean, you know, we laughed a lot. And we knew all of the words to all of The Band's songs. So, very often we'd be singing, you know, "Up on Cripple Creek" together as a sort of—as a duet. Things like that. Yeah.

00:31:48 Jordan Host

Gang of Four music has been sampled by some pretty serious hip-hop artists. I'm thinking of Run the Jewels and Frank Ocean, specifically. What is it like to hear your music used like that?

00:32:02 Jon Guest

I was so flattered, really, for both of them to use it. I mean, I think that Run the Jewels is a brilliant band and I liked them before they did that. I mean, I actually thought it was a joke when I was—someone said [*mumbling*]*—they asked for permission. I think Dave had ran into one of them in the studio in the west coast and they said, "Would you mind if we sample your song?"*

He said—and of course, no, of course he didn't mind! And I think it—and when Frank Ocean did that, I felt—I felt very musically pleased, because of course you're always standing on the shoulders of giants. You know. So, just as—just as we would sort of like heist something or other from Funkadelic. I'm not sure what it was, but you'd be inspired by something that you'd hear and then to think that a band that's also, like Run the Jewels, trying to take on the complicatedness of urban life... and, you know, hip-hop has got a fantastic thread to it of talking about real life in those ways. And I was so thrilled. And the song "Ether", which was all about that. "Trapped in heaven life style, locked in Long Kesh." So, it's, you know, so it's—you know, I mentioned it—are the two opposing ideas.

[Music fades in.]

There was the interment policy of innocent people and then there's your own sort of feeling that you are your own jailer in your own

			home. You know? And—which is quite a sort of proto hip-hoppy kind of idea, isn't it, I suppose? “Not Great Men” from the album <i>Entertainment!</i> by Gang of Four.
00:33:52	Music	Music	<i>History lives on the books at home</i> <i>The books at home</i> <i>It's not made by great men</i> <i>It's not made by great men</i> <i>It's not made by great men</i> <i>It's not made by great men</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:34:11	Jordan	Host	Jon King, thanks so much for talking to us on <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:34:14	Jon	Guest	Thank you very much. It's been a pleasure.
00:34:18	Jesse	Host	Jon King, lead singer of Gang of Four. <i>Gang of Four 77-81</i> is a boxset with live recordings and reissues of their brilliant records <i>Entertainment!</i> and <i>Solid Gold</i> . You can order the boxset from your local record store. Thanks to my friend Jordan Morris for conducting this interview. Jordan also co-hosts the comedy show <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> with me. I'm the Jordan from the title. He's the Go. Jordan also created Max Fun's scripted sci-fi podcast, <i>Bubble</i> , which you can download now <u>and</u> is now a graphic novel! You can preorder it at your local bookstore.
00:34:56	Music	Music	<i>["Not Great Men" plays uninterrupted for a few moments before the volume decreases again to play under the dialogue.]</i>
00:35:00	Jesse	Host	That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> , created out of the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles. Here in my house, I've accepted that I'm an extra-large now and am going through my clothes getting rid of the larges. The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our producer is Kevin Ferguson. Jesus Ambrosio and Jordan Kauwling are our associate producers. We get help from Casey O'Brien, as well. Our production fellows, at Maximum Fun, are Richard Robey and Valerie Moffat. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is by The Go! Team. Thanks very much to them and to their label, Memphis Industries, for sharing it. The Go! Team have a record just around the corner. There's a single up right now. You should search for The Go! Team on YouTube or whatever and give it a listen. You can also keep up with the show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We post all our interviews in those places. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.
00:36:03	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR. <i>[Music ends.]</i>