

1.



[DVD]

Modern Times
(Criterion Collection, \$30)

» *Modern Times* is the last movie by Hollywood's first superstar, Charlie Chaplin, that everyone agrees is great. Released in 1936, nine years after film began talking, *Modern Times* clings to the silence in which Chaplin's genius flourished and is all the more timeless for it, even as it's his most topical picture, taking place during a Great Depression that turned people literally into cogs: See Charlie wind his way through the gears of industry, one of the fine set pieces here, along with the uproarious blindfolded ride on roller skates through a department store.
// STEVE ERICKSON

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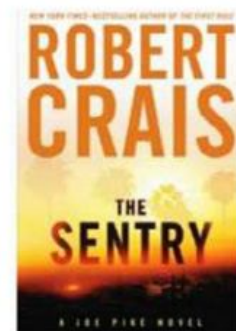


[CD]

Let's Make Babies in the Woods
Papercranes
(Manimal Vinyl, \$12)

» The sister of Joaquin and the late River Phoenix is behind the indie-pop band Papercranes. Celebrity vanity project this is not. Rain has been singing since before her brother appeared in *Stand by Me*, and her raspy voice now has a mature softness. The album is spare and psychedelic (think *Morning Becomes Eclectic*—the Bentley years), broken up by moments of lushness courtesy of a revolving-door band that features biggies like Flea and actor Dermot Mulroney (Mulroney plays cello, of course).
// LESLEY BARGAR SUTER

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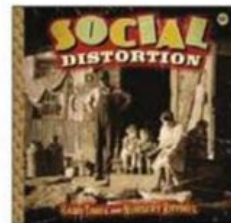


[BOOK]

The Sentry
By Robert Crais
(G.P. Putnam's Sons, 320 pages, \$27)

» The latest from the prolific L.A. crime writer is bookended by the ravings of an evildoer even more tortured than Gollum, and they make for a smashing finale. Otherwise it's all Joe Pike as Robert Crais's ironman trolls the Venice canals for gangbangers and develops a crush on the mysterious gal he thinks they're preying on. The action is swift—Crais is a master—and opens with a scene from literature's current fixation: New Orleans' Katrina. Pike's soft spot for waifs is equally treacherous. Did he learn nothing from Hieronymus Bosch?
// ANN HEROLD

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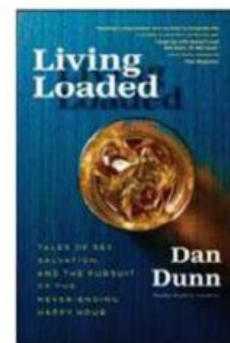


[CD]

Hard Times and Nursery Rhymes
Social Distortion
(Epitaph, \$17)

» It's been more than six years since the O.C. punk legends released a new record. You could blame the slowdown on age (the band's been slicking its hair back since 1978), but then **Mike Ness** might kick you in the teeth. Social Distortion grew out of the Ramones-Clash era, and it has remained true to that brand of punk, always toying with mainstream pop success without going completely Green Day on us. This album—an anthemic love letter to the guitar and catchier than Brylcreem—might just push the group over the edge whether it likes it or not.
// L.B.S.

5.



[BOOK]

Living Loaded
By Dan Dunn
(Broadway Books, 288 pages, \$15)

» Break out the highballs—Playboy.com's boozier columnist, Dan "the Imbiber" Dunn, has written a second book worth perusing over a couple rounds. The L.A.-based nightlife correspondent regales us with tales of his equally sordid professional and personal lives (strippers, porn stars, and alcohol play heavily in both). We could do without Dunn's sophomore lifestyle tips—"Hangovers and How to Beat Them," "How to Date Out of Your League"—but the drink recipes garnishing each chapter (all from renowned mixologists) go down easy.
// WENDY WITHERSPOON

Spot On



Mike Ness: The Social Distortion front man has been a central figure in the O.C. punk world for more than three decades. So what's changed? "It was a hotbed of musicians back then," says Ness. "If I was from a small town in the Midwest, I probably would have gotten caught up in crime. But here thousands of bands were all into the same scene. Still, 30 years ago we played for a couple hundred people; now we sell out three nights at the Palladium. I'd have to say it's changed for the better."