

reviews by Warren Opheim and Don Teplyske

Siouxsie and the Banshees: Hyaena (Polydor/Poygram)

You've just gotta wonder about a band that releases a Beatles cover as the single from an album. Even more suspicious is the irony that the ex-Queen of London's punk scene along with her group should get artsy by taking nine months to work on the

recording (Shades of Fleetwood Mac!). Don't waste your time.

Howard Jones: Human's Lib (WEA)

How can a man who writes The Most Catchy Dance Hit of 1984 fill his debut album with another nine songs that lack anything interesting? It seems that the rule these days is to write one excellent song, and fill the rest of the album with, well, filler. Next time,

Howard, let's see and exception.

The Cars: Heartbeat City (Elektra/Asylum)

Aural cotton candy; nice while you give it a try, but once it's gone you wonder if anything was really there in the first place. No classically enigmatic lyrics on this one like "chicken encounters fill your bowls," either. Could be that Ric Ocasek was having too much fun with his Fairlight CMI.

Berlin: Love Life (Geffen/WEA)

I used to worry that maybe I like synthpop in general simply because of the electronics and didn't care about the music itself. Well, thanks to Berlin, I can now sleep nights. "No More Words" sounds like a Quarterflash reject and that's about as good as they come. If you still have an uncontrollable urge to snap up *Love Life*, take my advice and buy the record; the tape includes two "bonus" songs. Hey Gilbert, how do you spell a Bronx Cheer?

Rubber Rodeo: Scenic Views

There is definite country influence on this debut recording, but they must be doing something right (right Don?) because I, a confirmed C & W hater, like it a lot. Hard to pigeonhole, but one critic calls them a cross between Chet Atkins and Devo — that's

pretty superficial. Besides, old Chet would look darn silly in a flowerpot.

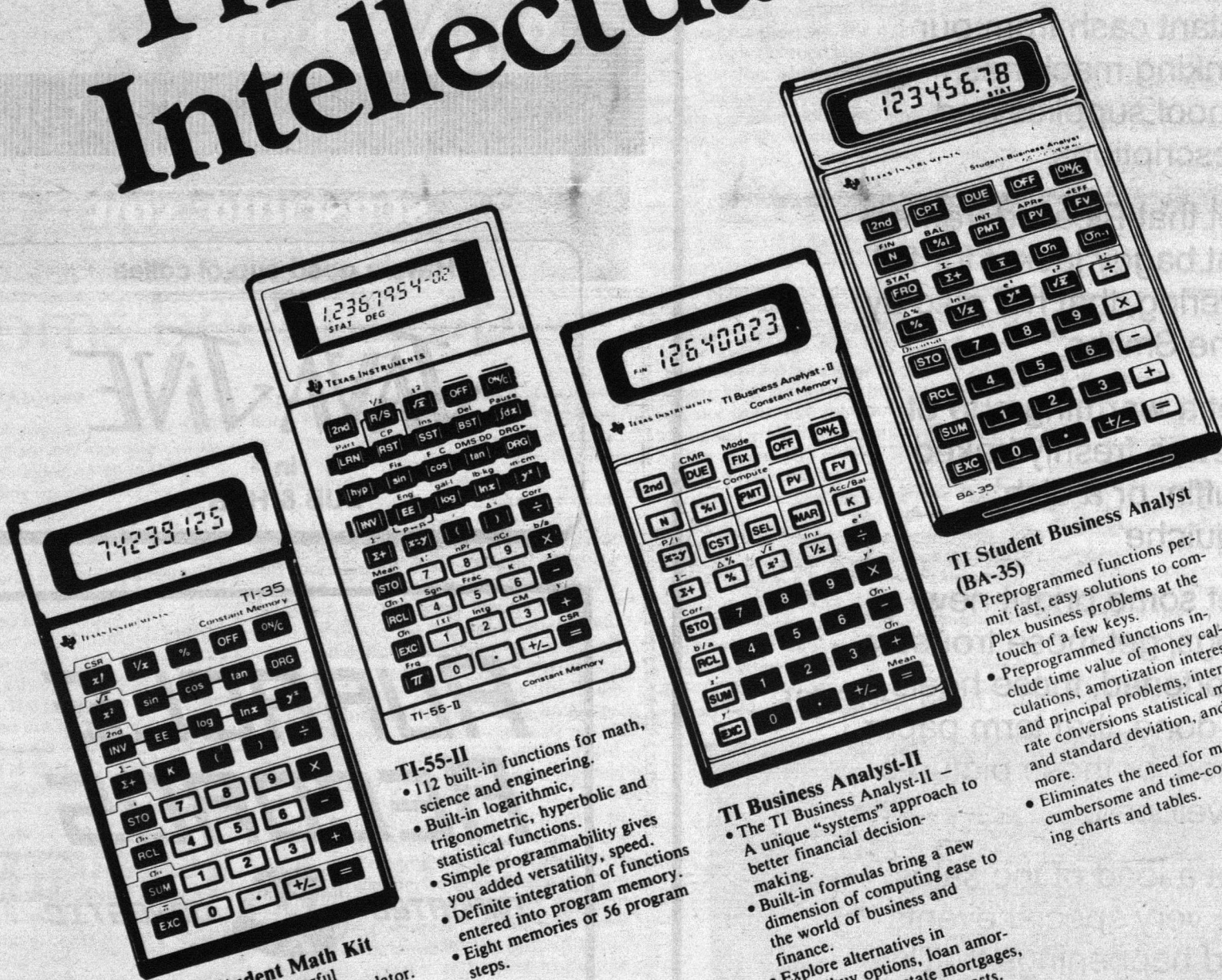
Gerry Cott: I Left My Hat in Haiti (Current/Polgram)

Ex-Rat Gerry Cott has delivered an immediately enjoyable collection of five songs which are poppish in feel, but which have lyrics that go a bit deeper than most fluff songs. The mini album is led off with the masterful "Alphabet Town" with its story of the cool side of the darkside. The album continues through on this high never getting bogged down by substandard filler. "Some People I Know" is what a mini-album should be: an artist's strongest work showcased in an attractive package at a reasonable price.

The Special AKA: In The Studio (Chrysalis-MCA)

The Special AKA (essentially The Specials without Terry FunBoy) have finally released their debut album following several semi-successful British singles. The wait has been well worth it. The Special AKA is much more politically centered than were the Specials; focusing on the racial injustices of the world. The songs are composed of powerful rhythms and equally scorching lyrics: "If you have a racist friend, now is the time, now is the time,

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