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# Not Just an ‘Extra-musical’ Scandal: A Musical Dialectic in and through the Sex Pistols’ Recordings

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## Introduction

One of the first impressions you get when listening to the only studio LP by the Sex Pistols, *Never Mind the Bollocks: Here’s the Sex Pistols*, is its sound quality — too ‘good’ and ‘professional’ to be associated with so-called ‘punk aesthetic’, the authenticity of which is based on lack of musicianship and low budget ‘DIY’ intention. Indeed, this album was recorded at one of the major studios in London, the Wessex Studios, under the control of two veteran producer/engineers, Chris Thomas and Bill Price. As Samantha Bennett said in her 2015 study on technological and processual aspects of studio production of the Sex Pistols’ record, it is “a product of large-scale, 1970s classic rock-album production”. However, does it necessarily mean this record is ‘not’ a punk record? Or, otherwise, is it just a rock’n’roll record by a band, that is better to be called “a rock’n’roll band”, whose members are, as Paul Hegarty remarked, “while hardly virtuoso”, at least “capable of decent, effective pub rock”? And then the ‘myth’ of musical “ineptitude” around the Sex Pistols, is it just the result from their manager Malcolm McLaren’s strategic exaggeration?

These kinds of questions could be approached by examining the recordings themselves: not only the official LP recording but also previously unreleased studio recordings and demos are to be analysed from a historical point of view. A pivotal point was in early 1977 when the guitarist Steve Jones, who was most infamous for ‘extra-musical’ scandals, and who is said to have started playing the guitar only months before the first rehearsal, had to also play the bass, on the producer’s suggestion. Because the bassist Glen Matlock, who had been considered as the most ‘musically experienced’ member, ended up leaving the band just before the sessions. The seeming contradiction in the Sex Pistols’ musical career is rather to say that it is necessary to illuminate the dialectic in and through the recordings.

Several previously unreleased recordings give evidence of what was the crucial difference between the recordings before and after Matlock's departure. The most appropriate example for this task is *No Feelings* for mainly three reasons: first, it is based on more various bass licks than any other songs; second, it was conceived, from the start, as a straightforward 'rock'n'roll' song, which means it has the simplest song structure that requires all the more effort to make it more dynamic; third, in this sense, an instrumental version of the song is all the more useful.

*No Feelings*, or *No Feeling*, had been recorded at least four times: first, in their first demo recording session in May 1976 in Majestic Studios, London, with Chris Spedding as a producer; second, in another demo recording with Dave Goodman in their rehearsal room at Denmark Street, in July 1976, overdubbed and mixed afterward at Riverside Studios; third, an instrumental version produced by Mike Thorne in December 1976 at Manchester Square Studios; and finally, in the Wessex Studios session, in April 1977, with Chris Thomas and Bill Price, after the departure of Matlock.

I want to be careful to say what is the main reason of the feud between Matlock and the rest of the band, including the manager, whether that be a difference in personality or in musical taste, which is not our subject. Let's just see this brilliantly comprehensive remark by the author of *English Dreaming*: "Musically too, Matlock's harmonies were unwanted, and in the January demos his work is too funky for the monolithic noise the Sex Pistols were now aiming for - a wall of sound that would act both as a barrier and a shelter." First, "Matlock's harmonies" that Jon Savage mentioned here need to be understood as the bassist's bass melodies which were intertwined with other melodic parts, Johnny Rotten's vocal and Jones's guitar, in such a supplementary way, not just following the root notes of the chords, to produce quite ornamental and superfluous harmony, to some. Besides, the linear procession of his bass notes is described as "funk", which is not to be understood literally but in a punk rock context, as exemplified in boogie-woogie influenced 50's rockabilly style 'walking bass' phrasing. For one thing, it tends to be too salient to be ignored in 'a wall of sound', and, for another, to represent a certain kind of horizontal flow with passing time.

## Solo Guitar Intro

*No Feelings* is one of the rare songs of their LP starting with a solo guitar intro, which then reflects the role the guitarist played during the first phase of composition, as remarked by different members, with the aim of making a straightforward rock'n'roll song.

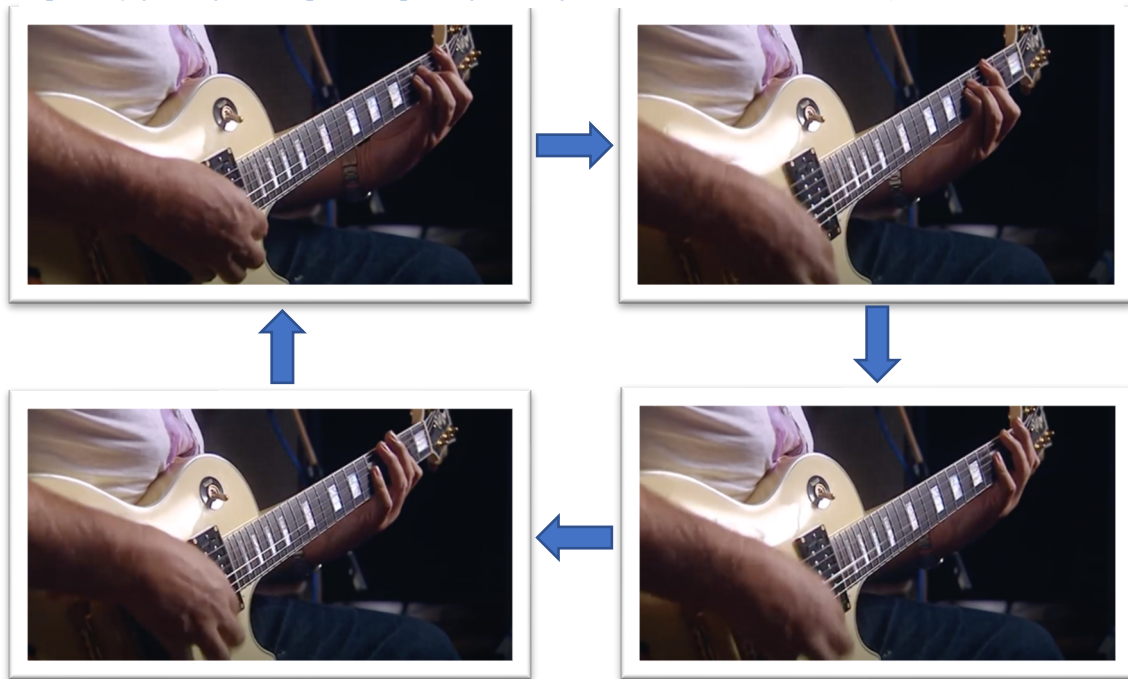
“*No Feelings* originally came from a Steve Jones riff.” (by Rotten in 2002)

“Very rock ‘n’ roll, courtesy of Steve.” (by Matlock in 2002)

“This came together so easy. I came in, going mad on guitar, John went mad on vocals and that was it... easy.” (by Jones in 2002)<sup>1</sup>

“Musically, it was mainly Steve’s original idea.” (by Matlock in 2017)

*Figure 1 : Four fingerings of Steve Jones playing the intro of No Feelings : F, G, Sb and C power chords, respectively, from left above (photos captured from the film Classic Albums: Sex Pistols)*



*Figure 2: Intro riff in No Feelings (guitar, LP version)*

Figure 2 shows the musical notation for the guitar intro riff. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a tempo marking of quarter note = 164. The notation includes a staff with chords and a corresponding TAB staff below it. The riff consists of two bars of music, each containing two chords.

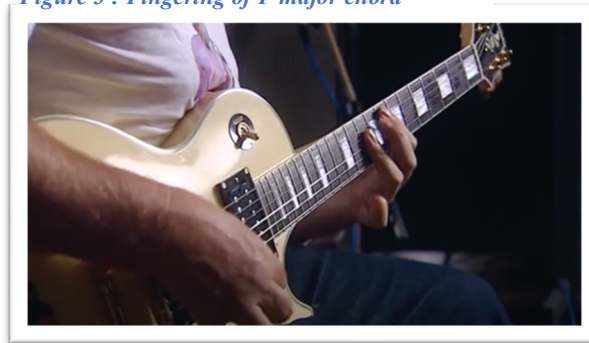
The guitar intro is two repetitions of two-bar riff based on power chords, each of them occupying two beats. According to what is seen on his live and interview videos, Jones distinguishes two types of power chord grips, depending on which string his index finger

<sup>1</sup> Sex Pistols, Boxset, 2002.

presses the root of the chord: the first two power chords are shaped in the lowest position with index, ring, and little finger pressing on, respectively, E, A and D strings, and the middle finger muting the G string, while the other two chords with the index on A, and the little finger on D and G strings together. This type of grip is acknowledged to require the least pressure and tension on your wrist and fingers. Besides, this four-power-chord progression doesn't need the guitarist's left-hand movement beyond three frets. It might be one of the simplest four-power-chord opening riffs in rock history.

The four-bar solo guitar intro is followed by the second part of the intro of the same length with all three instruments. The guitar plays F chord in the first three bars, but this time it's not a power-chord, but a major chord, formed by the index finger for the root and the ring finger for the other three notes. Jones tends to distribute these two types of grip categorically, one for power-chords, the other for major chords, just as the sonic difference between these two types of chord has a crucial role in the Sex Pistols' music.

*Figure 3 : Fingering of F major chord*



### **Bass lines**

While the guitar riffs don't show a big difference in pitch between different recordings, Matlock's bass lines demonstrate considerable evolution over time, borrowing more and more materials from notably major inspirations for the pub rock, that is, 50's rhythm 'n' blues, rockabilly, and rock 'n' roll, which is easily noticeable in his bass licks.

The overall linear procession of *No Feelings*, centred around guitar chords progression, is shown in table 1 (below). Overall, Matlock's bass playing is very well organized throughout the song, and apparently, the arrangement seems to have been done in a pre-determined way: most of the bass lines can be divided between a root-oriented part and a fill part, the latter being very often characterized by the presence of the major 3rd of a chord.

Table 1

<b>Intro pt1</b>	4 bars	<b>F5G5</b> I II	<b>Bb5C5</b> IV I	<b>F5G5</b> I II	<b>Bb5C5</b> IV V				Solo guitar
<b>Intro pt2</b>	4 bars	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>Bb5</b> IV				Guitar, Bass, & Drums
		<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>Bb5</b> IV				
<b>Verse 1</b>	16 bars	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			I've seen you in the mirror... And I fell in love with you...	G, B, D, & Vocal
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			Your brains are locked away... I only ever leave you when...	
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			I got no emotions for anybody...	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			You better understand...	
<b>Chorus 1</b>	10 bars	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V			No feelings, no feelings	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F C5</b> I V	<b>F5</b> I	No feeling for anybody else	
<b>Verse 2</b>	16 bars	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			Hello and goodbye in a run...	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			I kick you in the head...	
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			You never realize I take ...	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			Okay I'll send you away...	
<b>Chorus 2</b>	10 bars	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V			No feelings, no feelings	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F C5</b> I V	<b>F5</b> I	No feeling for anybody else	
<b>Bridge</b>	16 bars	<b>F5</b> I	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F5</b> I				G, B, & D
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F5</b> I				
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F5</b> I				
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F5</b> I				
<b>Verse 3</b>	16 bars	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			There ain't no moonlight...	G, B, D, & V
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			Well I'm so happy I'm feeling...	
		<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I	<b>F5</b> I			I look around your house and...	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>G5</b> II	<b>C5</b> V	<b>C5</b> V			I kick you in the brains when...	
<b>Chorus 3</b>	18 bars	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V			No feelings, no feelings	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I			No feeling for anybody else	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V			No feelings, no feelings	
		<b>Bb5</b> IV	<b>C5</b> V	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	<b>F</b> I	No feeling for anybody else...	

The first note of the bass appears in the fourth bar, along with the second presentation of the guitar's two-bar opening riff. Just a brief moment after the attack of the riff's third power-chord, the bass comes out with a major third of the chord on the second beat of the same bar, on a higher position, that is, with relatively high pitch and bright timbre, which is succeeded by three descending notes, in order to shape a motion leading to the second part of the introduction. Here,

in contrast, the guitar's first major chord is dominating the overall sound, while the bass guitar is only concentrating on the root note. Harmonically, this four-note introductory fragment of bass acts as a link between the first part with power chords on a lower position, and the second part with major chord on higher position of the guitar. A chain of four power chords, without a major 3<sup>rd</sup>, becomes for an instant a 'major' chord, when combined with this first note of the bass lick.

Figure 4: Eight bars of intro of No Feelings, « Spedding » version (guitar and bass only)

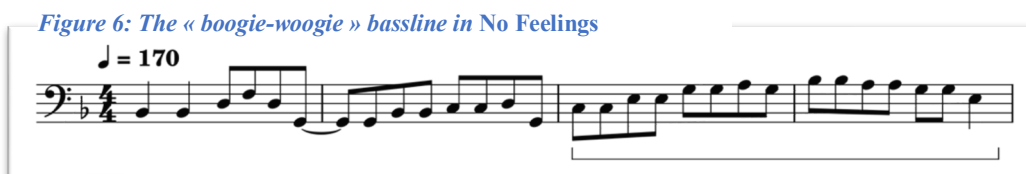
Still, on the other hand, Matlock starts every bar with the root note. He used this two-beat length, rhythmically salient motive at the beginning of mostly every odd number bar, excluding the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> bar of all the verses, the whole bridge section, and the moments when he used a boogie-woogie style, 'ascending-and-descending' line. Contrary to the bars having this motivic figure, most of these latter parts have the major 3<sup>rd</sup>, considering whether there is any major third sound on the guitar or the vocal.

Figure 5: The first four bars of the verse of No Feelings (guitar, bass and drums)

Regardless of the version, the first four bars of every verse demonstrate a similar bass phrase. (figure 5) On each of the first two bars, the bass alternates the aforementioned root pattern and two notable fragments: the first fragment contains part of a typical boogie-woogie rhythm guitar pattern, characterized by the major 6<sup>th</sup> of the chord on the backbeat; the second one presents a

mainly stepwise, ascending motion, including two blue, or bluesy, notes, i.e. flat 5<sup>th</sup> and flat 7<sup>th</sup>. Besides, the latter four-note fills give an ‘answer’ to the vocal’s ‘call’. In contrast to the African-American tinge and the mainly stepwise motion in the first half, the second half of the phrase is characterized by a sudden skipwise fill-in in the last bar, in particular containing the major 3<sup>rd</sup>. It should also be noted that, in parallel with Matlock’s ‘skip per beat’ progression, the drummer Cook converts into, to borrow David Laing’s words, “rhythmic monad (1-1-1-1)”, as opposed to “rock’s conventional dyad” (1-2-1-2, where the accent is on the second beat), by hitting the snare drum on every beat. In addition, the kick drum emphasizes the bass’s skip motion by duplicating two 8<sup>th</sup>-note units on the first and the third beat. Thus, this four-bar phrase shows a combination of two different temporal nuances: a horizontally developing, relatively smooth movement and another kind of progression comprising vertically and regularly emphasized moments.

In the next two bars, Matlock makes variations by replacing main 8<sup>th</sup>-note root motive by two quarter notes, then leading to a major chord arpeggio. Introduced by a rhythmic anticipation, the second bar features stepwise movement and includes minor 3<sup>rd</sup> chord tone. We will see later how this outstanding melodic progression was replaced in the LP session. What is more remarkable in this four-bar phrase is that the bass in the second half undergoes a totally and literally monotone progression comprising only root notes. This choice is partly explained by the presence of the major 3<sup>rd</sup> note on the vocal, which appears for the first time since the beginning of the song. However, Rotten’s monotone snarl makes this pitch only vaguely audible. This part and the next equivalent, i.e. the last two bars of the verse, are the most dry and weak moments in the song in terms of harmony. In the second and the third verse, Matlock seems to attempt to vitalize this moment by importing a 50’s rockabilly-inspired ‘8-to-the-bar’ fill-in, originally from boogie-woogie tradition: two 8<sup>th</sup>-note unit goes up, in the first bar, and goes down, in the second, especially passing through the major 3<sup>rd</sup> and the minor 7<sup>th</sup>.



Matlock keeps applying his principle in the chorus section: not to play a major 3<sup>rd</sup> and, rather, to go monotone, when the other parts are using the note; otherwise, to make some action with some bluesy or major sound. In the chorus section of the May 1976 recording, Matlock stays just monotone on the root notes, except for chromatic passing notes between two chords, as Rotten ‘sings’ the two-word lyrics (“No Feeling”), with relatively clear pitch, passing from Bb



to C, that is, the major 3<sup>rd</sup> notes of each chords, with glissando. As for the guitar, it manifests two blues-oriented patterns, but in the simplest formats, in two separate tracks: first, the Chuck Berry style rhythm guitar, especially alternating the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> notes at regular intervals over the root of the chord, on the right side in the stereo field; second, on the centre of the field, there appear three, probably overdubbed, short solo licks, distributed on three points as responses to the vocal. Apparently, Jones played all three licks on C pentatonic minor scale form, between 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> guitar frets, which is acknowledged to be the most effortless way to make a bluesy sound. In the third lick, there also appears a quarter-tone bend from the minor 3<sup>rd</sup>. Once the vocal part has finished the lyrics and disappeared, and the guitar returns to F major chord, however, taking on an ambiguous rhythmic figure, the bass guitar resumes the outstanding rhythm of the intro including a rhythmic anticipation as well as an additional fragment that comes from the Chuck Berry riff.

It's not the only example to show meticulously pre-determined coordination and role distribution between guitar and bass guitar. Who then would have had the initiative to lead such a coordination, and who would have been the one to make every decision in arranging various musical elements with such an efficiency, considering the overall organization of the song? The comparative analysis of various recordings shows that Matlock must have had the largest share in this respect. This remark by Sophie Richmond, quoted by Savage, is to the point: "Glen could write tunes and they couldn't. They could produce words and chords, but not tunes, and they were finished as a creative unit once he'd gone."<sup>2</sup>

The 'problem' can be raised when the bassist's flamboyant melody, in particular using the major 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequently, or minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, depending on a given chord, may start to sound superfluous when combined with that of the vocal, who begins to deliver clearer and more distinct notes than before and the sound of the guitar, which becomes more 'major', as, more precisely, power chords' harmonic partials are intensified by the guitarist's advanced playing skills.

In comparison with the May 1976 session's overall simple and dry sound, the next session in July demonstrates several changes from an acoustic point of view: first of all, Rotten's vocal is relatively clean, less distorted, so that the vocal notes, including the major 3<sup>rd</sup>, is much more clearly audible; then, contrary to the bass guitar having moved to the centre of the acoustic field with considerably lowered volume, the guitar sound here is emphasized by not only being double-tracked into both sides of the acoustic space, but, furthermore, being provided with

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<sup>2</sup> Savage, p. 310.

stereo Flanger effect, the sound of which dominates over every second half of the verses, all the choruses, and the bridge, with its so-called ‘jet plane sweeping effect’. Despite or because of the reduced presence in the acoustic space, Matlock attempts more audacious bass fills, both melodically and rhythmically, than he did in the previous version. *No Feelings* recorded in the December 1976 session is the last version to include Matlock’s bass guitar, and the only song to be recorded as an instrumental version in the band’s entire repertoire, it’s Matlock’s bass that leads the song melodically as the vocal usually does, using additional fills and, particularly, inserting more major 3<sup>rd</sup> notes.

### **The Punk Guitar Sound**

The dominance of the Flanger guitar sound found in the July 1976 session consists not only in its typical, wavering sonic motion but more in its oscillation between two sides of acoustic space. On the other hand, there are no more bluesy guitar fill-ins in the chorus section and, in the bridge, if any, they are so reduced as to give way to the Flanger effect. That is to say that, in the July 1976 version, there are fewer elements imposing linear progression or horizontal narrative than in the version recorded two months before.

Since Robert Christgau and David Laing characterized the punk rock guitar sound as a “drone”, which “came from the way riff-led chords blend into each other rather than staying separate”, rock researchers have agreed upon the importance of this “unbroken rhythmic flow” in punk rock, provided by the guitar, especially when “combined with the monadic bass”, fast tempo, and “non-stop through-passing beats” (Budde, 1997), and upon what is “the lack of phrasing” or “the absence of accentuation”, which “leads to a uniform sound” or so-called “wall of sound”, or engenders an “impression of stagnation” (Hainaut, 2017).

However, this is hardly the case in the Sex Pistols. First, their songs are not as fast as you would expect to gain that sort of “blending” or “stagnating” effect, albeit with the Jones’s straightforward, repetitive riffs and the “rhythmic monad” privileged by Cook. Second, Jones frequently uses left-hand cutting technique, as notably in the verses of *No Feelings*, preventing the individual attacks of power-chord from being “blended into each other”. It goes without saying that the syncopation and rhythmic anticipation he likes to apply, as in the verse and the second part of the intro of *No Feelings*, and the resulting, salient presence of “phrasing” lead to the opposite of what is expected to be “stagnation”. The syncopation and anticipation are regarded by German musicologist Dirk Budde as “typical rock’n’roll elements” in the Sex Pistols’ music. However, if one compares the Sex Pistols’ *No Feelings* with any of New York Dolls’ rock’n’roll songs, since the latter were Steve Jones’s all-time idols and, presumably, a

crucial model for *No Feelings*, one can easily see how the English band's music and its guitar sound lack a sense of phrasing and instead how 'vertical' they are. It must, therefore, rather be said that the Sex Pistols' songs would have undergone an evolution toward a different kind of temporality, distinct from both that of "stagnation" and that of linear progression.

### **Horizontal to Vertical Perspective**

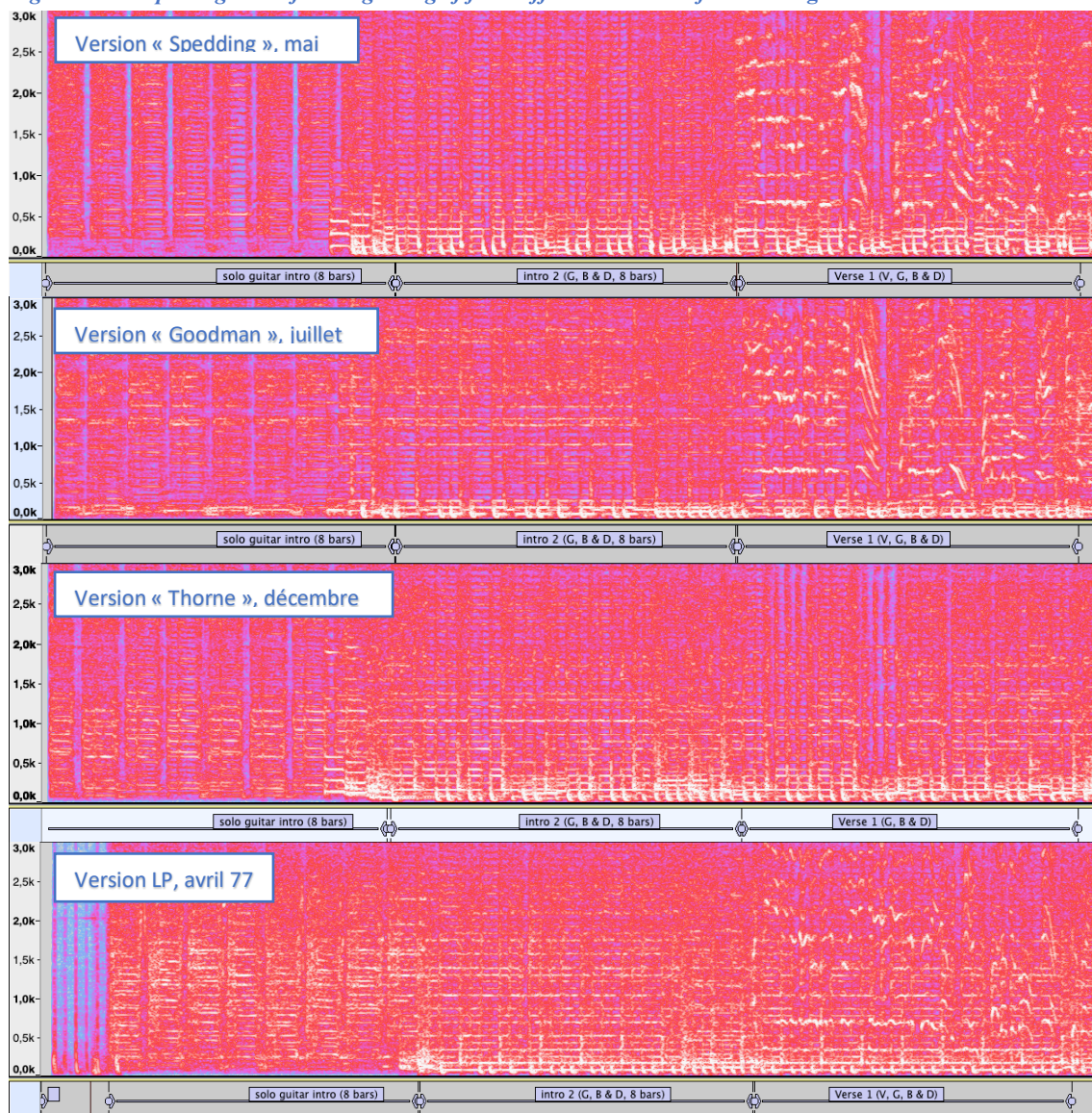
Jones and Cook, who had already started to play together months before Matlock and Rotten joined in, found themselves again, in early 1977, reduced to playing themselves, mainly due to the frequent absence of Rotten and the very musical 'ineptitude' of new bassist Sid Vicious. The sound they were making seemed impeccable as such to their new producer Chris Thomas, who then suggested to Jones to play the bass by himself in the recording. Apart from some indispensable notes, or 'bass hook', as in *Pretty Vacant*, *Sub Mission*, and *Seventeen*, Jones just followed the root notes of the chord progression, an octave below the guitar, which constituted an essential part of what would become considered the Sex Pistols sound, since the release of the LP. However, there is no denying Matlock's share of creativity in the Sex Pistols' works.

In fact, Thomas had already been invited to re-record their first single, *Anarchy in the UK*, as a producer, at the end of 1976, in the Wessex Studio, to replace the existing version produced by Dave Goodman. That means that Thomas had begun the Sex Pistols' recording work in the presence of Matlock, whose bass line used to make a lot of decisive points, mainly in the horizontal structure of their songs, and that Thomas and his partner Bill Price ought to have made important decisions to compensate the lack of those outstanding bass lines and fill-ins, and, more importantly, the control and coordination of musical materials they were charged with. Their main solution, however, was not necessarily directed at the horizontal aspects of the songs.

In the LP version of *No Feelings*, Jones's guitar (or guitars) tends to replace, at times, the rhythmic, harmonic, and coordinative role Matlock used to play, by not just being played in a different way by the guitarist himself, but also through two recordists' extensive multi-tracking of guitars and sophisticated mixing. The first and the third four-bar phrase of the verse present the most rhythmically prominent guitar out of the whole song. Besides, F power chord here is played with such an intensity as to be heard close to F major chord, especially due to the second combination tone and the 5<sup>th</sup> harmonic partial, which is comparable to the 'real' major 3<sup>rd</sup> Matlock used to play on the bass guitar in this section. Then, by the first half of this section, guitar chords are played by 'one stroke per bar', in order to give a contrast with the former section. While, here, the rhythmic anticipation in the second bar is maintained, the melodic and

harmonic movement of the previous versions doesn't exist. In terms of mixing, the recordist gives instead more contrast by distributing several rhythm guitar strokes on the extreme right and left of the acoustic positions, as it were, enlarging sonic space temporarily. In other words, these two bars are less oriented to establishing a melodic, linear progression, as we have discussed above, than to building a 'wall of sound', that is, in a vertical direction. Then, at the end of these phrases, the Chuck Berry-style riff is played in unison by guitar and bass, in place of the Matlock's boogie-woogie '8-to-the-bar' fills.

Figure 7: The spectrograms of the beginning of four different versions of No Feelings



The bridge section is the culmination of 'guitar-stacking' technique, containing at least four guitars: several long note rhythm strokes, Chuck Berry-style riff, and bluesy fills, regularly intruded by stroke noise from both sides in the sonic space. Horizontal elements, as in Chuck Berry riff and, to a lesser extent, short fills, tend to be submerged by several rhythm strokes as well as the bass's eight-beat monotony. Finally and the most strikingly, Cook's two quarter-

note snare-poundings, never shown in the previous versions, are systematically added at the beginning of the first and the third four-bar phrase to attract the listener's attention into these two vertical points, leading thereby to perceiving each of these moments as a 'block of sound'. It's the same sort of effect we can perceive in the solo guitar intro comprising four power-chords, each of these also converging into a block of sound of half-bar length.

Let's return to the solo guitar intro, but now in the LP version. As shown in the spectrogram (figure), the intensity of the solo guitar intro is presented in the mix nearly as high as the rest of the song. Compared to the other three versions, a lot more overtones are audible, or distinctly visible, in the sonic space. That is to say the guitar sound of the intro is designed to represent the overall sound of the song that follows. We can see a striking difference in this respect between the LP version and, in particular, the first demo recording in May 1976, where the four parts—vocal, guitar, bass, and drums—are distributed in as 'democratic' a way as possible, both in terms of volume and spatial positioning. *Never Mind the Bollocks* is thus one of the records to declare the predominance of the guitar sound over the other musical elements in rock history.

## **Conclusion**

The eight-bar intro of *No Feelings* by the Sex Pistols has in itself several implications about their music: first of all, it represents the particular simplicity and the vertically oriented procession of Steve Jones's guitar playing; on the other hand, Glen Matlock's introductory notes, linking the first and the second half of the intro, and the following bass licks, taking on the influence of notably 50's rockabilly, used to play a crucial role in justifying the song's horizontal progression. Furthermore, it is the justification for Jones and Paul Cook, despite their musical 'ineptitude', to put forward their musical materials as part of a decent song form. In other words, Matlock's mainly horizontally oriented materials and the relatively vertically oriented materials of Jones and Cook used to, on the one hand, be justified by each other, but, on the other hand, might have been maintained in an unstable condition, in particular due to the excessive usage of major, or sometimes minor, 3<sup>rd</sup> note of a given chord and the resulting 'bright' or 'pop' sound which could be problematic in a certain context. Finally, after the departure of Matlock, the 'professional' recording process by Chris Thomas and Bill Price replaced the horizontal elements that the bassist had planted in the 'ideal' image of this song, with, conversely, the reinforcement of the vertical elements, so as to make what would become considered as the Sex Pistols' sound, or, conversely, what had been considered as the Sex Pistols' sound", by some.

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