

## The Violent Femmes

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### Origin

You may wonder why we have a Violent Femmes report on the DHS Homepage and what they even have to do with Wisconsin. Well, surprisingly enough they originate from Wisconsin...in fact, they originate from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Violent Femmes became popular thanks to a man named James Honeyman Scott. He was from the band called the Pretenders. Sadly enough he died of a drug overdose in the late 80's.

One evening James Honeyman Scott was booked to play a gig, but he was so impressed by the Violent Femmes that he let them open for him. They were then offered a deal by Slash Records and soon after that they released their 1982 debut album, "Violent Femmes." To this day their debut still remains their most popular album and even went platinum.

Now 17 years after the band began their first debut and eight albums later they "still have what it takes to enthrall and hold an audience."

The members of the band are:

Gordan Gano (lead vocals, guitar, banjo, fiddle, and major song writer)

Brian Ritchie (vocals, acoustic and electric bass, xylophone and many exotic instruments)

Victor Delorenzo (percussion and vocals.....left the band after citing musical differences)

Guy Hoffman (percussion and vocals...took the place of Victor Delorenzo)

### Biographies



Guy Hoffman

Birthday: May 20, 1954

Where he was born: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Background: He attended high school in Shorewood where he played football, and was in band. He began in a band called the Oil Tasters. He replaced Victor DeLorenzo when he joined the Violent Femmes. He plays percussion and sings vocals.

Influences: British invasion, Jim Keltner, Ron Cudder

Currently: in addition to touring with the Violent Femmes, he is also in the band Absinthe.



Brian Ritchie

Birthdate: sometime in 1960

Place of birth: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Background: Was told by a teacher that he had "no musical talent whatsoever" but was playing guitar by the age of 13. He soon switched to playing bass, because bass players were more in demand. He continues to play bass, and has grown to love it. He makes every show unique because he never uses the set list, and improvises a lot. He plays bass, xylophone, and exotic instruments. He has a wife and a son, and is grateful for every day with the band. He is an original founding member of the Violent Femmes.

Influences: jazz, punk rock, avant-garde, Syd Barret, the Velvet Underground, Richard Hell, Sun Ra, and Pierre Henry



## Gordon Gano

Birthday: June 7, 1963

Place of birth: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Background: He grew up in a musical family. He started playing guitar in 6th grade, and was writing music by 7th grade. In high school, he was playing and singing his self-written compositions. He was a good student, and a popular oddball, well-known for wearing a bathrobe to school every Monday. He met Brian Ritchie in a punk club. After graduation the band really took off thanks to Gordon's constant determination to get gigs for the band. He now plays lead vocals, guitar (acoustic and electric), fiddle, banjo, and is also the lead songwriter.



Victor DeLorenzo

Birthday: October 25, 1954

Place of Birth: Racine, Wisconsin

Background: He moved to Milwaukee to attend the University of Wisconsin. He played with Brian Ritchie in the bands the Ruthless Acoustics and the Rhomboids before joining up with Gordon Gano to form the Violent Femmes. He played percussion and vocals. In 1993 he left the band, citing "musical differences," and was replaced by Guy Hoffman. He went on to record solo albums at his studio in Milwaukee. He has also performed in the band Sublime Nation. He has also been involved in theater, performing in "Rhinoceros," "Lord Alfred's Lover," and "The Unearthing." He still lives and works in Milwaukee.

Influences: jazz, the Beatles, the Beach Boys

Music



This is their newest album, that is coming out sometime in March, 2000.

Lyrics to their hit single, Blister In The Sun

Their other cd's:

The Blind Leading the Naked

3

Why Do Birds Sing? (Special CD)

New Times

Machine

Add It Up: 1981-1993

Violent Femmes

Hallowed Ground

Viva Wisconsin

Debacle: The First Decade

Rock!!!!

Tonight