I Love Rock 'n' Roll, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts on Boardwalk Records.

Listening to this album is like entering a time warp—how far back nobody's sure—to when rock was not such serious business. I Love Rock 'n' Roll is pure fun, with the kind of uncluttered rock spirit that attracted most of us to rock 'n' roll in the first place. Joan Jett is a sly musician and her debut album is slick and professional-sounding, but she hasn't allowed undue experimentation or ornamentation to soften her sleazy guitars approach. The lady simply gets down to business and rocks.

Joan's and her three-man backing were featured last year on their debut album, Bad Reputation. She earned an image as a bad, badd girl which her new LP, complete with black leather and chains, has reinforced. The title cut, a tale of sexual forwardness, is representative of the rest of the album and has been receiving the most airplay. It features high-tension power chords, a simple lead solo, and nasty lyrics.

This song initiates a nostalgic feel ("put another dime in the jukebox, baby") that threads in and out of most of the album, tugging the listener further and further through the time warp. "Nag" has a sixties girl-group sound, with a few simple R&B hooks and a lyric dealing with domestic squabbles. "Run Away" and "You're Too Promiscuous" have similar themes, but are more straightforward rockers.

What brings the most nostalgia and taste to the album, however, is the choice of covers. "Bits and Pieces" is an old Dave Clark Five tune (anybody remember them?), "Cleaver and Clever" harks all the way back to Tommy James in the early sixties. The song is rude with monotonic heavy metal chording and a haunting vocal by Joan. Lastly, if you really want nostalgia, try a new version of "Little Drummer Boy," straight from the TV show we used to watch every Christmas—now we're not sure anymore how long ago. Joan seems to be really trying to get us to remember our youth.

I Love Rock 'n' Roll doesn't feature any fine experimentation nor is it a showcase for any stellar musical talents. But remember, as David Lee Roth said, "Rock 'n' Roll is much better than music." And when you find the real stuff, fall in love with it. Joan Jett is the real stuff.

Steve Huntley

Standing Hampton. Sumner Hampton on Gefen Records.

I suppose this album is a result of the much publicized resurgence of heavy metal's popularity. The record companies executives smell a profit and hook the semi-popular heavy metal name with a slick pop producer, and hope for a hit. The result is a muddle, noncommittal work that is neither pop nor heavy metal.

Sumner Hampton is an indespensible pioneer in hard rock and roll. His work with Montrose in the early seventies is classic stuff. He's been on his own since 1976 and has released a few modest hits, but he never got close to superstar status. Standing Hampton, however, seems to have calculated for broad popular appeal. The sound is clean and well-manicured and takes no chances. The lyrics are banal and the guitar work uninspired. Producer Keith Olsen has also worked with the likes of Pat Benatar and Foreigner has shaped an album that should offend no one except possibly hardcore heavy metal fans.

The first cut, "I'll Fall in Love Again," has been getting generous FM airplay and admittedly has a few catchy melodic hooks that stick in the mind. But the clean, high-tech sound would be more at home on an AM dial, and the song is surprisingly mild coming from the man who wrote Heavy Metal's title track or even "I'm Doin' Everything For You" (Rick Springfield's recent big hit). From here, the rest of side one is all downhill. Songs slide by as a blur, with nothing to really distinguish any of them. And if you were thinking of buying the album for the remix of "Heavy Metal" that appears as the last cut on the first side, forget it. Keith Olsen's reworking of the song has taken all the punch out of it, which is interesting proof of just how tameous the rock 'n' roll spirit of a song can be.

The second side is no more promising. We get more wall-of-songs about life on the streets and wild women. Words like "Now everybody knows I'm stuck on you."

what's with all those games that we go through" and monotonous musical clucks make for an insipid listening experience. The only song that stands out is a fun cover version of Janis Joplin's screamier, "Piece of My Heart," but that's hardly enough reason to lay out eight bucks for an LP.

This album is unremarkable and boring, however, knowing the record business, it may end up a big seller. It will probably be a big push for Hampton's career, but the smug record executives look at the sales figures and remember them the next time he signs another contract. I won't say all the years Hampton has spent in the music business, standing Hampton deserves to be a hit. I just hope his reputation will survive it.

Steve Huntley

The Best of New Animation, first presentation of Center Screen's Eighth Annual Winter Animation Series. Opens Friday, February 5th, runs until Feb. 7th at Carpenter Center, Harvard University. For ticket information, call 494-0200.

OK, all you MIT gross guards, (I don't count, I'm a Freshman) how do you spend your weekends? Watching the same old flicks at LSC? Shooting up the bad guys from outer-space in the Stud Center Game Room? Well, do I have good news for you... 

There's a well-kept secret here at MIT called the Center Screen, specializing in unique brand of avant-garde animation and other media arts. CS caters to an audience that appreciates the bizarre, the off-the-wall, and the non-conformist artists of the film world. Yes, if your favorite ice cream flavor is vanilla and you're content to lie at home watching old "Our Gang" reruns, please read no further.

The latest presentation of Center Screen is simply, "The Best of New Animation," the first segment in the Eighth Annual Winter Animation Series, which runs through March 28. "Best" features 17 short animation pieces, each less than fifteen minutes long, some even less than a minute long. The quality ranges from very good to not so good.

The first work, "Bocciolu's Bike," as an intense study of motion and power. A vibrant energy leaps from the screen, starting the series off with a bang. Skip Battaglia, the artist, reportedly used over $200 in pencils in order to produce this work.

Steve Huntley

Hagar does Nothing for You