

# Rocking the Colonial Period



In answer to [Ben's comment](#), of course Sir Lord Baltimore counts, and who could forget Paul Revere and the Raiders, who actually performed in [quasi-colonial outfits](#)? (Actually they are [still performing](#) in them, in Branson!) To my surprise, it seems that the gimmicky, studio-buffed Raiders have enjoyed something of [a critical renaissance in recent years](#). Kicks do just keep getting harder to find.



But if we are going all colonial, what about [Cotton Mather](#) (out of Austin, Texas), perhaps the greatest power-pop band ever? I have no idea why Robert Harrison and company decided to name themselves after a witch-unfriendly Puritan divine, but their band was really, really good. They had [a taste of success in the late 1990s](#) but got washed away in the implosion of the “commercial alternative” music scene around the same time. I remember hearing their terrific single [“My Before and After”](#) on the radio a couple of times in Tallahassee, but I only truly discovered them ex post facto, thanks to a wandering conversation (and subsequent CD-burning) with a University of Chicago Press editor at an OAH booth a few years ago. I kid you not. (Sadly, Cotton Mather never named an album “Wonders of the Invisible World,” a ready-made album title if I ever saw one, at least if you had to choose among Puritan religious writings.) The video below is not my favorite of their songs, but it was the only one I could find on YouTube. Other songs can be heard [here](#).

This article originally appeared in issue 9.1 (October, 2008).

---

Jeffrey L. Pasley is associate professor of history at the University of Missouri and the author of *“The Tyranny of Printers”: Newspaper Politics in the*

*Early American Republic* (2001), along with numerous articles and book chapters, most recently the entry on Philip Freneau in Greil Marcus's forthcoming *New Literary History of America*. He is currently completing a book on the presidential election of 1796 for the University Press of Kansas and also writes the blog *Publick Occurrences 2.0* for some Website called *Common-place*.