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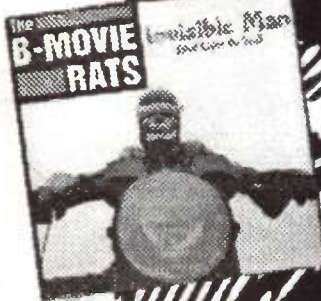
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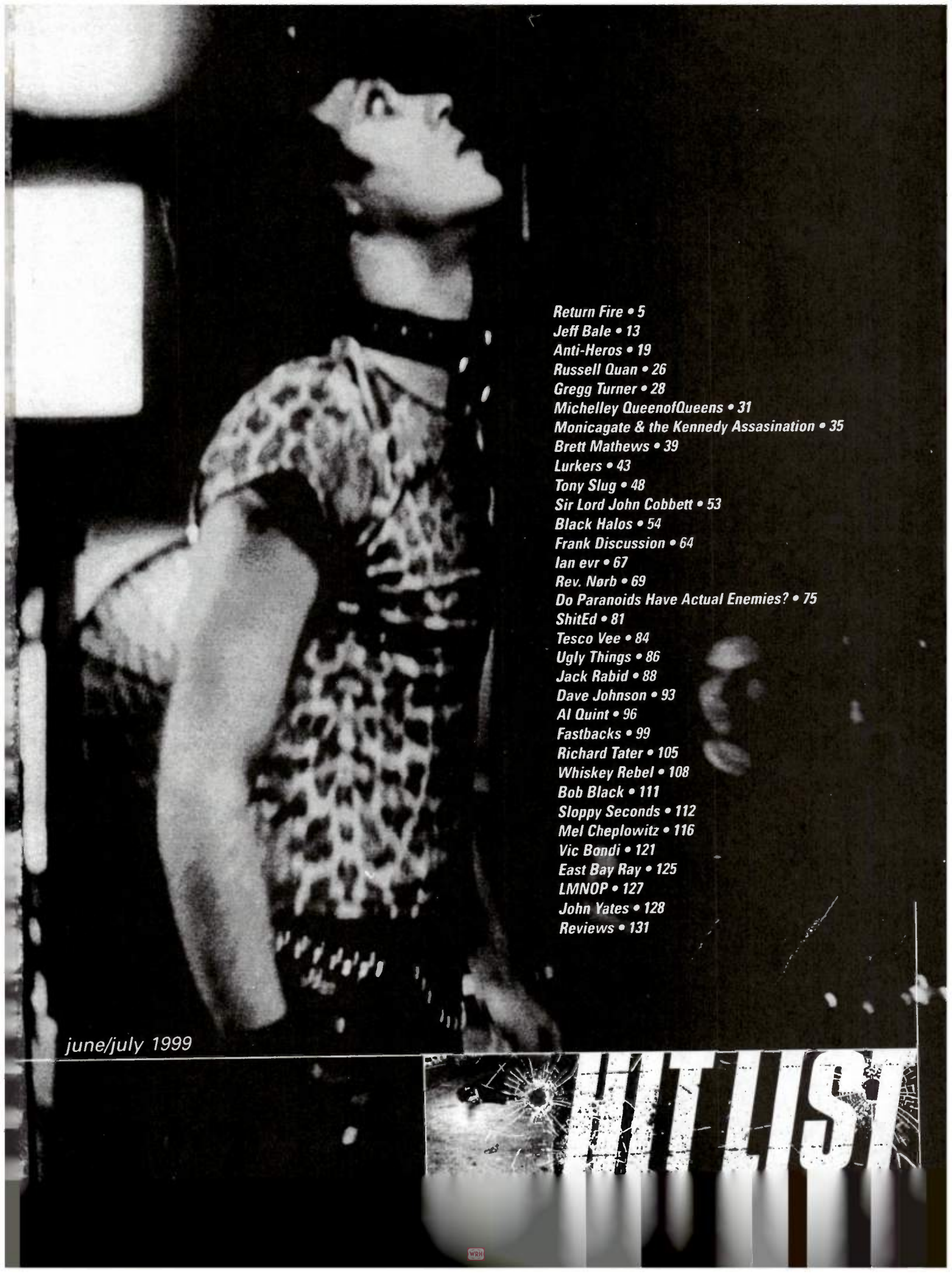
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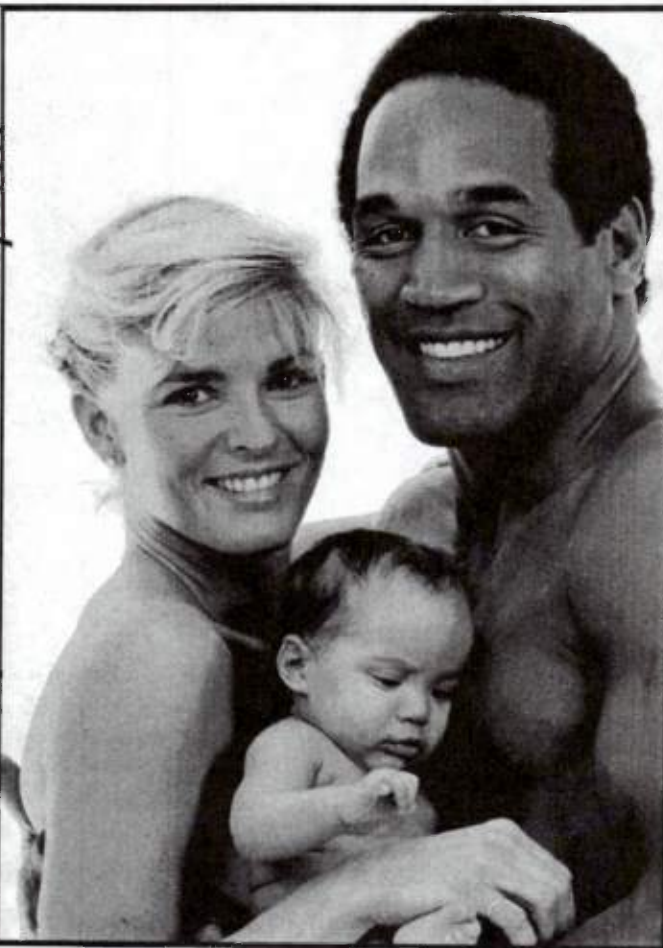
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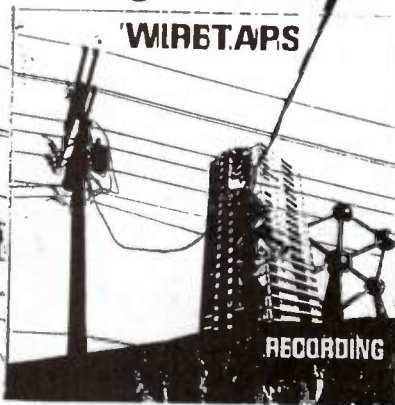
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If We're so Wrong, How Come Mr. Moynihan's so Right?

Dear Jeff and *Hit List*:

Re: Lords of Chaos article from your first issue.

Enjoyed your intro, though I must admit to not being as wrapped up in "punk rock." Back in '77 it jazzed me quite a bit, a time when I was doing nothing but driving around aimlessly in Los Angeles, a city which hardly had a "there" there. But when *Slash* magazine started, something else did, too. A true platform for outsiders and weirdos, and I found a niche there for a while. But why go on with a magazine that discusses this ancient genre as if it's so damn important today? Is it some form of middle age crisis?

The Kevin Coogan piece was chock-full of mistakes and weird associations. Coogan paints *Lords of Chaos* as playing up Varg Vikernes as being some sort of underground hero in the Charles Manson mold, especially by restricting material about Euronymous and other major elements of the black metal scene. He also says that Moynihan puts in the black metal neo-Nazi connection as a specific result of his own Nazi inclinations, and that hardly any of it actually existed.

All the above is verifiably wrong. Incredibly wrong. The black metaler who really hated the book is Vikernes himself, because he thinks it doesn't make him look good! At first he wrote a nice note to Moynihan, but he's followed it afterward with long letters telling him why the book makes him and his crypto-Nazi inclinations look so damn terrible. Anyone who reads the book thinks Vikernes looks like a true asshole. Coogan must be one of the absolute few who gets the picture that Moynihan is building him up!

Did Coogan speak to black metalers himself? I think not. If he did, he would discover quite a few speaking as if they're part of a radical right movement. Moynihan went to Norway. Söderlind lives there. They interviewed all the people involved. Söderlind knew Euronymous quite well. A chapter or two was devoted to him, though Coogan says he's underplayed. Huh? Both Moynihan and Söderlind KNOW what's going on, and it was all very accurately pictured in *Lords of Chaos*.

We have had a complaint or two from black metalers that say *Lords of Chaos* makes black metal look too violent, not nice enough. All I've got to say to that is: Michael Moynihan did not write some sort of propaganda to make black metal look picture perfect and swollen with kindly musicians, because he wrote about what was absolutely real. How many churches burnt? How many people committed suicide or murder? It was a twisted moment in a twisted scene that needed explanation, not a cover-up.

Too bad about that mistake with the footnotes not being integrated into the text. Though I know for sure that Coogan got things wrong about Moynihan, Boyd Rice, and many

others, I'll stick to the things he got wrong about me.

First things first. Coogan writes that I began "*IDEA*, a southern California-based *Re/Search*-type journal about punk culture" in 1980. Wrong again. I did start *IDEA* in 1979. It was a newsprint tabloid publication that lasted two issues, but it was started in San Francisco and had very little to do with punk culture or *Re/Search*. No coverage of music, only social issues. When *IDEA* began, Vale hadn't started his book publishing thing yet.

Coogan writes that "While in Portland, Parfrey (whose own mother is Jewish) hired the late Keith Stimely, an openly gay former editor of the journal of the Institute for Historical Review, the world's leading Holocaust-denial outfit, to write Feral House press releases." Strange. He writes this as if I kept a secret about having a Jewish mother. Because of guilt-by-association McCarthyites like Kevin Coogan, I pointed out my maternal religion in an introduction I wrote for a Boyd Rice interview in *Seconds* magazine. (And Jim Goad said so in an author byline for an *ANSWER ME!* article I wrote.) If Boyd is such a terminal Nazi, how is that he has long-term Jewish friends and girlfriends? How is that he collects Barbie dolls? Is Boyd Rice a neo-Nazi, or is he something else, something that Kevin Coogan doesn't understand or wish to consider? About Stimely: I never hired him to write Feral House press releases. He wrote an article for the leftist publication *PDXS* about an appearance I was making at Powell's bookstore. And when Stimely tried his hand at an unrequested Feral House press release, I informed him that I did not need his help. And it was never used. But on the other hand, Stimely worked for Peachpit Press, for whom he wrote a book about Quark software, and for *Willamette Week*, the supposedly leftist alternative publication. Does this mean that Peachpit and *Willamette Week* should be accused of having nasty associations? Or should it only be Adam Parfrey? Why did Coogan forget to mention that as long as ten years ago, I provided him with Stimely's phone number for a book he was writing on the extreme right-wing "martyr," Francis Parker Yockey? (By the way, Stimely must not have been "openly gay," since he never told me or my girlfriend about it until he was interned in some AIDS sanctuary.)

Now to the footnotes. What's a "Feral House type"? What does that mean? Is a Feral House type one who buys our biography of Guy Debord or *The Bomb*, Frank Harris' novel about the Haymarket bombing, complete with an afterword by anarchist John Zerzan? Is a Feral House type an individual who buys Anton LaVey books, or one that gets books by Alex Constantine, who writes about the connections between satanic ritual and government conspiracy? Or perhaps a Feral House "type" is one who buys a book that compiles "Kooks," or else this type is actually a genuine kook who doesn't like to have his views denigrated. What, then, is a Feral House "type?"

The footnote says that this Feral House type particularly hates "women like Andrea Juno..." First off, not one word has ever been printed in a Feral House book insulting or even discussing Andrea Juno. I respect some of the work she's done, and have nothing whatsoever against her, except not paying royalty money due Boyd Rice and Jim Morton.

There's another footnote that says that *Re/Search* canceled plans to devote an entire issue to Anton LaVey because they decided he was a "reactionary." Is this the actual case? Vale recorded hundreds of hours of interviews with Anton LaVey. Hundreds. Did it really take *Re/Search* so long to come to the conclusion that he was "reactionary?" Whatever the case may be, their supposed fear of being linked to LaVey's "reactionary" views did not prevent them from using an Anton LaVey interview in their *Modern Primitives* book. What really got Vale's goat, from what I understand, is that Feral House contracted LaVey's *The Satanic Witch* before they were able to issue their own LaVey volume. Through Anton, I offered Vale the opportunity of issuing his volume first, before the Feral House book appeared. But his competitive nature would have none of it. And if *Re/Search* hates so-called "reactionaries" that much, why did Boyd Rice have such a big hand in several books they published? Boyd considered Vale a close friend who knew "everything" about him. Why doesn't Kevin Coogan go after Vale for helping make a star of Boyd Rice in his *Industrial Culture*, *Pranks*, and *Incredibly Strange Films* books? I never promoted Boyd Rice so well as Vale...

Well, it seems the reason is simple. Kevin Coogan, to paraphrase Hillary Clinton, is given to vast conspiracies, particularly one that connects Genesis P-Orridge to "aesthetic terrorism" (where, how?), and Michael Moynihan, Boyd Rice, and extreme right-wingers of every stripe and inclination to us all.

Quite simply, I found this piece poorly written and strangely concocted.

Sincerely,

Adam Parfrey
Feral House
2532 Lincoln Blvd #359
Venice, CA 90290

Kevin Coogan Responds

After just three nice words ("Enjoyed your intro"), Adam Parfrey turns on Jeff Bale and punk rock. Is *Hit List* "some form of [Bale's] middle age crisis"? Punk is an "ancient genre." (Using this logic, only total fools like classical music.) Parfrey, however, has overcome the folly of youth. This is the same mature Adam Parfrey who puffs Feral House as "the most dangerous publisher in America" and lists as its specialties "Crime*Sex*Conspiracy*Apocalypse."

Parfrey next takes my "verifiably wrong, incredibly wrong" review of *Lords of Chaos* to task. We learn that "the black metaler



who really hated the book is Vikernes himself," even though he did originally send Moynihan a nice note. But if Vikernes is such an obvious "asshole" (no argument there), why did Feral House Audio market Burzum's *Filosofem* CD? As for Moynihan's allegedly "crypto-Nazi" inclinations: Is this the same Moynihan who writes for the pro-Vikernes journal *Filosofem*? The Moynihan ("Michael Jenkins") who published Nazi James Mason's book *Siege* through Storm Books? The Moynihan who plans to publish Julius Evola? The Moynihan who sings the merits of SS rune kook Karl Maria Willigut? The Moynihan who gives interviews to *Ohm Clock* and *The Fifth Path* expounding on his rightist views? The Moynihan who penned an ode to "The Faustian Spirit of Fascism" for *The Black Flame* (Vol. 5, Nos. 1-2, 1994)? The Moynihan who likes the scientific insights of the Ariosophist kook Lanz von Liebenfels? The Moynihan who, when asked by the journal *No Longer a Fanzine* about the Holocaust, replied:

"I have very mixed feelings about it. On the one hand I think that six million number is just arbitrary and inaccurate, and probably a gross exaggeration, I have read revisionist books which make a good case against much of the Holocaust canon, and even Jewish historians are constantly changing their claims. But my main problem with the revisionists is that they start with the assumption that killing millions of people is inherently bad. I'm inclined to just the opposite conclusion. It's not as if I'd be upset to find out that the Nazis did commit every atrocity that's been ascribed to them—I'd prefer it to be true."

(Moynihan, cited in the December 1998 *Searchlight*, p. 3.)

Yet for all his not-so-"crypto-Nazi" connections, I stressed in my article that Moynihan identifies himself not with Nazism but with diverse aspects of fascism, the "conservative revolutionary" tradition, and volkish kookery. I tried to show how Moynihan's "aesthetic politics" flowed out of aspects of industrial culture to such a degree that his views are perplexing to the reactionary *Führer* fetishists who still dominate contemporary Nazism.

Parfrey wonders whether I spoke to any black metalers. Not having an advance from *Hit List* to fly to Norway to interview black metalers for a book review written for free as a favor to Jeff Bale, the answer is no. Does this mean that before I review a book on ancient Greece, I have to invent a time machine to check it out as well?

On to specifics: Parfrey says I got it all wrong about *IDEA* which, he says, started in 1979 in San Francisco and had "very little to do with punk culture or *Re/Search*."

My wrong ("verifiably wrong, incredibly wrong") source was Adam Parfrey himself. AP told *The Fifth Path* (Issue 4, p. 21):

"The first time I published anything was back in 1980. I did a tabloid magazine at the emergence of punk culture, but it wasn't really about music. It was called *IDEA*, and the first issue had an interview with someone in the Aryan Brotherhood and conspiracy political material. It was quite satiric. I was anxious to get something out that was germane to an underground culture but didn't focus solely on music, which seemed to be the ONLY thing these underground people were interested in. Kind of limiting."

This sounds to me like *Re/Search*, which turned to culture from its earlier incarnation as a punk rock zine called *Search and Destroy*. In his interview with *Divinity Five*, Parfrey states that *IDEA* was "a punk rag without coverage of punk music. Politics and humor. In short, a failure." Today he tells us that it had "little to do with punk culture."

As for the southern California link, my source was a letter to Parfrey from his former cohort Bob Black which was reprinted in *Popular Reality*. Black, who accused Parfrey of now you see it, now you don't "winky wink fascism," also complained:

Remember when you were a UC Santa Cruz student, publishing *IDEA*, a *Re/Search* knockoff? You reprinted my "Ass(Holism)" without my knowledge or consent...I hardly think anything I've ever said or done could possibly besmirch the reputation of Joseph Goebbels' American publisher.

After looking at a map, I see that I mistakenly thought that Santa Cruz was in southern California when it is really south of San Francisco. My apologies to Parfrey, the people of Santa Cruz, and to the Great State of California (earthquake-doomed though it may be) for my New Yorkcentrism, I will now treat everything west of the Hudson river that is not San Francisco with the compassion and respect that it deserves, even though I feel that there is hardly any "there" there, if I may be permitted to paraphrase Parfrey's borrowing from Gertrude Stein's comment about Oakland.

Next comes "the Jewish question." Parfrey says he pointed out the fact that his mother is Jewish in *Seconds* magazine. Actually, he points it out in a lot of places. In his interview in *Divinity Five* (where I saw it), he said: "I take all my Nazi friends over to my mother's house, and she prepares matzo ball Soup and cheese blintzes for all us jackbooted hooligans as we devise plans to gas the untermensch [sic]." Ha, Ha. Ja, das ist ein guter Witz, mein

Freund! Only a heartless cynic could think that Parfrey might be using his mother's religion as a preventative strike to deflect criticism about his "Nazi friends."

Parfrey says that I called Boyd Rice "a neo-Nazi." As anyone who read my article knows, I did no such thing. I even commented that when Rice self-identified himself as a "fascist" in *Seconds*, he gave a definition of fascism so absurd as to be laughable. I do associate Rice with the Abraxas Foundation and the Church of Satan, where he serves as a member of the Council of Nine.

As for Parfrey's comments on Rice, *Re/Search*, Andrea Juno, etc., in my infamous footnote 33: When *The Fifth Path* asked him if *Re/Search* and Feral House had anything in common, Parfrey replied: "I used to have respect for Vale but it became increasingly difficult after all I've seen in the past five years or so. Also, anyone who could work with a psychotic cunt like Andrea Juno must be in a bad way." Parfrey may well have changed his mind about Juno, but when I made my statement I had his quote in mind. I also tried to make a point about "transgressive" feminists like Juno and Diamanda Galas (who are not easy targets like boring Andrea Dworkin PC types). I said that they were opposed to "Feral House types", by which I meant people like Parfrey, Boyd Rice, and Michael Moynihan. With the words "Feral House type" I did not mean to stereotype Feral House readers or deny them their priceless individuality. Since I too read Feral House books, I also apologize to my more sensitive inner self in case that self misunderstood me. Let the healing process begin!

As for Rice: As long as he was a hipster doofus into Barbie dolls, Mr. Bubble, Lawrence Welk, kitsch culture, funny pranks, really bad movies, weird sounds, etc., *Re/Search* liked him. When he moved into Social Darwinism, Abraxas, and bud-dies like Bob Heick, *Re/Search* dropped him even though Boyd still digs Barbie. (Perhaps he just expanded his Barbie fetish to include Klaus.) Why, he even has Jewish friends like Parfrey.

While *Re/Search* opposed Rice's right turn, Parfrey embraced Rice, who in 1987 introduced him to Anton LaVey (né Howard Stanton Levey). In *The Fifth Path* (Issue 3, pp. 10-11), Rice discusses a "Satanic destruction ritual" called "8/8/89." ("88 is also a common fascist euphemism for Hitler. H is the eighth number in the alphabet, so 88 means HH or Heil Hitler. No doubt his is just a—winky wink—coincidence.) 8/8/88 was "a recapitulation of a destruction ritual" that LaVey performed on August 8, 1969 which was repeated 19 years later "to the day and hour." The 8/8/88 cast of characters included Parfrey, Rice, Bob Heick (head of the Nazi skinhead group American Front), and "Evil Wilhelm" from Radio



Werewolf. (Moynihan only entered the scene one year later.)

As for *Re/Search* cancelling an issue on LaVey, which I mention in footnote 43: Parfrey confirms that there was an issue in the works. He seems oblivious to the fact that the closest *Re/Search* connection to LaVey was Boyd Rice. My understanding (and I may be wrong) is that *Re/Search* dumped the LaVey project when it dumped Rice, Parfrey believes that *Re/Search* abandoned "hundreds of hours of interviews" with LaVey just because Feral House published *The Satanic Witch*.

How does Rice describe his relationship with *Re/Search*? In an interview in *Forced Exposure* (No. 18: "Boyd Still Loves Barbie"), Rice says that *Re/Search* refused to pay him royalties for *Incredibly Strange Films* "ever since they decided I was a crazed Nazi." In an interview in *Misanthrope*, Rice said that *Re/Search* "told people that I underwent some sort of Jekyll and Hyde transformation. Like I was this really nice guy who became an asshole overnight." In a chat with *Your Flesh*, Rice stated that

"the people at *Re/Search* have been going around telling people what a rotten, unsavory character I am...I know all these people who are Nazis, who are the skinheads, and to me, skinheads are kind of like the '80's or '90's equivalent of the Hell's Angels"...The people at *Re/Search* have spent ages running around telling everyone what a rotten person I am because I would rather hang out with people who they considered to be thugs than them."

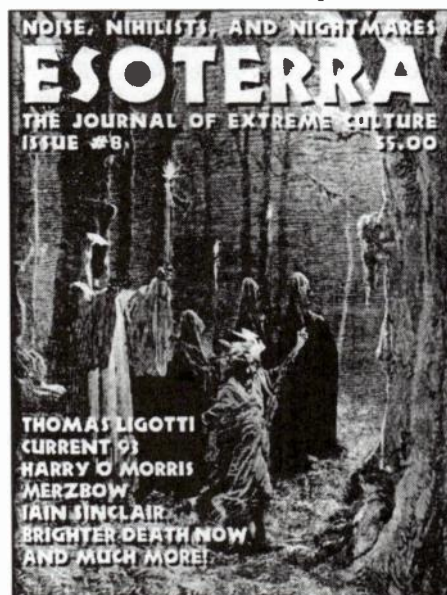
Re/Search ditched Rice (and LaVey?) after Vale and Juno decided that Rice had become a little too white for their taste. Parfrey, however, criticizes me for not attacking *Re/Search* for promoting Boyd Rice, although it was *Re/Search* (not me) that denounced Rice as a "crazed Nazi."

On Keith Stimely: In his interview in *The Fifth Path*, Parfrey said that he got into trouble in Portland after an anti-free speech PC feminist politico there named Robin Shanty "read a press reLease on me written by Keith Stimely" concerning a talk that Parfrey was to give at Powell's bookstore. I assumed that Stimely wrote the press release with the approval of his friend Parfrey. Parfrey, however, informs us that Stimely wrote "an unrequested Feral House press release." Parfrey now says that Stimely's stealth press release "was never used" (except by Shanty?).

Why Parfrey thinks that I would consider Stimely (a former director of Willis Carto's ghastly Holocaust-denial Institute for Historical Review and editor of the IHR's *Journal for Historical Review*) a leftist is beyond me. (Didn't Stimely make his views clear over cheese blintzes at Ma

Parfrey's?) As for Stimely being "openly gay": During the time that Stimely was directing the IHR and editing its journal, a former IHR director named David McCalden regularly attacked Stimely for his open homosexual lifestyle in the *David McCalden Newsletter*, a charge Stimely never denied. Nor did he lie about his sexuality to an East Coast Yockey fan that both he and Parfrey knew. Parfrey also told me that he personally took Stimely to an AIDS hospice. Now he says that he only learned about Stimely's sexuality after he was placed in "some AIDS sanctuary." Perhaps Stimely downplayed his sexuality or went straight while he was in Portland. I don't know. I only report all this to explain why I used the phrase "openly gay."

I spoke with Parfrey about Stimely during my Yockey research, since Stimely had collected archival material on the mystery man and Parfrey was Stimely's friend. Parfrey's memory is a bit fuzzy since he did not provide me with Stimely's phone number. Nor could he since I spoke to him



well after Stimely's death. (Parfrey may have given me a number for Stimely's parents. Here my memory is also a bit fuzzy.) Finally, as for Parfrey's reference to Genesis P-Orridge: Any reader of my piece will see that Moynihan and Rice both discussed the influence of GPO and Throbbing Gristle (and not the GPO of today's Thee Majesty).

Parfrey's missive aside, I would like to correct some real mistakes in my article. In footnotes 33 and 35, I misspelled Chad Hensley's journal *EsoTerra* as *Esoterica*. [Ed. note: To order this interesting publication, contact Chad Hensley/410 E. Denny Way #22/Seattle, WA 98122.] In footnote 13 of my "Hail Sade" insert, I wondered whether Peter Sotos and Philip Best might not be the same individual. I am assured that they are in fact different persons.

My most serious error concerns Norway's Progress Party

(Fremskrittspartiet, or FRP). Although the Progress Party is considered to be right populist, and although it has made foreign immigration a major issue, I was flat out wrong when I stated that "Vikernes seems to have shared many of its prejudiced beliefs." Vikernes' views are really much closer to openly "old right" organizations and not the "new right" Progress Party. The Progress Party arose in both Norway and Denmark as a tax-revolt party, and it has many libertarian positions. It supports abortion and has an anti-censorship attitude when it comes to pornography. A strong wing of the group's youth movement advocates the legalization of homosexual marriage. The group bases its opposition to increased immigration on economic (not racial) grounds. (On the Progress Party, see Robert Harmel and Rachel Gibson, "Right-Libertarian Parties and the 'New Values': A Re-examination" in *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1995; Jorgen Andersen and Tor Bjorklund, "Structural Changes and New Cleavages: the Progress Parties in Denmark and Norway," in *Acta Sociologica* (1990), 3; and Lars Svasand, "Scandinavian Right-Wing Radicalism," in *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St. Martin's), edited by Hans-Georg Betz and Stefan Immerfall.) My mistake occurred because I read an article that described the Progress Party as the leading anti-immigrant right-wing group in Norway (which it is), but which failed to make clear the distinction between it and the "old right."

Finally, I want to return to Varg Vikernes, Satanism, and *Lords of Chaos* one last time. Although *Lords of Chaos* portrays Vikernes as a Satanist, Vikernes emphatically denies that this was the case. The American historian of religion, Jeffrey Kaplan, who interviewed Vikernes on August 4, 1995, reports:

Vikernes strongly denied ever having been a Satanist. In a series of letters from August through December 1996, he reiterates this point again and again. (Jeffrey Kaplan and Tore Bjorgo, eds. *Nation and Race* [Boston: Northeastern University Press], p. 122, note 29.)

Vikernes wants to be seen as an Odinist and not a Satanist, and his fascination with *Lord of the Rings* (a book based on northern mythology, not Satanism) suggests just this. Part of my critique of *Lords of Chaos* also focuses on this very point—the downplaying or distortion of Vikernes' political outlook. If Vikernes is now disgruntled with his portrayal in *Lords of Chaos*, he may have some legitimate reasons.

Kevin Coogan

Confederacy of Dumb?

Do morons have the right to rock?



This is my philosophical dilemma: just because a band puts out a hard rockin' record or puts on a kick-ass show, does this mean that we should blindly accept and welcome them into the "punk rock" fold?

As this "punk rock" thing drags painfully on through the years, it seems to be picking up more and more space junk along the way. We've had the skinheads popping up like so many herpes sores for years now. Then came the straightedgers, Christians, pop punks, and "emo" nerds.

As annoying as all this was, I think we've finally transgressed the unwritten law, crossed the line in the sand, and spread open our collective ass cheeks for the biggest enemy the American counterculture has ever known. I'm talking, of course, about the redneck.

Aren't these the same backwards-assed, toothless, fat, smelly, dirty, violent dumb-fucks in pick-up trucks that tried to beat our asses up all the time, back when having spiked hair and a ripped shirt wasn't considered passe by the mall crowd?

You tell me what the advantage is in hanging out with a bunch of baseball cap-wearin' trailer trash and their pit bulls? They rock? I say fine, go ahead and rock. But hopefully they can go do it somewhere else, preferably somewhere where I can't smell them. I wonder if Garth Brooks needs an opening act? Let me remind you all that in the past the main interest of these hillbillies with leg tattoos was to kick your ass! Have they really changed that much? If you're sitting up in an ivory tower in the Berkeley Hills and viewing them from afar, it may be easy to attribute a certain "charm" to these backwoods morons. But when you're actually down here with them in the trenches, believe me, you go to "punk rock" shows to get away from rednecks, not to celebrate and wallow in their collective ignorance.

Remember when we used to yell "Freebird" at our favorite punk bands as a putdown? Well, is the joke on us now?

GOD,
Austin, TX

Some Get It...

Hello Jeff Bale and staff:

My name is Aaron "Skwelch" Alvarez. I am 28 years old and I live in Reno. I am a married father of two (a boy 3 years old, a girl 2 years old). Although I have every intention of telling you more about myself, with that simplistic profile in mind, I would like to begin by telling you my motivations for writing you.

My good friend Adam has been lobbying me for about two or three months to check out this new 'zine called *Hit List*. "It's got all the greatest contributors, blah blah blah, it's got all sorta different confrontational rude assholes, blah blah blah!" Now, in an effort to explain my complacency, I must begin with the first of many explanations about myself that I warned you of earlier. I have always been pas-

sionate about expressing myself through writing, and have always found inspiration from other written expressions of angst and honesty. Yet over the last 3 or 4 years, I have become completely enamoured of the one-sided, dogmatic, tired ethic that has dominated the so-called alternative press, as well as the ideology of the bulk of the new bands. I have also battled with the dreaded "writers block". So, to me, this great new rag he was pushing on me was "just another reactionary, alienating, one-sided alternative to the now accepted dogma of the hippy crust core mentality". But I bought it anyway (number two, that is). At the risk of sounding like I'm cramming my nose way up your filthy ass, your 'zine completely blew me away! Not only has it reassured me that I'm not "anti-punk" because I long for the blatant attitude of disrespect I witnessed in the late 70's and early 80's--you have actually inspired me to write something other than lyrics for my crappy punk band, the very letter you are reading now.

There was mention made in the first issue (which I purchased the very next day) about bands being hindered artistically by the fear of backlash from either side of the well-defined, new order of punk. This one statement struck a shit storm of realization in me. Maybe the reason I haven't been writing is because I had no forum in which to express my views without a Gi-huge-ik retaliation of uninformed socialistic rhetoric. What my beliefs and opinions are are unimportant. The point is that I've always perceived punk rock to be about free thought, and more importantly, the respect and relentless desire for diversity and true individualism. I was drawn to punk rock by the idea that Ian of Minor Threat and Ian of Skrewdriver were both allowed the freedom to seek their own truths, while the eloquence of Greg Graffin could be respected right along with the pure crassness and socially perverse perspectives of El Duce. (Remember to pay attention when the trains whistle!) This spark (or should I say inferno) was, I thought, long since lost.

Your 'zine, along with new labels like TKO and GMM, as well as the inevitable overwhelming impact the impending "Social Chaos tour" planned for this summer will have on the punk mentality, has proven me to be very wrong! There are obviously a large number of people who, as I like to say, "remember the chaos", people who can remember when punks were repelled by complacency and the largely ineffective boycott mentality. After all, anyone can "not" buy something, or stay home and "not" support something. That's the easy part. The question is, what are you willing to support and stand up for! Everyone I know, including myself, has done nothing but complain about the state of our scene, but then you came along and actually did something about it. Yet not in a reactionary manner, as other self-righteous publications would like to think. Instead, your approach has been more like a full frontal assault on those who

have diluted and distorted a once vibrant and threatening movement, one that you and your staff obviously hold in very high regard and, more significantly, were instrumental in helping to create! Please stay with it, because the structure of your publication, as well as the thoroughness of its content is (with the exception of some rags you've mentioned) unsurpassed by anything I've seen in recent years!

Thanks and Fuck Off anyway (respectfully),
Aaron Alvarez
olivianrec@aol.com

P.S.—It's just a suggestion, but have you considered interviewing Sammytown and Fang?

...Some Don't

Dear *Hit List*:

I'm writing in regards to your most recent issue. I read issue #1 and wasn't very impressed due to the cheesy-looking cover and endless rants about *MRR*. But I thought "what the hell, I'll give 'em another chance". So here I am with issue #2.

I've been in the punk scene for over 20 years, so you "old fuckers" hardly scare me with your self-proclaimed credentials such as "paving the path for thousands of punks around the world". I grew up all over LA, mainly in Hollywood, and I've been involved in a punk/dyke rock scene that isn't just about rock 'n' roll and being anti-PC, two attributes that your magazine clearly focuses on. That brings me to my first complaint.

To Mr. Joey Vindictive: I don't know what planet you're from, but let me assure you that the term "FAGGOT" is still offensive and not okay to use, even by a washed-up straight white male like yourself. And next time you're in town look me up--I'd love to see you get your ass whooped by some of my "FAGGOT" friends. Enough said.

I enjoyed Jeff Bale's column, although his extremist anti-censorship stance is quite lame, along with his statement that most women are conformist thinkers--a comment too ignorant to dignify by refuting. I know Jeff wants this zine to be shocking and all (wow, what a novel idea), but all I can say is that I'm disappointed. It's always a shame when someone who has had such involvement in the punk scene gets the "I'm old and I don't care about anything anymore" attitude. You'll be missed.

But what really inspired me to write was Brett Mathews' fucking long monotonous column, which again rambled on about the evils of *MRR*. Get over it! But as long as we're on the topic, let's talk about some of your bullshit. In your column you inferred that Jacqueline had no place going to Mordam's business meetings and "calling out" people. What a crime, a woman with a voice! What was she thinking? She should know her place and keep quiet! Fuck you! So she talked shit about Man's Ruin for wanting to get into Circuit City or whatever, big fucking deal. I'm glad she did,



and I'm even more happy she wrote about it because otherwise I never would have known about Man's Ruin's stance. It's not that I would have bought any of their lame ass releases anyway, but now I can make sure I let everyone else I know not to do so either. Hey Frank Kozik, good luck on your quest for corporate America. Thanks for giving consumers an "alternative," being that those who shop for music at Circuit City are so alternative and all. Try not to crush too many of us on your quest for millions. "But *MRR* is in Tower and Borders." Yeah, but that was going on long before Jacqueline came to the helm and then under fire. Next Brett, you go on and on about every minor detail of *MRR*, for instance criticizing the Tilt interview because they wrote "we didn't know what the kid said at the end of the interview." Big fucking deal. It sure beats reading interviews with assholes like Katon from Junk Records, including pictures of caged girls in bikinis. For someone who keeps whining about people having "no class", as the coordinator who helps pick the interviews you sure seem like a classy guy. And let's not forget the endless sobbing about some guy named Mel Cheplowitz. Guess what--no one cares, and your bitching about it just draws more attention to it. I don't know shit about that guy except that he seems really old and writes really boring columns. Besides, I find it quite funny that you claim Tim would never have allowed that. It's ironic how now that Tim is dead, he could suddenly do no wrong, whereas if he was still here he would do it better and he would do this and he wouldn't do that. That's bullshit, you don't know that. Maybe if Tim was still alive, that parody column about Mel Cheplowitz would have been about your candyass instead. It's funny that now that he's gone all he gets is praise, but while he was around everybody was on his ass just like they're on Jacqueline's ass now.

I don't know where this zine is headed and maybe this is it. I really hope not, because when I heard about *Hit List*, I had high hopes. But the way it's going I don't see you as even remotely close to *MRR*, but more in the *Flipside* realm. Maybe that's what you want. If so, congratulations. Full color glossy covers and the "we don't give a fuck about anything" attitude will get you far with the *Flipside* crowd, I'm sure, so good luck. I'll buy a few more issues before I give up on you guys, but maybe instead of Dave Johnson worrying about *MRR* rekindling the flame, you folks should concern yourself with your own spark because if things don't improve, the only flames you cats are gonna produce are the ones people like me will make lighting our issues of *Hit List* on fire.

Love,
Ruth Abernathy (another
dull-tongued female con
formist)

Dear Ruth:

We get countless letters complimenting

us on what a great magazine we have created, and what a great job we are doing. While they are all quite flattering and reassuring, we rarely plan to run them in the "Return Fire" section of our magazine, as this might be construed as "blowing our own horn". I hope we don't throw people off by running this letter to the editor, but we couldn't have received a better piece of mail to let us know that our magazine is right on target in terms of what we set out to do. It's very flattering to us when you not only say that we are not even "remotely close to *MRR*", but instead are in the *Flipside* realm. I would be honored to have people perceive us as being more similar to great rock 'n' roll magazines like *Flipside*, *Gearhead*, *Ugly Things*, or *Carbon 14*.

I apologize if the "full color glossy cover" threw you off. I guess it's hard not to end up with something this professional looking when you have a staff as numerous as ours (by the way, including Jeff and myself, we are now up to a grand total of three). As our graphics guru would say, "D.I.Y. doesn't mean it has to look like shit". Contrary to what you obviously believe, we are not in direct competition with *MRR*. Also contrary to popular opinion, we do not want to see *MRR* go out of business. They definitely serve their purpose, which is linking together and thereby sustaining the worldwide punk community, whereas we here at *Hit List* are trying to fill a separate niche. Heaven forbid that *MRR* should actually go out of business! If that happened, we would probably have all those whiny little PC fuckers looking to us to provide them with a tit to feed on. (Please don't be offended by my use of the word "tit".)

Allow me to respond to the "fuck you" directed my way because I was allegedly trying to keep Jacqueline "in the kitchen". I find it ironic that feminists like yourself think it's OK for a woman to stand up and and boldly voice her opinion, which she indeed has every right to do. Yet as soon as someone else disagrees with that opinion, especially a male, you immediately resort to playing the "sexism card". If a woman expresses her opinions publicly, she should be to deal with the same degree of criticism that a man would in similar circumstances. Despite all this talk about "empowerment", people like yourself seem to want to infantilize women by providing them with immunity from legitimate criticism. Either women are equal or they're not, and if they really are they shouldn't always be portraying themselves as helpless "victims of sexism" every time someone challenges their views. You're the one displaying blatant anti-male views, not vice versa. Did you ever think that maybe I had a problem with Jacqueline calling people out because her motives and methods of doing so were so unjustifiable? I couldn't care less what sex organs she has, although obviously that's

of great importance to you.

As for trying to justify the fact that *MRR* is being sold in Tower and Borders simply on the basis that it has been sold there for a long time, why should that matter? If Tower has developed into something that people at *MRR* object to politically, all one of the *MRR* coordinators has to do is make one phone call to prevent Tower from ever distributing the magazine again. I personally don't care whether or not *MRR* is distributed by Tower and other chains, but as long as it is Jacqueline surely has no right to attack others for seeking similar forms of distribution. What, after all, is a better definition of a hypocrite?

Finally, I'm rather disappointed that you didn't approve of the picture of those caged girls in bikinis. I thought that might be the one thing that you and I could agree upon. If someone else wants to show off their breasts, that's their personal choice. How come those women aren't allowed to exercise their freedom of choice, just as you are free to do whatever you want to do with your life? And why should a classy guy like me have to look the other way if they do decide to bare their breasts in public?

In conclusion, don't expect *Hit List* to change too much. We're going to keep making constipated, hypersensitive people feel uncomfortable, and that probably means that you're not going to like it.

Love,
Brett Mathews (another
sharp-tongued female
admirer)

Dear Ruth:

I was somewhat surprised when you claimed that I had adopted an "I don't care about anything anymore" attitude, since nothing could be further from the truth. It may be that I don't care about the same things that you care about (although I doubt that even that is invariably true), but I care about all sorts of things, above all preserving the maximum amount of freedom of expression for every individual. That would include you too, which makes it all the more ironic that you referred to my "extremist anti-censorship stance" as "lame". I might have paid more attention to your remarks if you'd actually provided a single concrete reason for characterizing my views thusly, but naturally you failed to do so. Let me remind you that the First Amendment and other legally-sanctioned guarantees of personal freedom are even more important to minorities (be they social, cultural, racial, or sexual) than they are to majorities. Why? Because in their absence majorities would be in a position to suppress and censor every minority group whose views they found "offensive", which is precisely what happens in most other parts of the world. Hence it is all the more bizarre that the primary opponents of

free speech in America these days are minorities on the radical right and the radical left--fundamentalist Christians, moralistic conservatives, feminists, "racists of color", and intolerant PC leftists. If all you would-be censors ever succeed in gutting the First Amendment by imposing laws against "hate speech", flag-burning, "insensitivity", etc., I can promise you that your efforts will soon come back to haunt you--and in spades.

As for your other complaint, I certainly didn't mean to imply that in general women were more conformist in their thinking than men. The overwhelming majority of both males and females are conformist sheep. Within the punk scene, however, independent-thinking women who both eschew knee-jerk feminist rhetoric and are extraordinarily knowledgeable about underground rock 'n' roll are much too rare--and I say this with great sadness and disappointment. All too many punk women nowadays automatically resort to making spurious accusations of "sexism" (not to mention "racism" and "homophobia") whenever someone says something they don't like--just as you did in your own letter--a trait which reveals them to be simpleminded dogmatists rather than independent, unconventional thinkers. However, if you know of any strong, inde-

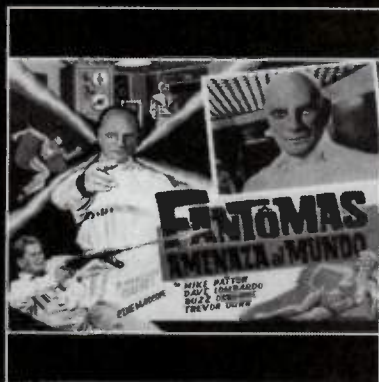
pendent women who don't see themselves as perpetual victims, aren't always whining about "oppression", have a sense of humor, believe in free speech, know a lot about rock 'n' roll, and can write, please have them contact us.

Finally, to suggest that we suddenly have decided that Tim Yohannan could do no wrong is utter rubbish. No one was more constructively critical of Tim when he was alive than I was, but having been one of Tim's best friends I happen to have a very good idea of what he would and what he would not have tolerated. And he certainly wouldn't have tolerated some of the underhanded crap that has appeared in MRR since his untimely death. That's a fact--unless Tim had become so ill at the very end of his life that he had lost his fundamental decency and his capacity to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate ways to criticize people. And if you are right to claim that when Tim was still around everyone was on his ass just as they're now on Jacqueline's ass, as indeed you are, that very fact completely undermines your unsubstantiated accusations of sexism now that similar types of criticism are being levelled at Jacqueline.

Jeff Bale

P.S.--By the way, I happen to agree with you (and Tom Hopkins) that the use of the term "faggot" is inappropriate and pejorative in connection with homosexuals, and I myself wouldn't use it in that way unless I was joking with a close friend who happened to be gay. But you should recognize that Joey Vindictive was making an important point, ironically the very same point that gay activists have made by appropriating the use of the term "queer"--namely, that the meanings and associations of words can be transformed depending not only on who uses them but on how they are used. By extending the use of the term "faggot" to someone he disliked who wasn't even gay, he was attaching the stigma normally associated with that word to a heterosexual and thereby subtly shifting its meaning and significance. I wouldn't have done so, but it's his column and he can say whatever he wants to within its confines. You, in turn, have the right to write in and complain about what he says. That's exactly what freedom of expression--which you seem to think is "lame"--means in actual practice. It's lucky for you that I believe in it, even if you don't, or your letter might never have been published. ☼

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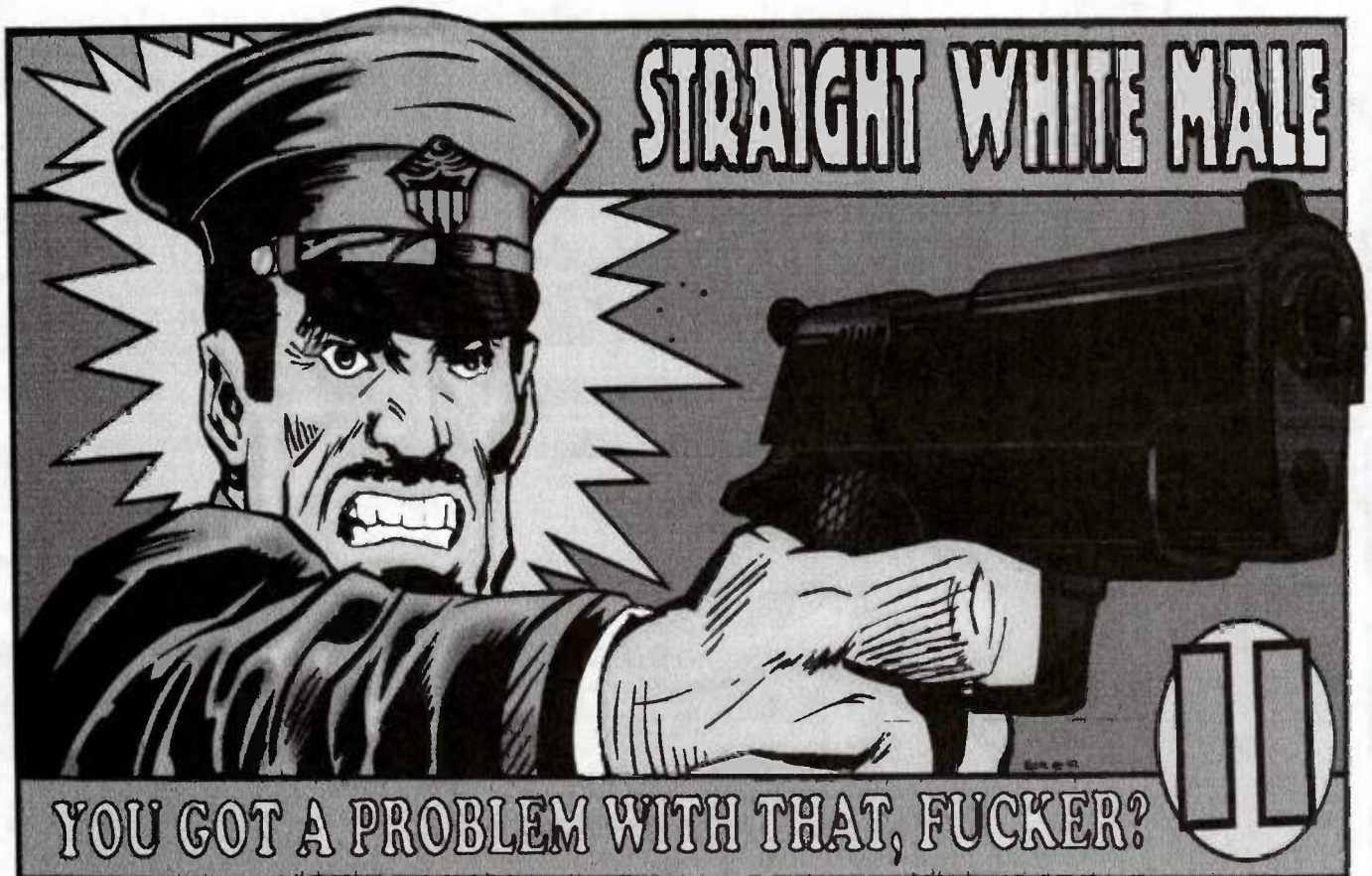
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As we careen out of control toward the new millenium, it seems as though lots of knowledgeable people are pissing and moaning about the lame or degenerate state of contemporary punk rock. This criticism takes a variety of forms, ranging from assertions that the quality of punk music has declined over the years to claims that everything which nowadays remains of our once vibrant and dynamic punk scene is merely a shadow of its former self. For example, in last month's issue of *Hit List*, Vic Bondi wrote a provocative and in many ways disturbing column. In it he argued that genuinely iconoclastic punks should do everything they could to destroy the current punk music scene, which he argued was pathetic and conformist if not utterly worthless. This issue Jack Rabid has chimed in by making severe and largely justifiable criticisms regarding the widespread lack of critical thinking, both within the punk scene and in society at large, something he feels is reflected in the general lack of interesting and insightful lyrics associated with today's underground music. On top of all this, many people I know—including several of our own reviewers who are half my age and twice as jaded—are constantly complaining about the generic and non-threatening nature of contemporary punk. Obviously, if all these negative views could be accepted at face value, there would no reason for us to waste our valuable time publishing a new punk-oriented zine and, in the process, making an effort to provide coverage of new punk releases. On the contrary, in that case we would probably be better off dedicating ourselves to eradicating all the remnants of punk.

But that certainly isn't the whole story, not by a long shot, and one must guard against throwing out the baby along with the bathwater. Before we can begin to accurately assess the current state of punk, it has to be recognized that people originally got into punk for all sorts of diverse reasons—the only thing they all had in common was a hankering for something new, exciting, and different from the status quo. Depending on their specific motivations at the outset, it is logical to expect that different individuals might later end up having entirely incompatible views about the current state of punk. So let's go back a bit in time, to the mid-1970s, when modern punk first made its appearance. Those of you who were not yet born can scarcely imagine just how boring music and popular culture had become by 1975. In case you've forgotten, this was the beginning of the godforsaken disco era, at least for heterosexuals. (All one has to do is watch the film *Saturday Night Fever* to get an insightful and all too accurate picture of just how lame disco really was, not only musically, but also in terms of fashion and, indeed, the sorts of people who were attracted to it—masses of shallow, lowbrow numbskulls who "shook their moneymakers" in an effort to "score" each night.) Everything that had made the previous decade exciting—great rock 'n' roll music, a spirit of adventure and experimentation, constant frontal assaults in the cultural sphere on social conventions and moral puritanism, extreme and cool-looking fashions that were guaranteed to shock "squares", and anti-Establishment politics of all sorts—had by 1975 either disappeared altogether or had mutated into something phony and/or repulsive. After all, even great glam bands like ALICE COOPER, the DOLLS, SLADE, and SWEET (much less horrible groups of overhyped wankers like URIAH HEPP and MOTT THE HOOPLE) were, collectively, no match for the hordes of amazing beat and garage punk bands that had emerged during the early- to mid-60s, or for the STOOGES, or even—in my opinion—for early hippie "psychedelic" groups like LOVE, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE, BIG BROTHER, and MOBY GRAPE. Moreover, the hippie counterculture with which I had by then long been associated—and which, contrary to the claims of some ignorant punk "revisionists" who weren't around at the time, was in fact the mid-60s equivalent of late 70s and early 80s punk, not to mention the successor of the 50s beats—had evolved into a pathetic, soul-less, and embarrassing caricature of itself. Not to put too fine a point on it, exciting avant

garde countercultural movements had disappeared or been grievously coopted, and had everywhere been replaced by commercial dross of the most inane sort. Life had thus become boring as hell. That's why I was fiddling about in academia during that period instead of engaging in my usual hedonistic practices.

It was in the midst of this cultural and musical wasteland that punk detonated like a hydrogen bomb. All of a sudden, something new had appeared which was aesthetically and musically irreverent, provocative, aggressive, extreme, offensive, and radical, and not surprisingly all sorts of alienated, rebellious misfits were attracted to it like moths to a flame. But, as noted above, they were attracted to it for different reasons. I wouldn't presume to try and delineate all the different types of characters who soon became

JEFF BALE

READ BETWEEN THE LINES



associated with the burgeoning punk scene, often at great physical risk to themselves, something which would probably require an extensive sociological treatise. For schematic purposes, I'll simplify my argument by identifying six "ideal types" of people who were initially attracted to punk. Once we better understand their original motives for becoming involved in punk, it should be easier to determine why certain sorts of individuals later became disillusioned with it to the point where they abandoned the scene altogether.

The first type of person that was attracted to punk might be referred to as the "artiste". Artistes were primarily interested in punk for aesthetic reasons. Constantly on the lookout for new forms of artistic expression and fashion, such people naturally gravitated toward punk at the outset. However, artistes tend to be fickle. Being more concerned with form than actual substance, they tend to shift rapidly from one new fad to the next—as long as it has a cool new "look". Most artistes therefore hastened to abandon punk as soon as new subcultural groups emerged with their own distinctive fashions, including "two tone", neo-mod, industrial, gothic, and neo-glam, not to mention even sillier and wholly ephemeral trends such as New Romantic, "ant people", or the "club kids" of today.

The second sort of person who was initially attracted to punk might be termed the "lost soul". Lost souls are individuals whose own lives appear empty or otherwise unfulfilling, and who therefore desperately search for some sort of alternative community or non-traditional surrogate family to replace those which they had the misfortunes to be born into. For a variety of complex reasons, atomized industrialized societies are replete with such people. Since they ultimately cannot escape from their own deep-seated problems, they too are always on the move, as the grass always seems "greener" somewhere else. Hence they were generally not destined to find a permanent home within the punk community, in part because there are so many other alternative "families" available to choose from, for example religious cults.

The third type of person who gravitated toward punk might be termed the "troublemaker". There are many disturbed individuals who associate themselves with groups which they hope will give them free rein to display anti-social attitudes, or perhaps even to engage in sociopathic violence. The intentionally menacing imagery associated with punk rock undoubtedly persuaded a few such people to join the punk



ranks, at least for a time. As everyone familiar with punk knows, however, much of its so-called "toughness" was a pose, and the "violence" associated with it was originally almost entirely of the stylized, theatrical variety. Hence seriously pathological people soon found themselves shunned by most punks, and thus had to either form their own "gangs" or move on to more receptive sub-cultural groups, where their psychoses and violent inclinations could truly thrive, e.g., the biker subculture or the growing neoskinhead subculture.

The fourth category of people who looked with favor upon punk were the "politicos", those who could be characterized as politically-oriented if not politically obsessed. On the one hand, certain groups of reprehensible organized and authoritarian politicians opportunistically saw punk as a brand new target for recruiting, mobilizing, proselytizing, and otherwise manipulating for instrumental purposes, ranging from the Socialist Worker's Party and National Front in Britain, to the Revolutionary Communist Party in America. On the other (and far less insidious) hand, a large number of concerned, idealistic people gravitated toward punk because they saw it as an exciting new vehicle for changing the world or, at least, a milieu in which they could create an alternative community where their own political values could prevail. The politicians who merely sought to use or manipulate punk soon found to their chagrin that most punks were far too individualistic, cynical, skeptical, rebellious, apathetic, or hedonistic to follow their orders, conform to their discipline, or accept their restrictive dogmas, and hence moved on to try and infiltrate and manipulate other groups. Those that sought to create alternative communities within the bosom of punk sometimes succeeded, and as a result they now form sub-groups within the broader punk culture, ranging from riot grrrls to animal rights activists to anarchists to straight edgers. But most politicians (fortunately) came and went, primarily because something as multiform and chaotic as punk couldn't hope to satisfy their absurdly high hopes and utopian dreams, much less actually achieve their concrete political agendas.

The fifth group that came to identify with punk in large numbers, not surprisingly, were teenagers going through their "rebellious" phase. Like other countercultures and subcultures with an "extreme" look and raucous music, punk made it easy for kids to shock their parents and other authority figures, which couldn't help but make it all the more attractive to many youths who were coming of age and seeking to create their own identity distinct from that of their elders. By definition, though, all teenagers eventually make the transition from adolescence to adulthood, and in the process most of them abandon punk and other symbols of their misspent youth in order to embark on a life of conformity and material well-being. Such is the way of the developed world.

However, there was one ideal typical sort of person who avidly embraced punk but was not destined to be a temporary, fair-weather supporter, the "rock 'n' roll maniac". Rock 'n' roll maniacs are incessantly seeking overpowering doses of primitive r 'n' r, just as drug

addicts are constantly looking for all-important "fixes" of the pharmaceuticals they've become dependent upon, because only the most primitive types of r 'n' r can truly satisfy their cravings and soothe their troubled psyches. Maniacs of this type were bound to fall in love with mid-70's punk rock, if not to see it as the be-all and end-all in the (d)evolution of rock 'n' roll into its crudest and wildest forms, and they were also bound to stick with it until an equally raucous or even more primitive type of rock music emerged. The problem is that they'll have to wait forever, since one cannot even imagine a new form of rock music that could be more primitive, raw, and aggressive than punk rock. Anything too much faster would soon degenerate into white noise (like grindcore has done), and anything more intense and powerful would probably destroy your entire sensory apparatus. Thus there is no real escape from the cul-de-sac of punk for the rock 'n' roll maniac, nor is it really even necessary to search for a way out. You may be able to go backwards to mid-60's punk and beat, or even further back to 50's rockabilly, in an effort to satisfy your obsessive rock 'n' roll cravings, but you definitely can't go forward and "progress" on to something else, at least not anything that fits the distinguishing criteria of rock 'n' roll. Us maniacs thus have nowhere else to turn, motherfuckers, which is why we'll surely be around long after the bulk of the ex-punks motivated by other considerations have moved on to something else.

Perhaps my general argument might become a bit clearer if I personalize it a bit. Like most other "really-existing" people, I myself don't fall exclusively into one of the above ideal types--rather, I embody elements of most of them (excepting the pretentious artiste and the violent troublemaker) to one degree or another. But I think it's fair to say that I am as close to being a quintessential "rock 'n' roll maniac" as anyone can

As Jeff Dahl put it in a recent phone conversation, if you can't still find great punk rock out there, you're obviously not looking very hard.

possibly be (along with, I imagine, characters such as Jeff Dahl, Tim Stegall, Dimitri Monroe, and Tony Slug). For this very reason, I think I might have some special insight into why our attitudes about contemporary punk differ from those of, say, Ian MacKaye or Vic Bondi. The reasons are not difficult to fathom. It's often said that people tend to love the music they grew up listening to more than any other, but for me that's actually not quite true. I grew up listening to and especially enjoying hard-edged British Invasion bands such as the YARDBIRDS, the KINKS, the STONES, the WHO, and the PRETTY THINGS, and soon progressed from there to 60's garage punk outfits such as the SHADOWS OF KNIGHT, the STANDELLS, the MUSIC MACHINE, and the BLUES MAGOOS. Later still, I got heavily into the VELVET UNDERGROUND, the early San Francisco psych groups, ALICE COOPER, and the STOOGES. I still love all those bands with a total passion today, but when I first heard '77-style punk groups like the SEX PISTOLS, the CLASH, the DEAD BOYS, and the PAGANS, I felt that this was the rock 'n' roll music that I had unconsciously been waiting for all my life. In other words, despite the fact that I remain infatuated with the earlier stuff from my youth, '77 punk is now my favorite kind of music, probably because it conforms most closely to my peculiar emotional makeup and represents rock 'n' roll in its most stripped-down and raunchy form. Later, I got heavily into thrash-style punk ("hardcore") for a few years, since it seemed even more extreme than '77 punk. In the end, though, thrash didn't stand the test of time because it didn't really rock and it didn't really roll. On the other hand, punk rock sounds as

great to me now as it ever did. That's why anyone who advocates the destruction of punk rock as a musical form, much less its replacement by something as awful as electronica, rap, emo, ska, lounge, or--worst of all--jazz, is bound to be my inveterate musical "enemy". Ian, Vic, and many other smart, ethical people may still be punks, attitude-wise, and for this reason I still have tremendous admiration for them, but they most certainly are not punk rockers anymore. (If they were, they certainly wouldn't have given us FUGAZI and JONES VERY in the wake of MINOR THREAT and A.O.F.) Although one can easily become disillusioned about most of the other aspects of punk culture in 1999, as they obviously have, rock 'n' roll maniacs like myself will never get sick of punk rock music. It's as simple as that.

Finally, it is really not the case that the punk rock bands of today are no match for their late 70's forebears. Sure, they can't possibly be as original, but that's not necessarily a decisive consideration unless originality itself is considered an inherent virtue regardless of what form it takes, and in any case it's hard to view basic three-chord rock 'n' roll, which is invariably marked by the recycling of certain "classic" riffs, beats, and melodies, as something totally "original"--the most that one can hope for is that those older elements will be recombined in a somewhat different and more exciting way. Moreover, there are now entire categories of loathsome music that are generally referred to as "punk" but which have little or nothing to do with real punk rock. Here I'm thinking especially of dorky "emo"; safe, formulaic "professional punk"; macho metallic hardcore; wimpy pop punk that even grandparents or Tipper Gore wouldn't find offensive; and puritanical straightedge thrash. If all of this lame-ass crap disappeared tomorrow, the world would be a far better place and I for one would celebrate its demise with a hearty cheer and a shot of Jagermeister. Nevertheless, there are lots of excellent punk bands around today, even if they seem to be submerged in a veritable sea of garbage. As Jeff Dahl put it in a recent phone conversation, if you can't still find great punk rock out there, you're obviously not looking very hard. (By the way, he was certainly not referring to BAD RELIGION or LEATHERFACE.) Those of us who are actively seeking it out somehow always manage to find it, so I wouldn't give too much credence to those who are constantly whining about how irrelevant and subpar punk music has become these days. Punk may not have been able to transform the institutions of the outside world in any fundamental way — wasn't that really too much to expect of it in the first place? — but it's still more than capable of enriching and rocking my personal world. If it no longer enriches or rocks yours, maybe that's because you yourself have changed for the worse, in which case you really shouldn't be blaming punk.

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO PUNK OUT, I SALUTE YOU

This issue will contain the first installment of my evaluations of some of the main 60's garage (beat, mod, punk, and psych-punk) and 1977-

JEFFBALE

84 punk (punk, pop punk, power pop, and Oi) reissue compilations, including some of the lesser known reissue series. In general, reissues should be evaluated on the basis of three distinct but interrelated characteristics: 1) the actual selection of songs; 2) the sound quality of the reproduction; and 3) the amount and accuracy of the information provided about the groups and songs selected. As will soon become clear, very few reissues or series score an "A" in all three categories. These days there is a veritable flood of reissue comps, not to mention CD reissues of remastered individual band releases, so it's becoming increasingly difficult for anyone other than experts to determine which ones are worth shelling out the money for. Even those of us who are generally in the know often find ourselves perplexed if not overwhelmed by all the releases featuring wholly obscure garage bands who, even when they existed, were never heard outside of their own towns or regions. I don't

claim that the subjective (albeit informed) assessments below have any "scientific" merit--they're intended only to provide you with some general guidance about particular reissues.

Speaking of reissues of individual band releases, remastered or not, there are five that deserve special mention. First, all of the BYRDS LPs have been remastered and reissued, ranging from their early folk rock offerings through their psychedelic period all the way up to their later countrified ventures. The sound quality is excellent, there are several bonus tracks added to each CD (including alternate versions of some famous songs), and the packaging contains new pictures and detailed liner notes. The first four LPs sound better than ever, and of those no one should miss "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Younger than Yesterday".

People seeking an overview of the BYRDS' musical career should pick up the remastered greatest hits collection.

Second, remastered versions of all the KINKS LPs are in the process of being reissued, and for my money no self-respecting rock 'n' roll fan can do without all the CDs from their debut on up through "Arthur". If for some reason you hate the mid-period faux-nostalgic KINKS British Empire sound, you might want to buy only those CDs up through



HIT SQUAD

"Kink Kontroversy" or perhaps "Face to Face". All these reissues contain bonus tracks and new pics, which is great, but in my opinion the bass tracks are mixed a bit too low to be able to fully capture the KINKS' primitive power.

Third, most of the PRETTY THINGS' LPs have been reissued and remastered, and for the first time ever the band has obtained royalty rights to their own songs--all the more reason to buy these versions on the Snapper Music label.

Of these reissues, the must-haves are their two punked-out R&B LPs, "The Pretty Things" and the better and far less derivative "Get the Picture?", as well as "S.F. Sorrow", which in my opinion is the greatest psychedelic long-player ever made (along with, say, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE's "After Bathing at Baxter's" and a handful of others). Anyone who tells you that psychedelia and rock 'n' roll don't mix have only to listen to "S.F. Sorrow" to disabuse themselves of that stupid notion, and on this new version a number of the PRETTY's mind-boggling psych singles (such as "Defecting Grey" and "Mr. Evasion") have also been included. Really fantastic stuff!

Fourth, there is now a two-CD (and vinyl) set containing almost all the songs recorded by the great British mod/freakbeat band, the CREATION. Hence you too can now own multiple extant versions of crunch guitar blasts such as "Making Time" (which has recently been featured on the soundtrack of *Rushmore*, a new Gen X teen movie, for Chrissakes) and "Painter Man", not to mention sharp mod and freakbeat classics such as "Biff Bang Pow", "I Am the Walker", "Through My Eyes", "How Does it Feel to Feel", and "Tom Tom". Here's that rare "cult band" that actually deserves every bit of its cult-like status.

Finally, don't miss out on the reissues of the YARDBIRDS' four incredible LPs, which sound every bit as fresh as they did when they were first released. The first three LPs have been released on the way cool Repertoire label in Holland (which is also responsible for releasing expanded versions of the TURTLES and BEAU BRUMMELS LPs), and contain bonus tracks, sharp-looking gatefold sleeves, new pics, and liner notes. An expanded version of "Little Games" also exists, but in this

case on EMI. These YARDBIRDS CDs have been on my turntable more than any other records lately, which is a testament both to their lasting value and, alas, to my own nostalgic inclinations.

As for comp reissue series, one of my very favorites is the eight-volume "Diggin' for Gold" series. Unlike many comps which concentrate primarily on one sub-genre of garage rock, this one combines "Demented 60's R&B/Punk & Mesmerizing 60's Pop." In other words, one can find hard-edged beat, 60's punk, and great atmospheric pop in each volume of the series. The sound quality isn't all that great, and the liner notes are perfunctory, but what makes these comps really stand out is that those responsible for selecting the songs have unusually good taste. Almost all of the tracks are stellar songs from extremely rare and very costly 7" records, and most of the groups are from continental

Europe, which ensures that only obsessive collectors could be generally familiar with them. Suffice it to say that 60's comps don't get any better than this in terms of song selection, and that you'll suddenly find yourself humming many of these cuts in public places after hearing them once or twice. I suggest that you pick up volume 2 first, which will provide you with an excellent intro to the entire series. If you don't like the brain-pummelling stompers by Iceland's THOR'S HAMMER or the haunting number by Holland's GROUP SOALL, there's really nothing I can do to salvage your pathetic lack of musical taste. The "Diggin' for Gold" volumes are on the Way Back label based in Holland, which is a bit strange because the parent branch in Germany is responsible for putting out one of the worst of the 60's comp series, "Sixties Rebellion", which I definitely do not recommend.

NEWS

In this issue we are pleased to welcome Frank Discussion (of the FEEDERZ), Tony Slug (of the NITWITZ, B.G.K., and LOVESLUG), Bob Black, Michelley QueenofQueens (of OLD BABY and *Boji for the Mentally Ill* magazine), and Richard Tater (of the CONDITIONZ) to our columnar ranks, and Tina Lucchesi (of the TRASHWOMEN and the BOBBYTEENS), Alan Wright (of *Cryptic Times*, *Do the Pop*, and *Ugly Things*), and Jeremy (of *NOTHING COOL*, *Chicken is Good Food* magazine, and *MRR*) to our stable of regular scribes & reviewers. In the future they'll be joined by Tim Stegall (of the HORMONES and the SHAGGERS, formerly a writer for *Flipside*, *Your Flesh*, *MRR*, and *Alternative Press* magazines, and currently for *Sonic Iguana* magazine), Dimitri Monroe (of *Anorexic Teenage Sex Gods*, *Ready to Snap*, and now *Burntout Recluse* magazines), Tim Warren (of Crypt Records), and Bryon Coley (who has written for too many important r'n'r zines to even list). More and more good writers are contacting us every day about the possibility of writing for *Hit List*, which is both very gratifying and very exciting, although I wish more of them were rockin' women. Last but certainly not least, Zabet Gerber has agreed to assume responsibility for crucial editorial tasks while I'm away teaching next year. I have absolute faith in her ability to maintain the quality of this magazine in my absence, because she's very smart and also has great taste in music. ⊕



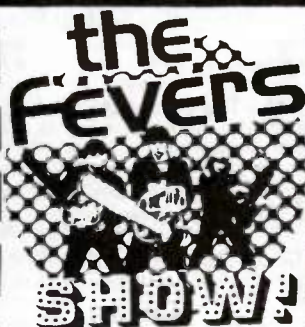
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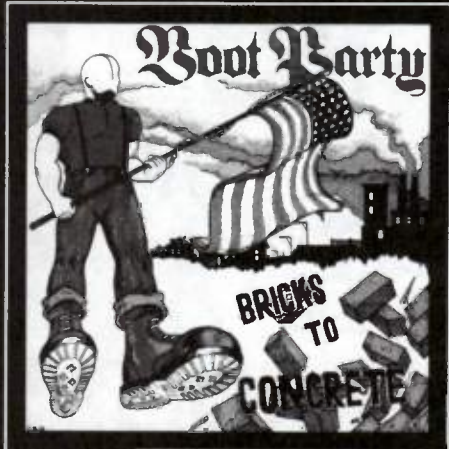
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the ANTI HEROS

AND "REALITY ROCK"

by Jeff Clark

Mark Noah assumed it was a dead issue. He had made his stance and the stance of his longtime band, Atlanta's Anti-Heros, perfectly clear: they weren't racists, and never had been. They would not be portrayed as such. They were realists. They played "reality rock." But Noah should have heeded the message of his own song, 1995's scathing indictment, "Fuck Hollywood:" "Fuck Hollywood, warped sense of reality/Where the truth is always the first casualty." Because reality has never meant shit to Hollywood.

Then "American History X" hit the movie theaters.

And then the calls and letters started pouring in.

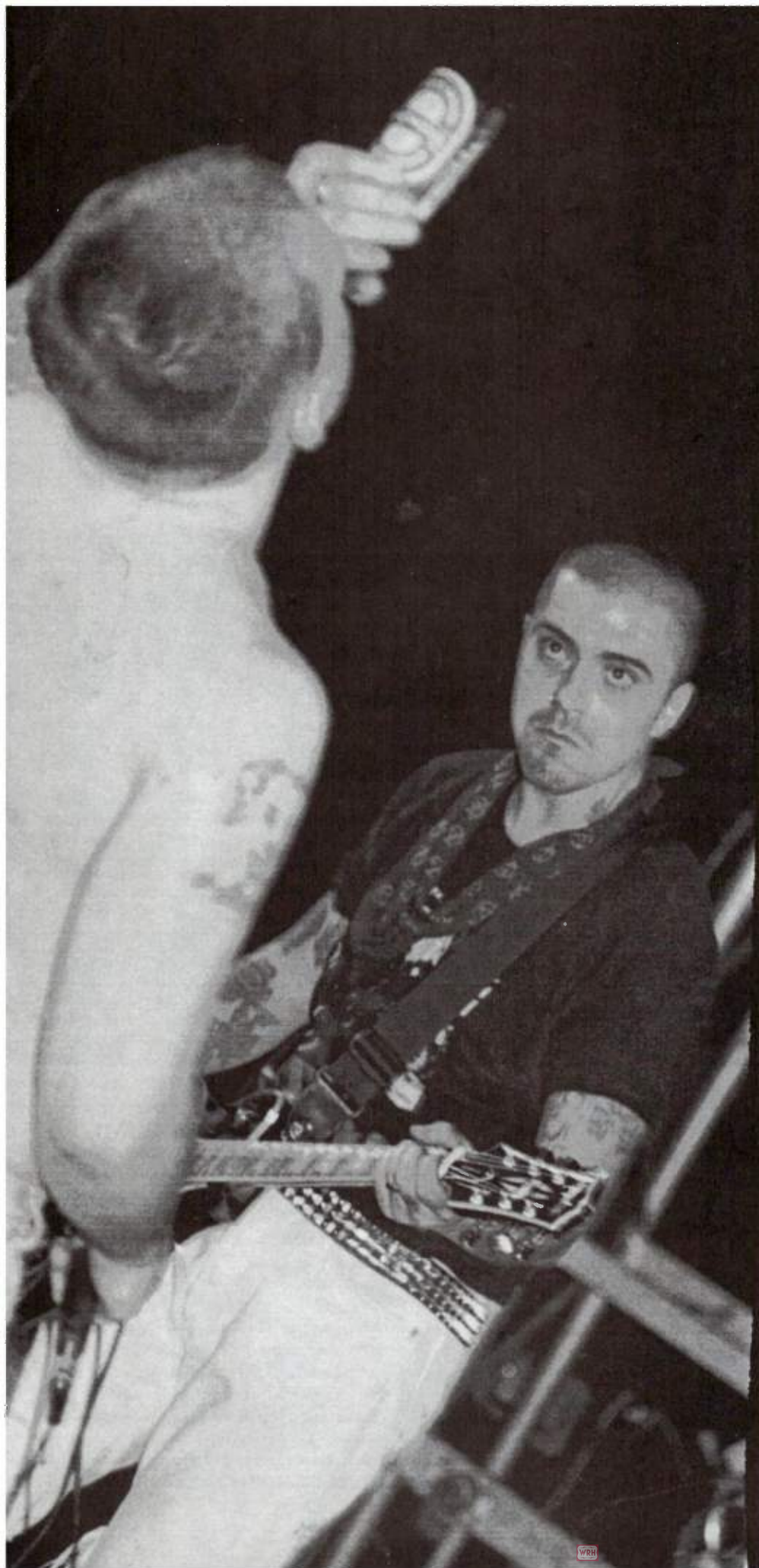
"I started getting hundreds of telephone

calls at my home number, and my office number, going 'Hey, did you know that your logo is tattooed on this Nazi kingpin in this movie?' And then I started getting letters at our P.O. Box, saying 'Hey, are you guys Nazis? What's up?' It was crazy. We've gotten over a couple hundred phone calls, and dozens of e-mails and letters and this and that. It's like, some giant leviathan of a company makes a mistake, and we're like David and Goliath, and we have to pay for it. We've gotten a lot of negative fan mail and letters from people who are thinking, 'What the fuck is up with this?' And who are basically blaming us for it, even though it's not our fault."

"American History X" is, of course, New Line Cinema's harrowing account of lives torn apart by the rage and racism of brutal Nazi skinheads. Noah has seen the flick and con-

cedes that "as far as simpleton films go, it's a pretty good movie. But the guy who's the biggest Nazi character in the movie, who commits racist crimes, has got our tattoo on his arm. And that's the crux of the matter. It's bullshit."

Screenwriter David McKenna, an Orange County, California native, had grown up around the often violent Oi and hardcore music scenes, which were apparently part of his inspiration for "American History X." According to Noah and the band's attorney, New Line Cinema approached Taang! Records (at the time the Anti-Heros' label) in 1997 asking for permission to use the band's music, image, and name in the movie. "The [label head] was up for it," Noah told Atlanta music magazine "Stomp and Stammer" that summer, "and I said, 'Are you fucking joking?'"



They wanted to have the inside of this Nazi's room covered with Anti-Heros posters and lyrics, and have him listening to us, and I was like, 'Fuck that! Who wants to be painted up like that?' That's the Hollywood version of what this music is, and it's wrong."

Never a band to roll over and play dead, the Anti-Heros are suing New Line for copyright infringement and libel. "I'm sure we'll probably get fucked, 'cause that's the way it works," concedes Noah. "But you never know."

The most ironic thing is, when the Anti-Heros were first bashing it out in Atlanta's burgeoning Oi/punk scene in the '80s, it was the radical Nazi skinheads who were attacking THEM.

"Here in Atlanta they'd say, 'You've gotta join our gang,' and all that stuff. 'We'll rule the streets.' 'Cause our band was really popular," recalls Noah. "And we just told them, you know, 'Get fucked. Gangs are for cowards and Nazis are for idiots.' And when we told 'em to get fucked, they looked at us as their enemy — which was true, we were their enemy — and we got in a lot of trouble with them for that. Like our first guitar player was Jewish, and several times he got beaten down pretty badly by a bunch of these big fuckin' criminals that are now either dead or in jail. That whole scene is pretty much dead and gone, for good reasons. They used to call me 'Nigger Lover Mark.' They used to call me a 'race traitor'. They started branding us as 'communists' and 'leftists', and would fucking throw shit at us when we played, try and beat us up in the parking lot before or after shows, stuff like that. Almost always unsuccessfully. But I think that's how it happened. I think some of these big racial groups tried to use the whole Oi and street punk thing as some sort of shock treatment for American culture, for their own publicity campaigns. They ended up causing a lot of trouble for us, but in the long term they ended up crapping out and losing."

Noah speculates that radical racists were attracted to Oi and skinhead music because of its rawness and anger, and indeed, certain groups in the genre such as Skrewdriver did adhere to a disturbingly racist agenda. "But just 'cause the Anti-Heros are an Oi band doesn't mean they're Nazis," counters Noah. "We've always been involved in anti-racist activities, and always made our stance pretty clear... There's been anti-racist skinheads in the band ever since the band started, but that doesn't mean that there's any racist issue involved at all. The thing about it is, the Anti-Heros aren't your typical softie, leftist band, and I think the music industry, especially the music industry press, regards any band that's not 'liberal' like Jane Fonda as totally illegitimate, and they then demonize something that they don't agree with. Which is kind of the opposite of being open-minded... And I don't

think that a band that has a leftist point of view is illegitimate. And I don't think we have a rightist point of view. But we certainly are very independent, and outside of the fuckin' pseudo-intellectual side of American politics."

Then why does Noah think most artists or musicians who do take a political stand tend to lean in a liberal or socialist direction?

"Uh...that's an excellent question, and I think maybe that's because

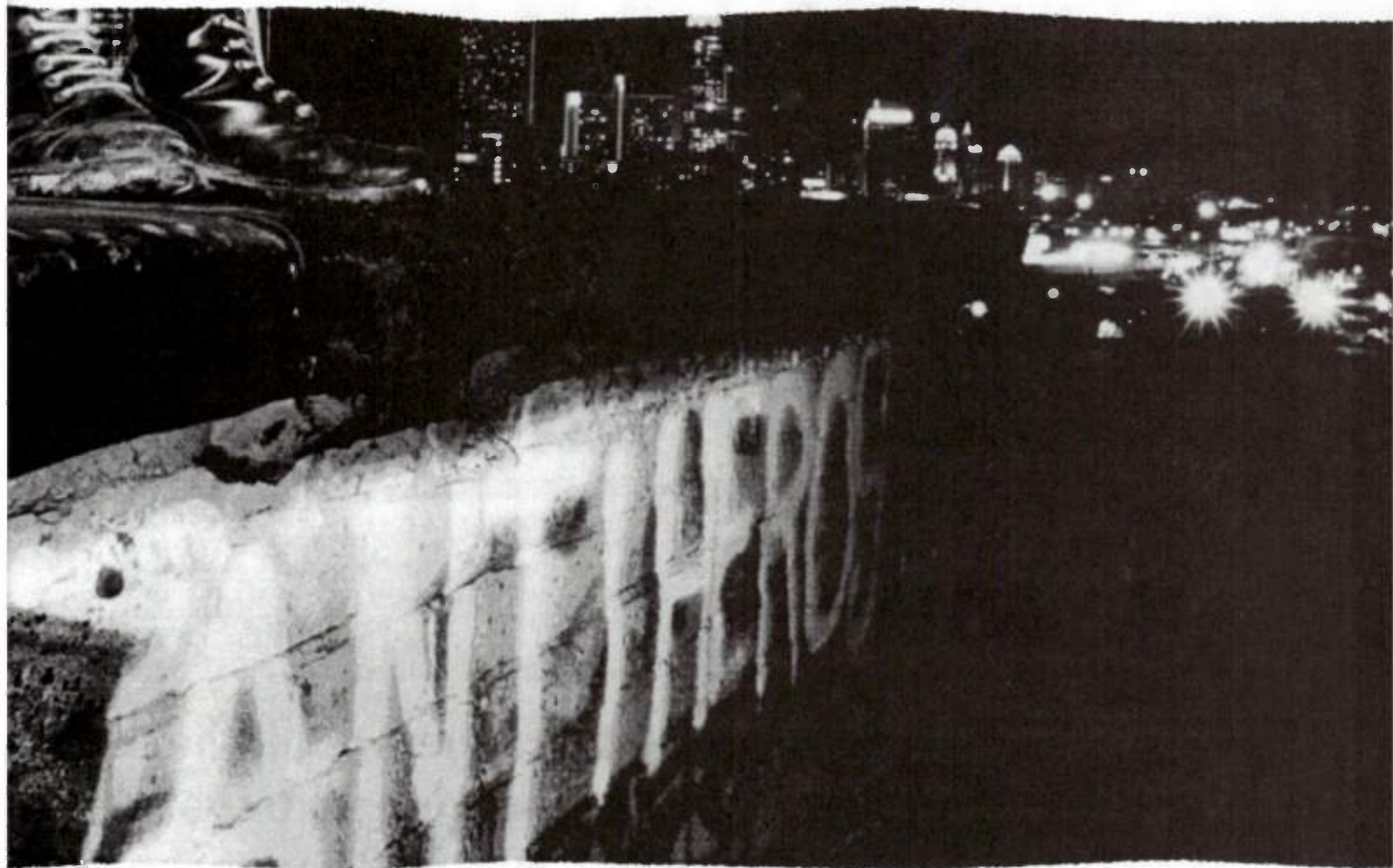
the American public's fault, 'cause they're so fucking lazy. And then they've lowered their standards so far, that they don't expect more from people."

Noah formed the Anti-Heros in the summer of 1984, appropriately enough, when he was nineteen. It was to be his first and only band.

"I'd been into punk for a long time before, since I was about 14," he remembers. "I had all these feelings that were not

His attraction to more hard-edged forms of punk rock developed swiftly and naturally.

"It was just the kind of evolution of that kind of music. It went two ways. A lot of those early punk bands went real poppy, like the Clash did, and kind of lost me, and then there was an offshoot of that kind of stuff called street punk, and Oi and all that, the bands like Sham 69 and Angelic Upstarts, and Blitz, around 1981, '82.



a lot of people that are artistic are very idealistic, and ideally-speaking, something like socialism might be a great concept. Ideally-speaking. But reality-speaking, it never seems to pan out. It never seems to work. And we're a reality-rock band, we're not like some dream band."

Naturally, then, Noah sees the current state of affairs in this country as some bad, bad dream—and no one's waking up fast enough.

"What's really scary is how totally indifferent the American public has become to totally mediocre characters leading their life," Noah says. "It's like living in George Orwell's world, you know. Where wrong is right. And freedom is slavery and ignorance is strength, right? It's fucking crazy. I tell you what the answer is, it's not the American political system that's flawed, it's the people that inhabit it. And it's

I tell you what the answer is, it's not the American political system that's flawed, it's the people that inhabit it. And it's the American public's fault, 'cause they're so fucking lazy.

-Mark Noah

very pleasant, and I just went and kind of gravitated to the angriest kind of music I could find. And bought records. The first punk records I ever got were the first Clash record, the first Sex Pistols record, and the first Stranglers record, and I think that was like 1979 when I was a freshman in high school."

Bands like One Way System and the UK Subs and stuff like that. I really started getting into that, and then of course some of the American groups like Minor Threat, and Black Flag and Negative Approach and all that stuff. And, not that I'm an extremist, 'cause I'm not, but I just liked the music that was more hard-edged



spewing lies and promoting socialism [Ed. — ???], and no one gave a shit. They still don't, of course, but at the time, it seemed obvious that the world was ripe for another dose of reality rock. One that was molded by a new sense of maturity, not just drinking and getting into streetfights. Noah was married and had a full-time job in the "real" world. But Oi music still spoke to him, and along with previous members Philip Soloman (drums) and Mike Jones (bass) he reformed the group in 1993, with strong new material in tow. Guitarist Mark McGhee was brought on board shortly thereafter.

than that.

It seemed a lot more honest to me."

As for the Atlanta scene at the time, "for this kind of music, it didn't exist," says Noah. "When we first started the Anti-Heros, Oi and street punk were not popular in America in general. And there were no bands that did it, and no following for it, really. 'Cause hardcore was pretty much what ruled back then. And a lot of the skate rock like JFA, and the Circle Jerks and stuff like that. I thought that the Circle Jerks were pretty fuckin' rockin' for their first few records. I saw their first tour here in the states, and I thought it was just awesome. But at that time, I thought bands like the Exploited were a lot more interesting to me than the Circle Jerks. But yeah, the scene in Atlanta back then for this kind of music was non-existent. But we kinda carved out our own scene, and at first it came out pretty cool. For a while there, before all the Nazis started showing up toward the end of the '80s, it was the biggest scene in Atlanta, and then all the fighting that we did against the Nazis back then pretty much destroyed it."

The Anti-Heros released two albums during the '80s. "That's Right" and "Don't Tread On Me" were originally issued on British indie label Link and distributed primarily in Europe, greatly expanding the band's following there, although enough imports found their way to U.S. record bins to satiate the quartet's growing Stateside audience. But violence among the crowds at their gigs was becoming alarming, and in 1989 they simply called it quits, in

disgust. "We couldn't play a show without a riot happening, or without one of us getting a bottle bounced off of our head or something like that," describes Noah. "It was pretty ugly, and we just said, 'Fuck it.'"

The layoff didn't last long, however. By '92

Taking things into his own hands, Noah decided to establish his own label, GMM Records, to release the group's new music as well as reissue their two out-of-print '80s albums on one CD. The first new music from the re-established band, the "Election Day"

For a while there, before all the Nazis started showing up toward the end of the '80s, it [Oi] was the biggest scene in Atlanta, and then all the fighting that we did against the Nazis back then pretty much destroyed it.

-Mark Noah

or '93 the Nazi gangs had dissipated, but on the other hand the American punk rock scene seemed to be degenerating into a pool of perpetual whininess, whether from the metal-head grunge contingent or the "I feel your pain" emo-core movement. Bill Clinton was elected President and immediately started

7", was followed in '95 by an EP, "Murder One." The three tracks on that CD were then expanded upon for their third full-length album, "American Pie," which Taang! issued in '96. Along the way, they've seen their audience get bigger than ever, both in the States and in Europe. The crowds are still crazed, of

course, but not necessarily as stupid and violent as before.

"Right now we have a really wide audience," observes Noah. "Punks, non-racist skinheads, and regular people, too—regular people that are into the music that don't have any kind of fashion connection or anything like that. And it's pretty cool! It's kind of surprising now that the band's been around for such a long time, and it's a lot more popular than it was back then. And we have a real good time with it."

Taking note of the hungry, growing audience for street punk in the "commercial alternative" '90s, but aware that most records in the genre were difficult to find, and many great bands had little if any help from a record label in the first place, Noah decided to expand GMM's canvas and start releasing music from other like-minded groups.

"There's almost more bands than there are fans," he laughs. "It's really funny. There's a lot of really good new bands in this genre of music right now."

To date, GMM has released dozens of singles and CD's from Oi and street punk bands the world over, including many from Atlanta—his wife Jennifer's all-female punk group Man's Ruin even had their riotous debut CD "whoyoucallin' CRACKER" released

on the label last year. In the wings for '99, GMM has discs from Boston's the Trouble, New York's Templars, Kansas City's Main Street Saints, LA's the Choice, Boston's Ducky Boys and England's One Way System in the wings. Add in a budget-priced 28-band label compilation called "Skins and Pins," and it looks to be a typically busy year for Noah's GMM ("Gimme My Money!") enterprise.

"You know, things have become so frenetic in my life, it's kind of depressing," the 34-year old laughs. "I'm so fucking busy I feel like I'm on the verge of a fucking heart attack! The record label has really gotten to be quite a bit larger than it used to be. We're crankin' out lots of new records, and people are really digging 'em and all that. Yeah, it's become quite a task."

But it hasn't overtaken his life to the point that the Anti-Heros have fallen by the wayside. On the contrary. Despite their pre-occupation with the "American History X" matter, they've been writing loads of new songs, and with new drummer Don Shumate in the lineup, they plan to record their next album in April and release it on GMM on the Fourth of July. As you might expect, Noah says the album, tentatively titled "Underneath the Underground," will be comprised of "songs

about life in America. You know, I'm really trying to get away from all the caustic and funny stuff that we've done, and make a more serious record. Our last record was pretty serious. But this one's kind of a combination of the two."

Hopefully out before that (on Taang!) will be "A Thousand Nights of Chaos," a live Anti-Heros album recorded last summer in Atlanta. The band will be returning to Europe for the first time in four years in June, playing the "Holidays in the Sun" punk festival, among other dates. A US tour will follow the release of "Underground." And so on. Another frantic year in the life of the Anti-Heros. No compromise. No surrender. No cowardly Nazis. No watered-down liberal bullshit. Straightforward, hard/fast reality. But does Noah have any hope that his band and others like it might somehow snap some people out of their daydream, knock some substance their way, help people see the truth for what it is?

"I don't know if we really aspire to such grand concepts, but I think a lot of people like the Anti-Heros for reasons other than the fact that it's loud, offensive music," he says, optimistically. "I really do think they make a personal connection with a lot of the ideals that are expressed in the songs." ⊕

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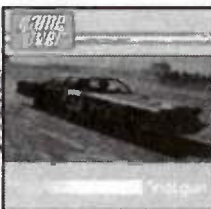


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I don't think so.... From under the boogery mattress comes a debate whose outcome may well change the world as you knew it! The debate will continue in 15 seconds...OK, time's up. I had to raise a paw in defense of the Hermits team. OK Ray, have you heard the Hermits version of "JEZEBEL" and "ACE KING QUEEN JACK"? I think these recordings are worthy of your perusal as evidence on the Hermits side. Sure, the



Dreamers were not pretty but "pretty" ugly. But have you seen Peter Noone's teeth lately? I think he must've had the same dentist as Rick ZZZZZerringer from the punk rock group the McCOYS. I think the term Tina uses is "English" teeth. The Freddie dance definitely

kicks ass on Herman's geeking and dimpling, but HERMAN'S A ROCKER.

LET'S GET READY TO RRRRRUMBLE!!! Oh Fuck Yeah, Britpop Mutha Fuckas!! Next beat band battle battles will include the Hullabalooos vs. the Honeycombs and the Rolling Stones vs. the Pretty Things (for a detailed update you will be instructed to turn to page 2 of your December's Children magazine, where John Hanrattie and Mike Stax were going at it with a flesh-in-their-teeth-and- blood-in-their-eyes [hey, just like a horny toad!]) battle to the death), not to mention the Beatles vs. the Dave Clark 5. Apples and oranges are somewhat too similar, so there. Now what was I talking about? Really, why waste time talking about such meaningless drivel as British beat bands? I can't think of one band playing nowadays that has more pissin' "punk" rock in it than the most average beat band had in it's toe jam. None of those beat bands had the FFFFFFoney "punk" imitations, or lame "punk" ethics, uniforms and rules which "punks" of today follow. Comform conform, and you won't be left out. "Yeah I got some rad tattoos, dude, and an awesome rod steward hairdooo...body piercings too, woweee! So what if I am a ROCKASAUROS (i.e., the Stitches) from another epoch gone by? I have adapted myself and hey, I can still rock with the best of them. It's anarchy all the way, dude!" Some folks say

what's so punk about a bunch of English kids in the 60s playing Bo Diddley (the regGAY and rap artist) or Chuck ("I'd kiss ya, but ya smell like pee") Berry covers? For sure those guys were just copying R&B, and there were alot of shitty groups too, but the number of great groups that just beat the crap out of every cover song they played was by far outweighing all the crummy ones. And only the jack-off ones tried for an "authentic" R&B sound. Of course, all those were in the dedicated-followers-of-fashion mold, too. You might wanna call 'em Mods. D.F. of F., I say.

Here are three fave new plugadereos I have to bring to your attentions: the Teenie Cheetahs (formerly in Tokyo's tuffest, the Evil Hoo Doo) 45 on Summpi werthiemer label ; the Fevers (better than the Beau Brummels) 45; and Bitchschool (Loli and Chone Christopher from Boyle Heights, almost as good as nick gilder) 45 on Lipstick label, are the best dicks available at your stores or for \$4 US cash at 5088 Camino Alta Mira/Castro Valley, CA 94546. Ya wanna be in my gang my gang? Just jump in, I ain't particular.

Next time we will investigate the punk phenomenon, THE ROCKIN' TELETUBBIES!!! from Bloomington, Indiana! And OK, that Beat LP and Teenage Head LP are good, I admit it. But Christ Child are terrible. A heavy metal-turned-punk group if ever there was one. Grosss me out to the max. I hope I am not making any sense to you and that you are just entertained by my potty-mouth, ha ha ha ha ha. But mama, I'm fuggin her as fast as I can! Thank you, sir, can I have another? ⊕

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Some KFC and Gas (A Story Strange but True)

That'll be five dollars and eighteen cents," she said to the old guy who was on pump #5. "Here," he fumbled in his pocket for the change and came out with a couple of coins, handed over a five spot and two dimes. She reached to the register to produce the two-penny change, but he said "you keep it, darlin'." So she kept it and he smiled like he'd done his good deed for the year and ambled outta the gas and GIANT junkfood 1-stop.



"I'm on number fer," yapped the next gent in line, handing over his plastic, "I'm gonna do ten."

"Dollars or gallons," she called back to him, but he was already out the door and the fat dude who was next threw down five giant bags of cheese puffs. "How much you pump," she asked him. An' he said "I didn't pump nothin', just the cheese chews." He sounded a tad pissed, like he'd been asked the same thing at other gas stops—like, maybe one of these times it'd be OK for a guy to just come in and buy dinner and not hafta feel bad fer not pumpin. In a huff he turned around and took off—"fuckin' place," he said to no-one in particular as his gut shoved the station's doors ajar. "Fuckin' world," he exhaled out loud outside where nobody could hear. He tore open the cheese bag with his teeth, reached inside to grab some in his extended sweaty paw, but the bag exploded from the force of his forearm—he was elbow-deep and it split in several sections. Still, he grabbed as much as he could and shoved it all quickly down into his mouth and bounded off across the street.

She, behind the counter, was about 35-ish, big overbite with a capped front tooth and yellowing cuspids. Pretty tall and sorta skinny, lousy skin. Could tell she'd been working here for quite a while, had the motions to the register down pat. Didn't look no-one in the eyes for more than a split second or two at the most. And you could tell that that was the seasoned mark of someone really good at what they do—for this sort of thing. Did she have a name? You bet, and a real good one: "Lavinia." Her tag said "Lavinia," but here at the

GIANT Superstop she answers to "honey"...or "darlin'." Well, to be straight, some travel-weary creep walked in when it wasn't all that crowded, and he said, "OK to fill it myself, ma'am?" "Ma'am"! She 'parently liked that a whole heckofa lot, cos she shot back, "why, sure is," surrendering a 3/4 exposed-cap smile. He tipped his hat, and went out to do his business.

Then finally no-one in line, so Lavinia sets down and swigs a big gulp of unsweetened Lipton Ice Tea. Two swigs, but then a couple suits walk in, check out the freezer—no, they decide they don't want any ice cream. They go by the crackers and cookies, look 'em over, no, they don't want none of that neither. Lavinia tracks 'em outta the corner of both eyes. Maybe if she pretends she don't notice that anyone's there, they'll hang for an extra minute or so—an' she can stay stationed. Been on her feet all mornin', the extra seconds on the stool and the cold tea feel pretty damn good, she's thinkin. One of 'em picks up an *Albuquerque Journal*. Starts readin' out loud to his buddy. "Goddamn hantavirus is gonna wipe us all out...Hey, Frank, they say that when those fuckin' deer mice meet winter, they're going to take for people's homes and stuff. And then shit's gonna hit the fan."

"Not if you don't breath3 the rat piss," says Frank.

"But how do you know if you're breathing the piss or not? It'd be, like, invisible, right?"

Frank thought about this for a moment, then offered that if he lived around these parts, hell, he'd get himself a small army of cats—the cats would of course stay outside cos he hates cats—but they'd "wipe out the goddamn vermin" since he wouldn't feed 'em

or nothin, so the only way the cats could survive would be to off alla the mice.

"Yeah, right, then what happens when one of the kits parades around with a headless fuckin' rodent into the house, or on the doorstep even, what then, bro?"

"Can you get the hanta thing from 'vaporated blood and stuff?"

"Well they say just piss and shit, but isn't piss part of blood, bro? I mean, like it's in the blood before it becomes piss. And what about the damn cats? If they're suckin' on the rats' eyeballs or pullin out tongues and shit, you tellin' me they can't carry the thing themselves?"

"Well, no-one ever said anything about cat piss or nothin. Cos if that could make you sick too, they'd of said somethin already."

"Maybe not, because the cat idea's pretty new. Ever seen a cat tear into a mouse, Frank? I had a buddy, he had two pet cats, one was called Justice an the other, I forget what it was called, Tequila or somethin like that...but anyway, the Siamese, Justice, somehow gets ahold of this real fat roof-rat, or maybe a tree-rat or whatever, but he twists off its goddamn head, then pulls its feet off, and goes and dumps the stinking, bloody rat body, what's left of it, into the john and drops it smack down on the goddamn toilet seat. He says his wife was the one who found out, cos she hadda go real bad,

"But how do you know if you're breathing the piss or not? It'd be, like, invisible, right?"

GREGG TURNER

Frank thought about this for a bit, and then admitted resolutely: “y’just can’t let ‘em in the goddamn house. That kinda shit happens...Cats gotta stay outside.”

His eyes opened wide, she was talkin' to him. That was good, he thought. He liked her a whole bunch, that's what he was thinkin', and found himself more than sorta excited at the prospect. "Well

She imagined herself about three seconds from a serious hardcore heave, but then Sally walked in with the chicken—coupla boxes of Kentucky Fried and some cokes. Sal trots past the stinky fuck, and drops the boxes and the bag of drinks on the counter behind the register. “We were a few dollars over,” and she unravels some change to bear witness to this fact.

Lav and Sal look up, as in "huh?"

“That Froggy Fried smells reeeel dern good. You gals must really go wild for that fried bird flesh, I betcha!” He stepped closer to the counter to get a better look. “Boy, I useta scarf bird all day long. In fact,” he opened his eyes wide in this unreal sorta way and added “I STILL DO SOMETIMES.” An he started laughin and hollerin. He clutched his tummy over his belt buckle—some kinda rodeo horse jumpin a fence—and turned crimson red, convulsive w/saliva and laughter. “These pretty young things jest cain’t turn down that Froggy Fried Chicken!! Heh heh heh heh eh eh eh eh eh...” And then he scooted out the doors and staggered off into the nether regions of the asphalt, way past the pumps and finally out into the fields, and Lavinia looked at Sal and they stared at the cooler with all its cold drinks. They embraced a short-lived vigil of silence, then reflexively pulled opened the box of takeout. The slaw sure looked good. ⊕



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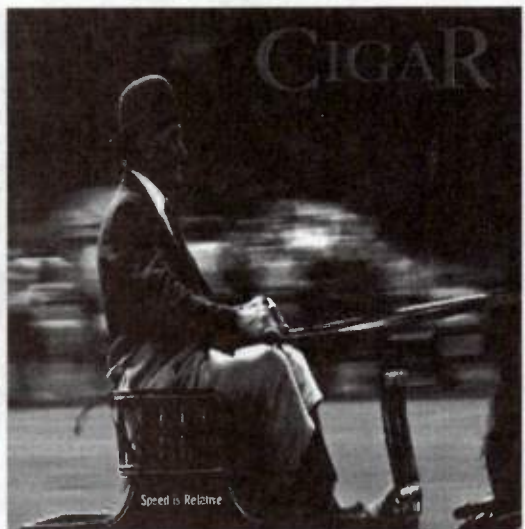
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Sorry Spike...I had to Lee-ve.

No one has ever linked becoming immortal with working the overnight at Mickey D's. Any self-respecting (i.e. self-exploiting) downtown glamour/media whore would rather go without hair dye and new body glitter for a month than ever don khakis and a navy blue name tag and utter the vomitous phrase "may I help you?". Yet all these brilliantly creative and completely uncompromising artistes would probably sell their mama's holes for even the teeniest role in a major motion picture...even as a lowly extra. I have oft-times been baffled at the desperate desire for fame of any kind that I've witnessed clinging like bad cologne to some of my friends. Likewise, many of these friends have looked utterly aghast when I mention the fact that I simply have no desire to pursue a career in "acting". I'm not impervious to peer pressure, though, and soon these horrified looks began to sow a subversive seed of doubt in my single-mindedness of purpose. Maybe I was going about achieving my goals in, simply put, a most retarded manner! Maybe recognition and integrity of purpose are, well, a load of cack! Maybe all that matters is getting to the last exit on the supersuccess highway, even if you have to wear Reeboks, Calvins, drive an Elmo Red BMW, and eat at every Starbucks along the way to do it! Yes! I had convinced myself that I too wanted some of that Gap-flavored pie, the only question was should I eat it with my Pottery Barn fork or my Ikea spoon?

Finally, my career opportunity as a hole seller arrived! I had been offered the opportunity to display my talents as a punk rock extra in the soon to be released Spike Lee "joint", "Summer Of Sam". I had never gone "Hollywood", and I was more than willing to sacrifice whatever it took to be a star. Feeling more confident than a titty dancer with taut new implants, here was where I was ready to, in the immortal words of Fame's Debbie Allen, "start paying...in SWEAT!". If it meant losing a ton of money at my way more lucrative day-job, paying more for a baby-sitter than I would be getting paid and, yes, selling my mama's hole, then by golly that's what I'd do! Once the name "Forty Acres and a..." appeared on my spy phone, indicating a call back, nothing and no one were going to prevent me from getting on my gear and appearing on set, all bright-eyed and bushy-bushed. I agonized over how to escape the clutches of my neo-feudalist boss for a day. I agonized over the punkness and '77 authenticity of my outfit (after all, the film is a period piece). Finally, as my dementia began to wield control, I agonized over the many future projects I might be offered as a result of this part....How would I balance an acting career with my already full life!? What a little fool I was. After arriving twenty minutes late to set, and suffering what appeared to be unnecessary coronary arrest because of my tardiness, I was rapidly approved by make-up and hair (who, for the record, seemed to be having a hard time discerning between '77 punk and '87 hair girl). For the next two hours, which in Hollywood hours is more like twenty, I was herded relentlessly from place to place with all the other eerily obedient extras like factory farm animals waiting to die. As my last ounce of patience was beginning to sweat out

from underneath my very Hazel O'Connor-ish blue wig, all of us anti-establishment punk rebels were cram packed into the sweat box that is CBGB's, without the benefit of air conditioning or even the most meager breeze from the PA system, to do what we do best...SUCK CORPORATE COCK! We were instructed by the crew to "Make it look real" and show abundant "energy" and "enthusiasm". Conversely we were given ginger ale in plastic cups and admonished not to drink all our "beer". After the protracted agony we had all already suffered, this final request was simply more than any of our heat-baked recalcitrant hearts could bear. If the word "ACTION!" had never formerly been a synonym for "SOAK EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE IN SIGHT WITH YOUR FAKE BEER!", it became one that night, thanks to my defi-



ant fellow cast members all of whom were sweating like an old pervert's hands in a school yard and suffering from stomach aches brought on by the school vending machine-fare offered by "crap" services.

I'm here to represent, never again will I, Michelley QueenofQueens, sell my hole for minimum wage, stale bagels, froot-loops, and the chance to pogo with a bunch of other two dollar whores to the sounds of a band who in real life would have

elicited about as much enthusiasm from the crowd as a wet cat fart on a hot day. You'll have to see who they are when the movie comes out, but trust me, they blew.

After about two MORE hours of these shenanigans I developed attention deficit disorder. Without the proper medication available I simply wandered off the set., despite the unprecedented

efforts of the crew to get me to stay Spike Lee cried, begging me not to abandon him. Through his tears he conceded that he had never seen talent like mine. I left the set anyway, feeling no regrets. After all there will always be another "forty suckers and a fool" dreaming of teeny film roles, excessive boredom and virtually no pay. Being a movie extra can fulfill that lofty dream.

Epilogue

Several weeks after originally expelling my little tale of woe from the bowels of my bitterness, the *New York Post* reported that many of the extras who suffered through the entire shoot had not been paid for their mohawked misery. Many of the people hired for the job were Gutter Punks who probably needed that \$35 just a wee bit more than Mr. Lee. Then again, if this flick does as well as the last few he's foisted upon us... ☸

I had been offered the opportunity to display my talents as a punk rock extra in the soon to be released Spike Lee "joint", "Summer Of Sam".



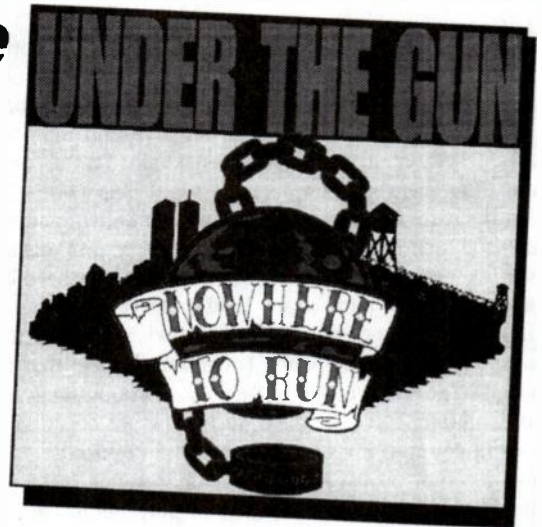
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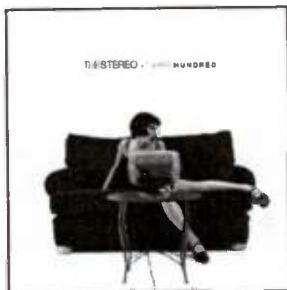
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MONICAGATE AND THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION: A DEEP PATTERN IN AMERICAN POLITICS?

by Peter Dale Scott

Peter Dale Scott is a former Canadian diplomat and professor at the University of California at Berkeley. He is one of the world's leading authorities on postwar covert and clandestine politics, and as such has acquired an encyclopedic knowledge about a host of arcane but important subjects. He has written several pioneering books, along with countless articles and essays, and first coined the term "parapolitics" thirty years ago to describe covert and clandestine political affairs. In recent years he has sought to extend his political analyses further by focussing on deeper structures and recurring patterns in contemporary American and international political history, and has coined the phrase "deep politics" to describe this newer theoretical approach. The piece below is a revised and slightly expanded version of a short opinion piece originally written as a newspaper editorial.

-Jeff Bale

In my book *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (1991) I wrote that "unexplained crises such as the Kennedy assassination, Watergate, and Contragate...are interrelated. To study any one of them is to acquire knowledge about some of the principal players, and their procedures, in the others."¹ In thus pointing to the deep continuities between these crises of each decade, I suggested the existence of a recurring pattern that might not repeat itself. Since that time we have seen Monicagate, and the hypothesis of continuity between our decennial crises has been upheld again.

When looking at deep continuities, we can ignore surface ones which tell us nothing. For example there is no significance to the reappearance of Washington lawyers like Charles Ruff, who moved into the Washington mainstream with Watergate, and later became chief counsel for the Clinton White House.

But it is significant that the person who forwarded Linda Tripp's tapes of Monica Lewinsky to the FBI is a book agent

and pseudo-journalist called Lucianne Goldberg, who in 1972 "told the [George] McGovern campaign that she worked for the North American Newspaper Alliance." Goldberg's role was not simply that of a cut-out or messenger for Linda Tripp. On January 22 she told the press "that she encouraged her friend Linda Tripp...to tape conversations with intern Monica Lewinsky."² She kept the tapes for Tripp and later turned them over to the FBI. If Tripp instigated Lewinsky, it would appear that Goldberg instigated Tripp.

Thus in Monicagate, as earlier in Watergate, Goldberg played a behind-the-scenes role (i.e., a deep as opposed to a surface one) in which she was apparently at home. Goldberg was exposed in 1973 as "a spy for [Richard] Nixon while she traveled with the press corps" covering McGovern's 1972 campaign. It was at this time that she said she worked for NANA (North American Newspaper Alliance), and supplied an address for NANA which "is the same as her current residence" in Manhattan. Watergate

investigators "said the Nixon campaign paid her \$1,000 a week."³ It was easy for Lucianne to use NANA as a cover, because her husband, Sydney Goldberg (an old enemy of Bobby Kennedy), was Editor and General Manager there at the time.⁴

Not mentioned in the first reports of Goldberg's role with Monica was the relevant fact that in 1972, as in the 1990s, Goldberg was snooping for sex. She told the late Anthony Lukas that the Nixon people "were looking for really dirty stuff...who was sleeping with whom, what the Secret Service men were doing with the stewardesses, who was smoking pot on the plane — that sort of thing."⁵ Her predecessor on this assignment was Seymour Freidin, who at the time was credibly accused by Jack Anderson of being a former CIA agent.⁶

Sixteen years later Lucianne Goldberg was involved in another sex and politics controversy, as the book agent for an expose of Senator Edward Kennedy's behavior at Chappaquidick. The book, by Leo Damore, was originally contracted for by Random House, which later backed out on the grounds that Damore failed to provide direct evidence for his accusations.⁷ Damore's book was eventually released by the right-wing publisher Henry Regnery, whose son Alfred is a close friend and former Department of Justice colleague of Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr.

Serious students of the JFK Assassination have long been interested in NANA, which supplied Priscilla Johnson (better known now as Priscilla McMillan) with her job in

Moscow, where she interviewed Lee Harvey Oswald at the urging of U.S. Consul Richard Snyder.⁶ This gave her the standing to publish a series of articles after the Kennedy assassination, presenting her image of Oswald as a "bitter" Marxist loner, "of the stuff of which fanatics are made."⁷

After the assassination, Johnson developed a close relationship with Marina Oswald, in connection with her selection as the writer for a book contract originally arranged by C.D. Jackson of *Life Magazine* at the urging of CIA Director Allen Dulles. Johnson replaced Isaac Don Levine, a veteran CIA publicist who in 1953 had worked with Dulles and Jackson (who was then in the White House) on the U.S.-CIA psychological warfare response to the death of Stalin.⁸

The book Johnson published on Marina, *Marina and Lee*, has itself been called a propaganda or psychological warfare operation. Its portrait of Oswald as a demented assassin is often based on vivid descriptions for which there is in fact little or no evidence. For example, she dramatically describes how Oswald in March 1963 "strode quickly" to practice shooting his rifle in the "Trinity River bottom." Her cited evidence is an FBI memo, which speculated that the "'Trinity River bottom' is clear and uninhabited and...could be used for rifle firing." (emphasis added)⁹

While with Marina, Johnson was present at the belated discovery of a questionable bus ticket stub in August 1964, which helped to place Oswald on a specific Mexican bus. This discovery was just in time to spare the Warren Commission potential embarrassment, and the account in the Warren Report was later based on it rather than on a bus manifest which had placed an "Oswald" on a different bus. That manifest had created a real problem: the FBI had already shown it to be a forgery, apparently traceable to someone in the office of the Mexican President.¹²

Priscilla Johnson's intelligence connections emerged more clearly after the CIA-assisted defection of Josef Stalin's daughter Svetlana Allilueva to the United States. Svetlana stayed at first with Priscilla Johnson's family on Long Island, and Priscilla translated Svetlana's memoir.¹³

NANA was itself created by a senior veteran of OSS (the wartime Office of Strategic Services), Ernest Cuneo, and continued to have intelligence connections. In 1963, before the assassination, it had come under Congressional scrutiny for publishing Chinese Nationalist propaganda, for which it had been paid large sums without registering as a foreign agent. At this same time its President, Ernest Cuneo, was a member of the Citizens' Committee for a Free Cuba, a

group calling in 1963 for a more militant anti-Castro policy, and meeting with dissident Cuban exiles.¹⁴ By the 1970s NANA was co-owned by Fortune Pope, whose brother Generoso was a former CIA officer.¹⁵

A recently-released CIA internal document from 1964 links Priscilla Johnson to Lucianne Goldberg's husband Sydney, while also suggesting that she personally was ignorant "of any NANA-CIA relationship:"

"During 1958 to 1960 she [Johnson] was employed in the U.S.S.R. by the North American Newspaper Alliance (NANA). Years later, rumors would surface that NANA was associated with the CIA.

NANA was run by Ernie Cuneo and Priscilla's editor was Sydney Goldberg. Priscilla had no inkling of any NANA-CIA relationship at the time. Today she too has heard such rumors.¹⁶

It would appear that the Oswald story and the Lewinsky story were released to the public with the help of people (Priscilla Johnson and Lucianne Goldberg) who moved in the same milieu of CIA contacts in the press. It is important to recognize that this fact is merely a symptom deserving further investigation; by itself it proves nothing.

Above all, as I wrote in 1993, these kinds of tenuous connections between Monicagate, Watergate, and the Kennedy assassination do not suggest that such crises are "part of some single conspiracy."¹⁷ On the contrary, the complexities and divergencies between them confirm "the need for deep political analysis, as opposed to conventional 'conspiratorial' analysis"¹⁸.

The isolation of a recurring symptom in Washington's political weather does not mean that this weather can now be understood or predicted. We are looking rather at recurrences of frictions and conflicts within our deep political system, which includes elements (such as intelligence agencies) that are often not visible within the public sphere of American politics. These conflicts are far too old and deeply constituted to be attributed to any single organization, conspiracy or cabal.

To thus recognize Monicagate as part of the deep political processes of our country, rather than some kind of anecdotal exception to them, is to imply nothing about the personal guilt or innocence of Bill Clinton. It suggests only that at least one of the people making his life difficult shared a propaganda or psywar background with others involved in past political intrigues. This does not resolve the question of whether Goldberg's efforts against Clinton were initiated on her own, or whether they were instigated by others.

But if those past intrigues are indeed related to the current crisis, we should perhaps look behind the seamy allegations to earlier symptoms of deep-rooted divisions in Clinton's Washington. Among those that were conspicuous at the time were Clinton's controversial realignment with China, the unresolved allegations about foreign campaign contributions, and FBI Director Louis Freeh's hints in December 1997 that he might resign his post.¹⁹ In retrospect one can point to any number of other emerging disagreements, possibly even over the then escalating situation in Kosovo.²⁰ ⊕

Notes:

(1) Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 7; cf. 303-05.

(2) These quotations are from an article in the January 23 *San Francisco Chronicle*, p. A11.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) *Who's Who in America*, 1984-85, under name "Sid Goldberg."

(5) J. Anthony Lukas, *Nightmare: The Underside of the Nixon Years* (New York: Viking, 1976), 161.

(6) *Ibid.* (predecessor); Vitalii Petrusenko, *A Dangerous Game: CIA and the Mass Media*; translated by Nicolai Kozelsky and Vladimir Leonov. (Prague: Interpress, [1977?]), 53 (CIA).

(7) *New York Times*, Nov 5, 1987.

(8) Peter Dale Scott, Paul Hoch, and Russell Stetler, *The Assassinations: Dallas and Beyond* (New York: Random House, 1976), 267; John Newman, *Oswald and the CIA* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1995), 70-76.

(9) Priscilla Johnson, *Boston Sunday Globe*, November 24, 1963, 19; reproduced in Warren Commission Hearings, XX, 290. Cf. Priscilla Johnson, "Oswald in Moscow," *Harper's Magazine*, April 1964, 46-50; reproduced in Warren Commission Hearings, XX, 307-11.

(10) Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK*, 55.

(11) Priscilla [Johnson] McMillan, *Marina and Lee* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 279, citing Warren Commission Hearings XXVI, 61, cf. Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK*, 370; Peter Dale Scott, *Coming to Jakarta* (New York: New Directions, 1989), 133.

(12) Warren Commission Hearings, V, 602, XXVI, 667 (Priscilla Johnson); XXIV, 619-21; XXV, 598-99 (false manifest).

(13) Peter Dale Scott, Paul Hoch, and Russell Stetler, *The Assassinations: Dallas and Beyond*, 267.

(14) Peter Dale Scott, *The Dallas Conspiracy* (unpublished manuscript, available from Tom Davis Books, Aptos), VIII-14.

(15) Daniel Brandt, "Monicagate's CIA Connection," <http://www.pir.org/> (Fortune Pope); *Who's Who in America*, 1984-85, under name "Generoso Pope" (CIA)

(16) JFK record in National Archives, quoted by John Newman, *Oswald and the CIA*, 540.

(17) Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK*, 303.

(18) *Ibid.*, xv.

(19) *New York Times*, December 20, 1997.

(20) *Wall Street Journal*, Jan 16, 1998. In my five-newspaper database, Kosovo merited nine mentions in 1996, 22 in 1997, and 788 in 1998.

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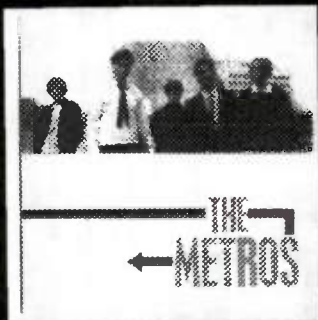
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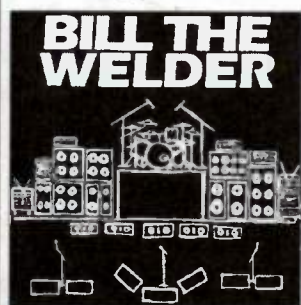
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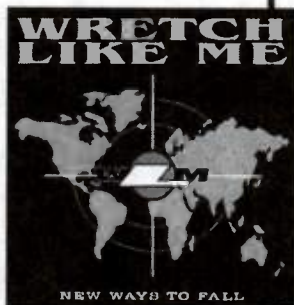


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We've got some good shit floating through *Hit List* HQ. We get way more terrible shit, but we actually do get some good shit once in a while. I would like to take a quick second to actually spotlight some of the gems that we've received lately. You will notice that my musical tastes are somewhat different than those of Jeff Bale's, but we both seem to like a lot of the same qualities. It has to have a great hook, and it has to rock in an all-out-aggressive manner. My tastes have always ranged from R&R, to Pop, to "Epi-Fat", to whatever, but the sounds of the hammering downstrokes on the power chords of a great punk song have always melted my heart. Please read the cover story on the BLACK HALOS. Jeff and I saw them a couple of times last summer, and we were just blown away by how great their songs were and how much fun it was to watch them rock out. When their new CD came out, it was all over. We scrapped the original cover story that we had and threw these bad boy rockers on it. Unfortunately, unlike the majority of our writers, I never had a chance to see the almighty DEAD BOYS and bands of their ilk. So it's really cool for me to see and hear new bands that put out records of this caliber, and to hear great R&R like this on a new release, as opposed to digging through my collection of early R&R classics (which now makes up the majority of my music listening time). I would highly recommend picking up the BLACK HALOS CD. It's on Die Young, Stay Pretty records, and should be in your local record store by the time this issue comes out.

If you can stand a little pop in your Oi, check out the new full length from the BODIES on TKO Records (which by the way, just in case you've been living underneath a fucking rock for the last few years, is one of the premiere record labels out there for great 77-style



p u n k , streetpunk, and Oi. Their shit looks and s o u n d s great, and they treat their bands like you wouldn't believe. I definitely r e c o m m e n d looking for TKO stuff in your local store). Anyway,

the BODIES fucking rock in an almighty fashion, with great vocals and a smokin' guitar sound. Make sure that, if you're lucky enough to have these guys come to your town this summer, you don't miss them. One of the best bands to spend your Friday nights drinking to. And speaking of hammering downstrokes, ALL recently released a "greatest hits" of sorts which absolutely rules. They always had great songs, but the quirky filler songs in between them always made me go back to the old DESCENDENTS' records for my rock fix (by the way, when Milo left the DESCENDENTS, he did a little project called MILESTONE. They did one radio show in '89, and Elastic Records from LA released it in '94. If you ever happen to stumble across a copy of this, pick it up. Some of these songs are better than a lot of

the DESCENDENTS stuff, which is saying a lot!). This ALL record ties together all of the highlights from the past ten records or so, and gives you 22 strong reasons to put this on your turntable and let a little dust build up on "Milo Goes To College" for the first time since you bought it!

I recently got a chance to hear the extremely-hyped ALL SYSTEMS GO!. My response is that this thing didn't get ENOUGH hype, since it totally rules. Featuring ex-members of BIG DRILL CAR and the DOUGHBOYS, this band brings back that mid -80's CRUZ Records sound that I could never get enough of. I'm quite curious to see who ends up putting their new record out, especially since we threw our label's name in to the running. (If we do end up putting this out, please don't



think that I'm using my column to promote my own record label, as I want this magazine and my label to remain entirely separated from each other. If I was interested in making shameless plugs that could be construed as a conflict of interest, I'd also be talking about an amazing new record that we just put out by a band called MARSHALL ARTIST, which features Kurt, Kim, and Mike from the FASTBACKS and Dave from the POSIES. Fuck, it's great!!!) Anyways, keep an eye open for the debut of ALL SYSTEMS GO!

I had a good chuckle the other day. I received a copy of the new PULLEY record, which actually is pretty damn good (at least a hell of a lot more consistent than their last record). So the first song comes on. Actually, let me preface this story with a



THREE OF THE HARDEST-ROCKING MEN IN SHOWBUSINESS: Milo Aukerman, Stephen Egerton and umm...uhh...some other guy who seems to like No Use For a Name.

few facts. Scott Radinsky sings for PULLEY. He also sang for TEN FOOT POLE and a great old Mystic label band called SCARED STRAIGHT. Scott is also a pitcher for the St. Louis Cardinals (how rad

HIT SQUAD

would it be to get to throw fast balls to Big Mac everyday in practice?). Anyway, the first song comes on, and Scott is singing this chorus about how he is "just another working class whore" and how his whole life is deadlines, so much so that he doesn't

have time for his own life.

DEADLINES?

Dude, you have to be on the

fucking ball-field before

noon. Those aren't dead-

lines! You get paid how

many million a year (even

though you actually only

work 6

months, and seeing as how

you're a pitcher, you only get action like once every 4 or 5

games) to throw a fucking ball, and you're a working class

whore? WANNA TRADE? This isn't an attack. I just thought it

was funny. I know they're only lyrics, but it feels kind of weird

to hear you sing those words. Please don't think that I am one

of these little PC whiners that think it's fucked up to make a

bunch of money. I say that if a team is stupid enough to pay millions of dol-

lars to see someone sport their jersey and play a game, then why shouldn't

you be the recipient? Fuck, I wish that somebody would start a hamburger-eat-

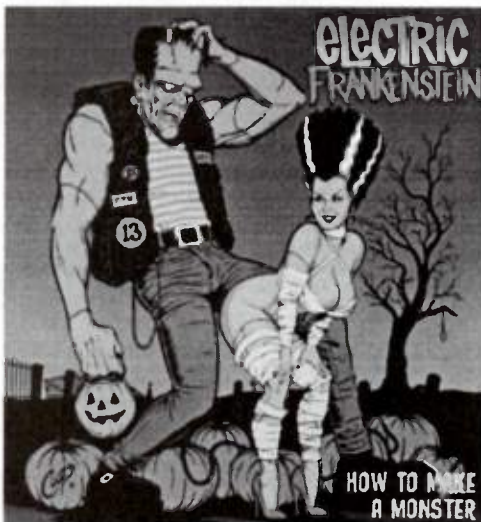
ing team! In that case I would be the Michael fuckin' Jordan of the sport.

Throw in a jersey and a cool mil, and I'll power back 7 or 8 of those little bas-

tards at one sitting. I can see the condiment endorsements now! Anyhow, the

new record is quite good. It kind of reminds me of the new DIESEL BOY.

Did someone say DIESEL BOY? Holy shit! Their new album smokes! I



wasn't a big fan of their first record, and their second record was a huge step forward for them, but who would have thought this thing would be coming around the turnpike next? It only furthers the mystery about whether Diesel Dave (singer/songwriter) is an actual lyrical genius, or just a fucking pervert. Personally, I believe he's a perfect combination of the two. With the quirkiness of their first record left FAR behind, all that's left to do is rock, and boy do they. Whether or not you were a fan of DB up til now, you should still go buy this record and give it a spin.

Other records worth mentioning include the HOT WATER MUSIC/LEATHERFACE split CD on BYO (a must get!), the new AFI (clearly the strongest offering from them since the first record, possibly even better), the ACTION SWINGERS' 7" on Reptilian Records (hunt this thing down and buy it, especially if you are a big BLACK FLAG fan; you'll love the sound!), the LILLINGTONS' "Death By Television" CD (although I'm getting sick of hearing people walk around the office talking about how it's the greatest pop punk album of the year), and of course the new ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN (even though they're starting to get a little too VAN HALEN for me, it's still an amazing R&R album). By the way, TURBONEGRO's "Apocalypse Dudes" is still the R&R album of the year so far. I challenge anybody to try and take that crown from them!

Thanks a million (or at least \$87) to Hopeless Records for inviting me to their open bar at their Subcity showcase the other night. Lewis and Darren are class acts, and they run a great label. When you buy something on Hopeless, rest assured that you're supporting great bands and a good label—not to mention the drinking habits of assholes like myself. ☺

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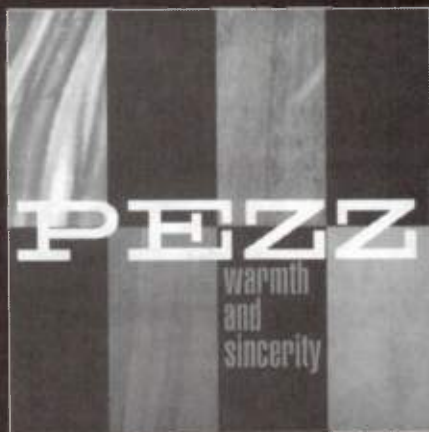
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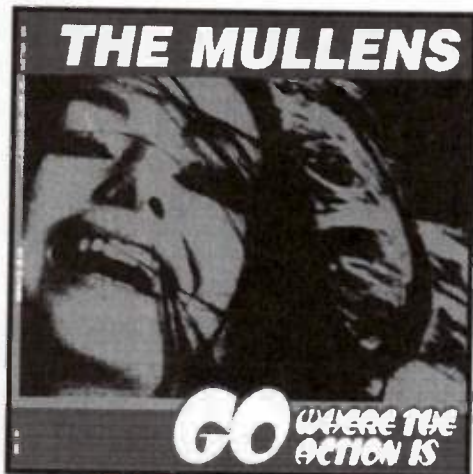
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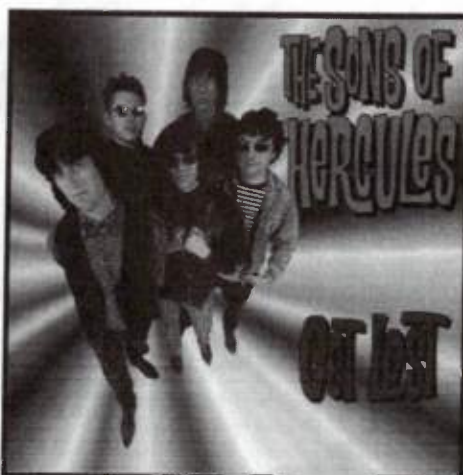
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Out in the Dark: THE LURKERS STORY

by Alan Wright

The Lurkers are a great punk rock band from England, whose history goes back to the original movement of the '70s. Perhaps you've heard current bands covering some of their songs like "Shadow" and "Ain't Got A Clue." While the band has been inactive at times, and had shifting personnel, they've continued to stay true to the original punk spirit of producing melodic, three-chord rock 'n' roll. While many other bands from this period have gotten their due credit, I always felt the Lurkers never got theirs. When the chance came to talk to Pete Stride and Arturo Bassick about the band, I jumped at it.

Our story begins in Ickenham, Middlesex, a small suburb in the west end of London. In 1976, four school mates, Pete Stride, Pete "Plug" Edwards, Nigel Moore, and Manic Esso (Pete Haynes) decided to form a band. "We met at school in the early '70s," says Pete. "After we left school, we carried on as drinking buddies and in the summer of '76, we thought it would be a good idea to form a band." Pete took up the guitar position, Nigel was on bass, Plug sang, and Esso manned

the drums. Pete Haynes had got the nickname from working at a petrol (gas) station. Then Howard Wall came along and took over lead singing duties. Plug stayed around as their roadie, played harmonica and sang back up. In May of 1977 Nigel left to join Swank, and was replaced by Arturo Bassick (Authur Billingsley), who came from Fullham.

So, what influenced the Lurkers to play "punk rock?" "We were all bored hanging around on the dole," says Pete. "We loved trashy American rock 'n' roll bands, namely the New York Dolls and the Ramones." "The Stooges, MC5, Dictators and early English '70s rock also," adds Arturo. Thus, the Lurkers were born. After a few months of practicing in the basement of the Fullham record shop Beggar's Banquet, and gigging around the London area, they were approached about making a record. "Mike Stone became our manager, and he worked at Beggar's Banquet when they were only a record shop," Pete explains. "He didn't have enough money to put into the band, so he got his bosses interested and formed the label for our first release. We had a very good

relationship with them until our record sales started dropping, then their interest waned and our relationship fell apart." The record in question was dubbed the "Free Admission Single," and featured "Shadow" and "Love Story." It was released in July of 1977. Both tunes were written by Pete, and stand out as classic punk rock tunes. Two months later saw the release of their second single, "Freak Show," backed with "Mass Media Believer." Again, a couple more killer tunes, with "Freak Show" being a funny song about going on a date with someone you'd rather not be with. Production chores, handled by Ed Hollis (Eddie & the Hot Rods) and Steve Lilywhite, were a step above their debut, but didn't harm the energy level one bit. The sleeve for this one featured a cartoon by local artist Savage Pencil, a.k.a. Edwin Pouncey, of another local band, the Art Attacks.

Around this time, some German film school students came to London to make a documentary on the burgeoning punk scene. The movie, later released as "Punk In London," features live footage of the Lurkers and an interview with Arturo. "A German school sent over some students to document the London punk scene," says Arturo. "They were looking for a punk rock musician who lived in a tower block and through Beggar's Banquet they found me. Seven heavily leather-clad Germans came into our tiny council flat, really freaking out my parents. They had so little money Beggar's Banquet had to buy reels of super eight film for them."

Arturo stayed with the Lurkers long enough to play on "Be My Prisoner," which came out on the Beggar's Banquet "Streets" compilation (which also featured the Art Attacks, Drones, Nosebleeds, Slaughter & the Dogs, the Reaction and more), but quit the band



soon after. "I left in November of '77," Arturo explains. "I was writing loads of songs that didn't fit in lyrically with the Lurkers, so I formed a band called Pinpoint who were managed by the Albion Organization, who managed 999 and the Stranglers, too." Pinpoint consisted of Arturo on guitar and vocals, Dave Allen on bass, and Hugh Norton-Griffiths on drums. "We made one LP called 'Third State'," says Arturo, "And three singles, all on the Albion label. None sold very well and Pinpoint split up in 1981." After the breakup of Pinpoint, Arturo had a band called the Lucky Saddles who made one single for Albion. "Then I had a band for five years which made two LPs and one single," says Arturo. "This band was a crazy punky and western band full of very large people called the Blubbery Hellbellies. It was pure fun and we played all over Europe, but split in '88, which was the year I got the Lurkers back together." More about that later!

Meanwhile, the Lurkers were carrying on, business as usual, with Kim Bradshaw (ex-Saints) now in the bass spot. "We advertised and Kim was the best," says Pete. "He was in the band for about a year." After Kim left, they drafted in old friend Nigel Moore, who they all knew from school. This was the line-up that would last for the next two years. A single of "Ain't Got A Clue"/"Ooh Ooh I Love You" was released with a bonus flexi disc of a goof-off song called "Fullham Fallout Firty Free", which was credited to "The Chaos Brothers."

Next came their debut LP, "Fullham Fallout." Produced and engineered by Mick Glossop,

the album captures a young band full of high energy rock and roll sensibility. It kicks off with the great "Ain't Got A Clue" and reprises "Shadow" from that first single. Most of the songs were written by Pete, with the exception of a Kim Bradshaw contribution called "Hey You," Nigel's "Go, Go, Go," the Stride/Esso tune "It's Quiet Here," the band composition "Gerald," and a cover of "Then I Kissed Her" retitled as "Then I Kicked Her." Band friend Pete "Plug" Edwards helped out on backing vocals and occasional harmonica. The album came out in April of 1978, with a nice gatefold sleeve featuring paintings of the band by artist Chuck Loyola. Initial pressings also threw in the flexi of "Fullham Fallout Firty Free," commonly known as "We Are The Chaos Brothers." Captian Oil, who reissued the album on CD in '97, retained the original artwork, added liner notes and a slew of bonus tracks including all the two pre-LP singles, the flipsides "Ooh I Love You" and "Pills," the flexi track, the "Streets" version of "Be My Prisoner" and demos of two of the LP songs ("Total War," "Then I Kissed Her"), "Freak Show", and a tune called "I Love The Dark."

The band followed up the LP with a single of "I Don't Need To Tell Her" and a non-LP flip, a cover of the Bo Diddley-via-NY Dolls song "Pills." It was released in five different picture sleeves, one of each member of the band, and one with all four of their pictures. The next single was "Just Thirteen" backed with "Countdown," both songs being exclusive to the 45, and released in January, 1979. The single was promoted with a headlining gig at the Lyceum with Adam and the Ants

supporting. In March of '79 the band was back in the studio with producer Phillip Jarrell to record tracks for their second album. A single was released from the sessions of "Out In The Dark," which also contained the tracks "Cyanide," "Suzie Is A Floozie," and "Cyanide (Pub Version)." This slower, reggae-ish version of "Cyanide" featured guest harmonica from their pal Plug.

Four months later, the Lurkers released their second album, the fantastic "God's Lonely Men." More varied in style than their debut, the album is an all time classic. Thematically, the songs seem darker and somewhat more complex. The band was stretching the boundries of punk, bringing in elements of psychedelia, especially on slower songs like "Out in the Dark," "Sleep on Diamonds" and "Non-Contender." The album is not without its share of speedy numbers, either: Moore's "She Knows," the Stride's "Cyanide" and the crunching Stride/Esso tune "Whatever Happened To Mary?" The band embarked on a U.K. tour to support the LP, which, according to Mark Brennan in his notes to the CD reissue of "Out In The Dark," almost ended in tragedy when their van and all their equipment crashed. Luckily, all the roadies escaped unscathed, but their equipment was destroyed.

By the end of '79, the Lurkers had been joined by ex-Boys guitarist Honest John Plain, who appeared with them on their last single, "New Guitar In Town"/"Little Ole Wine Drinker Me." The A-side, co-written by Stride and Plain, was a foreshadow of things to come, whereas the flip was a cover song. Not too long after the release of the single,

the Lurkers broke up. "Beggars Banquet decided to give us another chance," says Pete, "But since Esso and Nigel had been fired at John Plain's insistence, we decided to change the name of the band to the New Guitars." Recording sessions happened at three different studios, including the infamous Rockfield overseen by producer Pat Moran. An album was released in June of 1980 credited to Pete Stride and John Plain called "New Guitars In Town." On it, Pete and John played the guitars, Tony Bateman played the bass and sang back-up vocals, and Jack Black played the drums. Keyboard help came from Mick Talbot (later in the inexcusable Style Council!), and Howard Wall and Plug did the lead vocal chores, which were split evenly between the two. Pete handled lead vocals on one song, as well. The LP was much more R'n'B- and pub rock-influenced than the Lurkers, and also featured covers of "You Better Move On" (an early Stones cover of an Aurthur Alexander tune) and "He'll Have To Go," written by Joe Allison. A single was also released from the LP, featuring their cover of Sonny Bono's "Laugh At Me" (taken from the LP) on the A-side, and "Jimmy Brown" on the reverse. As a last Lurkers LP, Beggars Banquet also put out the "Last Will and Testament," a collection of singles and cuts off the two LPs.

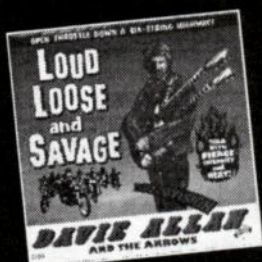
In 1982, the Lurkers got back together, sort of. Despite Moore and Esso being redrafted, Howard wasn't interested in coming back, so a new singer was sought out. Mark Fincham was found through an ad in "Melody Maker" in early 1982, which solicited a vocalist for "a known punk band." Mark Fincham had a great, thoroughly British-sounding and powerful punk voice and led the band through a series of cool 45 releases that they released while signed to the independent Clay label. The Lurkers Mark Two played their first gig at West Hampstead's Moonlight Club in the Spring of '82. Ex-Beggars Banquet owner Mike Stone signed the band to his newly formed Clay Records, after already signing the likes of GBH and Discharge. Their first release for Clay was "This Dirty Town," a Ramones-ish number played a breakneck speed. The B-side was "Wolf At The Door," a slightly slower but equally potent song with shouted beerhall-style choruses. The second release was the "Drag You Out"/"Heroin (It's All Over)" single, another great two-sided Lurkers disc. In February of '83 they released "Frankenstein Again"/"One Man's Meat", and the band played shows all throughout the year.

By late 1984, the Lurkers had split again. During the recordings for what was to be an album, the band developed typical "musical

differences" and broke up. Clay released the five songs they had recorded as the 12-inch "Final Vinyl" EP, released in March '84. The 1989 LP/CD "This Dirty Town" collects the Clay period stuff onto one handy long-player and is a good overview of the band at this point. "Heroin (It's All Over)" in particular is a great anti-junk commentary with an incendiary sound to it. Only a couple of tracks, such as the failed dance/dub experiment of "Let's Dance Now" and a pretty horrible version of "In The Midnight Hour", fail to live up to what the band was capable of.

After a three-year layoff, the Lurkers were once again inspired to get back together. This time, the inspiration came in the form of old friend and former bassist Arturo Bassick. Arturo had been contacted by a fan of the band to get them back together. "I got the Lurkers back together because the singer from a huge band in Germany called Die Toten Hosen, Campino, got in touch with me and offered to finance a comeback LP, so we just went for it," says Arturo. "We enjoyed playing so much that we haven't stopped again." How did Arturo end up being the band's singer this time, one wonders? "Arturo got the Lurkers back together in '88," says Pete. "He only wanted to play bass, but I didn't want to work with Howard or Mark again, so I suggested Arturo sing, which he has

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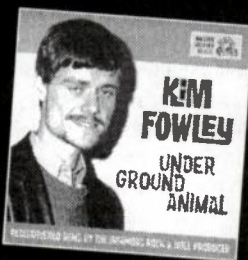
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write some songs for the last Lurkers album, which I was glad to contribute to."

Arturo and Dan meanwhile decided to keep going with the Lurkers name. "Me and Dan carried on with a guy called Alan Lee on guitar, who was in UK Subs for awhile," says Arturo. "He didn't last long, and we used Gabba from Chaos UK (who covered 'Ain't Got A Clue' on their 1992 split LP with Raw Noise entitled "Making A Killing," on the Vinyl Japan label) for a few gigs. He's a great guy, but was too busy with his own band. I had been playing and concentrating more on 999 than the Lurkers, so the Lurkers didn't play very often." They did find the time, however, to record a new Lurkers LP called "Ripped 'N' Torn" for the Step One label. "It's got 17 songs. I wrote seven, Dan and I wrote one, Esso and I wrote one, and I asked

Pete to write some songs for it, which he did," says Arturo. "We played in Argentina and Brazil last year with 999. I was playing twice a night!" In November '95 the band did a European tour with new guitarist Tom Spencer, and Arturo says "We aim to carry on 'till we're dead!" Indeed, "Ripped 'n' Torn" is one ripping release. I admit to being a little apprehensive when I learned that Pete had left, but new guitarist Tom Spencer plays the same kind of irresistible buzzsaw guitar. "One Day," which opens up the CD, is so catchy that I caught myself singing it for days after first hearing it. The songs are energetic and there's certainly no shortage of fast-paced punkers. In fact, the whole damn CD is filled with catchy tunes like "Extreme Heat Burning," "Furry Face," "Gotta Go" and "Who Wears The Crown?"

1997 also saw the release of a CD on Receiver called "Take Me Back To Babylon." This CD is a real mystery, since the pictures feature the Wall/Stride/Esso/Moore line-up, yet that's not the band on these recordings! The first 10 songs are from the "This Dirty Town" release, featuring the early '80s line-up of the band with vocalist Mark Fincham singing, but with a lousier sound, because for some reason a strange clicking noise mars some of the transfers. The last 13 songs are rerecordings featuring Arturo Bassick singing, and although they're not the original versions, this version of the Lurkers does a fine job on the songs. Recently, I learned that the Lurkers have decided to give it up. They are working on one more CD, sort of a "greatest hits" of rerecordings, with Pete contributing as both songwriter and musician. ⊕

THE LURKERS DISCOGRAPHY

"Shadow"/"Love Story" 7-inch single, 1977 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-1)
(orig. pressings on black vinyl, limited edition of 3000 pressed on red, white and blue vinyl)
"Freak Show"/"Mass Media Believer" 7-inch single, 1977 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-2)
Beg-1 and 2 reissued as double single Back-1, 1979)
"Be My Prisoner" on Streets compilation, 1977 (Beggar's Banquet Bega-1)
"Ain't Got A Clue"/"Ooh Ooh I Love You" 7-inch single, 1978 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-6)
(came with free flexidisc of "Fullham Fallout Firty Free" by "The Chaos Brothers," Beg-6)
"I Don't Need To Tell Her"/"Pills" 7-inch single, 1978 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-9)
Fullham Fallout LP, 1978
tracks: Ain't Got A Clue/I Don't Need To Tell Her/Total War/Hey
You/Shadow/Then I Kicked Her/Go Go Go/Jenny/Time Of Year/Self Destruct/It's Quiet
Here/Gerald/I'm On Heat/Be My Prisoner/Shadow (single version)*/Love Story*/Freak Show*/Mass Media Believer*/Ooh Ooh I Love You*/Pills*/We Are The Chaos Brothers*/Be My Prisoner ("Streets" version)*/Total War (demo)/Then I Kissed Her (demo)*/I Love The Dark* (demo)/Freak Show (demo)* (Beggar's Banquet Bega-2; reissued by Captain Oi! as Ahoy CD 73, 1997; * CD bonus tracks)
"Just Thirteen"/"Countdown" 7-inch single, 1979 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-14)
(Beg-9 and Beg-14 reissued as double single Back-3)
Out In The Dark 7-inch EP, 1979
tracks: Out In The Dark/Cyanide/Suzie Is A Floozy/Cyanide (pub version)
(Beggar's Banquet Beg-19)
God's Lonely Men LP, 1979
tracks: She Knows/God's Lonely Men/Out In The Dark/Cyanide/Whatever
Happened To Mary/Take Me Back To Babylon/Room 309/I'll Be With
You/Non-contender/Seven O'Clock Sameday/Sleep On Diamonds/Bad Times/Just Thirteen*/Countdown*/Suzie Is A Floozie*/Cyanide (Pub Version)*/New Guitar In Town*/Little Ole Wine Drinker Me*/Cold Old Night (demo)*/Pick me Up (demo)*/Mary's Coming Home (demo)*/New Guitar In Town (demo)*/Little Ole Wine Drinker Me (demo)* (Beggar's Banquet Bega-8; reissued

by Captain Oi! as Ahoy CD 74, 1997; *CD bonus tracks)
"Out In The Dark" on Twenty Of Another Kind comp. LP, 1979 (Polydor POLXC-1)
"New Guitar In Town"/"Little Ol' Wine Drinker Me" 7-inch single, 1979 (Beggar's Banquet Beg-28)
Last Will & Testament - Greatest Hits LP, 1980 (Beggar's Banquet Bopa-2; also reissued on LP/CD as Lowdown Records as BBL2/BBL2CD, 1988)
no track listing available
"This Dirty Town"/"Wolf At The Door" 7-inch single, 1982 (Clay 12)
"Drag You Out"/"Heroin It's All Over" 7-inch single, 1982 (Clay 17)
"Frankenstein Again"/"One Mans Meat" 7-inch single, 1983 (Clay 21)
Final Vinyl 12-inch EP, 1984 (Plate 7)
tracks: Let's Dance Now/Midnight Hour/By The Heart/Shut Out The Light/Frankenstein Again
"Let's Dance Now"/"Midnight Hour" 7-inch single, 1984 (Clay 32)
Wild Times Again LP/CD, 1988 (Weserlabel)
no track listing available
King Of The Mountain LP/CD, 1989 (Link)
no track listing available
Live & Loud! LP/CD, 1989 (Link)
no track listing available
This Dirty Town LP/CD, 1990
tracks: This Dirty Town/Drag You Out/Frankenstein Again/Heroin It's All Over/One Man's Meat/Wolf At The Door/Shut Out The Light/Let's Dance Now/Midnight Hour/By The Heart (Clay 104)
Powerjive LP/CD, 1990
tracks: Powerjive/Lipstick & Shampoo/Solitaire/Waiting For You/Things
Will Never Be The Same/The World Of Jenny Brown/Walk Like A Superstar (Talk Like A Zombie)/Go Go Girl/Strange Desire (Burn, Burn, Burn)/Raven's Wings/I Close My Eyes/Lullabye (Released Emotions REM 008)
Live In Berlin LP/CD, 1991 (Released Emotions)
no track listing available
Nonstop Nitropop LP/CD, 1992
track listing: Don't Need A Reason/Melt Away/Can't Stand My Room/Hand
In The Fire/She's Another Man/The Unknown/Show Goes On/Frozen Out/Jungle Creature/Storm In My Mind/Rags To Riches/Feel It Coming/In A Dark Room (Weserlabel)
Ripped 'n' Torn LP/CD, 1995
tracks: One Day/Nothing There For Me/Ripped 'n'

Torn/Extreme Heat
Burning/Red Light Girl/Too Lazy To Bleed/Don't Seem Right To Me/Furry Face/Don't Pick It Up/Gotta Go/False Fun/Special Friend/Scream And Shout/Shouldn't Do It/Slabs Of Grey/Who Wears The Crown/Start All Over (Do It Again) (Step One STEPCD 075)
"I'm On Heat" (Live), "Lucky John" & "Going Monkee Again" on Punk City
Rockers 4XCD set, 1995 (Castle Communications MBSCD 440)
"Just 13" on Dressed To Kill 3XCD set (Castle Communications?)
"New Guitar In Town (live)" & "Ain't Got A Clue (live)" on Punk & Nasty CD, 1995 (Emporio)
Beggar's Banquet Singles Collection CD, 1997 (Anagram) (contains all the singles, A & B-sides, from 1977-79)
Take Me Back To Babylon CD, 1997
tracks: all of This Dirty Town LP/CD, plus Then I Kissed Her/I Don't
Need To Tell Her/Freakshow/I'm On Heat/Be My Prisoner/Ain't Got A Clue/Self
Destruct/Just Thirteen/Take Me Back To Babylon/Love Story/Cyanide/Jenny/Time Of The Year (Receiver RRCD 243)

related:

Pinpoint:
"Richmond"/"???" 7-inch single, 1979 (Albion Del-8)
"Waking Up To The Morning"/"Floods & Trickle" 7-inch single, 1980 (Albion ION-1002)
"Yo Yo"/"Drowning In The Wave Of Love" 7-inch single, 1980 (Albion ION-1007)
Third State LP, 1980 (Albion)
Lucky Saddles:
"Both Here Today"/"Why Were You That Way" 7-inch single, 1981 (Albion ION-10009)
Pete Stride/Honest John Plain:
New Guitars In Town LP, 1980
tracks: Laugh At Me/School Girls/Cold Old Night/He'll Have To Go/Just
Like a Clown/Half the Time/New Guitar in Town/Cure For Love/Restless Kind/You Better Move On/Pick Me Up (Beggar's Banquet BEGA 17)
"Laugh At Me"/"Jimmy Brown" 7-inch single, 1980 (BEG-41)
999 w/Arturo:
You, Us, It CD (Anagram 1993)
Takeover CD (Cargo, 1998) ⊕

HIT SQUAD

Howdy hipsters. This is the frying Dutchman and fretboard warrior extraordinaire behind enemy lines, reporting from the deepest pits of sissy-lifestyle promotin' Techno Hell, cheese city. The quaint town of Amsterdam is where I call home. But if you thought the Politically Correct dogma patrol got the best of me, you're wrong. If you thought I was down for the count and wasn't coming back, here's some news for you: Mr. Tony Fuck-You-Over Slug is bringing on his asshole posse around for the third time since nineteenseventyfuckingeight to give you the fix of European Class, Style and Wisdom you so desperately need.

TONY SLUG

LET THE VEGANS EAT TUBE STEAK

They don't call me the Rock Pusher for nothing! I'm all up in that ass for the triple nine. Just watch me. So by accepting Jeff Bale's invitation to grace the pages of *Hit List*, I've joined the group of wise old men (sexism alert) who set out to save punk rock just in time for the next millenium. IT'S ABOUT TIME a European got to join the ranks of international punk rock celebs by becoming a "columnist". Only Bale, of course, is equipped with the brains to think of anything like that. Let the cult of personality commence. Cool!

Well THE PUNK WORLD IS IN DEEP SHIT, as we all know, but do not fret. The Rock 'n' Roll Superman (Nietzsche, not Clark Kent) from Amsterdam will come to the rescue. My first order of business is putting my masculine foot down firmly and saying, "TIL HERE AND NO FURTHER, YE

ANGLO SAXON SWINES!!!" The freedom fight against the cultural imperialism sponsored by California media moguls and their minions is in full swing. I call it the ROCK 'N' ROLL JIHAD. A holy war. And I'm telling you, it's ON, motherfuckers!! It's ON! Like soccer, it's kind of a European thing, but if you're bad enough you too can join the hooligans with the loud guitars. Clench your fist and repeat these words after me, to the tune of TWISTED SISTER's "We're Not Gonna Take It". Oh, no. Not anymore. The things we've had to put up with for ages. Fuck that! England hasn't produced ONE decent band in two decades and still clings to the ludicrous idea that it is the birthplace of punk rock. The fact that they expect be taken seriously as such is rather comical, but when European bands are ignored, treated with dis-

dain, and ridiculed for not being British for the past two decades, The Slug Man says (repeat after me), "FUCK YOU, LIMEYS!!!" (We're kicking Island Ape ass all over the place when it comes to punk rock, but more about that later.) Generations of misinformed American punkeroos, however, eat up the blandest, most tasteless Limey ersatz as if it were real. They recycle it (sometimes using funny fake accents) and then flood Europe with their versions of it, maybe adding a little Boston/Irish flavor to it (LIKE I GIVE A FUCK). Strangely, they find a willing ear among Euro dorks, whose bands copy it once more to the best of their abilities (reproducing the appropriate dress styles and other token stereotypes). All of this for the sake of accomodating the big shots in punk rock journalism across the Atlantic. Hoo-fuckin'-Ray. Gracing the pages of certain magazines is simply the only way for a European band to attain any kind of credibility on the home front. (Now you know why I'm doing this column. If no one else will, I'll be happy to promote myself. It's 100% DIY-certified punk!). Even though Germany has produced a number of its own institutions in the fanzine dept. that were modelled after the overseas examples, all they did was add to the crappy recycling trend and fuel Continental idolatry for Anglo-Saxon bands. Wunderbar. But The Slug Man says: Fuck that shit. Fuck Skinheads. (Being proud of being "Working Class" is like being proud of having a nose). Fuck the Crassholes and the Crusties too. (The "Crusties", known as "travellers" in England, are the best arguments in favor of the ethnic cleansing of Britain, in my opinion). An alarming amount of "DIS" bands have followed the path of the peace-loving porcupines of yesteryear. Punk Rock nostalgia is big business. Ska, which is just a pube's length away from Reggae, is more popular than ever. (TROMBONES in rock-

'n'roll? I don't think so, chump.) "Punk" is now a career opportunity for white-bread American suburban assholes more than anything else. European touring agencies monopolize "the scene", yet endless numbers of carbon copy, dime-a-dozen "88 style" clonecore groups emulating YOUTH OF TODAY—who wanted to be MINOR THREAT—portray themselves as bona fide flagbearers of "The Hardcore Spirit" ad nauseum. WHAT THE HELL DO THEY KNOW? They're so full

of "Hardcore Pride" that The Slug Man can only recommend diapers. ("Pampers Boy or Pampers Girl, they're both full of shit!"). This might explain those STUPID LOOKING baggy-ass pants, by the way. It's been at least 17 years since hardcore was relevant, and nowadays this type of music BORES THE FUCK OUTTA ME. By endlessly rehashing the same "youth/scene" rhetoric, etc., subjects which hardly top my own agenda, 1999 "hardcore" doesn't make me happy, much less rock my world. If anything, it was me who singlehandedly MADE the fucking scene in this town back in 1982, when the Heroes Of Today were still chomping on their mommy's veined milk bags—assuming they were born at all. But who cares? Not me. At age 36, I'm simply a little too old for the boys' club. All "the kids" are is a bunch of

England hasn't produced ONE decent band in two decades and still clings to the ludicrous idea that it is the birthplace of punk rock.

SQUARES. Just look at them and their preppy-ass girlfriends. The "scene" can go to hell, for all I care.

What else do I need to stomp on? Epitaph kiddie core!! Skateboards. Oh, No !!! Happy, shiny people. Yikes!!! Limp-ass quirky- sounding shit bands from Berkeley just have to suck the pecker snot outta Larry Livermore or rub elbows with some MRR columnist in order to get worldwide recognition, whereas a European group, on the other hand, can bust their asses for over 20 years and never make a fucking penny. (Of course, I'm talking about myself.) All the money was made by Record Labels, including some PC ones that shall remain unmentioned, and was then donated to "good causes" like paying the electricity bills of squatters who blew all their social benefit cheques on beer and drugs. Or it was raked in by anonymous asshole bootleggers, some of whom claimed to do it "to support the scene" (HEY ASSHOLES, HOW ABOUT STARTING YOUR OWN BANDS?). US groups can get 40-date European tours with guarantees, hotels, catering, free booze, etc., handed to them on a silver platter on the strength of a 45 and sufficient lip service from MRR columnists, whereas European bands can hardly get any shows locally because no one gives a damn on EITHER side of the Atlantic, unless they become chummy chums with the American headliners or something. "Book your own life", MY ASS.

The good news is that the times they are a changin', party people. Because EURO ROCK IS ON THE MOVE!! Your faithful dyke-

plugging Dutch pal, Snoop Sluggo Slug, has always been marching to his own drum, in spite of the most unforgiving circumstances, rocking harder than anyone else, being 5 years ahead of his time all the time, Karma in the red, driving drunk in the fast lane, and wiping out wimps for kicks like it's going outta style. Yeah, paying more dues and being stabbed in the back more times than a whole generation of "88-style" bands combined can even IMAGINE, much less TRY it the Spartan way like the Slug Man did. I walk through Death Valley WITH NO PANTS ON!!! But I can take it because I GOT ROCK 'N' ROLL. Nowadays I play this music for my own

personal enjoyment and nothing else. PERIOD. And I'll quit doing it only when I've had enough. But some years ago even the Slug Man was once close to giving up on punk rock altogether, since I was so fuckin' tired of the suck-ass bands fitting into the aforementioned categories. Why bother getting a new band together myself and wasting my talents on stupid wannabe American kids half my age, who were into skatecore and didn't care anyways? Realizing that my dreams were shattered and that my musical career was a big failure, I thought, OH WELL...Then, strangely, things began catching up with me. At last.

It all started about four years ago. One fateful night, I saw a bunch of Swedes called the HELLACOPTERS open up for some New York hipster bands of the Amrep "pigfuck" variety (if anyone still uses that dumb phrase?), and boy, they got me into a frenzy when they commenced to ROCK and hit the spot like a line of wicked biker meth. OBLITERATING the crowd of—count

TONYSLUG

'em—30 people who could be bothered to check them out (since being European means playing at the bottom on the bill) the band pummeled eardrums in a high-decibel, beer-n-sweat soaked hi-energy STOOGE-fest, with all the feedback and double the rock, while displaying the most daring, manliest, un-PC ("macho"), cartoon-character rock poses imaginable. WITHOUT coming off like Spinal Tap, mind you. These guys were seriously the BADDEST of the BAD ASS, and humiliated the US hipster headliners without pity. Feeling humble, I headed backstage to give them the thumbs up. Imagine my astonishment when the band members turned out to be huge fans of MY old bands, BGK and LOVESLUG, who I always believed had faded into obscurity without making a mark on later generations in Europe. Now the 'COPTERS have since conquered the entire world, closely followed by (the now sadly defunct) TURBONEGRO. Equally mind-blowing on stage, the members of TURBO were also quick to recognize The Slug Man as one of Europe's most prominent Riff Smiths. When Norway's Kings Of Rock, GLUECIFER, first hit Amsterdam to spread the "Hard Rock Gets You Laid" gospel several years ago (adequately summing up my personal motto since the good old days) and blew minds with Norse scorchorama, one of the guys came up to say he first picked up a guitar after

hearing one of my records., I was freaked out by all of this, folks. People rarely treat me this nicely.

But now I see things in a broader perspective and have accepted full responsibility as the undisputed leader of the ROCK 'N' ROLL JIHAD and FUEHRER OF THE EURO ROCK MOVEMENT. I intend to wield my rock sceptre with all the grandeur of the enlightened despot and the wisdom of Solomon, as ever-increasing numbers of Continental Cool Cats join in to BEAT THE ANGLO-AMERICANS AT THEIR OWN GAME with KICKASS ROCK 'N' ROLL! Fly, fly, my pretties! This R'N'R JIHAD thing is starting

to work out nicely, so far ! First I hereby decree that all you commoners check out the GRINNERS, the TURPENTINES, and PUFFBALL from Sweden (or anything on Bad Afro records for that matter); German Rock'n'roll Shocktroopers the CELLOPHANE SUCKERS keep up the best of German Blitzkrieg traditions, as do fellow Krautlings the GREAT UNWASHED (remnants of LOVESLUG-clones, the DUKE OF DICKS) and the DOGFOOD FIVE. Last, and most importantly, I should mention the (reunited) NITWITZ. Our album "Dark Side of the Spoon"—not to be confused with the one by MINISTRY, who stole our title—is NOW available stateside on Get Hip and should give you ignoroids an idea of what the heavy Continental Euro Rock sound is all about. Somebody get us a tour, goddammit ! When the Slug express comes rolling into your town like a wagonload of wild oats, I'll dump a ton of rock on all you American WIMPS. Till then, or some other time. ⊕

***I walk through Death Valley
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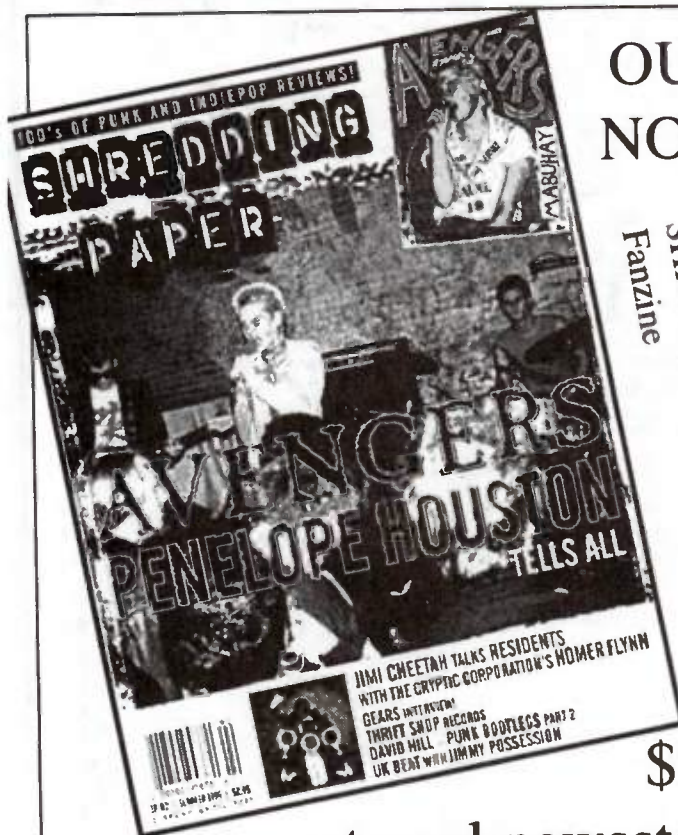
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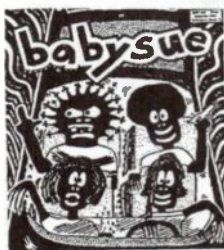
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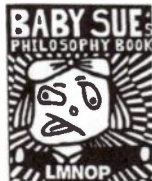
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THE BRUTAL GOURMET

Fuck San Francisco! I used to love it here, but the town I see lately is not the same town that I fell in love with 12 years ago when I arrived here. SF has always had it's annoying traits: the Bay Area, the Haight, the hippies, and the Idiot liberals. However, the changes I've seen here in the Mission over the past year and a half are astounding. It happened like lightning...a tsunami of college-educated white folks. I knew things were going south for the first time about two years ago, when I saw a white woman running

Sir Lord John Cobbett

by my house, and realized that she wasn't running FROM anyone...she was JOGGING! Sure enough, my rent went up. The speedfreaks next door have been replaced by gardening office brats. The ancient, junk-peddling hippies down the street have been replaced by a website. Even the hookers on Capp Street have been gentrified.

I preferred the old Capp Street, where all good dope-sick whores stopped on their way to Heaven. Where Jesus-worshipping, ugly old Mexican dudes cruised around in beat-up sedans, gritting their yellowy teeth beneath their mustaches as they scanned the sidewalk for a polydent- flavored blowjob. The old, half-dead streetwalkers that once haunted Capp Street have been replaced by underage, overpriced tarts. These new-fangled hussies my be a little easier on the eye, but they lack the rustic appeal of the old hookers. The macabre, tragic ambience of the Mission's peculiar red light district is gone, along with so much of what used to make this town interesting.

Even the pimps suck now. Just look at 'em: a cliché'd bunch of diamond-studded glasses-wearing walking stereotypes. These younger, tough-guy gangsta idiots from somewhere else should be jailed simply for being BORING! There used to be this old black pimp, who had some skin pigmentation disorder...we used to call him SPOT. You could see him running down Capp Street on any Saturday night, brandishing a tire iron and screaming some archaic pimp-gibberish as he chased off some equally dishevelled rival scumbag. That's how I liked it. The stakes were LOW, the entertainment morbidly CHEAP, and dissolute self-annihilation rained down from the filthy skies like so much acrid, poison-laced URINE.

By far the most revolting development of all is the influx of the Bay Bridge-traversing human trash that now solicits the services of these strange new hookers. Man, I HATE frat boys, guilt-ridden drunk yuppies, and hootin', hollerin' suburban jock-boys! If any of you wastes of meat are reading this, please DIE!! Better yet, go find one of those vanquished, disease-ridden prostitutes, contract a deadly venereal disease, go back to the East Bay, and infect your own fucking PEOPLE with it.

Anyway, here is my recipe for this issue:

SPOT'S CABBAGE and POTATOES

Ingredients: 1 head of cabbage, 2 potatoes, 1/4 stick of butter, 2 standard shots of rice vinegar, salt and pepper
Chop up the cabbage. chop up the taters. steam for 15 or 20 minutes. when it's done melt butter into it, add vinegar, and salt and pepper to create much needed flavor. Eat. Go kill a yuppie.

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By Stuart
Derdeyn

THE BLACK HALOS OF K&E



Dead boys and girls rise up. It's time to rock and roll over again. Vancouver, B.C.'s Black Halos play pure punk for now people, and the five-piece band's debut disc on SubPop's Die Young Stay Pretty imprint will rock your world. Guaranteed.

Mixed by legendary Seattle producer Jack Endino, the Halos twelve-cut album captures what the group does best—pump out '77 NYC-style tunes packed with plenty of swagger, piss 'n' vinegar, and (gasp!) pop hooks.

If you've got a problem with that, the members of the band have a rigid digit directed at you.

After five years of taking crap for being different than every other group in town, getting turned down for gigs, having to change their name (from Black Market Babies in order to avoid confusion with a defunct D.C. act), and

fighting tooth and nail to get where they are, the Black Halos figure they've finally got the right to party.

That's not to say these guys are a bunch of cocky bastards (actually, they are), only that they've got a goal in

mind—to bring riff-starved rock fans the noise they need to maintain a positive attitude in tough times.

I caught up with the five Men in Black a week before they head out on their first cross-Canada tour with label mates the Murder City Devils (who they've toured across the U.S. with, too), and it turned out that the boys—guitarist Rich Jones, drummer Rob Zgallic, singer Billy Hopeless, guitarist Jay Millette and bassist Matt Camlrund—had plenty to say. Here's a summary of the chatter.

* The Guns 'N' Roses Thing

SD: Rich, you're quoted in the label bio as swearing you'll wear your Guns n' Roses shirt with pride. What is that? Tell me about how "November Rain" moved ya?

Rich: That fucking quote keeps coming back to haunt me over and over. [Ed.—I know the feeling!] Simply put, we're fully supportive of G 'n' R's first record. The first album is a good rock record.

Matt: Yeah, "Appetite for Destruction" is a totally excellent album.

Billy: I think "November Rain" has better lyrical content and melodies, and half of "Use Your Illusion" is better than "Appetite".

Chorus: Shut up!

Rich: That just happens to be a band that plays, or played, the kind of straight ahead rock we've always been into. Maybe it wasn't the best example to use.

SD: Fair enough. So can any of you guys do the Axl dance?

Billy: No, and none of us can hit those high notes either.

Jay: What do you mean, Rich sings like a girl.

* New Dead Boys

SD: People are bound to call you Dead Boys clones.

Billy: Well, that's their choice. We're really more like the Lords (of the New Church) than anything else. That was Stiv Bators' finest moment in my mind, both lyrically and otherwise.

Rich: I think we were drawn to the NYC stuff because that's where it all started. Plus the scene there had Blondie (SD: the Black Halos' name actually comes from a Blondie song), Television, the Ramones and Johnny Thunders, all this variety.

Rob: That's a much bigger influence on us than the British scene. But we're our own band, it's not like we decided to be Dead Boys 2.

Matt: That's not to say we don't luuuuuuuve Britain and Europe. We do, we'd love to play there.

Rich: We just want to bring some of the energy and fun back to rock. There's so many shitty bands out there.

* The "Slick" Thing

SD: One of the things about the record is how slick it sounds.

Jack: There's no Mr. Slick producer going on with the record, we did it in only 8 days and it was generally a live off-the-floor approach. A good band sounds good.

SD: OK, so it's not slick. What did you think of the final product?

Jack: The record's so catchy, it's like a pop record in disguise. A lot of bands figure you can just go out there and be loud and in people's faces and

it'll work.

The Black Halos are shameless, they'll do it all to put on a ripping show. Plus, they got hooks galore, that's the most important element in the long run, and these guys have lots of them. Band members bristle at the mention of words like slick, or over-produced, being applied to their debut recording.

Billy: Oh man, we've heard that. It's like we don't sound raw like the Stooges or something. I

mean, we don't sound like the Stooges anyways, but if they could've made better-sounding records they would've too. Some of those albums sound just awful. They're still magic to me, but they sound like shit.

Rich: Why go out of your way to sound bad? Some people like to see us as a garage rock band, and we're just not that kind of group at all. I mean people start slagging you because they can

hear the high hat on the song, and the guitars are in tune. Sorry, that's just the way it is. Wait until you hear what we do when we really sell-out.

Billy: I mean listen to any of the New York Dolls records. Todd Rundgren produced the shit out of that band, and it's a classic sound. 'Nuff said.

* Glamorous, not glam

SD: So Rich and Billy, did you mold all the other members in your own image?

Rob: I had this haircut before any of these other guys did. Back when I played in Sparkmarker.

Jay: Billy was a longhair before.

Rich: The fact is we're as well known in some circles for how we look as how we sound. You know what you're getting from the start. But we sure as hell never jumped on any glam-wagon.

Jay: It's bullshit to think just your music is going to get people interested.

Everyone has an image, and you have to look good.

Matt: The fact that we all look alike is because we've been hanging around with each other for the past few years. You

notice somebody's belt and you're like "hey that's cool, where can I get one". Sooner or later you all look similar.

Rich: And we'd take sponsorship from MAC cosmetics if they offered it.

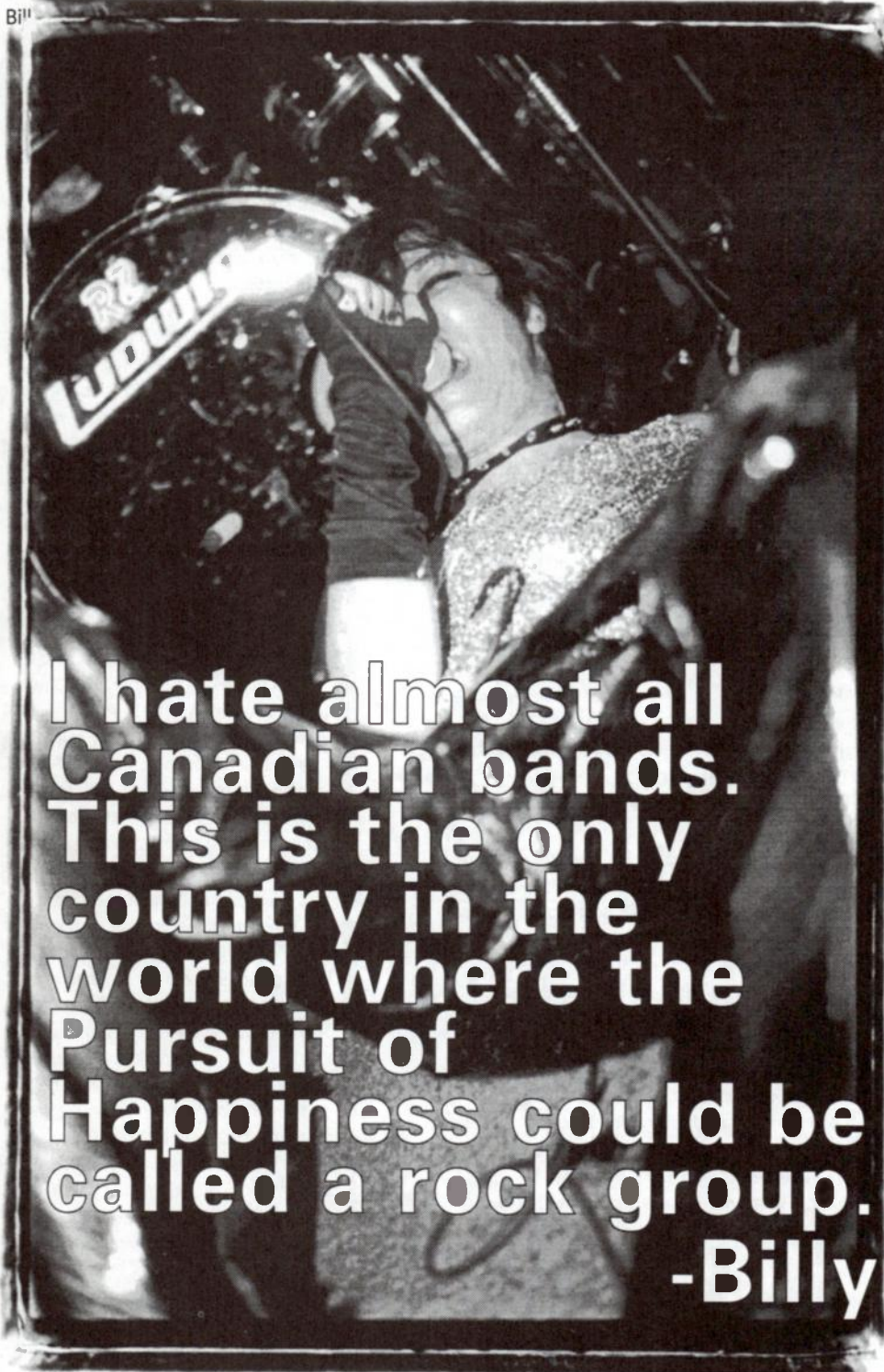
Matt: And Levi's jeans.

Jay: Yeah, no Wranglers.

Rob: This is the way we dress for our day jobs.

Billy: Face it, glamorous we are. Glam we're not.

SD: I don't know about that, Billy. What self-respecting rock star drops his pants at a high exposure gig like South By Southwest and has white Y-fronts on?



I hate almost all
Canadian bands.
This is the only
country in the
world where the
Pursuit of
Happiness could be
called a rock group.
-Billy

Self-respecting? I mean white Y-fronts are better than some little shiny gold lamé things that would be more glam than punk, wouldn't they? I wasn't concerned with what underwear I was wearing at the time, sorry.

Matt: Judging from how long you'd been wearing them you should have been.

Note: The April 12-May 12 issue of Seattle entertainment paper *The Rocket* reported that Billy Hopeless stripped down to "nothing but his microphone cord and his sparkling gold bikini

briefs! at the Sub Pop anniversary party at the O.K. Hotel.

SD: So, there's the image thing, but what else goes into being a great band?

* The Black Halos 10 Steps To Be a Rock Band

1. Take No Shit.
2. Have unabashed fun on stage. Go crazy, dance, whatever.
3. Don't worry about trends or what people think. Do your own thing.

4. If nobody likes what you're doing but you do, fuck 'em. You're right.
5. Be critical of yourself. If you get good enough, the music will speak for itself.
6. Be cocky and able to back it up. Assholes don't rule.
7. If someone asks you if your band is any good, the answer is always: We're the best. Believe it.
8. Write good songs. Don't ever leave half-assed stuff in your set.
9. Don't let yourself get fucked over by anyone. It's better not to play than to give it up to slimy promoters and club owners.
10. This is the best job you'll ever have. Treat it like one.

The last point is one worth looking at, because everyone who works with the Halos has nothing but good shit to report about the group's work ethic.

Meg Watjen: They kick ass and I hope they sell a million records. But realistically, they have to tour their asses off and we'll do the best we can to support them. A band this new has to grow mostly from touring and word of mouth. They need to get out there and I think they'll get radio play on a lot of specialty weekend shows and college radio, because the songs are just so catchy. They have an amazing dynamism, and a really good live stage presence, which can't hurt. But the fact that they have a good time doing what they do and are totally realistic about what it takes to succeed really impressed me the most.

Working with bands this good is excellent. Jack Endino: There's always been a lot of good bands in Vancouver, but the border gets in the way. These guys have been courageous about the border like NoMeansNo has, doing all the paper work and so on. Canada's a bitch to tour, so you have to make it to the States if you're from the West Coast, and these guys understood that right from the start. There's bands that can take care of business and are realistic about the work involved, and those that don't. You're your own business and you run the mom and pop store yourself.

* The Canadian Thing

SD: Did you need Seattle for this record to happen?

Rob: Absolutely, the Canadian scene is so shitty right now there's no way this could have happened anywhere else.

Rich: Yeah, I hope that the people can handle the massive rock and roll dose that us and the Devils are going to deliver. I'm not sure Canada is up for it.

Billy: I hate almost all Canadian bands. This is the only country in the world where the Pursuit of Happiness could be called a rock group.

Jay: Or Wide Mouth Mason.

Rich: Here we go again, slagging bands. But it's really true, there are so many bad bands up here. Down in Seattle there's this community which gets this vibe going. It's like Kim from the



Fastbacks just dropped by to put some vocals on our record and we recorded with Jack Endino. That couldn't have happened in Vancouver. Rob: Yeah, right now there's just no studio, producers, and so on that do anything with this music.

infested Downtown East Side of Vancouver. "I hand out medication and clean up for hard to house folks in a transition house." Recently quit as a porno store clerk. "The boss kicked me around." Rob: Netzwerk Records employee, handling mer-

they're wearing."

Rich: Advertising rep for Sam the Record Man store in Vancouver.

Jay: Living off playing in the Black Halos. Very hungry.

***Fave Rock Album of All Time**

Matt: Motley Crüe records. All of them.

Jay: Probably a Stones record like "Exile on Mainstreet".

Rich: Probably a Stones disc too. Maybe "Back in Black" by AC/DC

Billy: The first New York Dolls record, "Kill City" by Iggy Pop, Tom Waits. Can't pick just one.

Rob: Kiss' "Destroyer" was the first record I ever bought.

The band's fave song of the record: Toss up between "Retro World" and "Sad Boy".

Interview, Part II

***Here's the answers. RZ= Rob Zgaljic, RJ= Rich Jones, JM=Jay Millette.**

1. Why did the band take such a long time before recording?

RJ: We didn't take a long time to record, we took a long time to actually release anything. We've got an archive of stuff that we've recorded over the years, but I'm of the mind that just because you record something, it doesn't mean that it's worth releasing. I wanted to make sure I was happy with something that had my name on it. You know, I wish more bands would realise that just because you can afford to put out an indie CD, it doesn't mean that you should. Maybe then there wouldn't be so many shitty bands with basements full of unsold CD's.

JM: Yeah, I don't think we EVER had intentions of sinking big dollars into recording ourselves. We wanted somebody else to sink big money into us!!

2. You've performed acoustically, as well as a show as the New West Dolls (a semi-infamous show where the band dressed up as the NY Dolls and played a gay country bar); what do these shows contribute to the Black Halos?

RZ: We don't want to be predictable. We want our shows to be events, not just another Black Halos gig. We want to keep people on their toes wanting to know what we'll do next. I thought our acoustic show was great, people really seemed to love it and it was also a little bit of a challenge for us to pull it off without looking like a bunch of idiots.

RJ: Yeah, I think the acoustic thing is about showing people that we're not just a slash'n'burn rock'n'roll band. We actually have some songs. It may sound strange, but that's our "gimmick": good songs. As for the New West Dolls thing, that was just a fun thing. It was as much for our own entertainment as it was for people who wanted to go and see a Dolls cover band. And

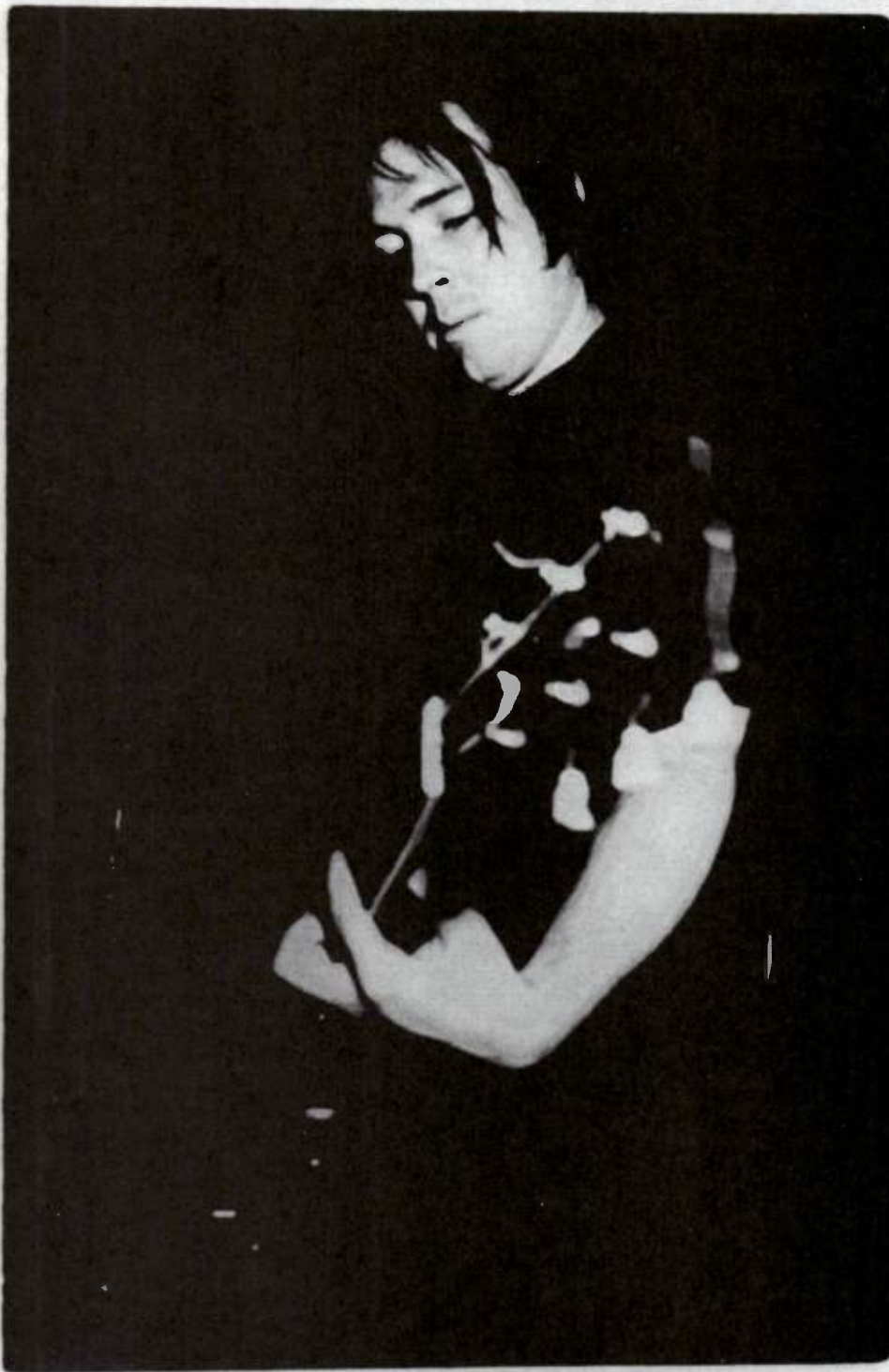
Matt: It's DJ land. Hopefully, that situation is going to change when the record drops in the band's hometown.

***The Day Jobs**

Matt: Mental health care worker in the drug-

chandise for Sarah McLachlan and other label artists.

Billy: Fashion consultant at local nasty girls/boys clothing and accessory store Cheap Thrills. "I make them look like me when they ask me to and I tell them about the bands on the T-shirts



surprisingly, there were quite a few people who wanted to see it...

3. What are the best venues in Vancouver?

JM: The best venue in Vancouver was The Mighty Niagara (R.I.P.), but now that it's gone we've got the Starfish if you are a big enough band to fill it. The Pic is great because it's small and the shows are always looking pretty full. The Columbia was

can't write a lyric to save my life. By the same token, he's not a very musical boy! But there are contributions from everyone that make the songs what they are—we just come up with the initial ideas.

RZ: I think it's really important that everyone puts their two cents worth into the songs. Everyone has a different idea of what a song

before we went into the studio, in order to check out different producers and sounds that they come up with. Some of our influences are rock bands from the 70's whose records have dirty production, which we really like, but now if you go for that sound you kind of get labelled a garage rock band, which is cool, but we're not a garage band. We wanted it to sound raw but also

White Y-fronts are better than some little shiny gold lamé things that would be more glam than punk, wouldn't they? I wasn't concerned with what underwear I was wearing at the time, sorry.

-Billy

completely great to us when nobody really wanted to see us, but we haven't been there in a long long time, and the Brickyard is fast becoming the mid-sized venue that this town desperately needed.

4. How many vehicles have died in the service of the Black Halos?

RJ: We had to resuscitate our current van, "The Lemon", on this last tour, but I think she's gonna pull through.

JM: Actually, none have really died..."Sheeler" (our pet name for our first van) was actually shamefully stolen from us by some lowlifes!!! We were checking out another van to buy one weekend when we were away, and while we were gone "Sheeler" was stolen!! It was probably Karma or something because we took another van instead of her on the road.

5. Were there any concerns due to the change of the band's name?

RZ: At first there were a lot of concerns with the band name, the band had been playing under the name Black Market Babies for four years and were steadily gaining a strong fan base, then we toured the West coast. Fortunately, we changed the name before our album came out and there was no threat of any legal stuff or anything like that. Also there are the Backyard Babies from Sweden, who were starting to get pretty big, so it was a little too close for our liking.

6. Is it important that the songs are the products of a partnership?

RJ: For me, I couldn't do it without Billy 'cause I

should sound like, and a little input from everyone really completes a song. I personally could not be in a band where it was one individual with all the ideas.

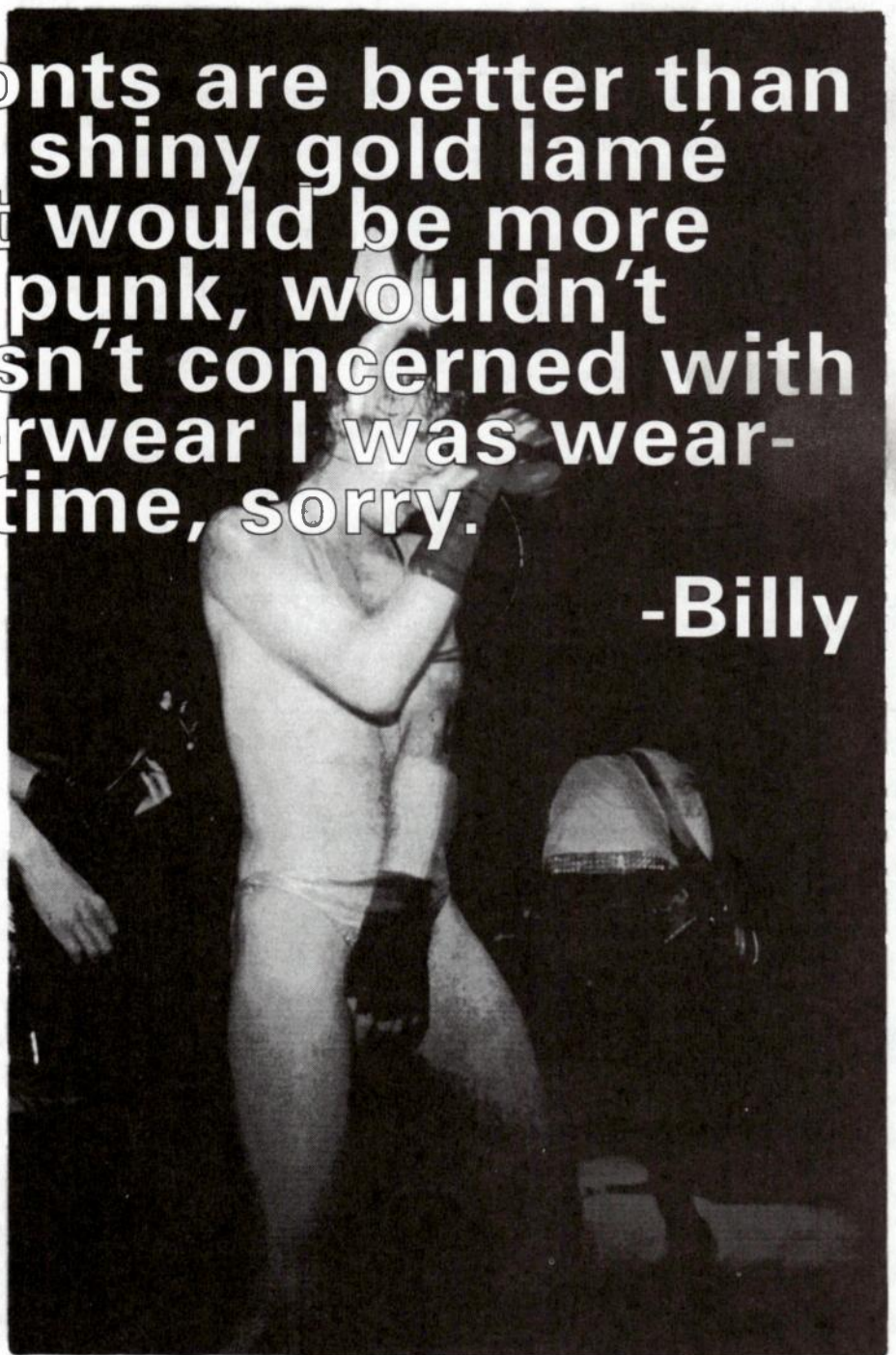
7. What were the albums that you wanted to equal when you recorded your own LP?

RZ: There were a lot of records that we listened to

to have lots of balls, and I think that's what we got.

JM: I didn't really think of any other albums we wanted to equal, so much. Sounds were always the main thing, what we wanted our instruments to sound like in relation to other records. Not so much any other specific artists.

RJ: Yeah, I'm more in the mindset of trying to live



up to my favorite bands when we're writing, not recording. You've gotta have the songs when you go into the studio, and you've gotta have the confidence to believe that you're just as good as the bands that you look up to because if you're not your own favourite band then what the hell are you doing it for?

8. What is it like to be part of the rejuvenated Sub Pop?

RZ: Sub Pop has been great so far. It really seems like they're excited about all their new bands, and they're putting full support into them. They've turned back into a label where the music comes first, and all the kick ass rock they're putting out has everyone at the label excited.

JM: Speaking for myself, I am thrilled. I followed the Sub Pop thing early on, listening to the likes of Mudhoney and others. For me, it's pretty incredible to see the label get a second wind and release some amazing rock'n'roll records—just like they used to do.

9. Do you think this overshadows the fact that the Black Halos are signed to Die Young Stay Pretty?

RZ: Die Young has been better than we ever expected it to be. Die Young has a smaller budget than Sub Pop, but we haven't been getting the shaft or anything. We're pretty much treated as a regular Sub Pop band without the fat

bank accounts. In the long run it'll work out to our advantage when all the money starts pouring in!!

RJ: Yeah, we're better off being on Die Young...that way people don't automatically associate us with all that boring shit like Sebadoh. Shit, did I say that? I only meant to think it!

10. Why is a vinyl release of your album important?

RJ: Personally, I think there are two kinds of people: vinyl people and CD people. We're vinyl people. It's quite obviously the superior format in all respects: sound quality, packaging, the fact that you can really see the album cover. So buy our record on vinyl, kids! We wanted to give the vinyl buyer more, so you get a CD booklet and a poster in the record. We hoped to put an extra song on it as well, but it wasn't feasible this time. Hopefully on the second record it will, though.

JM: All my favourite records were originally released as VINYL records! It's almost tradition—great records being released on vinyl!!! I think ours is a great record and I'm glad it's on vinyl.

11. You want to bring Rock & Roll to the kids, but the kids tell you they like Britney Spears. What do you do?

JM: I tell them that Britney is cute, but she's not

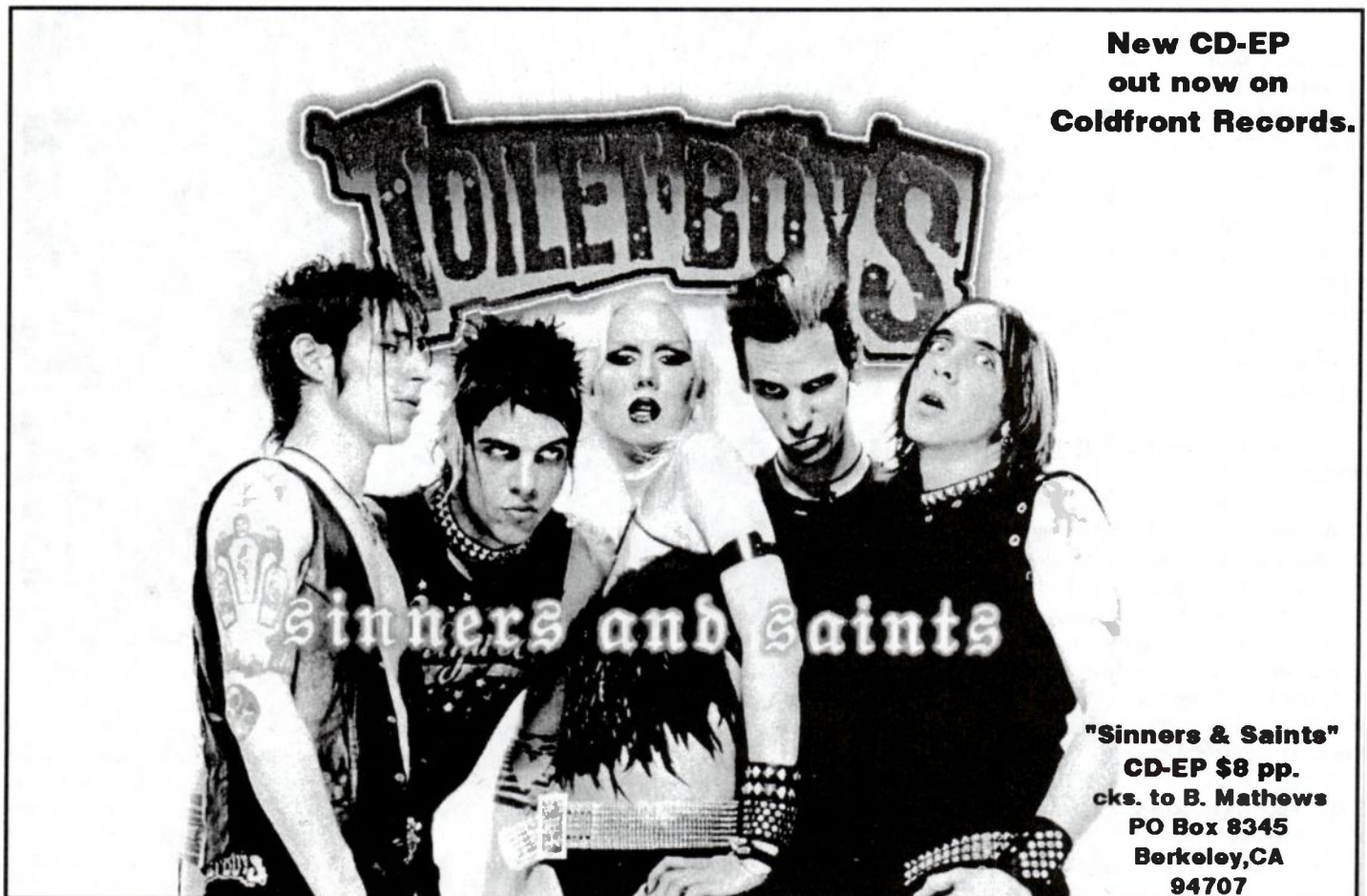
dangerous!! Or maybe she is...“hit me baby, one more time”...I think there is always an audience of rock'n'roll fans out there who will dig rock'n'roll. We just want them all to notice how great it is!! In the '50's, when kids would gather around a jukebox listening to the newest singles by bands, it was amazing and I wish that kind of thing could happen again.

RJ: The kids like Britney Spears because that's what's marketed to them. I can understand that, but we just wanna offer an alternative to that. That's why we play a lot of all-ages shows. Younger crowds are way more appreciative, and a lot of the time it's something totally new to them. I mean, a lot of teenagers have never heard “Raw Power” or “Young Loud & Snotty”, so they really dig seeing bands that are doing something a little different than the usual forced angst and misery that you get at so-called “alternative rock” shows.

12. When the call comes asking the Black Halos to open for Kiss, what will be your answer?

RZ: Ya right, you're shittin' me...fuck you, I don't believe you...OK, we'll do it !!!

RJ: Yeah, I mean we're used to crowds that call out for Kiss during our sets, so we could handle it. Kiss aren't that far removed from what we do. If they hadn't been so popular, they'd probably be regarded in the same manner as the Dolls. It's all rock'n'roll at the end of the day. ⊕



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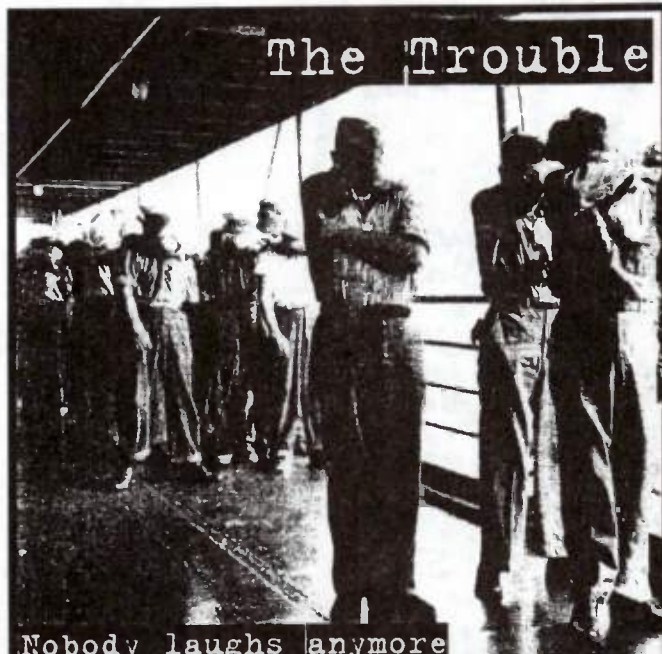
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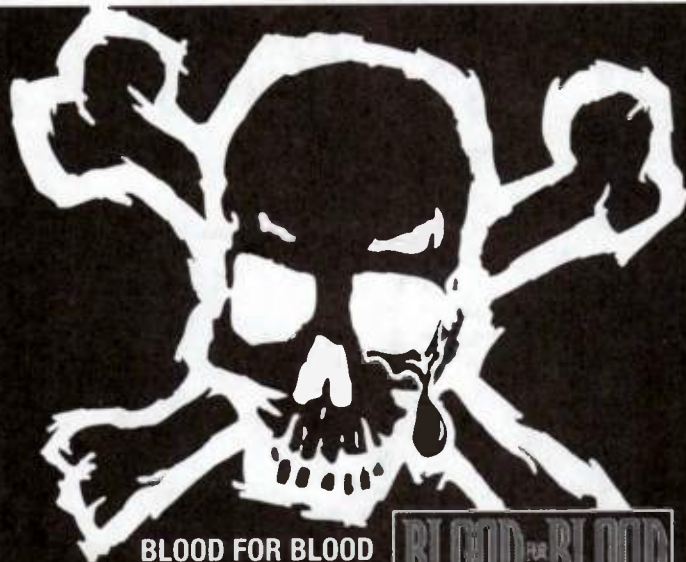
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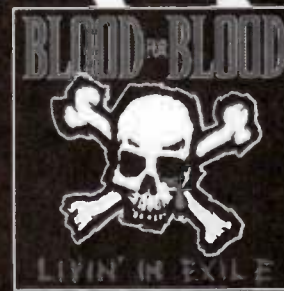
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Why? When Jeff first approached me about writing for *Hit List*, the first thing I had to wonder was: why the fuck did he want me to write for them? I haven't exactly been part of the "scene" (whatever that is) since the dinosaurs walked the Earth. And I'm not exactly what anyone would call a "writer".

I read the first ish of the mag. And I had to wonder what kind of bedfellows I was making here. I have to admit that I was convinced that at least one of the writers was severely in need of one of those doughnut shaped cushions to rest their "brains" on while they "think". But then I had to hand it to Jeff. It's been

frank•discussion

a long time since anyone put out a rag that exposed the whole fucking mess—warts, oozing hemorrhoids, and all. Without the obligatory "party line".

And then there was Jeff's offer that I could write whatever I wanted and whenever I wanted to. He also said he had no problem with my weird ideas, like sometimes wanting to put out my column in the form of derailed comics, etc. That's a hard offer to refuse, so I took the bait.

What can you expect from my little corner of the world? The truth is I don't even know yet. Some call my politics (or anti-politics) confrontational, and both the Right and the Left are often

appalled by my views, not to mention my outright attacks. That suits me fine. Let's face it, both the Left and the Right are pretty fucking useless anyway, aren't they? I've tried that Lemming Suit on before, too. Not only didn't it fit, it itched and gave me a really fucking bad rash to boot.

But one thing I can promise you is that I will assume you can think for yourself. And if you can't do that, well guess what? I've got this fine, pimply little ass awaiting the tender attentions of your lips. Not that I would ever want to offend anyone.

Well, enough about me. I really don't want you all to start wondering if the original I sent to Jeff didn't have big sticky globs and stains on it like that copy of *Penthouse Fantasies* you found in the gutter last week. So let's see who we can savage this week, OK? But I'll try to keep it short...this time.

SELLING OUT...

I just love to see people wringing their hands and whining about selling out. Do you really think maybe we all won't notice that it's

just your "subtle" way of wanking at our expense? The whole movie/rock star "See what I'm doing for all my fans" is a little old and more than a little transparent. That's right, I'm laughing at you. And your fake altruism. And your little dog, too.

Well, I'm going to share a little secret with those of you who are "worrying" so much about "selling out". If what you're doing is that fucking dangerous and subversive, selling out is not a worry. I want to sell out. You heard me right. I want to sell out. But the big ticket earwigs don't seem to want to buy exactly what it is I happen to be selling. Heh heh. I wonder why...

Let's face it...would Nike or Levi's ever ask the Feederz for permission to use "Burn Warehouse Burn" to advertise their products? I don't think so. But if there are any of you big corporations (or even little ones) out there who are that suicidal or stupid, I have one thing to say: Where do I sign? (uh, I can even be reached by email at feederz@orishanet.com). I might make one small suggestion, though: you had better make real fucking sure you have plenty of fire insurance before you try that little stunt.

On occasion, something beautiful happens and something subversive actually does slip by. Some of you old poodles like myself may remember when the United States Navy actually was duped into using the song "In the Navy" by the Village People for a recruiting ad. It was fucking hilarious. Here was the Navy trying to recruit young men with a song glorifying the opportunities the Navy gives. Opportunities to find Nice Young Boy Butt to Pork, that is...

Ahhhhhhh, and when they finally figured it all out, their reaction was even funnier. Boy, were their faces red. It was indeed a thing of sweetness and beauty.

Yeppers (I got that line from a juice commercial), who in their right minds wouldn't jump at the chance to pull off something like that. To have some company be idiotic enough to actually pay you to

help slit their fucking throats. With everybody laughing at them. To be able to infect vast sections of the population over the TV without having to lift a finger except to sign the contract. That would be priceless. Well, I'll tell you what. I'm ready. Even if the contract is in blood. Hell, I can shed some of yours later. As our way of sim-

That's right, I'm laughing at you. And your fake altruism. And your little dog, too.

ply saying "thanks", of course...

In other words, if it's that dangerous, you want the assholes to use it. Because it is a marvelous opportunity to cause serious damage.

On the other hand, if your shit simply ain't dangerous then you do have something to worry about. Plenty to worry about. But if that's the case, I hate to break it to you... you should have started worrying long before you were ever approached by McDonald's.

LOVE IN LITTLETON

Why is everybody playing at being so surprised and shocked about Littleton anyways? Didn't any of them ever go to school? As soon as I heard it was some black-garbed Goths who "everybody ridiculed" (read tortured and beat up) that did the job, and that they were especially targeting jocks, another picture came into view.

A picture of those delightful school days of yore came to mind. Where, if you didn't know how to fuck someone up in a fight and were "different", you would face being "ridiculed" (see above) on a regular basis. This abuse, of course, had the tacit approval of every-

one: the teachers, the parents, the cops, the other students, etc.

I remembered the joyful snickers from the PE coaches when a jock performed an (obviously intentional) elbow smash to my face when I was forced to play center in football. When I went back out to play the jock was quite happy to see me, greeting me with "I'm really going to cream you this time, faggot." Even though I enjoyed such witty repartee, I gave my new friend a little surprise: this time when he came up with his elbow, pity he didn't happen to see the foot coming up towards his balls. But he did get to see closeup my knee, which had a sudden and intimate affair with his face. I had helped with my hands to ensure that he would get a good view.

Of course that earned me a trip to "The Office" because I was a "problem". But it earned that bastard a trip to the fucking hospital, which made me a very happy boy. But the shit that happened to those who *didn't* learn how to fight was truly sick. And it was permitted, if not encouraged, by those very same idiots who are now pissing and moaning.

The upshot here is that we've all seen and/or experienced this shit all through school.

So why in the hell is *anybody* surprised that, every once in a while, somebody goes off and starts blowing away these motherfuckers? Please! Give me a fucking break!

Something else is also perplexing me here. Why all the apparent concern for what the media thinks? And why do we suddenly feel compelled to explain ourselves to them? Ummmmmm...who the fuck cares? And when did it become our job to explain things to them? And why should we suddenly be accountable to them? I don't think anyone here seriously believes that the media is our friend, do we? We are NOT answerable to them. So the solution is simple... Uh...Don't try and answer to them.

Why not "Just Say No"? "No. I am not answerable to you." It's

FRANKDISCUSSION

short, it's sweet, it's truthful, it's hard to edit (read manipulate), annnnnnd it's hella annoying to them (and perhaps even a little frightening, heh heh).

After all... Do you really think the media will be our friend further down the road if we just show them we're "not that bad" now? Is there any reason we should feel we need to "prove" ANYTHING to them? At all? Why are we answerable to them all of a sudden? I sure as hell didn't agree to that. Did you?

How far are you prepared to go in order to be acceptable to them? At what price? Do you really want to be acceptable? How many of you became Goths, Punks, SubGenii or whatever in order to be acceptable in the first place?

Soooo...I don't know about you, but my answer is: No, I am not like you "underneath it all". No, I am not answerable to you. You are not my friend. I am not your friend. So no, I won't help you. It's not in my job description. I will *not* play your little "secret touching game", so go away and die, Pink Boy.

On the other hand, we *can* play *with* them. They are here for our amusement, after all.

Just pull that newscaster to one side and *whisper* to him, just out of range of the microphones, of course: "Look, you seem like a nice guy. And you look real straight. So I'll tell you what. There will be \$20 bucks in it for you if you go over to that gun store and buy me an assault rifle. Who knows, there might even be a story in it for you later." Stuff like that just drives them wild.

Insurrection means never having to say you're sorry. ☎

Frank "Nice Nice" Discussion

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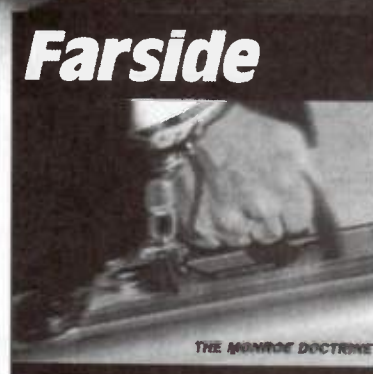
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HIT SQUAD

A couple of months ago, at the behest of Brett Matthews, I pulled myself away from the glories of whisky and elephant tranquilizers long enough to write a half-assed column for *Hit List* about fanzines or things I hate about literacy, something roughly along those lines. I poured about an hour of effort into what was ultimately a second-rate piece of writing (which didn't bother me at the time because, I kept reminding myself, THEY ASKED FOR IT), Little did I realize that when the zine came out I would be massively humiliated by the spectrum of REAL TALENT they had assembled to spew ink onto paper. No wonder they didn't put my name on the cover. I'm surprised they didn't send my piece back to me. I mean, come on, you have the Rev. Nørb, Ben Weasel, and Vic Bondi—what the FUCK else do you need in a fanzine?

And I feel a little ashamed about not being able to recognize most of the other names I appear alongside—I should have made a point of reading these people long ago, I can't help thinking. Maybe they wrote for *MRR*, which would have stopped me. That'll be my excuse.

So here I am now to make it up to you—to give you the greatest piece of literary work you've seen, and make it entertaining at the same time. Yeah, obviously I'm not going to do that, but that's the challenge every writer (yeah, I've taken the liberty of anointing myself with that title) sets forth for himself each time—to make this one the piece that really matters, to make up for all the substandard crap he's hacked out and thrown at you in the past, to make it all up to you and make you LOVE HIM.

Yeah! LOVE! Somewhere hidden in all the vitriol and venom on the pages of *Hit List* ("The Angry Magazine") is each writer's desperate plea for you to bestow on him (or her, and you know I mean "or her" every time, so don't make me clutter up my writing by addressing that—it might keep people from loving me) your admiration and respect for entertaining them WHILE THEY READ. People want to read, and they want to be entertained. It's a FUCKING

HUGE BONUS when they get both out of the way at the same time.

Of course there are some people who say they write only for themselves. Maybe that's true—can I say what's going on in other people's heads? Of course I can and do, but not with any degree of accuracy. These people will tell you they don't give a shit if you like what they write or not, but they're not fooling anyone. It's like a little game we play: "I won't care what you think of my writing as long as you recognize that that in itself makes it more likeable." BULLSHIT.

Since I'm calling myself a writer, let me categorize my fellow verbal pugilists as follows: we are in varying degrees academic, self-absorbed, ambitiously acerbic, and sometimes (every once in a while) inadvertently on the mark. Right now I'm mostly self-



ian
EVR

absorbed, but I'm trying to work in a little of the acerbic, hoping to stumble onto some of that sweet, sweet accidental veracity.

I think the most important of the above qualities has to be self-absorption. A writer of HAS GOT to think they're the greatest fucking thing going. I'm not talking about confidence, either (I think

that word is overused anyway—it's just a weak way of saying someone thinks they're HOT SHIT). I'm talking about thinking you have "got it all together", in the words of the chemically-imbalanced and sex-obsessed (god bless him) Frank Zappa. But you can't let on to your readers that you think you're Hot Shit; you have to downplay it a little bit by saying things like "while I'm certainly no expert on the subject" or "according to my limited experience," when what you really mean is THIS IS THE WAY IT IS, YOU FUCKING SHEEP—DIG MY WORDS AND LOVE ME. Hey, you know what? That sounds like a good closing line, but now that I've written this there's no way the strength of it will carry through, so I have to keep writing. Maybe I dug myself a little hole within the preceding paragraphs. Does it make any sense to backtrack now and tell you I don't really think I'm Hot Shit? That my LOVE FOR THE WRITTEN WORD is pure and direct, and is untainted by my desire for the love of the reader? Should I tell you that most writers don't really care about praise, accolades or fanfare? Would you believe that this was just a soul-baring exercise in self-examination, calculated to make you think about the person behind the page and not your own two-birds-with-one-stone literary/entertainment fix? BULLSHIT. You wouldn't believe that anyway. I'm a hack, but as soon as someone tells me I'm not a hack then I'm fucking Hot Shit and you won't be able to touch me.

Eat me, punks. Ian evr

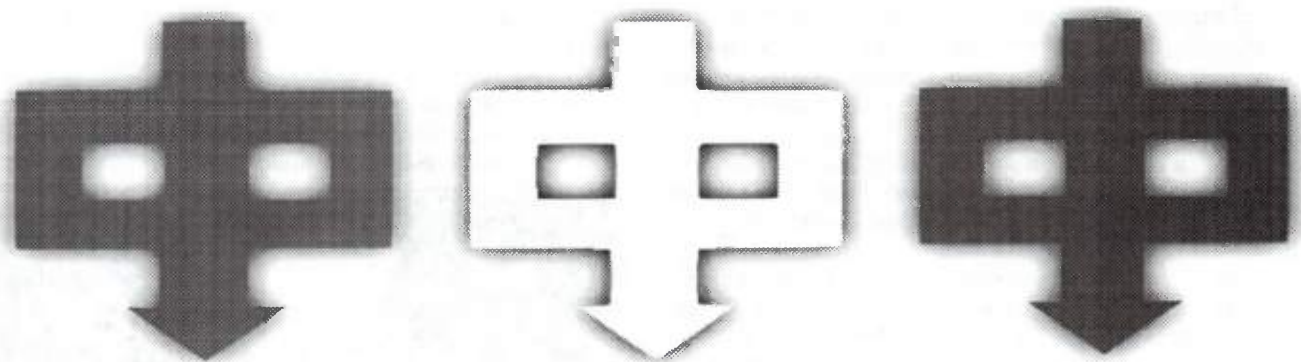
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- 1) Remembrance on a grave
- 3) Mr. Brett's new band, also Evel Knievel and son
- 4) Candy from a neck, plus an extra "z"
- 6) The only band I can think of named after a molecular compound
- 7) Chick band
- 8) Voted the best punk band in 1997 by the SF Bay Guardian
- 10) Slap A Ham power violence kingpins
- 11) Leather jackets, a brick wall...
- 14) Classic horror-punk band known for diminutive musclebound singer
- 15) Jersey's Best Women's Channel
- 17) If you sat around all day doing crossword puzzles and eating junk food, you'd be a...(label!)

DOWN

- 1) Doghouse band, also dot finishing a line
- 2) Bubblegum pop-punk group; a homonym of an old Dischord band
- 4) You might find a rope running through this band
- 5) Former Tooth & Nail duo
- 6) When Bob Hope cancels, you get this label
- 9) Lookout, an all-girl Ramones
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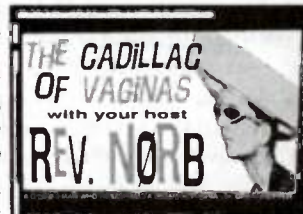
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As of 11:01 AM CDT 4.15.99, i, Reverend Nørb, am officially declaring myself "un-street." I am unsure what this "street" appellation engenders in 1999 (i'm pretty sure it means what every other similar term has meant thru mankind's evolution — "buy my records, book my band, give me money") yet am continually unable to pin down a usable definition for "street" that satisfies my urge to be a happy yet responsible pigeonholer. I mean, i walk down the street, does that count? Heck, i walk down the street with alarming frequency! I'm a streetwalking Cheeto with a heart full of Boone's Farm! (editor's note: this is poetic license on the part of the columnist. There is actually no Boone's Farm in the heart of this writer. This writer's heart muscle is, upon closer inspection, actually composed of more Cheetos) I actually don't walk down the street so much as i walk down the sidewalk, maybe that's my problem. I wrote a song about walking down the street once. I called it "Sidewalk Sidewalk Yeah Yeah Yeah." I really wasn't thinking. I should have called it "Street, Street, Yeah Yeah Yeah." Boy, there went my street cred. But, yet, don't people who are "street" actually spend more time on the sidewalk than on the street? Perhaps this is where the new generation of "streetness" has gone awry; perhaps this is why i cannot hammer out a working definition of "street": Too much sidewalk contamination threatening to cloud the issue. Reverend Nørb urges all those "street" to leave the unclean, impure babylon that is the sidewalk and to go into the street and play in traffic immediately. Get in touch with your roots, dude! Reverend Nørb has also just decided that Reverend Nørb enjoys referring to himself in the third person, as it makes Reverend Nørb feel more like Marky Ramone. Actually, my name is too long to keep typing out like that; fuck it. But, i mean, to capsulize, what is this "STREET" shit and what does it all mean to me, Al Franken??? (ha, and i bet you thought i was going to say "Reverend Nørb" again!) I mean, i saw an ad for the new album by The Strike (on Victory Records, no less) wherein the product pitched was referred to as "STREET ROCK WITH A CONSCIENCE." The Strike? STREET ROCK??? Who the hell writes this stuff??? I mean, i know what "ROCK" is, and i know what a "CONSCIENCE" is (i think it means "trumpet" in Canadian), but wherefore cometh the "STREET" part of the equation? The Strike being "street" is as ludicrous a proposition as Frank's Quality Kraut Juice or the Santa Fe Gordita. As the kid i babysit for would say, "are YOU on DRUGS?" (and, as i would say back to him, "No. Go put this pipe back in my desk drawer.") I mean, play the record once. What do you hear? That's right — a bunch of loud, kick-ass guitars. Jeezus, since WHEN are loud, kick-ass guitars "STREET???" "Street" bands ain't into that guitar shit, you fools!!! "Street" bands — as far as i've been able to tell in the 90's — are groups of big, tough guys who make records with little, sissy guitars pushed way back in the mix, probably so's they don't get in the way of the jubilant Herman's Hermits-type singalong parts (Hey! Hey! Hey! I finally get my copy of the first issue of Hit List, and, with sweat-slick palms, i flip maniacally to Russell Q's column about "Freddie & The Dreamers vs. Herman's Hermits" which i had been waiting like ten years to read, having only theretofore seen the title as i briefly thumbed thru someone else's copy, and, gol dangit, there wasn't ONE GODDAMN THING IN THAT COLUMN about Freddie & the Dreamers vs. Herman's Hermits!!! Boo! Foul! The ol' Bait and Switch!!! The ol' Bait and Switch!!! The absence of bona fide scholarly Russelization on the epic Freddie v. Herman conflict is like some sort of sick and cruel MRR April Fool's joke, except sicker and crueller because it actually involves bands that don't suck!!! I am incensed like unto a gonesh cone that walks like a man!!! Then, in issue #2, East Bay Ray adds

his two cents worth by apparently casting his lot with Freddie Garrity & crew on the basis of the fact that they had their own dance, plus "didn't do that 'Mrs. Brown' song." Now, i'll give him points for "The Freddie," but, number one, "Mrs. Brown You've Got A Lovely Daughter" is an awesome song; and number two, Herman's Hermits may not have had a cockamamie dance like Freddie & The Dreamers, but they had a movie with friggin' Dennis The Menace's dad [i think?] in it, wherein the boys had a god damn mother fucking American NUCLEAR MISSILE named after them, 'cause they were so fab and gear, et cetera! Freddie and the Dreamers never had no fricking NUKE named after them!!! REVEREND NØRB SQUARELY BACKS HERMAN HERMIT OVER FREDDIE GARRITY!!! Plus i have pretty much all the Herman's Hermits albums [of course, tracking down the three million permutations of essentially the same greatest hits album could be a lifelong campaign], but only the one Freddie & the Dreamers LP where they're decked out in the archaic sleeping gear, so it would be the sheerest of follies for me to vote otherwise [plus i met Peter Noone once, and he signed some of my albums, and he was cool. I told him how much i liked "Marcel's," this obscure b-side of theirs about going on some wacky houseboat full of fags and transvestites and such, and he whumped me on the back and said "Yeh, that was a good 'un, wunnit?" and then i told him how i liked his later band, the Tremblers', cover of Elvis Costello's "Green Shirt" {this was sort of a fib, their version is not noteworthy whatsoever} and he whumped me on the back and said "Yeh, that was a good 'un, wunnit?" and i think i told him one more thing but i don't remember what it was, but i'm pretty sure he responded with a whump on the back and a "Yeh, that was a good 'un, wunnit?" so at least he's consistent...and i never met Freddie Garrity or any of the other Dreamers, and they never signed my one record of theirs that i have, and they never responded to my compliments with a whump on the back and a rousing "Yeh, that was a good 'un, wunnit?", so, pfft, fuck them, they suck. I actually met East Bay Ray once too, i briefly rode in a car with him about fifteen years ago; i'm sure he doesn't remember it. I was wearing a Bow Wow Wow t-shirt i got for \$1.49 at Don Smith Sales just to be a dick, and the only thing i remember is that he said "they're actually not that bad," which was cool at the time {he also wrote some excellent articles about the record biz for MRR way back when, long before such pieces were fashionable, but i found it kind of amusing that one of the first things he talked about in his new "how-to" column was "how to get a good guitar sound." It's like if he knew how to get a good guitar sound, why didn't he utilize this vast surfeit of Rock Knowledge on any Dead Kennedys records??? {Waiter! Saucer o' milk, please!} Sorry, man, but talk shit about "Mrs. Brown, You've Got A Lovely Daughter" and there will be consequences!!!] [and, for the record, the new Queens album is nowhere near as lame as people make it out to be {it's no "Don't Back Down," mind you}; the song "Mrs. Brown You've Got an Ugly Daughter" is actually quite excellent. Further, this is a little late, but it really was a shame to hear about the passing of Queens drummer Hugh O'Neill. He was always nice to me, and is destined to be treated in death as he was in life: As a tragic motherfucker who was never given anywhere near enough credit for looking as much like Clint Eastwood as he





actually did. End of exceptionally tardy eulogy, and major parenthetical digression)). Where was i? Oh yeah, oh yeah, this "street" thing: I keep hearing records by these bands who are supposed to be "street," and they're all like these tough fuckers, so, you know, holy shit, forgive me for typecasting here, and do double-check my math, but i always sort of figured "from tough fuckers cometh tough-sounding records," right? I mean, if the Tough Fuckers don't make the Tough Sounding Records, a) what good are they? and b) who will? We can't keep exporting the difficult jobs to Scandinavia, ya know! But anyway, you put on a record by these big tough goons and the guitars are buried so deeply in the mix you need the fucking Jaws Of Life to find 'em, and the vocals are way up front, as if these people have good voices or something. **KNOCK KNOCK! HEY! BIG TOUGH DUDES!** Are you trying to sound like a bunch of hoodlums — which you DON'T — or are you trying to sound like a marginally more male Cyndi Lauper, which you DO??? I mean, hel-LO! Could i trouble somebody to obtain a copy of the first Cockney Rejects album (original EMI vinyl version only;

CD reissue sound is somewhat inferior to original [but still comparatively awright]) and maybe play it once or twice??? Say, do you hear that weird noise at the beginning of the record??? Do you know what that loud, unfamiliar sound is???

We call that a GUI-TAR. You may wish to familiarize yourself with this instrument; many rock music fans find having this instrument recorded at greater-than-inaudible levels pleasing to the ear. If you'd like to find some pop-punk faggot to show you how one of

these things works, like where the volume knob is and stuff, i'm sure there would be many who could aid you in your quest. Actually, i'm sure these bands don't sound like that live; but, somehow, when they go into the recording studio, the end result

is several orders of magnitude more sugar-coated than one naturally assumes it would be. Case in point: My...uh...girlfriend (whoops, there goes the carefully cultivated image of the Voice of Geek America!) made me a tape of her current fave-raves, Jets To Brazil. If somebody can explain to me how that Blake guy's voice is even remotely listenable, i'd like to hear it (the explanation, not his voice) (and believe you me, i know unlistenable voices!!!), but that's not my point (i keep hearing that you have to listen to the Jets To Brazil record "ten times" before it really "sinks in," which seems like an excellent scam — just tell everybody that your record sucks until you listen to it several thousand times more than anyone with any sense would bother to listen to it in the first place. With that in mind, i'd like to suggest that everyone run down to their local record

store and pick up a copy of the new Boris The Sprinkler record — sure, it might not sound like much NOW, but if you can sit through the first 24.000 listenings, it'll sound REALLY GREAT after that!); in the interests of bringing my testosterone levels back up to par (the whys and wherefores of this are left as an exercise for the reader), she recorded the Business' "Coventry" 45 at the end of the tape. This is a song about riots and violence and shit. Not only is it a song about riots and violence and shit, but it is a song about riots and violence and shit with the guitars practically AWOL in the mix, except when the guy goes off into a wanky lead — a song about riots and violence and shit with some gay effects on the vocals like Journey or something — and a song about riots and violence and shit with the heinous Bon Jovi hair farmer late 80's long-delay slick snare sound on it. I mean, not to put too fine a point on it, but WHAT THE FUCK??? Is this supposed to be "street???" Is this supposed to be "tough???" IT SOUNDS LIKE REO SPEEDWAGON, F'R CRIPES SAKES!!! What do these bands do, record their parts and then go out drinking and let some studio poof mix their records or what???

I mean, are they happy with this??? I'm sure in real life they could beat everybody up with one hand tied behind their backs, but if you just go by the records — which is all i have to go by — Freddie & The Dreamers could roll over 'em like Patton through France, bay-bee! I will readily admit that i'm pure fucking wimp, but, jeezus, at least my band's records have some fucking guitar on 'em. So, anyway, i guess my question is this: How do these bands get AWAY with having such unconscionably slick production on their records without their fans lamenting??? (oh, in case you didn't notice, i'm not utilizing this column to babble about the records i've been listening to as i said i was gonna

KNOCK KNOCK! HEY! BIG TOUGH DUDES! Are you trying to sound like a bunch of hoodlums — which you DON'T — or are you trying to sound like a marginally more male Cyndi Lauper, which you DO???

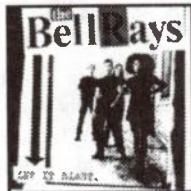
do last time, as, when i finally got my copy of Hit List, i noticed that that was exactly what Mr. Vee was doing in his column, and lord knows i've ripped him off enough as it is) I mean, do you ever hear some "street" aficionado saying things like "today I purchased the new record by The Gutter Dolts, which promised several exciting anthems about riots and violence and shit, and, when i applied this record to my turntable, i was aghast to find out that the guitars were mixed at an unacceptably low level and the lead vocals were far too prominent, dampening much of the excitement i might have experienced had the record been mixed with a more aggressive sound in mind. Further, i found certain senseless production flourishes such as the Bon Jovi Hair Snare Sound and the Steve Perry Vocal Laxative Effect to be most troubling and out of place on a record of this nature, and i should like to make it known that i would prefer to hear a much rawer production style employed on this band's subsequent recordings or i shall have to cease purchasing their releases entirely. Good day." Ya never hear anything like that, do ya??? It's

always "another great record about riots and violence and shit! See you at the bar!!!" So, the next question is obviously why are these bands never called on their shit??? If the Mr. T Experience or the Parasites put out records that had the same production as some of these "street" bands, they'd be laughed out of the galaxy. "Oh, the horror these eunuchs have brought upon the REAL punks! Exile them to planet Dhor, where they can serve as ball-less vassals on the galley of Kanjar Ro's slave ship!!!" My current theory that explains this quizzical state of affairs is this: "Street" punk is for girls. I base this on the observation that the majority of the people i know who are "into" so-called "street" punk do, in fact, sit when they pee; further, historically, girls have had a tendency to like certain bands based on how much they imagine their fathers would disapprove of them bringing a member of said band over for brunch, not due to anything connected to the music itself. I mean, have you ever noticed that chicks occasionally date guys who wear wife-beater tops??? What the fuck is the deal with that? If there was such a thing as a "ball-kicker skirt" or a "castration sweater," you'd not catch many gents buzzing around a hive so equipped, lemme tell ya! Also, before anyone flips wig, let the record show that i believe in totally reciprocal gender idiocy — i.e., that for every daffy-ass thing chicks do, guys do something equally as dizzy — therefore, the reason guys like certain bands is probably equally as lame as why chicks like bands on the basis of which ones they think their fathers would perceive as symbolizing the greatest threats to their virtue — of course, being a guy, i have no clue what my gender's parallel moronic criteria may be, nor, come to think of it, do i care overmuch. Counterintuitive as this may sound, GUYS ARE AS STUPID AS CHICKS — but BY NO MEANS does this imply that CHICKS ARE NOT STUPID!!! I mean, remember women's suffrage? (no, not the wife-beater thing, the let-the-women-vote thing!) As i recall from grade school, one of the allegedly "ridiculous" reasons why the American Menfolk were reluctant to let the American Womenfolk hit the polls was that it was believed that the womenfolk would merely vote for the candidate they found most attractive. AS IF THAT'S NOT WHAT THEY ACTUALLY HAPPENED. I mean, Bill Clinton gets chicks to give him blowjobs in the Ovary Office; Bob Dole is on TV doing commercials for erectile dysfunction. Women outnumber men in the USA, Clinton gets elected, you do the math. Of course, guys vote for candidates for an equally insipid reason; of course, i got no clue what it is and, frankly i don't wanna know, but the shame-on-you's rightly dispensed to the anti-suffragists of yore were deserved not because they were sexist dopes, but because — owing

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to a failure to recognize the existence of their gender's own inherently unrecognizable parallel foolishness — they refused to allow the womenfolk their God-given right to ditz out. Look, FUCK the Gender War! We're ALL idiots here!!! (i bring this up only because i'm still bumming over missing a perfectly good opportunity to preach my loving gospel of Reciprocal Gender Idiocy [also known as the "I'm Not OK, You're Not OK, But I Don't Know Why I'm Not OK So I Think I'll Just Detail YOUR Shortcomings For A While" theorem] in front of a crowd other than the type o' scumbag who would be reading this in Hit List recently, when my band's warm and loving label, Go-Kart Records, flew us out to NYC to play the "Go-Kart Kissin' Cuzzins Weekend" shindig at Coney Island High [flying to gigs is cool, because you can't smell it if any of your bandmates fart. However, in general, i hate flying, because it's like they give ya one 12 oz. can of Diet Coke, and that's supposed to amuse you for forty minutes, until they come by with those shitty little packets of Cape Cod Potato Chips, which suck worse than the Patriots. Well, close. You finish your Diet Coke in like ten minutes, then you go to the

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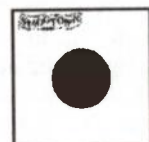
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lavatory and jerk off, you come back to your seat and you still got twenty-five minutes to wait before you get your potato chips, so you gotta get back up and jerk off again. HOW MANY TIMES TO I HAVE TO JERK OFF BEFORE YOU GIVE ME MY FUCKING POTATO

CHIPS??! If i was a goddamn monkey in a zoo, how many times would i have to jerk off before i got my potato chips??? Flying is demeaning, and it makes my wiener sore!). Anyway, we play a vaguely mediocre set, then the Lunachicks come on and rock de house. At the end of the set, Theo [who is hot] leaves the stage with the jubilant "Thanks for coming! And if any of you need to come out, do it!" I'm like, waitaminnit, waitaminnit, "come out?" Wait, that's, like, some kinda lesbian thing! And where there's lesbians, there's feminists!!! SHIT!!! SHIT!!! SHIT!!! My trip to New York has been WASTED, as i completely overlooked the fact that the composition of the audience might be strongly influ-

enced by the Lunachicks' female-itude, and did not tailor my insults accordingly [i should've suspected something was up when somebody paid for a t-shirt entirely with Susan B. Anthony dollars, but i merely assumed they had just knocked over a post office!] Here i was, trying to rile the crowd by telling them how much i wanted to see the sacred ground of Yankee Stadium [weak applause] — not because of their stupid baseball team, of course, but because that was where the Green Bay Packers beat the New York Giants for the NFL Championship in 1962 [huzzah!!!], when my ends would have been much better served urging the female members of the crowd to get huge "Where's Waldo" scenarios tattooed on their backs so guys would have something to do whilst they fucked them doggy style. Trying to rile feminists with sports taunts is like trying to piss off Germans by telling Polish jokes. Oh well, live and learn [downstairs after the show, Greg Go-Kart — the living answer to the age-old question of what would emerge if The Artist Formerly Known As Craig From Sheboygan mated with Jesus' hair — informs me that we are "partying amongst superstars," as the Lunachicks' one-time tourmates, the Offspring, have made an appearance at the post-show soiree. Greg gestures towards a small cluster of nondescript punk guys i don't know, which is when i suddenly realize that i wouldn't recognize the Offspring if i found them in a "Where's Waldo" scenario tattooed across my girlfriend's back., not that we do that type of thing. All i know is that one of them is supposed to have dreads or something, and maybe glasses, and that the guy in the band who was on the cover of SPIN looks like Dennis The Menace with a worse haircut, or maybe like Tim Stegall with a better haircut, but i don't see anybody fitting the bill, just a couple anonymous

schmucks, one of whom looks kinda like Nate from La Crosse. Well, maybe Nate from La Crosse is in the Offspring these days. Maybe he replaced Tim Stegall. I dunno. People don't tell me shit. Anyway, that's my claim to Party Fame: I may have partied with The Offspring. Oh, that and the fact that former Packers cornerback Johnnie Gray ate two booths over from me at Taco Bell last month] [of course, being old and lame, my "partying," which may or may not have been with the Offspring, consisted almost entirely of drinking bottled water and trying to find my sunglasses, whereas Boris

drummer boy Paul #2 spent the entire weekend staggering around in a cowboy hat, drunkenly bellowing "LLL-LADIES!!!" at the top of his lungs, except for the brief intermission when he passed out in Malibu Lou's grandmother's closet, and when he was introduced to Coney Island Hat Check Conduit Stephan, formerly of the False Prophets, when Paul #2 briefly ceased yelling "LLLLADIES!!!" and began to scream the lyrics to "I Am The Taxidermist" instead, to mixed reviews by club management and security {Stephan still has those Laffy Taffy Fun Rope length nails that he had in the 80's; i sure hope he don't extend his pinky when he drinks tea, somebody could lose an eye. He also told me that the rent for the club is like

I plan to sell my house and open a goth club down the street from Coney and call it "DONUTS PLUS." I'm gonna hire some guy that looks like Edward Scissorhands to run it, and the only thing i want him to say when people come in looking for donuts is "this is a goth club. Seven dollars, please."

twelve thousand dollars a month — that is to say, for exactly what i paid for my house, i could rent a club on St. Marks Place for four months. Which is, of course, what i'm going to do: I plan to sell my house and open a goth club down the street from Coney and call it "DONUTS PLUS." I'm gonna hire some guy that looks like Edward Scissorhands to run it, and the only thing i want him to say when people come in looking for donuts is "this is a goth club. Seven dollars, please." I can't see how this could be anything other than a gold mine waiting to happen. Don't steal my idea, fucker!}. If you really wanna get a feel for how drunk my band was that weekend, Greg called them a bad influence on the Candy Snatchers. I presume i need say no more) (further spewing forth on the "illusion of streetness" vs. "reality of streetness" issue, during the set by fellow Kissin' Cuzzins and potential "street" icons Anti-Flag [whom i do like enough to at one time have purchased one of their buttons, although i am not a girl], while contemplating the likelihood of bona fide revolution being fomented in a club that rents at 12k a month, i couldn't help but recall the old motto of some long-forgotten fringe politicians or another: "First We Drink, Then We Revolt." I really wanna see The Revolution kicking off on St. Marks Place. It'd be like "FIRST WE DRINK, THEN WE REVOLT!!!" How much for a beer here? Five bucks? Whoa, false alarm, no revolution today! Sorry for the inconvenience!" Due to inflated drink prices elsewhere, i am virtually certain that, when The Revolution comes, it will kick off in Wisconsin: As is no secret, we are a naturally revolting peoples anyhow). I admit that males, as a gender, are stupid in ways that we cannot possibly fathom. Now bring me my potato chips, my arm is getting tired. ⊕

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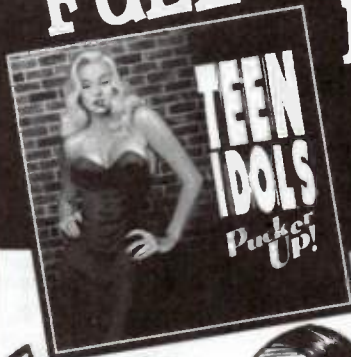
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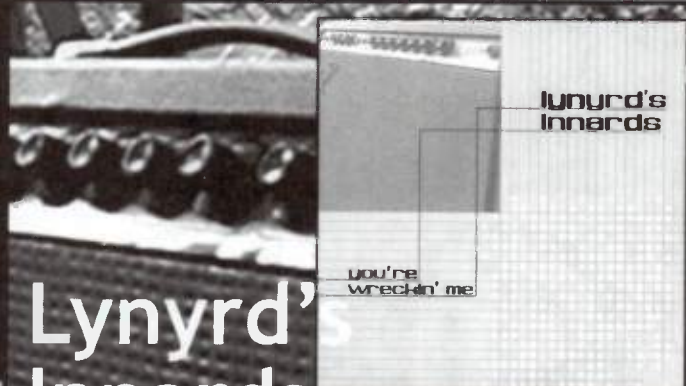


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Do Paranoids Have Actual Enemies?

Bogus "Conspiracy Theories" vs. Real Covert and Clandestine Politics

BY JEFF BALE

We live in a credulous age, despite the unprecedented scientific and technological progress that has been made during the course of the past half-century. As the new millenium rapidly approaches, millions continue to believe in the existence of angels and demons, alien abductions, vast satanic undergrounds engaging in ritual murder, cattle mutilations, mind control devices embedded in televisions, the Chupacabra, and elaborate political conspiracies of the most fantastic sort. In reaction to this proliferation of increasingly bizarre and unfounded "conspiracy theories", more skeptical individuals have unfortunately moved too far in the other direction, so much so that they often deny the importance—if not the actual existence—of really-existing clandestine and covert political activities. If someone were to claim, for example, that it was necessary to counter "an alien organization that uses conspiratorial methods", most educated people would probably raise their eyebrows and assume that they were in the presence of a nutty "conspiracy theorist". In this instance, however, the phrase can be found in an official definition of "counterespionage" provid-

Ed. note: An earlier version of this article appeared in Lobster: A Journal of Parapolitics, an excellent British publication dealing with covert and clandestine politics from a Labour left and anti-secret state perspective. Suscriptions can be obtained from Robin Ramsay/214 Westbourne Road/Hull HU5 3JB England.

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ed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's Office of Special Operations (OSO), and was cited in a 1976 article by CIA counterintelligence specialist William R. Johnson that appeared in the agency's classified in-house journal, *Studies in Intelligence*.¹ Why should such a straightforward characterization automatically provoke so much skepticism among the intelligentsia?

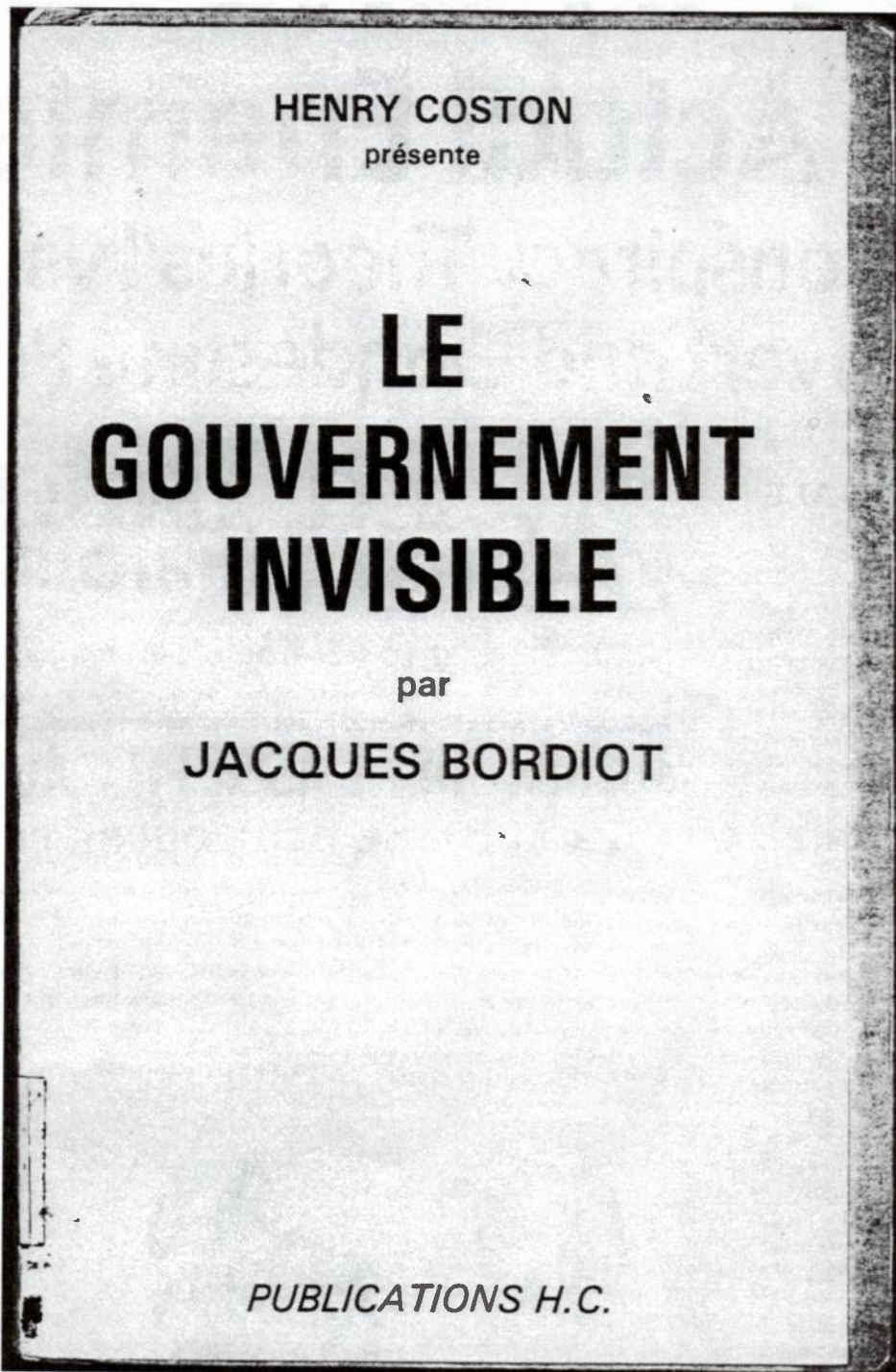
Very few notions nowadays generate as much intellectual resistance, hostility, and derision within academic circles as a belief in the historical importance or efficacy of political conspiracies. Even when this belief is expressed in a very cautious manner, limited to specific and restricted contexts, supported by reliable evidence, and hedged about with all sorts of qualifications, apparently it still manages to transcend the boundaries of acceptable discourse and violate unspoken academic taboos. The idea that particular groups of people meet together secretly or in private to plan various courses of action, and that some of these plans actually exert a significant influence on particular historical developments, is typically rejected out of hand and assumed to be the figment of a paranoid imagination. The mere mention of the word "conspiracy" seems to set off an internal alarm bell which causes scholars to close their minds in order to avoid cognitive dissonance and possible unpleasantness, since the popular image of conspiracy both fundamentally challenges the conception most educated, sophisticated people have about how the world operates and reminds them of the horrible persecutions that absurd and unfounded conspiracy theories have precipitated or sustained in the past. So strong is this prejudice among acad-

emics that even when clear evidence of a plot is inadvertently discovered in the course of their own research, they frequently feel compelled, either out of a sense of embarrassment or a desire to defuse anticipated criticism, to preface their account of it by ostentatiously disclaiming a belief in conspir-

infrequently, delve even further into certain sordid and politically sensitive topics. Most academic researchers clearly prefer to ignore the implications of conspiratorial politics altogether rather than deal directly with such controversial matters.

A number of complex cultural and historical factors contribute to this reflexive and unwarranted reaction, but it is perhaps most often the direct result of a simple failure to distinguish between "conspiracy theories" in the strict sense of the term, which are essentially elaborate fables even though they may well be based upon a kernel of truth, and the activities of actual clandestine and covert political groups, which are a common feature of modern politics. For this and other reasons, serious research into genuine conspiratorial networks has at worst been suppressed, as a rule been discouraged, and at best been looked upon with condescension by the academic community.² An entire dimension of political history and contemporary politics has thus been consistently neglected.³ For decades scholars interested in politics have directed their attention toward explicating and evaluating the merits of various political theories, or toward analyzing the more conventional, formal, and overt aspects of practical politics. Even a cursory examination of standard social science bibliographies reveals that tens of thousands of books and articles have been written about staple subjects such as the structure and functioning of government bureaucracies, voting patterns and electoral

results, parliamentary procedures and activities, party organizations and factions, the impact of constitutional provisions or laws, and the like. In marked contrast, only a handful of scholarly publications have been devoted to the general theme of political conspiracies—as opposed to popular anti-conspiracy treatises, which are very numerous,



Far Right French "conspiracy theory" tome.

acies.² They then often attempt to downplay the significance of the plotting they have uncovered. To do otherwise, that is, to make a serious effort to incorporate the documented activities of conspiratorial groups into their general political or historical analyses, would force them to stretch their mental horizons beyond customary bounds and, not

and specific case studies of events in which conspiratorial groups have played some role—and virtually all of these concern themselves with the deleterious social impact of the “paranoid style” of thought manifested in classic conspiracy theories rather than the characteristic features of real conspiratorial politics.⁵ Only the academic literature dealing with specialized topics like espionage, covert action, political corruption, terrorism, and revolutionary warfare touches upon clandestine and covert political activities on a more or less regular basis, probably because such activities cannot be avoided when dealing with these topics. But the analyses and information contained therein are rarely incorporated into standard works of history and social science, and much of that specialized literature is itself unsatisfactory. Hence there is an obvious need to place the study of conspiratorial politics on a sound theoretical, methodological, and empirical footing, since ignoring the influence of such politics can lead to severe errors of historical interpretation.

This situation can only be remedied when a clear-cut analytical distinction has been made between classic conspiracy theories and the more limited conspiratorial activities that are a regular feature of politics.

“Conspiracy theories” share a number of distinguishing characteristics, but in all of them the essential element is a belief in the existence of a “vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetrate acts of the most fiendish character”, acts which aim to “undermine and destroy a way of life.”⁶ Although this apocalyptic conception is generally regarded nowadays as the fantastic product of a paranoid mindset, in the past it was often accepted as an accurate description of reality by large numbers of people from all social strata, including intellectuals and heads of state.⁷ The fact that a belief in sinister, all-powerful conspiratorial forces has not been restricted to small groups of clinical paranoids and mental defectives suggests that it fulfills certain important social functions and psychological needs.⁸ First of all, like many other intellectual constructs, conspiracy theories help to make complex patterns of cause-and-effect in human affairs more comprehensible by means of reductionism and oversimplification. Secondly, they purport to identify the underlying source of misery and injustice in the world, thereby accounting for current crises and upheavals and explaining why bad things are happening to good people or vice versa. Thirdly, by personifying that source they paradoxically help people to reaffirm their own potential ability to control the course of future historical developments. After all, if evil conspirators are consciously causing undesirable changes, the implication is that others, perhaps through the adoption of similar techniques, may also consciously intervene to

protect a threatened way of life or otherwise alter the historical process. In short, a belief in conspiracy theories helps people to make sense out of a confusing, inhospitable reality, rationalize their present difficulties, and partially assuage their feelings of powerlessness. In this sense, it is no different than any number of religious, social, or political beliefs, and is deserving of the same serious study.

The image of conspiracies promoted by conspiracy theorists needs to be further illuminated before it can be contrasted with genuine conspiratorial politics. In the first place, conspiracy theorists consider the alleged conspirators to be Evil incarnate. They are not simply people with differing values or run-of-the-mill political opponents, but inhuman, superhuman, and/or anti-human beings who regularly commit abominable acts and are implacably attempting to subvert and destroy everything that is decent and worth preserving in the existing world. Thus, according to John Robison, the Bavarian Illuminati were formed “for the express purpose of ROOTING OUT ALL THE RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS, AND OVERTURNING ALL THE EXISTING GOVERNMENTS IN EUROPE.”⁹ This grandiose claim is fairly representative, in the sense that most conspiracy theorists view the world in similarly Manichean and apocalyptic terms.

Secondly, conspiracy theorists perceive the conspiratorial group as both monolithic and unerring in the pursuit of its goals. This group is directed from a single conspiratorial center, acting as a sort of general staff, which plans and coordinates all of its activities down to the last detail. Note, for example, Prince Clemens von Metternich’s claim that a “directing committee” of the radicals from all over Europe had been established in Paris to pursue their insidious plotting against established governments.¹⁰ Given that presumption, it is no accident that many conspiracy theorists refer to “the Conspiracy” rather than (lower case) conspiracies or conspiratorial factions, since they perceive no internal divisions among the conspirators. Rather, as a group the conspirators are believed to possess an extraordinary degree of internal solidarity, which produces a corresponding degree of countersolidarity vis-à-vis society at large, and indeed it is this very cohesion and singleness of purpose which enables them to effectively execute their plans to destroy existing institutions, seize power, and eliminate all opposition.

Thirdly, conspiracy theorists believe that the conspiratorial group is omnipresent, at least within its own sphere of operations. While some conspiracy theories postulate a relatively localized group of conspirators, most depict this group as both international in its spatial dimensions and continuous in its temporal dimensions. “[T]he conspirators planned and carried out evil in the past, they are successfully active in the present, and they will triumph in the future if they are not

disturbed in their plans by those with information about their sinister designs.”¹¹ The conspiratorial group is therefore capable of operating virtually everywhere. As a consequence of this ubiquitousness, anything that occurs which has a broadly negative impact or seems in any way related to the purported aims of the conspirators can thus be plausibly attributed to them.

Fourthly, the conspiratorial group is viewed by conspiracy theorists as virtually omnipotent. In the past this group has successfully overthrown empires and nations, corrupted whole societies, or destroyed entire civilizations and cultures, and it is said to be in the process of accomplishing the same thing at this very moment. Its members are secretly working in every nook and cranny of society, and are making use of every subversive technique known to mankind to achieve their nefarious purposes. Nothing appears to be able to stand in their way—unless the warnings of the conspiracy theorists are heeded and acted upon at once. Even then there is no guarantee of ultimate victory against such powerful forces, but a failure to recognize the danger and take immediate countervailing action assures the success of those forces in the near future.

Finally, for conspiracy theorists conspiracies are not simply a regular feature of politics whose importance varies in different historical contexts, but rather the motive force of all historical change and development. The conspiratorial group can and does continually alter the course of history, invariably in negative and destructive ways, through conscious planning and direct intervention. Its members are not buffeted about by structural forces beyond their control and understanding, like everyone else, but are themselves capable of controlling events more or less at will. This supposed ability is usually attributed to some combination of demonic influence or sponsorship, the possession of arcane knowledge, the mastery of devilish techniques, and/or the creation of a preternaturally effective clandestine organization. As a result, unpleasant occurrences which are perceived by others to be the products of coincidence or chance are viewed by conspiracy theorists as further evidence of the secret workings of the conspiratorial group. For them, nothing that happens occurs by accident. Everything is the result of secret plotting in accordance with some sinister design.

This central characteristic of conspiracy theories has been aptly summed up by Donna Kossy in a popular book on fringe ideas:

“Conspiracy theories are like black holes—they suck in everything that comes their way, regardless of content or origin...Everything you’ve ever known or experienced, no matter how “meaningless”, once it contacts the conspiratorial universe, is enveloped by and cloaked in sinister significance. Once inside, the vor-

tex gains in size and strength, sucking in everything you touch."¹²

As an example of this sort of mechanism, one has only to mention the so-called "umbrella man", a man who opened up an umbrella on a sunny day in Dealey Plaza just as President John F. Kennedy's motorcade was passing. A number of "conspiracy theorists" have assumed that this man was signalling to the assassins, thus tying a seemingly trivial and inconsequential act into the alleged plot to kill Kennedy. It is precisely this totalistic, all-encompassing quality that distinguishes "conspiracy theories" from the secret but often mundane political planning that is carried out on a daily basis by all sorts of groups, both within and outside of government. It should, however, be pointed out that even if the "umbrella man" was wholly innocent of any involvement in a plot, as he almost certainly was, this does not mean that the Warren Commission's comforting reconstruction of the assassination is accurate.

However that may be, real covert politics, although by definition hidden or disguised and often deleterious in their impact, simply do not correspond to the bleak, simplistic image propounded by conspiracy theorists. Far from embodying metaphysical evil, they are perfectly and recognizably human, with all the positive and negative characteristics and potentialities which that implies. At the most basic level, all the efforts of individuals to privately plan and secretly initiate actions for their own perceived mutual benefit—insofar as these are intentionally withheld from outsiders and require the maintenance of secrecy for their success—are conspiracies. The Latin word *conspire* literally means "breathe together", and need not suggest anything more sinister than people getting together to hold a private meeting. Thus every time officers of a company participate in a board meeting to plan a marketing strategy they are "conspiring", and in this sense there are literally millions of conspiracies occurring every single day.

Moreover, in contrast to the claims of conspiracy theorists, covert politics are anything but monolithic. At any given point in time, there are dozens if not hundreds of competitive political and economic groups engaging in secret planning and activities, and most are doing so in an effort to gain some advantage over their rivals among the others. Such behind-the-scene operations are present on every level, from the mundane efforts of small-scale retailers to gain competitive advantage by being the first to develop new product lines to the crucially important attempts by rival secret services to penetrate and manipulate each other. Sometimes the patterns of these covert rivalries and struggles are relatively stable over time, whereas at other times they appear fluid and kaleidoscopic, as different groups secretly shift

alliances and change tactics in accordance with their perceived interests. Even internally, within particular groups operating clandestinely, there are typically bitter disagreements between various factions over the specific courses of action to be adopted. Unanimity of opinion and complete solidarity are not possible in any organization, though ruthless purges can temporarily contribute to that impression.

Furthermore, the operational sphere of particular conspiratorial groups is invariably restricted in time and space, though the precise extent of those temporal and spatial boundaries can vary quite widely. There is probably not a single secret organization anywhere which has existed continuously from antiquity to the present, and only a small number could have had a continuous existence for more than a century. And, with the possible exception of those which are created and sponsored by the governments of major nations and the world's most powerful business and religious institutions, the range of activity of specific clandestine groups is invariably limited to particular geographic or sectoral arenas.

Given these great disparities and divergences in range and power, it is obvious that actual conspiracies operate at varying levels of effectiveness. Although they are a typical facet of social and political life, in the overall scheme of things most conspiracies are narrow in scope, restricted in their effects, and of limited historical significance. But this is not always the case. It should be obvious that whenever powerful political figures engage in secret planning, the impact of their decisions on others will be correspondingly greater and more difficult to resist. Therefore, when such influential figures meet to hatch and coordinate plots, these plots may well have a disproportionate impact on the course of events, and hence a broader historical significance. There is nothing mysterious about this, however. It is simply a covert reflection of existing and sometimes readily visible power relations, and should be recognized as such.

Perhaps the easiest and quickest way to clarify the distinction between "conspiracy theories" and genuine conspiracies is by reference to the notorious anti-Semitic tract, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This document, which purports to be the minutes from a secret meeting of a conspiratorial Jewish leadership group aiming to take control over the world, has played a major role in stirring up fears of a Zionist conspiracy and catalyzing repressive actions against Jewish communities throughout Europe and beyond since its appearance in the late nineteenth century. Even today, it continues to be cited by conspiracy mongers and anti-Semites of all

stripes as proof that there is a secret Jewish cabal which is carefully planning and directing worldwide efforts to subvert and destroy all that is good in the world of the *goyim*. As such, it provides a perfect example of classic conspiracy theory literature, one which further exacerbated the "paranoid style" of thinking already characteristic of many of its readers. Of course, as Norman Cohn and others have conclusively demonstrated, the *Protocols* are not what they purport to be. Yet even though they are not ascribable to a hidden group of Jewish plotters, they are nonetheless the product of real conspiratorial politics, since they were forged by persons affiliated with the Tsarist secret police, the Okhrana. In short, they were produced at the behest of a genuine clandestine agency in

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Far Right Argentine anti-Masonic journal.

order to fan anti-Semitism and otherwise exploit and manipulate popular fears.

It is clear, then, that there are fundamental differences between "conspiracy theories" and actual covert and clandestine politics, differences which must be taken into account if one wishes to avoid serious errors of historical interpretation. The problem is that most people, amateurs and professionals alike, consistently fail to distinguish between them. On the one hand, the vast majority of the self-appointed "experts" who concern themselves with alleged conspiracies are in fact "conspiracy theorists" in the negative sense outlined above. They seriously and passionately believe in the existence of vast, preternaturally effective conspiracies which successfully manipulate and control historical events behind the scenes, though they typically disagree with one another about exactly

who is behind those conspiracies. This vocal lunatic fringe tends to discourage serious researchers from investigating such matters, in part because the latter do not wish, understandably, to be tarred by the same soiled brush. In the process, however, most have unfortunately failed to heed the important qualification that Richard Hofstadter made in his analysis of the "paranoid style" of political thinking—that real conspiracies do exist, even though they do not conform to the elaborate and often bizarre scenarios concocted by conspiracy theorists. How, indeed, could it be otherwise in a world full of intelligence agencies, national security bureaucracies, clandestine revolutionary organizations, economic pressure groups, secret societies with hidden political agendas, and the like?

There has never been, to be sure, a single, monolithic Communist Conspiracy of the sort postulated by the American John Birch Society in the 1950s and

1960s. Nor has there ever been an all-encompassing International Capitalist Conspiracy, a Jewish World Conspiracy, a Masonic Conspiracy, or a Universal Vatican Conspiracy. And nowadays, contrary to the apparent belief of millions, neither a vast Underground Satanist Conspiracy nor an Alien Abduction Conspiracy exists. This reassuring knowledge should not, however, prompt anyone to throw out the baby with the bathwater, as

many academics have been wont to do. For just as surely as none of the above-mentioned Grand Conspiracies has ever existed, diverse groups of communists, capitalists, Zionists, masons, and Catholics have in fact secretly plotted, often against one another, to accomplish various specific but limited political objectives. No sensible person would claim, for example, that the Soviet secret police has not been involved in a vast array of covert operations since the establishment of the Soviet Union, or that international front groups controlled by the Russian communist party have not systematically engaged in worldwide penetration and propaganda campaigns. It is nonetheless true that scholars have often hastened to deny the existence of genuine conspiratorial plots, without making any effort whatsoever to investigate

them, simply because such schemes fall outside their own realm of knowledge and experience or—even worse—directly challenge their sometimes naive conceptions about how the world functions.

If someone were to say, for example, that a secret masonic lodge in Italy had infiltrated all of the state's security agencies and was involved in promoting or exploiting acts of neo-fascist terrorism in order to condition the political system and strengthen its own hold over the levers of government, most readers would probably assume that they were joking or accuse them of having taken leave of their senses. Ten years ago I might have had the same reaction myself. Nevertheless, although the above statement oversimplifies a far more complex pattern of interaction between the public and private spheres, not to mention between visible political institutions ("the overground") and covert political

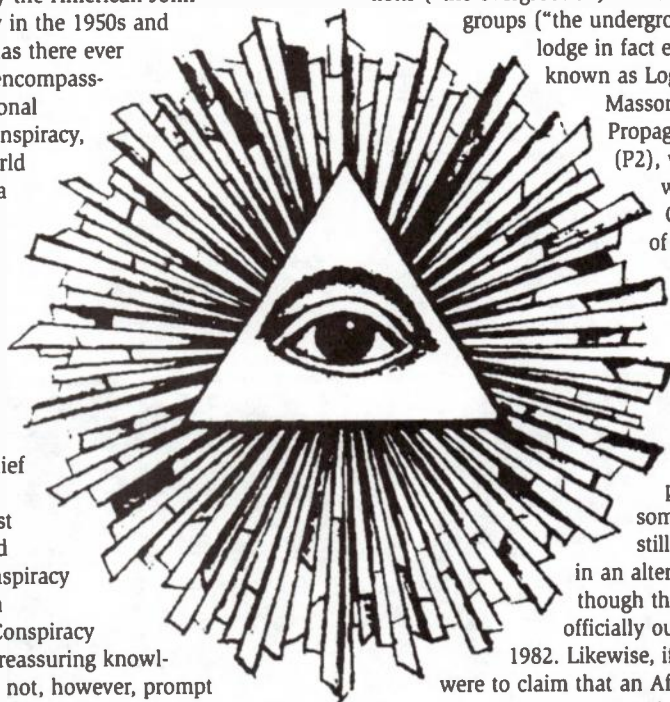
groups ("the underground"), such a lodge in fact existed. It was known as Loggia Massonica Propaganda Due (P2), was affiliated with the Grand Orient branch of Italian masonry, and was headed by a former Fascist militiaman named Licio Gelli.¹³ In all probability something like P2 still exists today in an altered form, even though the lodge was officially outlawed in 1982. Likewise, if someone were to claim that an Afrikaner secret society founded in the early decades of this century had

played a key role in establishing the system of apartheid in South Africa, and in the process helped to ensure the preservation of ultraconservative Afrikaner cultural values and Afrikaner political dominance until 1990, some readers would undoubtedly believe that that person was exaggerating. Yet this organization also existed. It was known as the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB), and it formed a powerful "state within a state" in that country by virtue, among other things, of its unchallenged control over the security services.¹⁴ There is no doubt that specialists on contemporary Italian politics who fail to take account of the activities of P2, like experts on South Africa who ignore the AB, are missing an important dimension of political life there. Nevertheless, neither of these two important organizations has been thoroughly investigat-

ed by academics. In these instances, as is so often the case, investigative journalists have done most of the truly groundbreaking preliminary research.

The above remarks should not be misconstrued. They are in no way meant to suggest that conspiratorial groups are the propulsive force of most historical change or that they alone are capable of controlling our destiny, as legions of "conspiracy theorists" would have us believe. For one thing, no group of individuals has that capability, no matter how powerful they are. Fortunately for the rest of us, even powerful human beings are inherently flawed creatures who regularly commit errors of judgement and other sorts of blunders. They not only have to cope with the formidable problem of unforeseen and unintended consequences, but also have to contend with other powerful groups who are likewise vying for influence, broader social forces which are difficult if not impossible to control, and deep-rooted structural and cultural constraints which place limits on how much they are able to accomplish. Moreover, to attribute that degree of power and influence to secret conspirators would be to commit what David Hackett Fischer has dubbed the "furtive fallacy", that is, to embrace the idea that everything that is truly significant happens behind the scenes. On the other hand, Fischer goes too far in the other direction by implying that only that which is aboveboard is worth considering and that nothing that happens in the shadows has real significance.¹⁵ To accept those unstated propositions uncritically could induce a person, among other things, to overlook the bitter nineteenth century struggle between political secret societies (or, at least, between revolutionaries using non-political secret societies as a "cover") and the political police of powerful states like Austria and Russia, to minimize the role played by revolutionary vanguard parties in the Russian and communist Chinese revolutions, or to deny that powerful intelligence services like the CIA and the Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (KGB) have fomented coups and otherwise intervened massively in the internal affairs of other sovereign states since the end of World War II. In short, it might well lead to the misinterpretation or falsification of history on a grand scale.

It is easier to recognize such dangers when relatively well-known historical developments like these are used as illustrative examples, but problems often arise when the possible role played by conspiratorial groups in more obscure events is brought up. It is above all in these cases, as well as in high-profile cases where a comforting "official" version of events has been widely diffused, that commonplace academic prejudices against taking covert politics seriously come into play and can exert a potentially detrimental effect on historical judgements. There is probably no way to prevent this sort of



Masonic symbol for the "Grand Architect of the Universe"

unconscious reaction in the current intellectual climate, but the least that can be expected of serious scholars is that they carefully examine the available evidence before dismissing these matters out of hand. ⊕

Notes:

1. See William R. Johnson, "Clandestinity and Current Intelligence", reprinted in *Inside CIA's Private World: Declassified Articles from the Agency's Internal Journal, 1955-1992*, ed. by H. Bradford Westerfield (New Haven: Yale University, 1995), p. 131. Compare also the OSO's definition of "counterintelligence", which indicates that CI techniques "all have as their objective the frustration of the active efforts of alien conspiratorial organizations to acquire secret or sensitive information belonging to our government." *Ibid.*, pp. 131-2.
2. Compare Robin Ramsay, "Conspiracy, Conspiracy Theories and Conspiracy Research", *Lobster* 19 (1990), p. 25: "In intellectually respectable company it is necessary to preface any reference to actual political, economic, military or paramilitary conspiracies with the disclaimer that the speaker 'doesn't believe in the conspiracy theory of history (or politics).'" This type of disclaimer quite clearly reveals the speaker's inability to distinguish between bona fide conspiracy theories and actual conspiratorial politics.
3. The word "suppress" is not too strong here. I personally know of at least one case in which a very bright graduate student at a prestigious East Coast university was unceremoniously told by his advisor that if he wanted to write a Ph.D. thesis on an interesting historical example of conspiratorial politics he would have to go elsewhere to do so. He ended up leaving academia altogether and became a professional journalist, in which capacity he has produced a number of interesting books and articles.
4. Complaints about this general academic neglect have often been made by those few scholars who have done research on key aspects of covert and clandestine politics which are directly relevant to this study. See, for example, Gary Marx, "Thoughts on a Neglected Category of Social Movement Participant: The Agent Provocateur and the Informant", *American Journal of Sociology* 80:2 (September 1974), especially pp. 402-3. One of the few dissertations dealing directly with this topic, though not in a particularly skillful fashion, is Frederick A. Hoffman, "Secret Roles and Provocation: Covert Operations in Movements for Social Change" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: UCLA Sociology Department, 1979). There are, of course, some excellent academic studies which have given due weight to these matters—for example, Nurit Schleifman, *Undercover Agents in the Russian Revolutionary Movement: The SR Party, 1902-1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan/St. Anthony's College, 1988); and Jean-Paul Brunet, *La police de l'ombre: Indicateurs et provocateurs dans la France contemporaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1990)—but such studies are unfortunately few and far between.
5. Some standard academic treatments of conspiracy theories are Richard Hofstadter, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics", in Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Knopf, 1966), pp. 3-40; Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981 [1969]); J. M. Roberts, *The Mythology of the Secret Societies* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1972); Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein, *Die These von der Verschwörung, 1776-1945: Philosophen, Freimaurer, Juden, Liberale und Sozialisten als Verschwörer gegen die Sozialordnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1976); Carl F. Graumann and Serge Moscovici, eds., *Changing Conceptions of Conspiracy* (New York: Springer, 1987); Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, ed., *Geheimgesellschaften und der Mythos der Weltverschwörung* (Munich: Herder, 1987); and, most recently, Daniel Pipes, *Conspiracy: How the Paranoid Style Flourishes and Where it Comes From* (New York: Free Press, 1997). Compare also the journalistic studies by George Johnson, *Architects of Fear: Conspiracy Theories and Paranoia in American Politics* (Los Angeles: Tarcher, 1983); and Jonathan Vankin, *Conspiracies, Cover-Ups, and Crimes: Political Manipulation and Mind Control in America* (New York: Paragon House, 1992).
6. See Hofstadter, "Paranoid Style", pp. 14, 29.
7. Although conspiracy theories have been widely accepted in the most disparate eras and parts of the world, and thus

probably have a certain universality as explanatory models, at certain points in time they have taken on an added salience due to particular historical circumstances. Their development and diffusion seems to be broadly correlated with the level of social, economic, and political upheaval or change, though indigenous cultural values and intellectual traditions determine their specific form and condition their level of popularity.

8. As many scholars have pointed out, if such ideas were restricted to clinical paranoids, they would have little or no historical importance. What makes the conspiratorial or paranoid style of thought interesting and historically significant is that it frequently tempts more or less normal people and has often been diffused among broad sections of the population in certain periods. Conspiracy theories are important as collective delusions, delusions which nevertheless reflect real fears and real social problems, rather than as evidence of individual pathology. See, for example, Hofstadter, "Paranoid Style", pp. 3-4.

9. See his *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe, Carried on in the Secret Meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies, Collected from Good Authorities* (New York: G. Forman, 1798), p. 14. This exhibits yet another characteristic of "conspiracy theorists"—the tendency to overdramatize everything by using capital letters with reckless abandon.

10. See his "Geheime Denkschrift über die Gründung eines Central-Comites der nordischen Mächte in Wien", in *Aus Metternichs nachgelassenen Papieren*, ed. by Richard Metternich-Winneburg (Vienna: 1881), vol. 1, p. 595, cited in Rogalla von Bieberstein, *These von der Verschwörung*, pp. 139-40.

11. Dieter Groh, "Temptation of Conspiracy Theory, Part 1", in *Changing Conceptions of Conspiracy*, p. 3. A classic example of conspiratorial works that view modern revolutionary movements as little more than the latest manifestations of subversive forces with a very long historical pedigree is the influential book by Nesta H. Webster, *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements* (London: Boswell, 1924). For more on Webster's background, see the biographical study by Richard M. Gilman, *Behind World Revolution: The Strange Career of Nesta H. Webster* (Ann

Arbor: Insight, 1982), of which only one volume has so far appeared.

12. *Kooks: A Guide to the Outer Limits of Human Belief* (Portland: Feral House, 1994), p. 191.

13. For more on P2, see above all the materials published by the Italian parliamentary commission investigating the organization, which are divided into the majority (Anselmi) report, five dissenting minority reports, and over one hundred thick volumes of attached documents and verbatim testimony before the commission. See Parlamento, IX legislatura, *Commissione d'inchiesta sulla loggia massonica P2* (Rome: Camera dei Deputati, 1984-87). Compare also Martin Berger, *Historia de la logia masonica P2* (Buenos Aires: El Cid, 1983); Andrea Barbieri et al., *L'Italia della P2* (Milan: Mondadori, 1981); Alberto Cecchi, *Storia della P2* (Rome: Riuniti, 1985); Roberto Fabiani, *I massoni in Italia* (Milan: L'Espresso, 1978); Gianfranco Piazzesi, *Gelli: La carriera di un eroe di questa Italia* (Milan: Garzanti, 1983); Marco Ramat et al., *La resistibile ascesa della P2: Poteri occulti e stato democratico* (Bari: De Donato, 1983); Renato Risaliti, *Licio Gelli, a carte scoperte* (Florence: Fernando Brancato, 1991); and Gianni Rossi and Francesco Lombrassa, *In nome della "loggia": Le prove di come la massoneria segreta ha tentato di impadronirsi dello stato italiano. I retroscena della P2* (Rome: Napoleone, 1981). Pro P2 works include those of Gelli supporter Pier Carpi, *Il caso Gelli: La verità sulla loggia P2* (Bologna: INEI, 1982); and the truly Orwellian work by Gelli himself, *La verità* (Lugano: Demetra, 1989), which in spite of its title bears little resemblance to the truth.

14. For the AB, see Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1978); and J.H.P. Serfontein, *Brotherhood of Power: An Exposé of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University, 1978). Compare also B. M. Schoeman, *Die Broederbond in die Afrikaner-politiek* (Pretoria: Aktuele, 1982); and Adrien Pelzer, *Die Afrikaner-Broederbond: Eerste 50 jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1979).

15. See his *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 74-8.

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What could possibly be the most obnoxious thing for a hoary old punk music writer like myself to write about? Punk? Nah, been done by everyone. Metal? I love beating up on Metal, but not this time, thank you. Classic Rock? Ick, but no...well sort of, almost, as you shall see, but definitely not exactly!!! No. This time I'm going to pick on Country...Wankers in Stetsons.

Remember wanking Arena Rock and its obnoxious offspring, Arena Metal? Most of that died, with only the biggest bands carrying on the disgusting tradition, right? Wrong! It seems to have transmigrated! I have cable at home (all the mountains surrounding Sunland-Tujunga make broadcast TV unavailable) and lately I have been watching Country music concerts on TNN, plus occasionally Country music videos on CMT. Now before you have salivating hissy fits all over my front and soak me with flying spittle you should understand that I am watching TNN in the spirit of an anthropologist taking careful notes on the quaint customs of some nekkid Borneo tribe with bones in their noses. I ain't no advocate of line-dancing, crypto-Nazi Country. I think it sucks. And lately I have discovered that they suck far worse than I ever imagined.

So shut up and let me tell you about it!

Ever go to a concert and watch some band do the Ted Nugent school of wanking Arena Rock? You know the type. David Lee Roth. Guns & Roses. They and others like them were the most disgusting thing about rock during the 80s. Arena wankers would play flashy masturbatory leads on guitar, ego-stroke solos on other instruments—and the singers! They were the worst! They would get up there and strut like they were the sexiest critters on the face of the earth—all the girls should come fuck them after the show!—and do so with this self-congratulatory vibe that automatically assumed that everyone was in love with them! They could feel the love in the room. And they glowed while basking in it.

I swear to Dobbs, these sumbitches thought they were God.

This is how I discovered that Things Were Worse Than I Thought. I was channel surfing late at night looking for something to watch that wasn't irritating, yet was sufficiently mindless to put me to sleep so I could go to work the next morning well rested. My clicking took me to TNN. Some band was on stage. They wanked. They strutted. They sent each other subliminal signals telling each other how great they were. They were wearing cowboy hats!

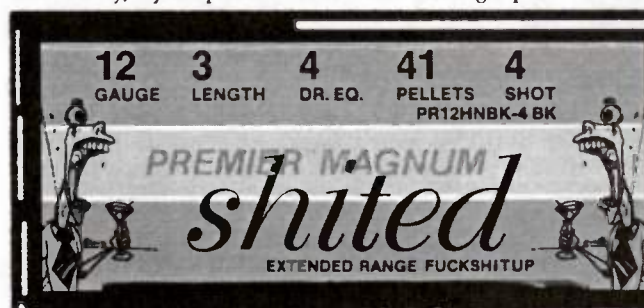
My mind raced straight into the twilight zone. A creeping horror overtook my consciousness, until my darkened bedroom—lit only by the flickering menace of my television—was transformed into a surreal set from a gothic movie. Christopher Lee and Boris Karloff meet the Knights of the Ingo Boingo. Stephen King meets Kafka.

Gradually I recovered my mental balance enough to note that the singer was Garth Brooks! At that point my horror dissolved into laughter. Here was a clear and recognizable cloning of Arena Metal style, with twangy accents and funny looking hats added for comic relief.

Let me tell you a little something about cowboy hats. The purpose of having a rim all the way around is to keep the sun and rain off the face and the head of a man working while riding a horse. He can't carry an umbrella because he needs both hands free to use reins and ropes. It is

an outdoorsman's hat. The Aussie horsemen Down Under wear the same basic design, only they don't get all stylish and curl the sides of the brim upward the way American horsemen do. But of course, very few people working on farms and ranches in the USA these days do so from the back of a horse. So the cowboy hat evolved with the curled up sides to the brim. This left the front of the brim for a sun visor (same idea as the baseball cap), and the back of the brim to keep the redneck's neck from getting too red from sunburn.

There is no reason in the world for most of these idiots to wear cowboy hats indoors. The jackasses wearing them on stage, or while being interviewed on TNN, are being nothing more or less than trendy, stylish poseurs. Each one is striking a pose. The hat



is part of their uniform. The ONLY Country artist who I've ever seen wear his cowboy hat indoors and NOT be a poseur is Dwight Yoakam. That is because Dwight's intention is to HIDE behind his hat—that's why he pulls it down over half his face!

In a related bit, let's talk about wearing baseball caps backwards. Indoors and outside in cloudy weather, fine. But if the sun is bright and you still don't wear the thing forward to protect your face and eyes, then you are just as much of a trendy, stylish, pretentious piece of shit as the cowboy poseurs, so nyah!

I'm now going to tell you something most of you will automatically misunderstand. But that's okay, I'll explain it in excruciating detail! Ready? I LIKE COUNTRY MUSIC. Does that mean I like Garth Brooks? NO! I despise Garth Brooks. The Garth Brooks I saw doing a concert WAS NOT COUNTRY MUSIC! So don't be deceived by advertising and the overwhelming flood of input through the media that tell you Garth Brooks' music is Country. It isn't. What it has is a Country FLAVOR to the vocals, and to some of the arrangements, riffing and instrumentation.

Don't think I'm only going to be picking on poor Garth here. I'm using him as an example, but the same things are true of Billy Ray Cyrus, the Dixie Chicks, Kenny Chesney and George Strait, to name a few more of THEM.

The vast majority of today's "Country" is actually Rock! Years ago, when I wuz just a little tyke, popular music had a couple of styles called "Country" and "Western." Country music originated among the farming and mountain people in the eastern United States. It was based on the English and Scottish folk ballad, heavily flavored with the use of a violin among other instruments. You could generalize and call it "fiddle

I ain't no advocate of line-dancing, crypto-Nazi Country. I think they suck. And lately I have discovered that they suck far worse than I ever imagined

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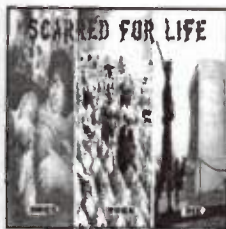
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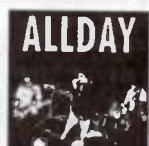
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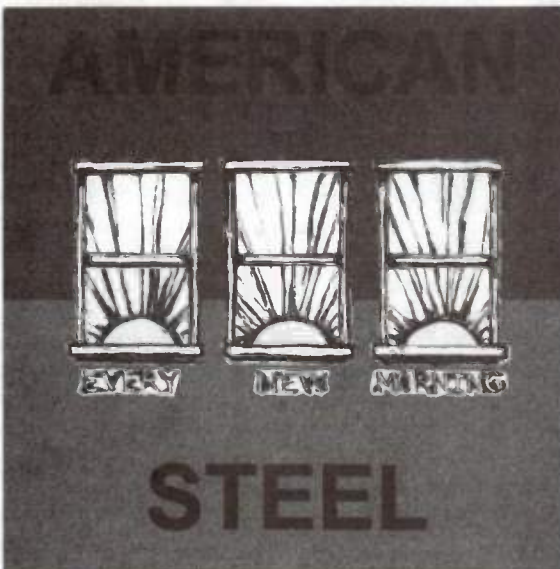
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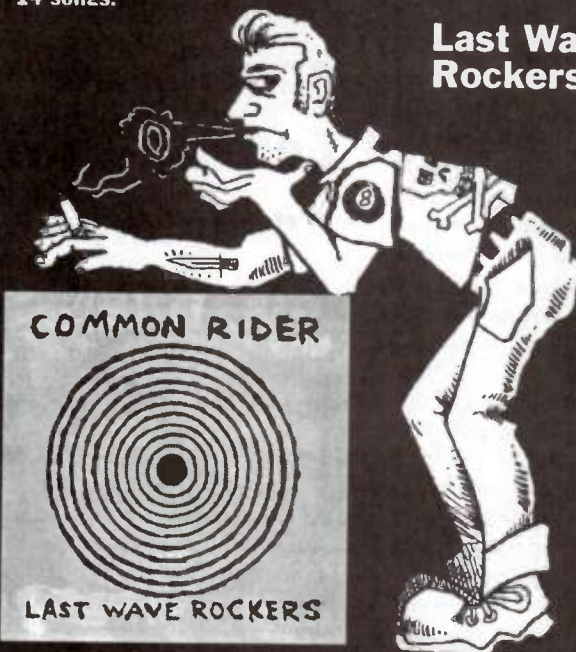
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music" if you wanted. Out of this roots-country music developed a pure style/approach called Bluegrass. Bill Monroe. Flat and Scruggs. That's Country! Country does NOT USE DRUMS. Drums are ROCK! (Drums were introduced to popular music through the two negro styles of Blues and Rhythm, both of which acquired drums through the influence of the big jazz and swing bands. In actual fact Rock IS Rhythm, but that would take a whole other column to go into it!) When I was growing up, people began introducing Rock into Country. One style that grew out of the mix is Rockabilly. Rockabilly is hillbilly (i.e., country boy) rock and roll. Then later the 60's hippie movement spawned the rock-oriented, Bluegrass-inspired band the Grateful Dead. Other Country-Rock bands of those hippie days were Buffalo Springfield (whose guitar players were Neil Young and Stephen Stills of Crosby, Stills and Nash) and later Poco (the Doughboys of hippie Country?). There were others, but you get the idea. If any of these bands, playing their exact styles, were to appear today, they would be instantly classed as Country bands and would be played on the Country music radio stations rather than on Classic Rock or Alternative Rock stations. Back then they were classed as what they actually are: Rock. Why? DRUMS!

Therefore the converse is also true: if these alleged "Country" bands and artists of 1999 were magically transported back in time to 1968, they would be classed as Rock bands. At the same time they aren't REALLY Rock, because they don't rock. I realize that sounds oxymoronic, but bear with me. They use the drums to kick back the beat without driving it. That entire approach to Rock is an abomination—it is a violation of the entire concept of Rock, which is supposed to speed you up with energy and/or sleaze you out with sexual excitement. Never forget that the phrase "rock and roll" is old negro slang for fucking! Somehow they and the other Rock Lite bands of all kinds manage to pablumize Rock so it won't be subversive.

Western is the Spanish guitar-influenced music of the cowboys. So generally and originally, Western is west of the Mississippi, and Country east of it. Original Country is sorta cool. It's very down to earth, the same way Delta Blues is down to earth. (Delta Blues is another kind of music I like a lot. Robert Johnson. Muddy Waters. No drums but way real and primal, the way the Ramones are primal.) And that's what makes it cool. What makes today's faux Country like Brooks suck so hard is that it's fuckin' fake, pretentious poseur music. And it goes too slow and wanks too much, and the sparse "hit the snare on 2 and 4" drumming makes this punk rocker crazy.

Let me beat a tattoo into your head on this one: neither Country nor Western uses drums. I remember seeing old Country bands on TV when I was a kid. They would have a stand-up bass, a guitar or two, and maybe one or more of the following auxiliary instruments: violin, mandolin, banjo. All these were acoustic; nothing was electrified directly, their playing was picked up with microphones. The bass was usually the

only rhythm instrument, unless they were using a washboard.

Another important point about today's Country is that it doesn't sound like the music of back country folks because it's all slicked up. The overproduced garbage offered as "Country" by major labels is the product of weeks and months in a recording studio, where the carefully crafted resulting Product bears little resemblance to what happens in a live performance. Call me a roots purist, call me a minimalist, call me a primitivist—I don't fucking give a shit—but live music by real people playing together RULES, and studio Product had damned well better result in the intensity and immediacy of a live performance or I am going to hate it. The best example I can think of offhand of a studio record which sounds live is the first Humpers CD on Epitaph. It was recorded with the band playing live in the studio. The studio was Westbeach, which is why they did a great job of capturing what the Humpers really sound like.

The overproduced garbage offered as "Country" by major labels is the product of weeks and months in a recording studio, where the carefully crafted resulting Product bears little resemblance to what happens in a live performance.

I do like some Country Rock: Gun Club and Blood On The Saddle are good examples, and of course all the good Rockabilly (but especially Psychobilly and Swamp). The reason these don't suck is because they rock, they aren't bullshit pretension, and they let it all hang out in a very earthy manner.

Therefore today's Country is a double lie. It is not actually Country at all because of the drums and the Rock arrangements. And it is not really Rock because its beat is softened to the point of inoffensive pap. Therefore it is neither one. Neither fish nor fowl, it is decidedly foul and smells really fishy to my ears (mixed metaphor alert!). It seems to be nothing less than a self-congratulatory exercise in egotistical stupidity.

To my hawk-eyed ears, Garth Brooks is standing there on stage with his mike in one hand and his cock in the other...Yuck! Wankin' away. The only time that sort of "look at me, I'm so cool" attitude is okay is when it's done as a joke, or when it's done ironically as obvious self-parody. That's why NYC's Dictators are cool. It's a "wrestling attitude", baby! And wrestling attitude is PUNK ROCK—except when it loses its self-parody and begins to take itself seriously. That's why the Supersuckers are so irritating, since they look like they seriously mean it. When Wrestling Attitude starts believing its own bullshit, it transmogrifies into Metal Attitude. Which is precisely "look at me, I'm so cool" delivered in utter seriousness. And that leaves us with the following profound revelation:

Garth Brooks = Metal God.

You heard it here first! Ha ha ha!

—ShitEd, Tujunga, Californication ☯

HIT SQUAD

EEGAD, the news hit me like a cold fist fashioned out of cold liverwurst. Due to a brief union walk-out in the *Hit List* mailroom, and my heinous location down the Free Record Foodchain, I would be receiving not a godamn thing for review this issue. I was on my own, trapped in a mental outpost at the Arctic Circle and enduring a 6-month winter without much needed provisions. Not that stream of unconsciousness ain't my forte...I could catch y'all up on current events like me re-locating to the Midwest to cash in on a 6-figure advance to run Canadian Wilderness Bowhunting expeditions for "TED NUGENT U.S.A" in scenic Jackson, Michigan. Or maybe the "EVERY THOUGHT THAT ENTERS MY MELON IS GOD"-type column a la Larry King in *USA TODAY*. (Oh goody, I've always wanted to do this)



There's nothing in this world I HATE MORE THAN THE NEW YORK YANKEES...That Adrian Barbeau, what a set of milk wagons...My favorite BLACK FLAG singer would have to be—without question—Keith Morris, Ron, Dez, or that other guy...I was chowin' on some Gefilte Fish at Duke Zieberts and who walks up but Pam Anderson, who launches her freshly-removed glad bags all over my supper! What a nut!...Glenn Danzig comes up to my godamn waist WITH the Mexican Elevator shoes ON!...The best godamn ska/punk band in the land has to be

THE PIETASTERS...Ever wonder why Hillary puts up with Clinton's runaway frankfurter? Coupla Secret Service Pals told me on the QT that Hillary has a "woman friend" who gets SS Protection. She's a full-blown rug-muncher—it makes perfect sense, don't it?...Other celebrity secrets passed on to me by Tour Bus Drivers...Neil Diamond has a shoebox full of poop on his bus at all times, and enjoys handling, shaping, and molding yesterday's lunch...Merle Haggard was caught FUCKING HIS DOG in the back room of his

bus, and his sheepish retort was "You ain't gonna tell nobody bout this, areya?"...The smegma that builds up under my toupe smells like death...That Carol Wayne, what a set of GONZAGAS she had...My new bride is younger than my freakin' daughter...

Is it just me, or is Popular Music at an all time low?...The real reason I got no platters to revile and defile is that the record labels forbade it...Tell it like it is and be damned. Be like the Car Mag that loves every new rod or you no get next year's rod...Payola still exists in the form of tarts who travel around and pander to program directors until the \$\$ runs out...The Majors jettisoned all the middle-ground bands. Does that signal a rebirth of the TRULY INDIE LABEL? Will a creative mud spring bubble up? I gotta tell ya, I got a creative mud spring in my boxers as we speak.

That MBX, now that's a sandwich...My favorite import Whitbread Ale is now over a SAWBUCK A SIXPACK! You Limeys are killin' me! I'm pretty pissed that after 20 years of slingin' VITRIOL, I've never inspired any of the grisly acts we see in the daily papers! Why, back when I was a schoolboy, a little fisticuffs and an occasional flick-knife were the extent of aggro. I guess KMFDm inspires true rebellion, the pansies...How come everything has a shelf life, from the *Billboard* Charts to your favorite niteclub? But people keep listenin' to Howard Stern...Howard, from ONE JEW TO ANOTHER, it's time to fade away and turn over the reins of WACK to SOMEBODY NEW who is Funny, Glib, and Muthufuckin' knock-down handsome in a Norse God kinda way (TESCO VEE with sidekick REVEREND NØRB).

That reminds me, THE GODS from Cleveland—what a rock band!...If it hain't been re-issued already, somebody oughta do the entire BLACK RANDY AND THE METROSQUAD Dangerhouse catalogue, including all the 45's and the classic knee-slappin

"PASS THE DUST, I THINK I'M BOWIE" LP, featuring one of my all time faves, "I Slept In An Arcade", a gigglefest for the ages...I'm puttin' a fork in my abbreviated monthly missive with a pledge to properly review all the waffle-stompin' rock 'n' rave you pongos wanna promo me by way of my illustrious PO Box. By doing so you can be certain no other *Hit List* HACKMOID reviewer will wax snotty on your hard-earned product. Fantabulous or Frisbee, I decide. Roll some big dice, punk rock compatriots, and wisdom will flow to thee. Until issue #4, whence I'll be flush with fresh product to enlighten your inquiring

I'm pretty pissed that after 20 years of slingin' VITRIOL, I've never inspired any of the grisly acts we see in the daily papers! Why, back when I was a schoolboy, a little fisticuffs and an occasional flick-knife were the extent of aggro.

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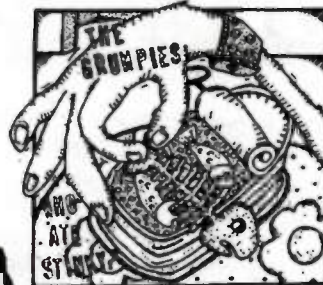
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frank • discussion

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HIT SQUAD

"That's the solution to all the school shootings," Jello Biafra quipped at the Purple Onion as the Dukes of Hamburg whipped into a 100mph version of Bo Diddley's "Cadillac", "More garage bands."

Ha ha. Funny line. But he's right. Forming a rock'n'roll band was at one time the primary outlet for frustrated middle class, teenage outsiders. Any zit-faced bored teenager can figure out how to play guitar if he just puts his mind to it. Enlist a few of your equally disaffected pals, write or learn a few three-chord rants, come up with a suitably disaffected name such as the Outsiders, the Fugitives, the Lost & Found,



or even the Trenchcoat Mafia, and you're away. Who needs a pipe bomb when you have a fuzz box?

Back in the '60s when kids heard the Rolling Stones or the Kinks for the first time it got them fired up enough to make some noise of their own. The same was true in the '70s with the Ramones and the Pistols. Now all they have Marilyn Manson, which just inspires you to want to paint your fingernails black and bring about the downfall of Christianity. Where's the fun in that? No wonder today's bored teenagers stay bored.

And those cold-blooded killers in Colorado were obviously bored. Bored, lost, and looking for something. Anything. I mean, one of them even tried to enlist in the US Marines, for chrissakes. Talk about desperate. I don't want to make light of the Columbine massacre. What happened was a tragedy. All I'm saying is if someone would've just handed one of those kids a "Pebbles" album, things might've turned out a lot different.

Or maybe just a copy of *Ugly Things*?

The shameless self-promotion part of the column begins here, but, hey, what do you think the rest of the *Hit List* columnists are doing other than blatantly promoting their own coolness? At least I have a tangible product to sell you other than my own self-importance/self-righteousness/self-pity/self-stimulation/my-beautiful-self-fish.

The new *Ugly Things* #17 should be out by the time you read this. It is a thing of monstrous size and beauty—and probably

madness. One hundred and sixty pages of tightly-packed rock'n'roll writing, wrapped in a screaming full-color cover and laden with more wild stories and photos than you can possibly imagine.

The remarkable resurrection of the Pretty Things provides the cover story and central theme this time around. As well as the full behind-the-scenes action on their great new album "Rage Before Beauty", there's a round-up on their recently reissued back catalog and some never-before-seen vintage pix that are beyond cool.

You also get the first installment of a huge two-part article on the Real Kids by Dave Laing: all the drugs, fights, and of course the music are here, with no punches pulled. There's also a major feature on the Damnation of Adam Blessing, Cleveland hard rockers from 1969-71 who never got their due, plus Aussie '60s punks the Missing Links, British beat/psych crackpot Big Boy Pete, moonshine banjo-plunker Dock Boggs, Tony Rivers & the Castaways, Love, the Black Cat Bones, the Velvet Underground, and a hysterical in-depth interview with R&B icon Andre Williams.

Also, Johan has compiled "The 100 Greatest Worldwide Punk Rock 45s (in order of greatness)"—a piece that's sure to, er, let's say, spark some debate among you collector scum types.

How to order? Just send \$7 (\$10 overseas) to *Ugly Things*, 3707 Fifth Ave #145, San Diego, CA 92103, or look for it at clued-in record and magazine outlets.

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incredible phenomenon of its rise and gradual dissemination now is often so lame it's sad.

I made the mistake of reading an interview with Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day, found in a year-old issue of that dreaded bastion of "hip" rock music, *Spin* (a magazine that never wrote about the band when it was releasing its early LPs on tiny Lookout! Records—so what else is new?). The most laughable slice of illogic in the whole piece is the singer/guitarist's pathetic response to Johnny Rotten's bitch that Green Day rips-off original punk groups like the Sex Pistols (I might add that, far worse, they're a second rate punk group in comparison, at that): "If it wasn't for the Sex Pistols, there may not have been Green Day," Armstrong acknowledged. "But if it wasn't for Green Day, The Sex Pistols wouldn't have done their big reunion tour. To each his own."

Ground control to Billie Joe: How does that justify your ripping off Rotten's group, exactly as he charges? More to the point, considering that the Sex Pistols' lone LP *Never Mind the Bollocks* went platinum on sales long after the quartet's breakup, before Green Day and Offspring (and to a lesser extent Rancid and Bad Religion) hit big in 1994, isn't it safe to say they didn't need your "help?" The Sex Pistols were a subversive original, one widely remembered as a milestone group precisely because they were genuinely dangerous and contrary to the other bands/lyricists of their time. Whereas you are a safe copy of a well-worn genre so precisely defined now as to be as instant as freeze-dried coffee. Get used to it.

Which isn't to say I hate Green Day, I don't. They're OK. And to be fair, from his quotes, Armstrong is neither stupid nor completely thoughtless, despite his attempts to fit into the brain-dead, witless, obnoxious punk caricature of the last 10 years. To wit, as *Spin* writer Jonathan Gold breathlessly revealed in an impressed tone, throughout the conversation Armstrong "explored a nostril with his pinkie finger so assiduously and so often that I began to wonder if he was expecting to root out a pearl, while punctuating his comments with miscellaneous poots, belches, and spectacular loogies hocked into a parking lot 50 feet below." (Yawn. How boring.)

But even given that Armstrong's comments were more intelligent than his self-conscious show of grade schooler behavior, the real problem is that there wasn't one thing he said, given such a

generous forum, that made me think. Not even one "sound bite," to refer again to Sagan, aroused my curiosity. There wasn't a single fervent stand, raised issue, enthusiastic reflection, or careful opinion that might inspire me to think or do anything other than turn the page, unchallenged.

Granted, such moments are in short supply in *Spin*, in the occasional vapid text that merely connects the plethora of airbrushed, emaciated teen models busting out of the heavily stylized ads for clothes, alcohol, and cigarettes. But remember, punk and post-punk were supposed to be different. (Well, they used to be. Honest!) The underground was supposed to be the place the disgruntled, the dissatisfied, and the disillusioned could turn to for fuel for thought. Not mere farts and burps. (For that, we could have just bought Lynyrd Skynyrd.)

And as Gold notes, with 14 million sold of one five-year old Green Day LP, the hooky *Dookie*—which I guess should have been called

public interest can even grasp the issues; when the people have lost the ability to set their own agendas or knowledgeably question those in authority; when, our critical faculties in decline, unable to distinguish between what feels good and what's true, we slide, almost without noticing, back into superstition and darkness."

"The dumbing down of America is most evident in the slow decay of substantive content in the enormously influential media, the 30-second sound bites (now down to seconds or less), lowest common denominator programming, credulous presentations on pseudoscience and superstition, but especially a kind of celebration of ignorance. As I write, the number-one videocassette rental in America is the movie *Dumb and Dumber*, and *Beavis and Butthead* remains popular. The plain lesson is that study and learning—not just of science, but of anything—are avoidable, even undesirable." (the late) Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, 1997, Ballantine Books

Reading the above, a music fan might think, "Why should modern rock be any different?" Even much of punk rock, post-punk, indie, and "Alternative" (i.e., the uncommercial and thus underground branch of rock that, over the last 20 years, had taken on the task of counteracting superficial newsmidia and idiotic entertainment) now fails us. In many ways, it's a shell of its once untamed, savage, wild self. The once



**JACK
RABID**

**Ground control to Billie Joe:
How does that justify your
ripping off Rotten's group,
exactly as he charges?**

Loogie, since it has all the lyrical depth of one of the singer's aforementioned expectorates—Armstrong is by far the best-selling punk songwriter in history, flattening in comparison the more insightful Rotten, Iggy Pop, Lou Reed, Joe Strummer, Patti Smith, Pete Shelley, Poly Styrene, Penelope Houston, John Denny, and others, like a steamroller over Gumby dolls. To paraphrase Strummer, from the Clash's penultimate lyrical moment, "White Man in Hammersmith Palais," if Green Day have got anything to say, there's plenty of young ears here to listen. More than ever, in fact, that's obvious.

But the article merely confirmed the impression of Mr. Loogie I'd gathered from his lyrics: The reason his songs for the most part say little about not very much is because he himself has little to say. What a wasted moment. What a wasted legacy. If this is the version of punk that most Americans know and like, it's like Donny and Marie were to rock 'n' roll, or like Kenny G. is to jazz—it has a vague resemblance but all the heat has been removed. Too bad those valuable record sales (and *Spin* space) couldn't have gone to someone with a highly active social mind, such as Joey Keithley of D.O.A. (21 years and still going) instead.

OK, yeah, I'm in my 30s now, and it's expected for me to thumb my nose at the works of the younger generation. Point taken, and no argument back. Hell, even Plato did it, and suffice to say he was kind of before my time. But don't kill the messenger without at least considering the message. We can't just dismiss the arguments of those no-longer college age as the ravings of someone far too enamored of their own lost youth. I am here to tell you that the enduring legacy of punk and underground music in general was in its communication with its listeners, which inspired communication between its listeners. The balls-out frenzy of the music was great, but what really made it so exciting, both then and now, was how that impassioned, loud and exciting drive was matched by ideas, both in interviews and on

JACKRABID

records, that either made you laugh about the absurdities of social mores (from the Ramones to the Dickies to Legionaires Disease), or stopped you dead in your tracks with a carefully aimed diatribe and call to arms, or all the points in between. (Dead Kennedys or Gang of Four, anyone?)

15-23 years ago, if you were a kid who wanted to think, did punks have a music movement for you! It was as smart and as comic and as inspiring as it was feral. Heard on today's retrospective CDs, it still is, and it blows the Green Day's of the world out of the water (though again, they're not horrible and there sure are worse out there right now!).

Perhaps the punk and new wave "look" that was briefly affected two decades ago shocks no one these days. Clothes and hairstyles that used to provoke threats of punchings, beatings, and ostracization from suddenly defensive peers, now constitute just another niche-marketed uniform. No one feels threatened by the contradictory uniform of "non-conformity." As Jello Biafra noted in one of his most interesting and enduring observations, it's like wearing a costume on Halloween. Rather riskless.

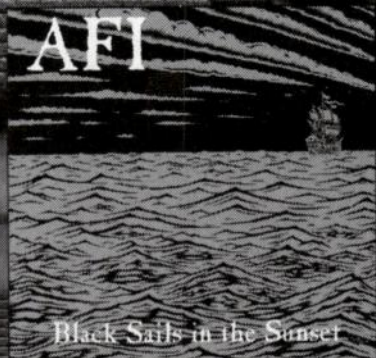
However, I have no problem with this, even if I wonder if today's punks, goths, and clubkids have any clue what a botch they're making of the old idea of totally fucking with society's ever-changing concept of proper dress—the crazier the better—instead of clinging to a pre-established mode. But I actually don't mind this missed point in modern punks at all, since the "fashion" part was always a tiny sideshow to me anyway—a bit of fun, a small, public expression of a mind trying to open, rather than the be-all and end-all the media and society thinks it is.

SPARK THE REVOLUTION!

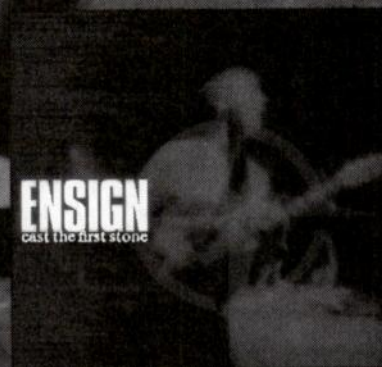
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Simply put, you could never call yourself a “punk” because your hair was/is pink or green, 20 years ago or now. But you could if your mind was/is all those colors, and you could if your reaction to what you were told to accept by the government, the media, society, your classmates/workmates, and most of all, popular culture, was/is to question instead. Yes, it’s that simple.

Let me go back to Sagan again, one of my favorite writers. The most important part of his ruminations was that he noted our failing ability to question what is conventional—and you can bet he never bought any Black Flag or Minor Threat albums. Punk and the underground, like the anti-Vietnam war folk singers of the ‘60s, was best at inspiring one to take on this task, one our sneering peers so hotly resisted, like the Peanuts’ Linus having his blanket yanked. What, after all, is the gift of “freedom” if not the freedom to make your own inquiries and to arrive at your own conclusions? To think or like what you please, to go where you please with whom you please, without the need for public approval? This is where modern punks and indie faves have largely lost the trail. For them, this is all just rhetoric or careful stance instead of an important code for living.

Sagan’s love of science led him to write *The Demon-Haunted World*, a great book that expresses a lot of my own disdain for mass ignorance. This general myopia is manifested primarily in the preference for superstition and ridiculous scientific, political, social, or religious fantasy over reality. When you think about it, it’s pretty damn amazing how casually accepting our society is, particularly as we watch tabloid-style journalism take over from old-style serious-issues journalism, and rapid-spread (exponential!) internet innuendo replaces carefully fact-checked and investigated reporting. (For more of this, I recommend three-decade news vet Pete Hamill’s fine, short and sad new book on the subject, *News is a Verb*.) In fact, the internet makes the oozing of misinformation, inane urban myths (Neiman-Marcus cookie recipes, anyone?), and other pithy poppycock travel so fast and so powerfully, it’s like the ultimate grand-scale circumvention of the scientific method and the use of fact-based reason. On a national and international scale, rumor now becomes fact overnight—or do you really believe that one about the movie star and the gerbil?

Thus, perhaps now more than ever (given such a powerful new medium to distribute rot), we leap to believe in ghosts, alien visits up the wazoo (whole saucer-loads of them!), lost continents like Atlantis, crackpot prophecies, decaying religious myths, astrological signs, or specters (I am always amazed at how many people will travel thousands of miles to see a “sighting” in a tree of some Virgin Mary of other, or hear her speak through some booby woman in Georgia!), without waiting for any credible corroborating evidence or even minor trial. Hell, there are still people who think there are canals on Mars, or that the last czar’s daughter Anastasia survived, long after scientists and historians have shown these theories to be the hoaxes and irrational leaps

of desire they were. We still don’t learn from such cautionary tales as Orson Wells frightening the whole of New Jersey with his radio reading of H.G. Wells’ *War of the Worlds*. (Though I was raised in that State, and reckon that Martian in-breeding could be the only plausible explanation for some of the people I encountered there.)

An idiotic Disney movie even perpetuated the half-century-old Anastasia hoax two years ago, proving once again that a Disney version of the world is going to replace our history textbooks for the average human being. We are free, apparently, to ignore D.N.A. testing that proved conclusively that the woman who claimed to be Nicholas II’s lost daughter for 50 years was in fact of Polish peasant ancestry, no more a noblewoman than you or I. People prefer to believe what they want, facts are so irrelevant to a good fantasy! But let’s get this straight,

once and for all. Anastasia was murdered and shoved down a well with her mom and pop, Nicholas and Alexandra. This truth may be ugly, but it’s time to accept it.

Why does this matter? Every prominent celebrity death is now the work of a shadowy conspiracy, every unexplained phenomenon is the intervention of the divine or Aliens in UFOs. And this cosmic, comic silliness only masks how much more we succumb to ignorance and a dim understanding of far more common and important issues, from government distortion to environmental destruction, to rampant cor-

porate greed and irresponsibility.

We want everything simplified, and current lyrics are not the only problem. Our movies are frequently of the mush variety of: “The fate of the western world, or the President, or our national security, is at stake, and only one man can stop the evil vermin from their dastardly deed” (fill in the blank for the lone-gun hero: Harrison, Arnold, or Sly, hell, these days even Julia Roberts. Me, I would only see such a film if it starred Don Knotts, Moe Howard, Marge Simpson, and Groucho Marx). We’re a nation that even thrilled to Stallone on the screen, single-handedly winning the Vietnam war in *Rambo*, which...oops...uh...we lost. Wishful thinking makes better entertainment, I guess, as much as lone-superhero-pablum. The enemies in these films are usually whatever minorities or foreigners our current national panic irrationally fears. This we have never questioned.

All of this brings me back to modern punk and indie rock. I was obviously not always in my 30s, and I believe my way of looking at the world was enhanced by the music I encountered and embraced as a teen when, like all teens, I was most impressionable for good or for ill. I had to start somewhere, and in those key years underground music acted like a stick of dynamite. It blew up the first 15-17 years of what I was taught, by teachers, by TV, by older people, by social interaction, by crap movies, by religious figures, and even by my caring parents. It drove me insane with delight to think that I had a brain, and that for the first time I was going to use it in my own way and trash all I had been indoctrinated with to see what I would keep.

In finding out I had been sold a bill of goods by my peers and elders, I was free to discover what was routinely kept from me. I could debunk centuries of baloney! I was inspired to confront the issues of the day, in all their gray areas, rather than Stallone-ize them in my mind: issues of politics and power; of the astonishing pull of marketing and how the

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consumer economy drives us like lemmings to jump off the cliff of devastating discontent—even of something as simple (but radical to a high school kid) as how the endless desire to be “popular” is usually accomplished only by pretending you are something you are not, rather than reveling in who you are, regardless of what others wish. Look around you—how many of your fellow townsfolk of all ages have figured out this one yet? How many 54-year-old business executives instead still play-act their teen-age traumas of fragile self-esteem? Or, for that matter, just look at our president, who still wants to be the quarterback who screws the adoring airhead cheerleaders.

Above all, punk gave me the idea that I was free to create my own identity. I got it all from the lyrics of my favorite songs. From those already mentioned, as well as from the Adverts, Newtown Neurotics, Alternative T.V., (early) Bad Brains, Dils, Saints, Jam, Damned, Devo, Effigies, Ruts, you name it. Many of these bands even contradicted each other, but that was part of the lesson. Their songs still make me think when I hear them today. That cannot be said of the majority of today’s underground groups, who erroneously claim such lineage just because they have bought the right black clothes, spiked their hair in unusual colors, or copied the right chords, tempos, guitar densities and production values.

One after another, each of the punk and post-punk giants of my youth challenged my way of thinking. This is what Green Day and too much of what passes for indie rock these days fails to do. In fact, it galls me that in losing this torch, in losing this legacy, so-called “alternative” music has just become another facet of the trad rock music that I needed to get away from the most, if a less cock-rock one. One after another, a thousand bands say as little as the Doobie Brothers, Kansas, Boston, Journey, Aerosmith (sorry, my esteemed friend Al Quint!), or REO Speedwagon said when I was 16. Go watch MTV’s “120 Minutes” any Sunday, or even check out your local college radio station. Focus on the lyrics. What will you learn? About sex and love? About politics? About relations? About issues? Wasn’t the point of the so-called “alternative” to the mainstream to have an actual substance of ideas that the mainstream intentionally lacked in its bid for mass-produced appeal?

You could say it doesn’t really matter, it’s just a song or four kids with guitars, not a Manifesto, and you might have me there. But rock ‘n’ roll still has an enormous pull on kids. For every whip-smart teenager reading a Sagan book, there are 100,000 buying rock records, all semi-blank slates waiting for something to kick their mind’s ass. You can rail against Rap all you want, and I think it’s sometimes (often?) detestable and thuggish instead of inspiring (and, as a form of music, I find it unlistenable). But black kids (and other races) are listening to it and are at least asking a few questions they should. It’s the one good thing about Rap to those of us who can’t stand the genre, that the audience takes the words so seriously: it really is too bad that there are many popular Gangsta Rap bands churlishly bragging about their “bitches” and “hos,” their riches, and their infantile macho toughness (there are more intelligent exceptions; I hope someday they become the norm), because the Rap kids are all ears in a way the rock kids just aren’t anymore.

This is not to say that no one says anything any more, so there is no need to send the editor all your pet exceptions. In fact, mine are bands such as Bad Religion and Leatherface. But exceptions don’t disprove a rule until they are no longer mere exceptions, and moreover, the presence of such quality in our midst just underscores what is lacking in general. Against a Greg Graffin or a Frankie Stubbs, most modern punks and hip indie kids are seriously outclassed where it comes to pen and paper.

For example, let’s take but one Bad Religion song this decade. From *Against the Grain*’s opening shot, “Modern Man”: “I’m one big myoma that thinks the planet supports only me/I’ve got this one problem: will I live forever?/I’ve got just a short time to see/Modern man, evolutionary betrayer/Modern man, ecosystem destroyer/Modern man, destroy

yourself in shame/Modern man, pathetic example of earth’s organic heritage/Just a sample of carbon-based wastage.” (Here is someone who knows his Sagan and gets the message!) If this lyric doesn’t give a 16-year-old something to chew on that he or she hadn’t previously considered, than that kid is a prodigy.

But even in this example, of the million copies each Bad Religion LP sells, typically only 200-300,000 of them are sold here, in their home country. The band moves the bulk of their albums in Germany, where they routinely chart, and in other countries where English is not even the nation’s language, like Japan and the countries of South America. Is there no hope for the bulk of our own nation’s young?

Let me provide another exception in order to show where I think we should be headed instead. Another 100,000-selling post-punk band that clearly has something to say is the wonderful Fugazi, as their recent interviews and LP *End Hits* make clear again. In half the space of Green Day’s *Spin* feature, Ian MacKaye and Guy Picciotto daze the gray matter with their thoughtful convictions and challenging opinions. But like Bad Religion, Fugazi members are also veterans of punk going back to 1979. It is more important to examine what sort of lyrical ideas are coming from younger, newer bands. And as a critic who listens to 1000 CDs a year of just about every young band out there, I’m in a good position to say that I think the exceptions are so rare as to be remarkable. The pile of mediocrity is on an endless march through my door to my stereo. You listen to this sophomoric and self-absorbed drivel all day long and try not to get discouraged!!!!

So how do we inspire our young people, and by extension our young bands, to think, most of all to question, which is the only thing that will allow future generations to avoid the nightmare Sagan posits? To focus on Microsoft-style monopoly instead of Monicagate, or Campaign Financing instead of Jerry Springer. It may not be solely rock music’s job, but it’s the best place I know of to start teens and college-age folks off, if we expect them to stand up against the dark ages of decreasing critical thought in America. If we can only open up that can of words for 15-25-year-olds again, if lyrics can matter, if you can make the young think beyond what they’re told, taught, or learn by osmosis, then you can produce what the Clash called “bullshit detectors” in the minds of young people everywhere. I can tell you, that mechanism, once installed, is permanent.

If nothing else, punk and later indie rock was once a glorious response to this dumbing down of America we all talk about, to the strangulation of culture in lowest common denominator garbage (85 channels, nothing to watch!), and to the incredibly dangerous rise of infotainment and “misertainment” (the term my girlfriend coined for real-life cop-bust shows and tragedy videos), the biggest modern threat to an informed democracy—where even the editorial content of our biggest newsmagazines is up for sale to advertisers. If current bands aspire to be called either “punk” or “post-punk” or “independent” or “alternative,” they should provide mind-opening opposite ideas to their audiences, both young and older. They must have something important to say and say it, for that, above all, is what I will forever call “punk,” or “independent,” not a bunch of loogie pitchers, however working class.

And if you’ve got nothing to say, clear the hell out and give the stage (and the pages of *Spin* and *Rolling Stone* and even *Hit List*) to someone who does, like Graffin, or Keithley, Stubbs, MacKaye, or those younger coming up like them who speak buried truths.

Everything else is just wasted phlegm. ☉

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It's been unseasonably warm in the Bay Area for the past four days—a nice little mid-April heatwave has swept the area and really, it's put everyone in a better mood. And with that first inkling of summer, the clothes get more revealing, car windows get rolled down, stereos are proportionally amplified and, more generally, everyone's in a better mood. Kinda makes you realize why warmer climes like Florida have such a reputation for partying. So the other day I was enjoying daylight savings time (off work during the daylight hours, what a concept!), having grabbed a burrito at the Illustrious El Castillito Taqueria #2 (24th and Harrison in SF's Mission District; the other ones are at Church and Market, and—inexplicably—buried in the deep dark netherworld of Livermore). I was on my way back to the East Bay, cranking "Clash City Rockers" on my stereo with the windows down at 11th and Bryant when this cute Filipina pulled up next to me in a late-model dark forest green Integra. She checked me out, I checked her out. We both smiled in approval. The little girl in the front seat next to her played peek-a-boo in time to the hip-hop beat I could barely discern over Strummer's near-indecipherable Limey mush-mouthedness (couldn't somebody at that big, posh major label have bought the guy some new teeth?). Then she rolls the window all the way down and says something I can't hear over the din of our combined stereos. We both turn down and smile at each other. She tries again. "You (unintelligible, something something) sing."

"What? Do I sing?" I ask as the light changes and we start to move. Her final words as traffic finally separates us:

"No, you look like you're in N'Sync."

Whatever minor shreds of the much vaunted here-today-gone-tomorrow commodity known as Punk Cred I'd managed to amass since moving here from Sacramento almost five years ago seemed to blow right out the window like so much cigarette ash. "What?" I asked myself. "I, Dave Johnson, Punk Rocker, Integrity-Driven-Coffee-Swilling-Czech-Writer-Loving-Bay Area-Living-Sometime-Anarchist-Collective-Volunteer, look like a member of 'N Sync? Egads! What an affront to my Indie Sensibility! I quest for ALL on a daily basis! I go to record stores without any clear idea of what I'm looking for, on a quixotic mission to find that Elusive Perfect Record. According to that Reverend Nørb guy, I'm a prime candidate for Rocking Man Status!"

Yet, although unstated by His Nørbness, I have a vague inkling that Rocking Man generally looks nothing like anyone even vaguely associated with the whole NKOTB Redux that's currently

sweeping the nation like a great turdly tsunami. I mean, fuck, nobody would mistake Jeff Bale for an errant member of the Boyzone posse now, would they? Fuck no! He's an Apocalypse Dude (or so he says, although I think that requires a leather motorcycle cap and a vague European übermasculine brand of androgyny that he doesn't quite have a handle on yet).

Despite my initial offense, I tried to make lemonade out of castor oil. Think about it: she was listening to some kind of vacuous, vaguely-hip-hopish pap. She looked like the type of girl who would be into a man who proudly displayed his Muthafucka 3000 stereo to his Boyz on a Saturday night in a suburban parking lot. She certainly didn't look like she knew the words to "Clash City Rockers" (okay, so Orlando from Special Forces/United Blood/Intrepid AAF is the only person I've ever met who *does* know all the words to it). She's probably one of the mil-

lions of women who are inexplicably drawn to this mass of mind-numbingly vacant pap known as the Modern Boy Group. These guys are Playaz...well, okay, they're the watered down, sanitized-for-your-protection brand of Playaz. They're Smooove, baby. They're sensitive; they'll Make Sweet Love to you Baby all night long, but they'll hold your hand for a year beforehand. They'll do you all night, and be there for you every day, sugar. Because, because, Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh, you've got the Right Stuff and you're their Cover Girl. Yeah, it's the same shit Donny, Jordan, and Danny et al were projectile vomiting to great success ten years ago remodeled for the post-Nirvana generation. (Dra! If I only could've worked something about mastication in there, I would've had "eat shit vomit" in the same sentence. I guess I'm not that tal-



ented. No wonder MRR didn't want me...) They've appropriated the trappings of the Alternative Nation while removing the flannel shirts, unsightly body hair and all of that God-awful unseemly angst. In short, their brand of manufactured suave makes the part of the Rebel as safe as John Denver (although they'll probably live longer and die poorer).

Which brings to mind the question, if a guy like me looks like a member of 'N Sync (probably another reason MRR didn't want me, now that I buff the mind's eyeball with it), what hope is there for Punk Rock? I mean, I'm sorry, I don't wanna be Tim Armstrong. It's too much work...if I'm going somewhere, I don't want to have to carry a whole Punk Wardrobe with me, I just want

a few t-shirts, a couple sweatshirts, a jacket, and a pair of pants to lug around. I don't wanna have to bring a leather jacket with a Crass symbol stenciled on the back, a leather vest (which I'd invariably have to spend time embedding spikes in)

with the Subhumans skull painted on it; a variety of pins denoting my Political Affiliation For The Day (c'mon, depending where I am I'd either need my Circle A, my Swastika, or my Hammer and Sickle), and the corresponding laces for my heavy-duty headstomping boots. I mean, fuck-ing shit, that's just too much of a pain in the ass! Besides, with all those leather products, I'd probably get my ass kicked by straightedge kids.

But at the same time, in certain incredibly clueless sectors of society, these Boy Groups are looked upon with the same reverence afforded to icons like James Dean. That great respect accorded to rebels without cause. Apparently, it's a social model which I, with my cigarettes, my unreasonably loud Punk Rock, and my all-important sideburns fit into quite easily. I suppose this would also fit nicely with Vic Bondi's assertion in the last issue that I should, by all accounts, be embarrassed to associate myself with punk rock. But for some reason, I'm not. '94 is

I mean, fuck, nobody would mistake Jeff Bale for an errant member of the Boyzone posse now, would they?

HIT SQUAD

over. All the Hip Teens are listening to Electronica now.

A few weeks ago I ran into an acquaintance about five years younger than me at a wedding. The last time I saw her she liked a lot of the bands I like.

Apparently she's moved on to this new-and-exciting Electronica stuff. I mentioned to her that I'd tried it, but I couldn't get into it, saying, "See, I can put on a Pistols record and have a few beers and go 'Rock! Fuck yeah! We're so pretty, oh so pretty yeah! We're VAAAY-CUNT!' but I can't do that with Orbital or DJ Shadow or these other darlings of *Spin* magazine." She went onto explain that I wasn't doing the right drugs. But I like beer. And I like music that goes with

beer! Unfortunately for the mallrats of America, Music That Goes With Beer is no longer the pajamas of choice for cats of cultural distinction. The Culture Collective, the Arbiters of Hip and Cool, seem to have passed me by. Sure, you see Green Day, Rancid and the Offspring in *Rolling Stone* occasionally, but that's just a token

gesture to keep the Mallalternative crowd into thinking they're on the pulse of what's happening. Think about it: when all this electronic music was really happening back in the late '80's and early nineties, they were busy fawning over Faith No More, Jane's Addiction, and Pearl Jam. So the Culture Trust (as the excellent and highly recommended journal *The Baffler* puts it) and I had a momentary collision four years ago. For a moment there, my culture was the It Culture, and I'm sure, ten years from now or so, the cycle will repeat itself and we'll find the Green Days, Jawbreakers, Rancids, and Offsprings of the next decade appropriated, chewed up, and spit back out. It doesn't change the fact that all those guys (well, except for the Offspring, who pretty much always sucked) are still making good music, but in terms of the great landscape of what's Cutting Edge, they're so five minutes ago.

Rebellion has been so watered down and commodified that people can't even distinguish between its various manifestations anymore. Joe Strummer or Joe McIntyre? Tim Armstrong or Timbaland? It doesn't really matter, does it? Or does it?

I guess it has to matter. It matters to me at least. In some small way, if I can subvert the cultural combine, pose some sort of threat to the elite—fuck, do something to change some minds, I feel it's worth it. I don't know. It's so

daunting and I really have very few answers. I'm as much a product of it as you, the car I drive, the computer I'm typing this on, the job I have (which ultimately lines the pockets of a multi-million dollar investment banking firm) as Steve Forbes, Rush Limbaugh and Newt Gingrich are. But there has to be something else. Maybe I'm a pathetic idealist. Maybe Bill Gates will someday own everything around me, but I don't wanna sit around and let that happen. That's why I'm here. That's why you're here; we're ultimately sifting through a cultural waste transfer station looking for nuggets in a pile of shit and if we can help each other out and create something worthwhile along the way, I say it's worth doing. So what if I end up looking like a member of a vacuous flash in the pan...some girls love that stuff... ☺

xoxo
Davey

I like beer. And I like music that goes with beer! Unfortunately for the mallrats of America, Music That Goes With Beer is no longer the pajamas of choice for cats of cultural distinction.

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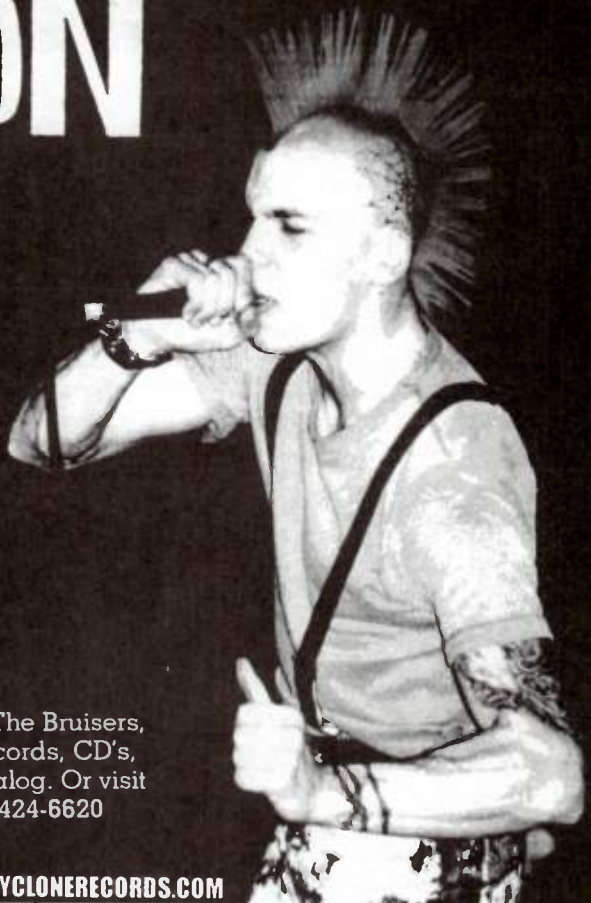
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I'm going to deviate from the nostalgic rummaging through my music collection, at least for the first part of this column, and go in a slightly different direction. Now, I'm not going to churn out some whiny, self-pitying emo type column here. There's enough of that shit in the zine world already. I'm also not quite ready to bring my bleeding-heart left-leaning political viewpoints to this column yet, either—and I'm sure Bale is waiting with his editor's pen to pick apart my hopelessly naïve perspectives if/when that happens, as well. Actually, truth be told, I'm as annoyed and disgusted with the Leninists, Maoists and other "left-wing authoritarians" that Jeff mentioned in a reply to a letter in the last issue. Trying to pass



through a gauntlet of *Revolutionary Worker*-waving hawkers and other brainwashed (or is it brain-dead?) Mao or Castro followers on my way to hear a Noam Chomsky lecture isn't all that enjoyable. But I digress. On to the

incident that inspired me to write the following...

It was an April Fool's joke gone wrong. I actually pulled off a couple of good ones this year—posting on a local punk e-mail list to which I subscribe that I'd been visited by the lord Christ and, as of the next issue, my 'zine *Suburban Voice* was going to be exclusively covering Christian punk, hardcore and metal. It would be featuring interviews with No Innocent Victim, MxPx, Zao and some of the originators of Christian rock, namely Kerry Livgren of Kansas and Michael Sweet of Stryper. Incidentally, for the uninitiated, the first three names mentioned are Christian punk and hardcore acts and it wouldn't matter if they were god-inspired or satanic—they'd still truly suck. Anyway, anyone familiar with my basically non-observant viewpoints on religion got a good chuckle out of that, although I did scare the bejeezus (pun intended) out of a couple of gullible friends/colleagues. I also announced, on the radio show I co-host, that the Clash were doing a 4-date, unannounced club tour with the original lineup and that tickets would go on sale the following morning for the Cambridge show at the Middle East club. We did get a few calls about that from people who took it seriously. Of course, considering that a good chunk of our listening audience is of the adolescent punk variety, it's not too tough to pull one over on 'em. It was a riff on an April Fool's joke I pulled in college—telling some dorm-

mates that BROOOOCE Springsteen was playing at a club down the street that night, unannounced, and 3 or 4 of 'em had their coats on and were heading out the door before I yelled April Fool. In retrospect, considering how much I hated the fucking assholes in my dorm, I should have let them find out for themselves, but I showed compassion. I regret that...

But the other April Fool's gag I pulled was a lot more cruel than that and, in the process, revealed some fairly noxious viewpoints/beliefs. I kind of knew that's the way this person felt, anyway, so it was bound to create an incident. The victim was my father. And he fell for my nasty prank completely. There's no doubt about that, at all. My dad's basically a decent guy, in his early 80s, but he's got his blind spots. He still believes that I'm going to come to my senses, someday, and put that business degree to work and go into some executive training program or what have you. I knew that wasn't going to happen within 6 months after graduating and that was almost 17 years ago. He also wishes, with all his heart, that I would become an observant Jew again, something I pretty much abandoned when I was 14 or 15. His entire universe revolves around going to temple every day, going to the Jewish Community Center, seeing his girlfriend and babysitting his spoiled grandson. That's pretty much it. No other interests, hobbies, etc., except for whatever plays, movies or meals out his girlfriend drags him to. He's also quite prejudiced against anyone who's not Jewish. He doesn't like black people all that much, either, although he's not a screaming, bellicose racist lunatic. He doesn't volunteer the information unless you scratch the surface a little. My dad's not the type of guy you can usually have a deep conversation with, once you try to get beyond the "how are you? How's Ellen (my wife)? What did you do today?" type of exchange. When I do bring up something on a social or political issue I find repugnant or want to discuss, it usually leads to a blowout. So I often take the path of least resistance and just stick to the superficial conversation. Not on April 1 this year, though.

"April Fool." He got even more pissed, calling such gameplay juvenile, passé, etc. Instead of being happy for us, it really burned him up that we'd even consider adopting someone outside the faith, of a different race.

I told him we were going to adopt an 18-month old black child named Abdul. My father's reaction was one of abject horror. "Why can't you adopt a Jewish baby," he pleaded. I explained that we wanted to give a disadvantaged child an opportunity for a decent life he might not otherwise get. Be that as it may, after hearing from him about how there are lots of disadvantaged Jewish children too and that we should stick to our own, I said "April Fool." He got even more pissed, calling such gameplay juvenile, passé, etc. Instead of being happy for us, it really burned him up that we'd even consider adopting someone outside the faith, of a different race. Then I told him a true incident that a friend of Ellen's was coping with. Her friend, a former co-worker, is a Russian Jew who immigrated to the US about 4 years ago and just had a child with his black girlfriend. His father doesn't want anything to do with this child. Ellen and I feel terrible about this situation, of course. The same way that we feel it's wrong that Ellen's

mother's friend disowned his daughter because she married a non-Jew. The same reason that we think it's wrong that Ellen's aunt had to move 3000 miles away when she married outside of the faith, mainly because she was shunned by many people in her family, including Ellen's mother and grandmother.

Regarding Ellen's friend, I tried to explain this rationally to my father and his first comment was, "if he's Russian, he's not a Jew." I don't know where he got that idea...perhaps it stems from his contempt for the Russian immigrants who join his temple for a year because it's free, and then do the same thing at another temple when the free year at my dad's temple is over. Maybe it's because they stampede toward the refreshment table at the after-service "kiddush" or knock people over at the rummage sale (it's happened to me there!). Whatever the cause, the fact is that my dad doesn't like Russians. Of course, we do agree that it's asinine for the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews to say that Conservative and Reform Jews aren't really Jewish. And my dad thinks that you're born a Jew and die a Jew, whether you practice the faith or not (that's what he has to say about my non-observance/agnosticism/I don't know what the fuck I believe any more). So, if he believes that you're Jewish by birth and it's ancestral, how does he make the jump to that viewpoint about Ellen's friend? Aren't Jewish people scattered all over the globe? This is why I don't get into many discussions with my father that go beyond the perfunctory.

So, yeah, it was a rotten, probably heartless April Fool's joke. I was a prick to play it on an old man. I'm not even 100% sure why I did it. I mean, there was a lot of emotional abuse in my family growing up and maybe I'm still trying to pay some of that back, if one is trying to search for an explanation. Unfortunately, it uncovered some rather virulent, odious sentiments. We all have prejudices and make judgements and generalizations--I'm as guilty of that as anyone--but I hope my mind is never as closed as some people in my family or my wife's...

♦♦♦♦

Whew... Let's rock 'n roll now! This time, as I forage through my 7" boxes and LP shelves, I'll stick to punk rock and hardcore. Back in the days when they were basically the same thing. Most of these selections could fall into the "I have these records and good luck finding them" department, but I'll also assume that many of you people out there are record hounds and are always on the prowl for rare booty. Yes, Felix Havoc does this sort of thing in that other magazine that a number of my *Hit List* cohorts used to write for and I may even mention a couple of the same records he has, but fuck it...

URBAN WASTE-Urban Waste (Wasteland Records 7", 1982; re-released as a 12" on Big City Records, 1987)

When Another Planet put out the "Sunday Matinee" anthology of 1980s-era New York hardcore bands about five years ago, Urban Waste's "Public Opinion" was included and is a bona-fide LOST CLASSIC! Not a term I bandy about lightly, either. I rediscovered this gem again last year and I've been playing it constantly. The recording quality is thin and compressed but, as with the first *Negative Approach 7"*, that's part of its charm. Re-mastering would destroy the effect and, even though it was re-mastered on the 12" version,

ALQUINT

it doesn't sound markedly different. Here are the specifications: Johnny Waste's guitar sounding like a hornets' nest after being disturbed by a whack to its side from a 2x4; trebly doesn't begin to describe it. There's next to no bottom end, not even on the 12" version. The obscene guitar tone is the first thing you notice, but that's not to shortchange Kenny Ahrens' drano-gargling vocals. "Public Opinion" is the stand-out, with its chorus of "I'm not into punk rock/I'm not into hardcore/Don't you try and label me..." chafing at and running contradictory to the completely blistering early 80s hardcore sounds they unleash. I'm also blown away by the line "really, I'm just CRAZY and I don't want to be figured out... figured out... FIGURED OUT!!", and then the song slams to its conclusion with Ahrens' penultimate declaration of "PUBLIC OPINION!" And while there have been a zillion songs called "Police Brutality" over the years, these guys were early in the game and, in this era of New York pigs gone amok, it's an ever-timely exhortation. Amazingly raw and frenetic and well-worth scoring. I can't recall if one of those less-than-scrupulous overseas labels re-pressed this or not, but there's no reason for this EP to be out of print. Urban Waste will make your ears ring and you'll soon drive your friends and loved-ones crazy repeating the chorus to "Public Opinion" like the mantra it is. I know that's the case in my house--I'd better be careful or Ellen might smash the record over my head.

MECHT MENSCH-Acceptance (Bone Air 7", 1982)

I remember having some guy talk me into buying this 7" at a DOA gig in 1982, and I'm glad he did. I hadn't played it in years, until I pulled it out of the box just for the hell of it about a month ago. It's

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HIT SQUAD

a scrappy little hardcore dynamo...Scampering thrash with an overriding rawness, although they slow it down to a creepy crawl for "Grinder" and "Zombie," the latter complete with blood-curdling screams. From Wisconsin and, at times, reminiscent of the early work of fellow Cheeseheads Die Kreuzen. By the way, that band's first album and "Cows and Beer" 7" are also primo midwest hardcore. Some of the people from this band ended up in the Tar Babies, who released albums on SST in a funkier (and nowhere near as enticing) muse.

LIFE SENTENCE-Life Sentence (Walkthru fyre LP, 1986)

On the surface, this LP seems like an ordinary mid-80s hardcore album, suffering from a case of early 7 Seconds worship, and some of Eric Brockman's guitar lines do border on the wanky, but this is clearly a situation, to use a horrid cliché, of the sum adding up to more than its parts. The lead track "Problems" is powered by an absolutely punishing bass-line and scampering drumming that compensate for the somewhat weak vocal presence. Thirteen years after its release, hearing the opening guitar surge and nimble bass-plucking in the intro give way to a thundering speed blast still creates a thrill. These songs just plain move and ravage everything in front of them. Threatening to fly apart in a flurry of velocity, but not going off the proverbial track and effectively negotiating the slow/fast transitions with careening authority. After an acrimonious split, Brockman came back with two new partners-in-crime for a followup album, but it wasn't the same. Life Sentence had their moment and this is it.

STATE-No Illusions (Statement 7", 1983)

A lost midwest hardcore brainburner. Vocalist Preston Woodward was later in such bands as Wig, Mule and P.W. Long & Reelfoot (he's had a few name changes along the way). Oddly, though, he denies ever being a member of this band. At least that was the case when I had two different people, including the publicist at his current label, Touch & Go, ask him about his days in the State. Why he would be ashamed of putting out such a great piece of plastic is beyond my comprehension, but there's an artistic temperment for you, I guess. Granted, the lyrics rail at the standard targets with youthful blind fury and that could explain his reticence. But, goddamn, I really wanted to have a song from this disc on the 15th anniversary CD for Suburban Voice and I couldn't even get him to acknowledge his involvement, never mind get the go-ahead. In any case, the State had the scorch, from the thrash-drive of "No Illusions" to the screech 'n wail of "Subvert" to the damage assault provided by "Girl Violence." Guitar feeding back and jabbing out the powerchords in a Greg Ginn-inspired tradition, accompanied by Preston's formidable yowl and pillaging bass and drums. There was a posthumous LP of State material released in 1987, but it's quite unimpressive. Not the case for this hard-to-find 7", though.

CRUDE SS-Who'll Survive (Uproar 7", 1983)

It's all Bill Chamberlain's fault. I was seeing one of his bands, React (he's also a past or present member of the Pist, Broken, Brutally Familiar and several others), and he was telling me how the band got a lot of its inspiration from Swedish hardcore. At that show, React's drummer also gave me a Diskonto LP he'd put out on his own label. We got talking about some of the old Swedish bands and I mentioned to Bill that I had the Crude SS 7". His eyes lit up with the

incredible longing you only see from the beyond-hope record collector. So, a few days later, this was cause to dig the 7" out. These events have had me on a near-obsessive Swedish hardcore kick for the last several months. Diskonto, Krigshot, Uncurbed, Accursed and Totalitär have been getting a lot of play around here, as have such originators as Mob 47 and these guys. Crude SS's 6-song EP is a holy grail of Swedish hardcore and I acquired my copy some years back, probably from a trading contact overseas. I can't remember. Regardless of how or where I got the record, this is the SHIT! The real enchilada, etc., etc. Blistering, thick guitar and rumbling bass chords revved up like a chainsaw, harshly-expelled vocals and an interjection the occasional doomy, heavier passage into the obliterative thrash assaultment. "Forced Values," in particular, is an unstoppable blitzkrieg. The vinyl is tough to come by, but there is a 20-track CD on Lost & Found (don't know if it's legit or not) that includes the EP and a lot more.



Once again, allow me to mention that I publish a 'zine called Suburban Voice and if you have any questions, want to send kick-ass punk, hardcore or garage material for review, or need mailorder info, the address is PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903 and my e-mail is alellen@shore.net.

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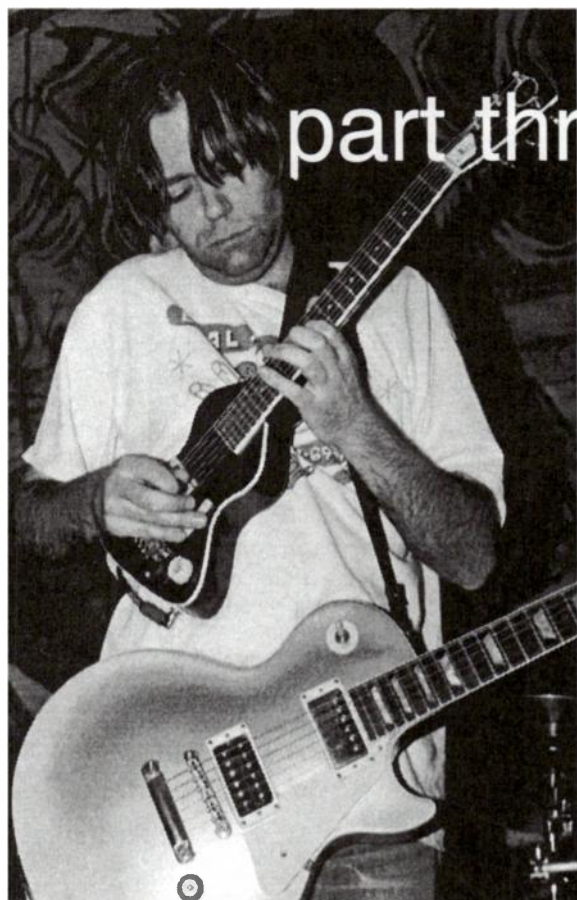


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FASTBACKS



part three: Fly to the Rainbow (1989-1993)



The Art of Falling Apart

June 27, 1990 marked the first Fastbacks show with Lulu in almost two and a half years. Many individual instances and experiences led up to this "reunion" of sorts. While the Fastbacks were in somewhat of a shambles between 1989 and June of 1990, each member had their own business to attend to.

Nate had moved to Alaska to earn some money on fishing boats. According to Kurt, Nate had even left before the last "scheduled" Fastbacks show of 1988. A week before the gig (probably October-ish), Bloch was putting up flyers when he ran into a friend of Nate's. The friend asked, "Does Nate know about this show?" Kurt replied, "Yeah yeah, I left him a message the other day." Much to his surprise and dismay, the friend informed Kurt that Nate was already in Alaska. The show had to be cancelled.

1989 was also the year that Andy Davenhall practiced with the Fastbacks a few times. Not content with the band's politics during practices, Andy quit before he even played a show. The Fastbacks were again without a drummer.

Fastbacks line-up circa 1989:

Kurt - Guitar

Kim - Vocals

Kurt had seen his stint with the Young Fresh Fellows as an opportunity to keep playing music while the Fastbacks sat in the cellar to age. The first YFF LP with Kurt in the fold, "This One's For the Ladies", is in my estimation their finest album. Amongst the 15 or so tracks, it features three Kurt originals: "Still There's Hope", "The Family Gun", and the stunning "Lost Track of Time". Each Bloch original would've sounded great as a Fastbacks song, as they contain all of the trademark devices embedded in the Bloch writing style (the last verse of "Lost Track of Time" contains one of the finest guitar solos Kurt has ever committed to tape; "Still There's Hope" was also recorded by the Fastbacks earlier, but never released). While playing a CMJ showcase with the YFF in 1989, Kurt broke his arm in an unfortunate stage pile-up. This put an end to any thoughts of really doing much touring or playing with any band (although he continued to play with the Fellows).

Kim was encountering her own problems at the time. She had a rough go of things during the late 80s and was trying to get her shit together. The fact that the band was in disarray didn't really hold much significance compared to the other demons she was fighting. Towards the end of the decade she finally started realizing what was important to her and began putting her life back together. Lulu had seen her career as a director of photography start to blossom in the late 80s. As she earned more and more work in that field, her interest in playing music became less and less. But late in 1989 she picked up the drums and started playing in a 'side' project with some friends. They called themselves Motorhoney.

Motorhoney

Motorhoney consisted of Kurt on guitar, Maryellen Cooley on bass, Ayne St. Martin on vocals, and Lulu on drums (Kurt had actually played drums in another band with Maryellen called Wild Betty. Maryellen is also pictured on the 7" of "They Don't Care"). They played mostly cover songs (Rezillos, Girl School) with an occasional original thrown in here and there. Kurt only played 2 shows with Motorhoney, and when in 1990 it was decided that Kim would take over on guitar; Motorhoney emerged with their all female line-up. They would end up releasing a single on the Lance Rock label, as well as a few miscellaneous tracks here and there that ended up on compilation records. The significance of Motorhoney is not so much what they recorded, but rather that it gave both Kim and Lulu an opportunity to rediscover music and realize that it was something they had fun doing. Sometime during the late 80s with the Fastbacks, both had become a tad bit disillusioned with music in general. Motorhoney was a revitalization of sorts, and ultimately it helped inspire the Fastbacks "reunion" in June of 1990.

As Lulu remembers it, someone approached somebody with the idea to have the Fastbacks play a show. An agreement was made, a date was set, and since Nate was back in town, the band got back together. Lulu recalls the first practice as being almost as if the band had never stopped playing at all. The songs were still great songs, the energy was still high, and the chords were all falling into place. The Fastbacks had a new lease on life.

The show on the 27th was by no means the best show the Fastbacks ever played (nor was it the worst), but it was good enough to spark the interest of Sub Pop co-founder Jonathan Poneman. Kim remembers that Jonathan approached the band after this show with an offer to record a double 7" for Sub Pop. He had always been a big fan of the Fastbacks, and Kurt even remembers playing

Fastbacks Albums & EP's

Title

Fastbacks Play Five Of Their Favorites
Every Day Is Saturday
Fastbacks . . . and his Orchestra
Very, Very Powerful Motor
Bike, Toy, Clock, Gift (same as In America)
In America (live in Seattle 1988)
Never Fails, Never Works
The Question Is No
Zücker
Gone to the Moon (4 song EP)
Answer the Phone, Dummy
Waste of Time Promo CD's
Alone In a Furniture Warehouse
Here They Are . . . Live at the Crocodile
New Mansions In Sound
Just Say CD's - 1 track
Win Lose Or Both (EP)

Fastbacks 7 inch Singles

Title

It's Your Birthday/You Can't Be Happy
In the Winter/It Came to Me In a Dream
Wrong, Wrong, Wrong/In America
In the Summer/You Can't Be Happy/
Everything I Don't Need/Queen of Eyes (Soft Boys)
Lose/King of Hubcaps (by Gas Huffer)
The Answer Is You (2x7"): My Letters/Whatever Happened To?
/Impatience/Above the Sunrise
Live In America - 9 tracks (2x7") Live in Seattle '88
Run No More/Really
Now Is the Time/Sometimes/Was Late (rec. 1983-1985)
They Don't Care/Out of the Charts
Gone to the Moon/Go All the Way
Wait It Out/The Jester
Answer the Phone Dummy/
Allison (The Pixies)/All In Order
Rat Race/I Live In a Car/Telephone Numbers (all by U.K. Subs)/
(and one Sonics cover by the Meices)
I Can't Win/Girl's Eyes (The Who)
A-A-A/Marionette (Mott the Hoople)
Maybe/On the Couch/Teenage FBI (Guided by Voices)/I'll Return
Compilations & Tributes

Title

Seattle Syndrome - "Someone Else's Room"
Monkey Business - "Time Passes"
12" Combo Deluxe - "It Came to Me In a Dream"
Sub Pop 200 - "Swallow My Pride" (by Green River)
Estrus Half Rack - "Beaujolais the Beat"
Estrus Gear Box - "Hot Rods to Heaven"
Int'l Pop Underground - "Impatience" (live)
Another Damned Seattle Compilation - "Hit or Miss" (The Damned)
20 More . . . Explosions - "Rocket Man" (Elton John)
Hodge Podge Barrage - "Trouble Sleeping"
Spin Promotional CD - "Impatience"
Sub Pop Comp. - "Go All the Way" (The Raspberries)
The Bob - free flexi disk of "Believe Me Never" (live)
And the Fun Just Never Stops - "You Can't Be Happy" & "Love You More" (1988)
Melody Fair - "Turn of the Century" (The Bee Gees)
World of the Zombies - "Just Out of Reach", "Hung Up On a Dream" (The Zombies)
13 Soda Punk - "I'm Cold" (alt. version)
Oh Candaduh - "Won't Have To Worry"
That Virtua Feeling - "I Know" (demo)
Charles Peterson's Seattle Photo Book - "What's It Like?"
Bite Back - "Always Tomorrow (Live)"
Home Alive - "Time and Matter" (The U.K. Subs)
Hype Soundtrack - "K Street (Live)", "Just Say" (LP version)
Hype! Box Set (45 rpm) - "K Street (Live)"
Paydirt Compilation - "I Can't Win", "No Information"
Sub Pop Spring Line-Up (promo only) - "Just Say"
La 2nd Internacional - "All In Order"
An Evenings In Edenbrook Forest - "One More Hour" & "On the Couch"
Dictators Forever Forever Dictators - "Exposed"

Label & Format

No Threes rec'ds 12"EP
No Threes rec'ds 12"EP
Popilama LP & CD, Subway LP (UK)
Popilama LP & CD, Blaster (U.K.) LP
Popilama Cassette, Lucky Records CD Reissue
Lost & Found (Germany) LP & CD
Blaster (U.K.) LP
Sub Pop CD
Sub Pop LP-CD-CS
Sub Pop CD-5, 12"EP (Germany)
Sub Pop LP-CD-CS
Sub Pop Promo CD
Munster CD & EP (Spain)
Lance Rock Records CD & EP (Canada)
Sub Pop LP-CD (US)
Sub Pop
Popilama

Year

1982
1984
1987, 1989
1990
1990, 1994
1991
1991
1992
1993
1993
1994
1994
1996
1996
6/18/96
1996
2/13/98

Label & Format

No Threes
Subway (U.K.)
Subway (U.K.)

No Threes/S.P.F.C.
S.P.F.C.reissue: Overground (U.K.)

Sub Pop
Smilin' Ear
Who Cares
Ded Beet
Popilama
Sub Pop (Germany)
Munster (Spain)

Year

1981
1989
1989

1990
1992

1991
1991
1992
1992
1993
1993
1994

Birdtime Bird Co. (Tour Single)

Free with Issue #3 of Gearhead
Free with LP of New Mansions In Sound
Tour Single for New Mansions In Sound
Munster Records

Year

1994

1995
1996
1996
1998

Label & Format

Engram LP
Green Monkey LP
Popilama LP
Sub Pop LP & CD
Estrus 7"Box & CD
Estrus 7"Box & CD
K LP & CD
Dashboard Hulaig LP & CD
Pravda CD
Estrus
Sub Pop/Spin
Sub Pop Japan
Free with an issue of The Bob
Lost and Found CD (Germany)
eggbert CD
Popilama CD
Top Drawer CD
Lance Rock Records
Sub Pop & Sega
Charles Peterson
Popilama
Epic
Sub Pop
Sub Pop
Sub Pop
Sub Pop
Munster
Book Records
Roto Records (Spain)

Year

1981
1986
1986
1988
1991
1992
1992
1992
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1997

Mike left his equipment for other people to use on the "ATPD" record. He helped organize stuff and lent a hand.

him mixes of "Powerful Motor" during a car ride a few months earlier.

The Fastbacks went into the studio later in 1990 and recorded 6+ songs. Four of them would appear on Sub Pop (sp104) in 1991 ("My Letters", "Impatience", "Above the Sunrise", and "Whatever Happened To?" [a Buzzcocks cover]). Two other songs would eventually end up on the first Fastbacks Sub Pop CD, "The Question Is No", in 1992 ("Run No More" and "Really") as well as on a 7" via the Who Cares? label.

The rest of 1990 was typical Fastbacks. I

say that only because they didn't really accomplish much beyond playing a few shows and recording those six songs. For a band that had been together for over 10 years and were entering their third decade, they sure didn't have much experience as a "band". They had released 2 albums that were never originally intended as albums, 2 EP's that were self-released, 1 live cassette, and had gone on a grand total of 2 West Coast tours. When 1990 was coming to a close, I don't think any of them anticipated the growth the band would experience over

air guitar in his room while he was stoned listening to Led Zeppelin or the Who and he wouldn't let me in the room. I never knew what band was what, so I'd go down the street and sing the songs I liked to my brother's friend Andy Clark, and Andy would tell me what band did what song. Elton John was the first artist who I became a bonafide fan of. I used to send him fan letters in which I drew pictures of him dressed like the pinball wizard.

Punk rock changed my world. I got into punk rock right at the time that my family

the next 8 years and counting. The recording output alone is enviable by any musician's standards (6 full-length releases, 2 EP's, 1 more live album, and a ton of singles).

In January of 1991, Nate found himself playing in both the Fastbacks and Flop. Flop had gone into the studio to record a few songs, but then shortly thereafter, Nate's fishing muse whisked him off to Alaska again, this time leaving two bands drummerless. The Fastbacks had no choice but to honor Rusty, the singer/guitarist of Flop, by recruiting him as their next drummer!

Fastbacks circa 1991:

Kurt – guitar
Lulu – guitar, vocals
Kim – Vocals, bass
Rusty Willoughby – Drums & busting shit up

RUSTY WILLOUGHBY

Rusty was born June 30, 1966. He spent most of his childhood in Washington State, attending various schools in Spanaway, Belfair, and Sumner. His early memories of music are simple, poignant and hilarious:

"I used to listen to my brother listening to his records through the heating vents of our house. He was seven years older than myself and had all of the cool

records. He would play

fell apart, so I had plenty of anger and hostility bottled up. Punk rock taught me to think for myself and gave me permission to bust up everything in sight. Two things I treasure 'til this day."

Rusty had played drums with Kurt before in a Cheap Trick cover band called Sick Man of Europe (with Jonathan Poneman on bass and Scott Sutherland [Model Rockets, Chemistry Set] on vocals). They would play the first album in its entirety from start to finish (even "Mandocello"). Prior to Sick Man, Kurt thought Rusty was joking when he said that he could play drums. His Bun E. Carlos imitation, however, was the impetus behind the Fastbacks asking Willoughby to join. As Rusty recalls:

"Nate, like always, was a restless soul in need of change and a few bucks and decided he had had enough of playing music. That left FBX and Flop with no drummer. There was actually a Flop show in that period where I sang and played drums (a la Phil Collins) and Kurt played my guitar parts. Anyway, since I had been playing with Kurt in Sick Man of Europe, it seemed natural to try and help out FBX and have a little fun to boot."

So in 1991 the Fastbacks forged ahead with Rusty Willoughby in the drummer's chair.

They would continue to play shows in local venues around Seattle, and eventually record what would later be released in 1993 as "Zücker" (these 2 sessions also spawned a few unreleased tracks; including a half-finished version of Flop's "Entropy", a cover of "Ramblin Rose", and a stunning rendition of Tommy James' "Ball of Fire"). July 31, 1991 marked the release of "And His Orchestra" on compact disc (the Fastbacks' digital debut). This CD also included the first two EPs, as well as full liner notes, a hilarious old picture, and complete lyrics.

At the end of 1991, Nate had returned from Alaska and was ready to play drums again. His days in the Fastbacks, however, were numbered. Flop was beginning to generate a big buzz thanks in part to the fact that they were a great band. Oh yeah, and the Seattle scene was also booming with the emergence of Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Flop were playing sold out shows and getting a lot of attention from the press. Their debut album, "Flop and the Fall of the Mopsqueezer", was primarily recorded in January of 1992. This record is significant in Fastbacks lore because it is the first non-Fastbacks record that Kurt produced. Little did Bloch suspect that he would go on to produce over 30 more non-Fastbacks full length releases in the next 8 years.

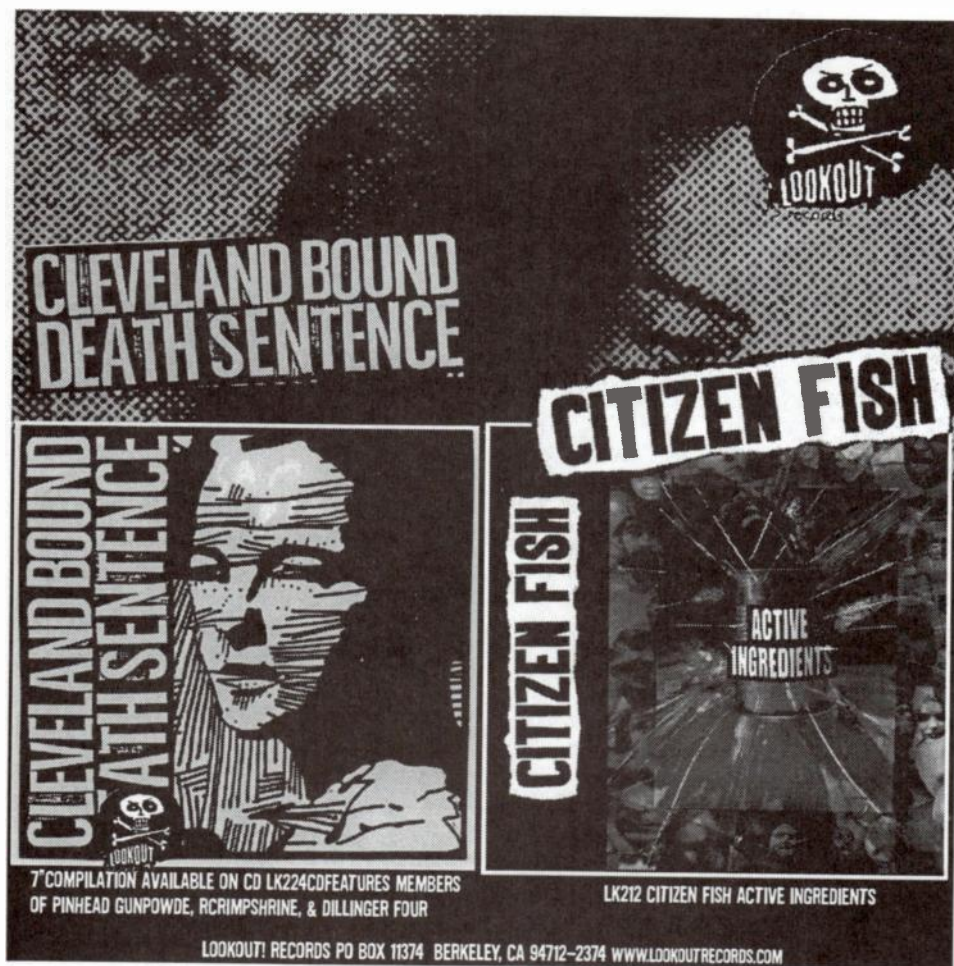
The success of Flop, however, left both Rusty and Nate too busy to really devote time to the Fastbacks. Mike Musburger would step in on drums and play his first show as Fastbacks drummer in the summer of 1992 at Volunteer Park for the Popllama Picnic (a picture of this show can be seen on the back of the "Gone to the Moon" single). Mike's presence and foothold as the Fastbacks drummer, however, would not really cement itself until a few years down the road.

THE QUESTION IS NO

Sub Pop approached the Fastbacks with the idea to release a bunch of their odds and ends as a CD- and cassette-only release. With another new record in the can, Kurt wanted "Zücker" to be released first, but Sub Pop wanted to release the rarities collection first. "The Question Is No" was released in June of 1992 (just weeks after Popllama released "Powerful Motor" [5/26] on compact disc). This collection features 15 songs covering release dates from 1980 to 1992. It is an interesting snapshot of the band's history and also an illustration of how much the music had not changed over the 13 years it covered. From the peddled notes of the guitar intro of "Impatience" ('91) to the bombast and loquaciousness of "Someone Else's Room" ('81), the differences were minor. The singing got better, the recording quality got better, but the songs were always great. Kurt's liner notes in the CD are alone worth the price of admission. There is also a great blurb by rock critic Greil Marcus. The packaging also featured pictures of the various Fastbacks 45s that were released throughout their history. Amongst these rare singles were a few well placed "fakes" that still baffle geek fans to this day. One only need remember that in the end it's all about the gun-shaped knife.

ZÜCKER

Just six and a half months later, on January 26, 1993, Sub Pop released the first collection of "new" originals from the Fastbacks. At 32 minutes and 49 seconds, these 14 songs are collectively known as "Zücker" ("sugar" in German). In terms of the sound of this record, it is unlike any other Fastbacks record. By no means is this record polished and glossy, but the sound is loud and crisp (think iceberg lettuce). It's an inferno of sound that never lets up from start to finish. Before the listener has a chance to take their first breath, the first 5 songs are over. The only reaction is to wonder what brick just hit you. The next two songs blanket the listener in a delicate fog that is thick and beautiful. The record rounds itself out with a barrage of obscure images (coffee in your alarm clock?) and funny song titles ("Kind of Game?"), culminating in a depressing number entitled





From the lavish harmonies of “All About Nothing”, to the minor key drone of “Parts”, “Zücker” is a remarkable accomplishment in spite of its brevity, oddity, and darkness.

“That Was” (“That was really, really, just leave me alone”). Overall, “Zücker” is punkier than any other Fastbacks record, and it exhibits haunting overtones in both style and content while simultaneously maintaining a musical optimism. From the lavish harmonies of “All About Nothing”, to the minor key drone of “Parts”, “Zücker” is a remarkable accomplishment in spite of its brevity, oddity, and darkness. Critically, “Zücker” was hailed by more critics than any other Fastbacks release, with reviews appearing in national magazines like *Rolling Stone* and *Entertainment Weekly*.

MIKE MUSBURGER

Mike was born and raised in the Seattle suburb of Bellevue, WA. Born January 28, 1968, Mike attended Interlake High School and played in local bands and school ensembles. He attended high school with future Posies bandmate and roommate Rick Roberts (bass). After high school, Mike attended

Washington State University for one year before deciding that he didn't want to spend the next 3 years of his life in school. While in Pullman, he played in a jazz band based out of Moscow, ID. It was not only an outlet for his drumming muse, but the legal drinking age in Moscow was 19. Musburger moved back to Seattle in the Fall of 1987 and into a house with Rick Roberts that was previously inhabited by members of the Chemistry Set and Pure Joy. In May of 1988, the Posies recruited Mike and Rick as their new rhythm section. Around the same time, Mike was working at a local record store called Peaches (former Peaches employees also include Mark Lanegan and Eddie Supersucker, just to name a few). He remembers seeing Kurt and Maryellen come into the store quite often. In 1989 the Posies were gaining so much momentum that Mike was able to quit his day job and devote all of his time to being a musician. His tenure in the Posies would last until 1994, culminating in Mike quitting the

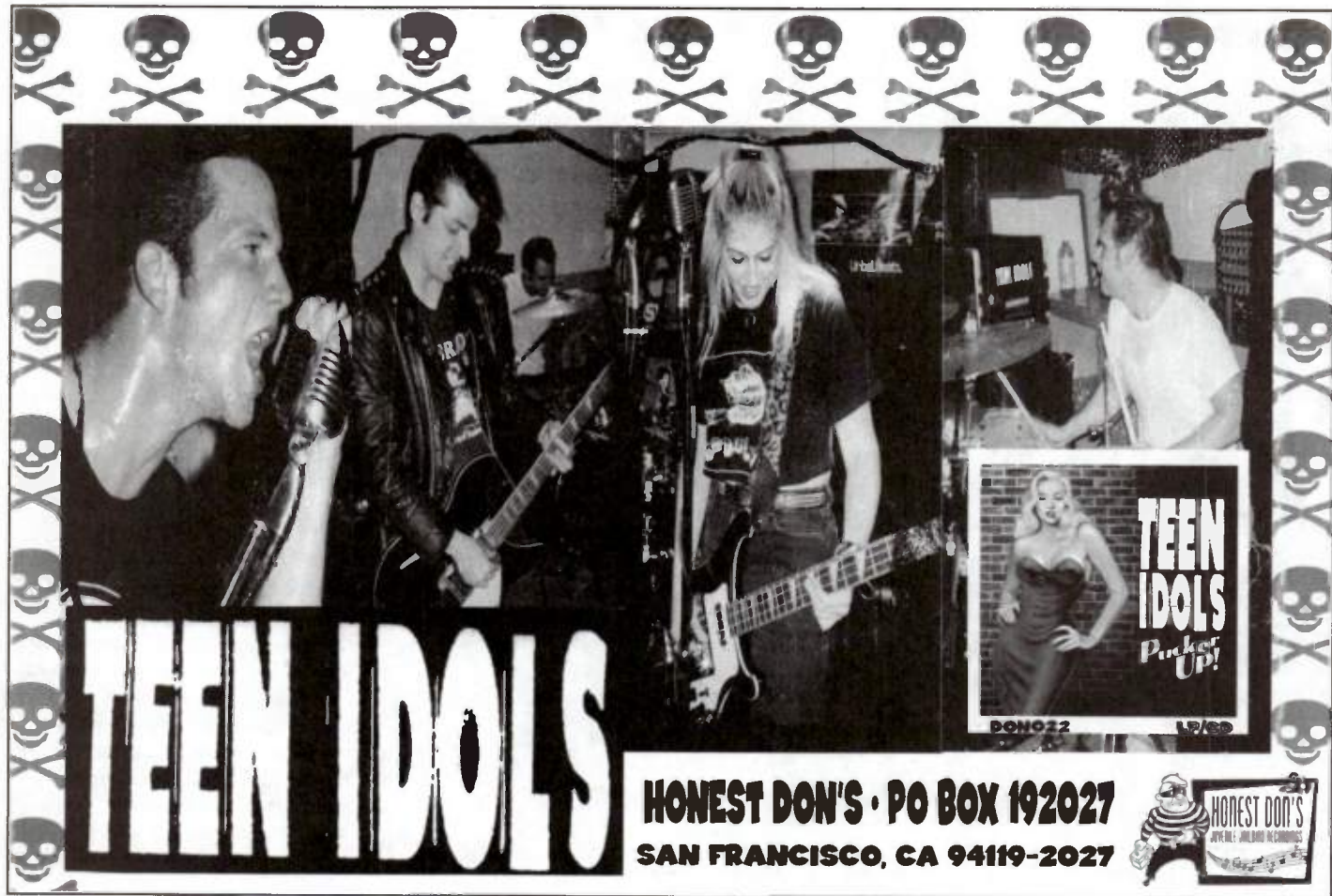
band after getting into an argument with Kim's ex-husband (but husband at the time), Ken Posy (Stringfellow). He took some time off to travel and then promptly found himself playing with the Fastbacks. The next 5 years would establish Mike as the most prolific and long lasting of all their drummers. The irony of his membership, however, is that it wouldn't be until 1999 that Musburger would play on every song on a Fastbacks studio record, and that record is still unreleased (well, it actually has one song with no drum track). Regardless, Mike will go down as THE Fastbacks drummer, once all is settled. He has not only played on the most studio songs, but he has played more shows than any other Fastbacks drummer.

Mike's earliest memory of the Fastbacks was seeing them at the Mural Amphitheater when he was in the 8th grade. At the time he used to go to as many local shows as he could with his friend Matt. He recalls a few things, mainly that Lulu had big scary hair and that he loved the music. His love of the band would persist for years to come, when it finally reached the point where they agreed to let him play in it.

For someone who was used to touring with a major label budget, having a full crew and a nice bus to travel in, joining the Fastbacks must've been a culture shock to Mike. He wasn't accustomed to long trips in shitty vans and staying in Motel 6's and eating at Taco Bell every night. But he was also not used to actually making some money while he was on tour. And with the Fastbacks he found the freedom to not only make money, but also to concentrate on just playing music rather than dealing with the business side of being in a band. As Musburger so succinctly states, “there were no expectations other than to have fun, play music, and keep it simple.”


Shows Circa 1993

January of 1993 saw not only the release of “Zücker”, but the Fastbacks went on tour to California with Mike on drums. They would end up playing 47 shows that year, the most they'd ever played in a single year to that point. The tour schedule marked a series of firsts for the band. The first East Coast tour took place in April of that year, as they spent 3 weeks on the road with the fabulous Meices. August of that year marked the first midwestern tour they would take, this time with John Moen filling in at the drum position (the Posies' “Frosting on the Beater” had just been released and Mike was on the road). The highlight of the year, however, was their trip to Japan for 3 dates in December. Never before had they seen the frenzy of Japanese punk rock fans, and it's something they still remember fondly to this day. John Moen was the lucky drummer. ☪



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FOR SABLE'S SAKE, STOP THE GEEK HIGH SCHOOL MASSACRES

NO MORE LITTLETONS, NO MORE SPRINGFIELDS, NO MORE, ETC. It's gone too far. Too fucking far. Another high school. Another blood bath. This proliferation of depressed, suburbanite, ritalin-sketchin', gun-nut-geeks has finally gone over the edge. I can't take it any more.

This doesn't need to stop to preserve America's sanity. Because we're not only lazy, as the Japanese have stated, but completely savage, well armed, and insane. It would require nationwide mass electro-shock treatment and psychotropic therapy to quell the American beast. Also, a repealing of the 2nd Amendment would further this, but that is another rant all in itself, and is covered quite well all over the net and discerning bookshelves everywhere.

I'm not asking to stop the school house shooting to help shut up and impoverish Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center, although it would be a nice side effect. As well as putting all the so called "experts" on American terrorism and violence out of their soft jobs. Hate crimes. Please. With the exception of mercy killing the terminally ill, people don't murder out of love, fools. I mean come on, they're not only blaming guns and the internet for this latest outburst, but also the Gothic lifestyle and Marilyn Manson. It's like watching those old, black and white, 1950's, cracker screeds against that "comminiss", satanic, nigra-lovin' rock-n-roll, music." Goth kids are the next "other" to fear? The only gun-like device I've ever seen the lipstick, lace-dress wearing, Goth "males" hold is the blow dryers they use to tease up their big hair before a night of dirge music, suicidal thoughts, and balling like a bitch in some black-wearing fag-hag's flabby arms. The only thing Goths ever kill, besides occasionally themselves, is music.

Speaking of the homosexual lifestyle...If the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Daily Sentential* can be believed, it appears that these confused Colorado tots may not have been celebrating KMFDM's Audios album release or Hitler's birthday, but participating in some ultimate sort of Act Up! protest against both the natural enemy and, ironically, one of the larger closet segments of the gay world, Jocks. Who's to fucking know, because we have only the media to trust to bring us the story. They would never push an agenda and lie to us. Noooo. My own crackpot theory is that they were violent hippies commemorating 4/20 as their ultimate protest against the drug war. Since failed high school Jocks (along with, again ironically enough, ex-nerds seeking the empowerment they never had in high school) are usually the demographic that latches onto the cop lifestyle, this combat unit of the Trench Coat Mafia took it upon themselves to thin out the shock troops of the War on Hemp. Sure, I may be misreading all the signs, but when robot Sam Donaldson tells millions of folks to be on the look out for pipe-bomb carrying, white-faced, Anne Rice-reading kids in trench coats, I think I can take a little journalistic lie-cence here.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not defending the depressed masses of make-up wearing clods more than they deserve. It's just that these

out of touch idiots in the media need to put their finger on a more credible scapegoat if they're going to get the desired results of their puppet masters. The hillbilly/militia threat was pure propaganda genius. Before it alienated whole blocks of voters and then disappeared in the mist of the minds of the public, the militia scare got one of the most oppressive pieces of law that ever existed passed, The Anti-Terrorist and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. No more Habeas Corpus, baby.

One by one this revolving door cabal of evil fucks have been whittling down the Bill of Rights. The 4th Amendment is but a shadow of what it once was since the institution of the Harrison Narcotics Act (1914), the

Deer Blind and Naked with Richard Tater

Marijuana Tax Act (1937), and of course twelve years of the high treason of the Reagan/Bush dynasty. Now on the horizon is further gun legislation (2nd Amendment), and the way the media spin doctors are accusing the web of sponsoring hate, we're sure to see it finally restricted (1st Amendment). What the pervasive threat of porno couldn't do by tweaking the right nipple, stopping the violence may accomplish by tweaking the left nipple. You can bet the government was just waiting for this latest little massacre to put the reins on the greatest threat to the status quo

since the printing press. (TV doesn't count. Just ask the FCC. Plus, it's been controlled by corporations since its inception.)

Oh shit. I'm getting too serious here. I need to get back on to the "stopping the violence" tangent. The TV blurb provides a good segue. You see I'm a vidiot. As much as I rail against the evil

box of stupidity and doom, I'm like an alcoholic finding Jesus in the daylight and then ditching him by stepping into a bar at night. I need my TV fix sometimes, and when it gets interrupted constantly by the next big massacre or bombing, I get close to giving it that Elvis Presley, .357 mag' final solution.

I didn't mind the preempting of all daytime programming. I'm a reality programming junkie. Drunkenly watching the deadening urban and suburban American third-world tear itself to shreds on Cops and Jerry Springer provides many late night laughs. I approve of the televised car chase interrupting Warner Brother cartoons I know by heart. But when violence gets in the

My own crackpot theory is that they were violent hippies commemorating 4/20 as their ultimate protest against the drug war.



way of the soft-core, Victoria's Secret porno of prime time TV, then it's time to stop the violence. (Pardon me, ladies, while I unzip my objectification.) You see, Sable's large, scantily clad, fake tits were supposed to appear on Fox Files tonight. They've been advertising it all week and even up to an hour before show time. It wasn't until the show was half over, after I had sat through another neo-Nazi clod in desperate need of a good blow job (a critique many have given of me), that they let the viewers know of the nixin' of the wrestling vixen for another rehash of the Littleton massacre.

After 60 straight hours of watching the same clips of the same people wail over the bloodshed, I need to see Amazons of stern, leather-swathed, disciplinary womanhood, engaged in psycho-sexual warfare. I don't need the same stock footage and tut-tutting media puppets coldly trying to fight through the hazy fuzz of prozac to show empathy towards a situation as unreal to them as the TV is to the rest of us. Just bury the poor fucking kids, hand out the blue ribbons, and let us get on with our mindless escapism.

When gun-toting, pimply-face, teenage malcontents and their murder/suicide gets in the way of my titty viewing, then it's time to stop them. How do we stop them, you might ask? Further legislation and oppression isn't going to put an end to making people feel oppressed and different. Hell, that's just going to swell the ranks. The only ones that are going to fall in line are going to be the massive throngs of sheeple that'll go along with anything they think will stop weirdness. Just like drug laws can't stop idiots from using readily available and legal inhalants to decay their grey matter, gun laws won't stop people from building bombs that can be easily made from household products. Are they going to outlaw gasoline, propane, and fertilizer? I don't think so.

While I'm on this explosives tangent, the Littleton massacre is not the largest slaughter perpetrated on a school. That record belongs to school board member/treasurer Andrew Kehoe. On May 18, 1927 he detonated dynamite he planted under the Bath Michigan School, killing 38 children and five adults. After the main course, for dessert, he blew up his pickup truck containing himself and the school superintendent. If the media is going to take this talkshow-style, sensationalist, save-the-children standpoint, they at least need to have their facts straight. Assuming of course that they actually want to find a solution to this problem and not just raise the viewing public's bile up and glean more money from their corporate sponsors.

Since the media seems to not actually care enough to propose a definitive solution, I'll table one myself. Here's one that the "liberals", or what we define as the left in this country, can get behind. SEX. Fucking, if you will, or at the very least free head for those in need. I propose that every high school should be equipped with one decent looking, non-druggie prostitute. Put her in the nurse's office. Fuck, dress her up like a nurse. Just like a school counselor is needed to help kids un-fuck their heads, in theory that is, a school prostitute is needed to service those outsiders too desperate to find

release amongst the normal channels of impossible teenage maidenhood. Or, as the case may be, for geeks and nerds. Seeing how it's geeks, not gangbangers, who are carrying out the violence in the more backwood areas of our nation's heartland, this new trend of school prostitutes should start there. If the allegations of buggery and gaybashing turn out to be true, then maybe there was no hope for the Littleton affair. Except for maybe gathering the Jocks and Goths together, dosing them heavily with MDMA, and letting nature and their homosexual impulses take their course. But, in the other cases, school prostitutes may just have saved some lives.

Honestly, I feel for the rest of middle America. I'm deeply sorry that the spectre of urban warfare has finally reached your little white-flight hamlets. Suck it up, and walk it off. You've helped to create this archetypal monster. It rests not just in the subconscious of the wretched ghetto, barrio, or trailer park dweller, but in the minds of some of your sweet, little "innocents" as well. The kids all listen to the same music, watch the same TV shows and movies, and live in the same culture of yahoo-violence. And it's a little too late to change it. Everyone can't live in their own personal Disneyland. Besides, even the sappiest place on Earth has its occasional blood sacrifice.

It won't help you to harken back to those good ol' days, either, because there weren't any. That's an escapist fantasy, fuckwads. (That was directed to any of the elderly or equally delusional youngsters who happen to be reading this.) The shit's been the same all throughout history. We're just cycling up to the period at the end of the century referred to as "the Decadence." If you think the turn of the last century was a never-ending "salad days" tea party of sunshine-smiles, straw hats, barbershop quartets, lemonade and croquet, then you need to pry your thumb out of your ass and get a whiff of the past. I won't go into 19th Century American History 101, that's your job if your interest is so piqued. Hint: Just look under "labor unrest".

These recently shot up communities should consider themselves lucky. A great many of us have to deal with potential armed thugs at every turn, every fucking day. You get all the pent-up psycho-trauma let out in your little, hideaway enclaves in one quick, gestalt upheaval. Many of us have to live with routine

gunfire in this drive-by nation, helicopters flying overhead every goddamn night, and mean-spirited cops that would beat down their own mothers at a traffic stop if they showed the merest hint of sarcasm.

Speaking of pigs. As I alluded to before, the beaten-up-and-trounced upon used to have the patience to wait until they were out of school and could join the police force to get their revenge and be amongst uniformed, sweaty, manly men, their dreams of a Castro-like, meat-market "Precinct Night", every night, coming to eventual fruition. It seems that the kids aren't as patient these days. They also seem to have a total lack of attention span and long-term planning. I'd like to take the easy way out and blame convenience culture, gun-makers, the internet and TV, but I need all of them, especially Sable's tits on this long fucking night of redundant news programming. ⊕

Blood, Cocaine, and Sodomy
Richard Tater

Everyone can't live in their own personal Disneyland. Besides, even the sappiest place on Earth has its occasional blood sacrifice.

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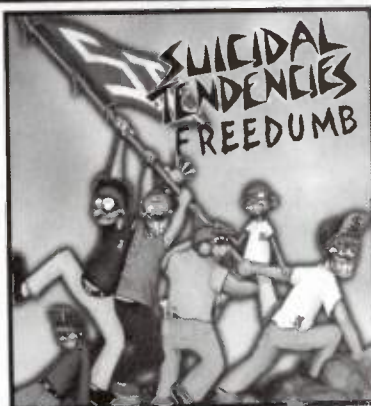
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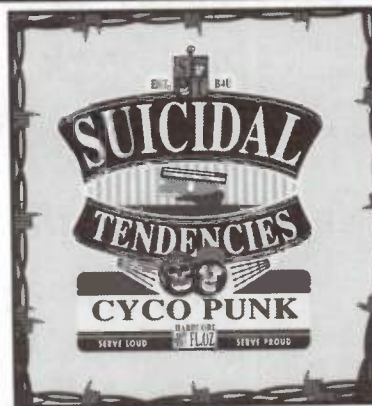
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IT'S A BAD, BAD, BAD, BAD SPECIES!

I got a copy of *HIT LIST* #2 in the mail today...thanks JB. I'm glad to see that the mag has managed to last 2 issues. I spent an hour skimming through the other columns...Jesus Christ! Everybody that writes for this mag but me seems to know one another from the "golden era" of *Maximum R'N'R*. Sadly, my band RANCID VAT was not popular enough to qualify me as a columnist for *Maximum R'N'R* back in the day. I DID help my buddy Pig

Champion from Poison Idea with his column for the 4 or 5 issues he contributed to; I remember Pig saying over and over that it was a shame I wasn't the

one with the damn column. Back then, I agreed with him. These days

I'm not so sure I'd want *Maximum R'N'R* on my resume. I guess since I seem to be a stranger in this mag compared to old heads like Tesco Vee and Ben Weasel, maybe it's time I introduce myself...and explain thee WHISKEY REBEL's basic agenda and philosophy. First: the music "scene".

Let's get one thing straight. No matter how much bellyaching you read in the other columns about the disgustingly uninspiring state of the music scene today, bear in mind the fact that most of these guys have been successful over the years with their bands, labels, or zines. The fact that my band has wallowed in obscurity for 18 years while their projects seem to have all done well should be pointed out. If I had been as successful as some of these guys with their music scene-oriented projects, my life would have been significantly different. This is NOT to say that I'd want to trade places with them...I'm content being me. Even so, you can expect a lot of bitterness in this column...I've been backstabbed, badmouthed and ripped-off so many countless times over the years by "concerned", "support-your-scene" types that I'll admit

that I'm a bit jaded. Please don't make the mistake of lumping me in with the other columnists and their own personal blues. Frankly, without naming names, over the years I've suspected that a few of my fellow columnists are actually jolly fellows who are only working a negative "heel" gimmick when they piss and moan about the "scene". You may rest assured that when I piss and moan about our music "scene", I am REALLY pissed off...I'm not just assuming a stance to appear witty or stylishly "negative".

I've played in the same band, RANCID VAT, for 18 years. Depending on who you ask, the VAT is either one of the last remaining punk rock bands in the country...OR a band that has absolutely no connection to punk rock. We DEFINITELY aren't a nostalgia act, and I'll be goddamned if we're ever going to be part of the "oldies-punk circuit". When we play, we spend a lot of time berating the audience. Now, I know that our approach plays hod with some people's preferences that bands should play 2-minute songs for 20 to 30 minutes, one after the other (with very little talk in between), and then get off the stage. Well, tough shit. When we're on stage, it's OUR STAGE, and we can use our time to do whatever we want. If we want to stand up there and vent our frustrations, well that's OUR BUSINESS. I think as a rule audiences deserve to be insulted more than they deserve to be molly coddled. I also strongly feel that abusing an audience IS ENTERTAINING. Anyway, people who see my band play live are usually either offended or inspired, and that's the way we want it.

My wife Marla and I started the band largely to express our hatred of the people involved in our local music scene. After all these years, even though the "scene kingpins" that we hated back

then are all in their 40's and, like Vic (who wrote a fine column in *HIT LIST* #2 on the subject), have long ago outgrown punk rock, I not only still haven't shaken my hatred for THOSE fucking assholes...I've also learned to hate VIRTUALLY EVERY ASPECT OF THE MUSIC UNDERGROUND.

When I enter a club to play a show, I usually get a stomach ache. I always wonder which of my enemies I'll encounter that night. I always wonder HOW MUCH SHIT the booker or club owner, or even the other bands, will try to pull on us later

When I'm simply out for a night of entertainment, my eyes scan the

When I'm simply out for a night of entertainment, my eyes scan the crowd the instant I enter the room. I always keep my back to the wall and a beer bottle ready to use as a foreign object in case somebody tries to back-jump me.

crowd the instant I enter the room. I always keep my back to the wall and a beer bottle ready to use as a foreign object in case somebody tries to back-jump me.

CLUB OWNERS are at the top of my hate list. Almost without exception they are lying, cheating scumbags. Has anybody ever met a club owner who DIDN'T skim money from the door?? Who doesn't renege on guarantees regularly?? Yet for some reason, they

Thinkin' & Drinkin' w/ The Whiskey Rebel



all share in common the same fucked-up notion that we bands should pretend not to notice when they try to fuck us over. It makes me sick the way music-fan marks and rubes always fawn over club owners. If they knew exactly how often the owners fuck bands over, they'd spit in their faces.

Even though I know they seem like relatively innocent working folk to most people, SOUND MEN are real pricks too, generally speaking. In fact, I refuse to do sound checks unless I've personally been convinced that the soundman isn't a dumbass. In any given local music scene, the local sound guy is almost without exception a schmoozing, scheming name-dropper. They always try to act cool...until we bust up a few mics or twist the microphone stands into pretzels...then they come UNGLUED!

DISTRIBUTORS have been using the same line of bull about "90-day payment" since I first started tangling with them many years ago. Almost every single one I can think of tried to rip us off. The worst distributors I ever encountered were a couple of shysters doing business as "Systematic" out there in S.F. They were total FUCKING LIARS who strung me along for many, many months WITH NO INTENTION of paying me. Some other fuckface distributors who ignored my phone calls or swore over and over that the check was "in the mail" were "NEW WORLD", "DUTCH EAST" and "SEMAPHORE" (over in Europe).

My wife and I are D.I.Y. as fuck.

We've been putting out records and CDs for 15 years on our own label. We used to flounder around playing games with the distributors. About five years ago, we finally wised up and decided to NEVER DEAL with those motherfuckers again. (We've made a couple exceptions..."Get Hip" distribution is the most honest distributor we've ever dealt with...thanks, guys). Nowadays, we actually MAKE MONEY distributing our crap to individual customers...one by one by one. We have a CD burner too, so FUCK PRESSING PLANTS! Maybe we only have a fan base of a few hundred mailorder customers, but GUESS WHAT?? It's worked. It's mind-boggling to think of how many good bands quit because they get fucked over by a distributor (HHhmmm. Of course, on the other hand, it's quite pleasant to think of all the shitty bands that called it quits!)

I FUCKING REALLY HATE music columnists and reviewers in local music sheets. 9 times out of 10 their main objective is to promote THEIR OWN BAND or their FRIENDS' BANDS. Is there ANYBODY out there that would even dispute that?? I suppose it's only natural to do so, but it's just another example of how fucking phony the music biz really is, even on a grassroots level. I also hate the "POLITICS" of which band will play in which slot at a gig (I could write an entire column about that!). I think that "RECORD RELEASE PARTIES" are just another form of shameless hype, and I WIPE MY ASS WITH YOUR YEAR-END POLLS!!

Maybe you understand now why locals here in Philly don't see me at clubs very often. I love live music as much as any of you, but all the other horseshit and hoopla that takes place at a club

makes me wish I had stayed home. Even little stuff, like a singer being a prisspant about monitor levels, will bug me.

Oh yeah. Here's another thing you should know about the WHISKEY REBEL...a MAJOR fact. I'm an alcoholic...and proud of it. Not proud like all you idiots who count how many beers you drink and how fast you drink 'em as if it were some sort of fucking competition. Alcohol is one of the few gifts...along with kick-ass records and hardcore wrestling...that make life worthwhile. WITH ALCOHOL, life is "worth it". Take it away, and you can just cancel my subscription.

Here in HOSTILE CITY U.S.A., everybody drinks. In our neighborhood (South Philly), teenagers stand on the corner and drink without being harassed by cops. Hell, the cops love to drink here too. I've sat at Dave's bar in the Northern Liberties neighborhood and drank with a bar full of cops many times. They're friendly when they have a bottle in front of them. Old ladies here sit on their steps and drink like fucking fish; they drink and spit and swear...and then go to church. In fact, churches that preach against drinking don't do all that well here in HOSTILE CITY, which is as it should be.

Hell, all you anarchy punks out there would be shocked if you had the guts to come here to see what scofflaws the residents of this city are. THE AVERAGE JOE is more "punk" than YOU!! They

don't march around in groups trying to "freak people out" with Mohawk haircuts, and they don't pin stupid cloth patches with band names and slogans on their coats or sit begging for change in front of record stores. The average citizen here has NO REGARD FOR THE LAW...they simply ignore laws they don't agree with! This city is PARADISE for people who hate rules. People here double and triple park OVERNIGHT...they just stop their car in the middle of the street and walk away. Our cops look the other way. Why should they give a shit if somebody wants to park directly in front of their house?? Not a day goes by when I fail to see somebody at a stop light simply get tired

of waiting, then stomp on their accelerator and take off. If a garbage truck is blocking the road here, there's no major problem. Rather than everybody waiting with their thumbs up their asses like in California, you'll see a steady stream of cars swinging up on the sidewalk to get around the blockade.

NOW THAT'S PUNK! Large masses of people ignoring laws as a group without discussion. It's instinctive here...and WHY?? BECAUSE EVERYBODY DRINKS HERE!

NO wonder rock and roll was being played live in clubs here when King Elvis was still sucking his Mama's titty. No wonder extreme wrestling was invented here! And no wonder thee WHISKEY REBEL chose this city to relocate to after being forced to live amongst all those tofu-eating kooks in Portland, Oregon.

Let's get religion and politics out of the way. Religion is for

Alcohol is one of the few gifts...along with kickass records and hardcore wrestling...that make life worthwhile. WITH ALCOHOL, life is "worth it". Take it away, and you can just cancel my subscription.

HIT SQUAD

weaklings...marks. Dummies. I hereby beg your fucking god to strike me with a lightning bolt. SEE, nothing happened. I WIPE MY ASS with Bible pages! Religion has been the root cause of almost every war that has ever been fought. Hell, everybody knows that...I know most of you hate organized religion too. I do wish to point out that unobtrusive silent prayer and meditation seems like a total waste of time to me. Go tell your troubles to a bartender...it's a lot more fun.

On to politics. I understand that a lot of you reading this have deep political commitments. Well, I must confess that the only time I've ever REALLY wanted to vote in an election in my lifetime was during Jesse "the Mind" Ventura's campaign last fall. Unfortunately I don't live in Minnesota. I don't believe that people are inherently good, OR that they are WORTH SAVING. The human race is a bad, bad, bad, bad species. REALLY. Our problems are not political in nature...people are just rotten to the core. Kids are born totally sweet and innocent into this world, yet they are fucked up

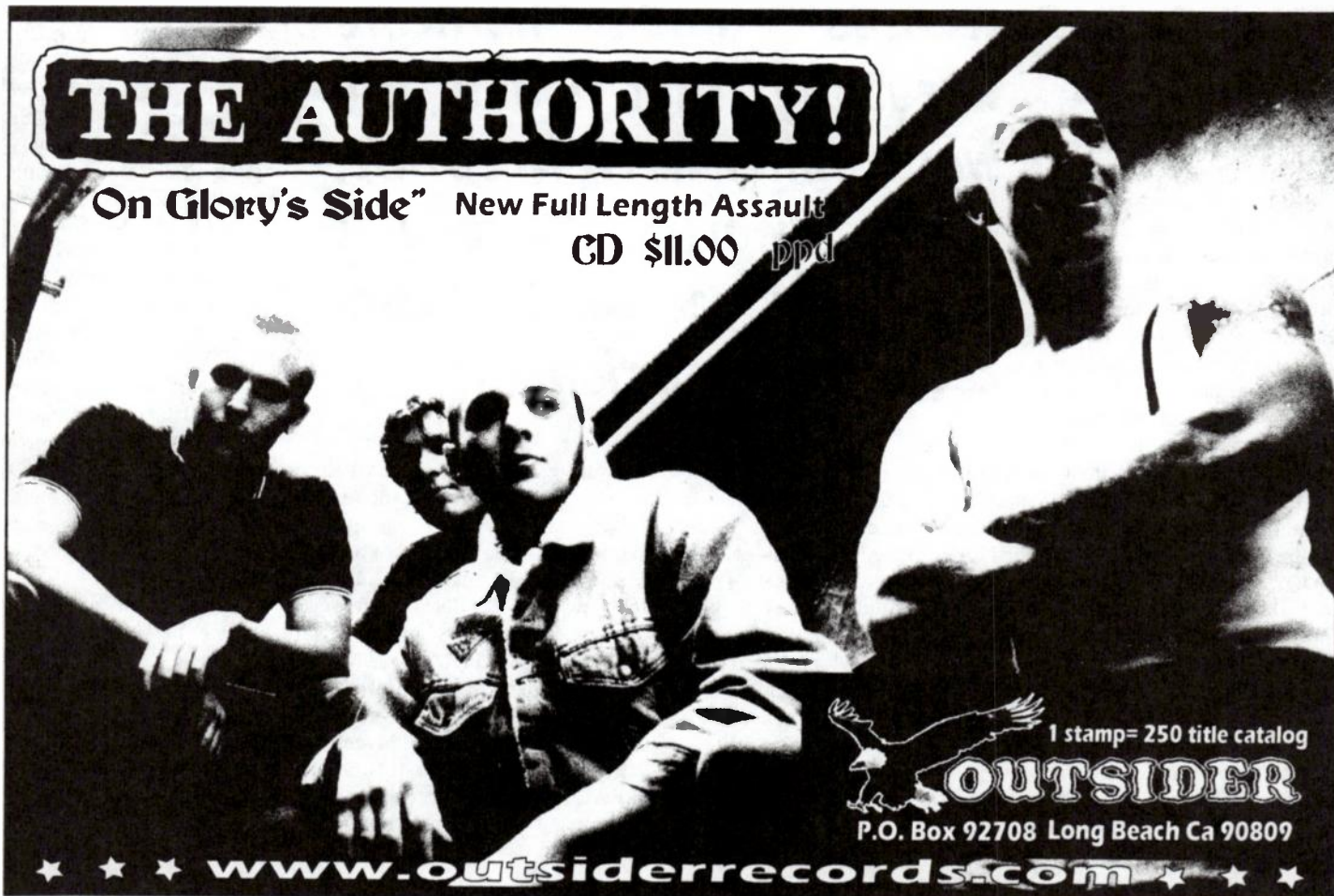
by the time they go to preschool. PEOPLE INVENT POLITICAL SYSTEMS...THAT'S WHY THEY DON'T WORK!!! Unless a benevolent alien species comes along and implements an equitable system upon this earth, we are doomed. As I write this, the big stories in the news are the feud over in Kosovo and Bill

Clinton's "indiscretions". Oh, and this update...Dan Quail is running again for President. YAWN!! Where's my bottle????

I guess that's enough of my "core beliefs" for now. Hopefully those of you who are still reading this that consider me a brainless, alcoholic slob will develop breast or testicular cancer. Those of you that love me should rush out and buy a rack of matching frames so that you can hang each and every WHISKEY

REBEL column over your fireplace. Over and out... ☺

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Every Jew a .22

The late Rabbi Meir Kahane was an advocate for Jewish self-defense who had a flair for the sound-bite. "Every Jew a .22", he used to say. Now I sympathize with the principle but I think it should be generalized. We should level the killing field. Various national groups also need to be reminded to take up arms:

*Every Dane a chain.
Every Scot a garotte.
Every Turk a dirk.
Every Swiss a kris.
Every Israeli a shillelagh.
Every Finn a rolling-pin.
Every Pole a pole.*

For many nationals, a rhyming reminder isn't easy to come up with. For these people, resort must be had to colloquialisms which some might consider pejorative. The ends justify the means, although the means demeans. Happily, there's one nationality it's always in good taste to lambaste: the Germans. I am sure Rabbi Kahane would have agreed.

*Every Kraut a knout.
Every Hun a gun.
Every Boche a cosh.*

That wasn't so bad, was it? So let's empower up some other folks:

*Every Nip a whip.
Every Yank a tank. (It may come to that.)
Every Mick a big stick.
Every Wop a riding-crop.
Every Canuck a nunchuck.*

As much as members of nationalities need to power up their weapons, members of other groups often need to even more. Nationals belong to nations--that's a curious expression, isn't it?--which at least purport to protect them except, of course, against their protectors. Homosexuals, for instance:

*Every gay an epée.
Every dyke a pike.
Every queer a spear.
Every nance a lance.
Every faggot a faggot.*

Women are another obvious example:

Every wife a knife.

*Every tart a dart
Every bitch a switch.
Every nun a gun.
Every daughter something with which to slaughter.*

Then there are ethnic groups subject to national majorities. They need to defend themselves too. Indeed, that was Rabbi Kahane's original insight.

*Every kike a spike.
Every wog an attack dog.
Every Afrikaaner a spanner.
Every spade a grenade.*



*Every Lapp a strap
Every Walloon a water balloon.
Every Aleut a jackboot.
Every Pomeranian a Pomeranian.*

*Every Gypsy a whipsie.
Every Tutsi, um, something with which to shootsie.*

According to the late Robert Heinlein, "an armed society is a polite society." Although I'm against gun control, at least so long as governments have guns, I'm sceptical about this proposition. The Wild West undoubtedly had certain meritorious aspects which Confucian China, for instance, did not, but politeness was surely not one of them. Nobody knows what difference

it'd make if every Jew had a .22, or every Slav a Molotov, or if all the Spartans had worn Doc Martens. But there must be a better way to level the playing field than turning it into a battlefield.

(Thanks to Madeleine and Lawrence in Oakland, California for contributing rhymes to this game.) ⊕

Bob Black
P.O. Box 3142
Albany, NY 12203-0142

The ends justify the means, although the means demeans. Happily, there's one nationality it's always in good taste to lambaste: the Germans. I am sure Rabbi Kahane would have agreed.



sloppy seconds

by
Bret Brummett

The first time that I heard Sloppy Seconds was at this very bad party with very good music. At one point, I leaned over and asked the girl next to me who this band was. "Sloppy Seconds," she told me.

"This is a great record. I've never heard of them," I said.

"They're from Indianapolis. They've got an album coming out soon," she told me.

We had been listening to the first Sloppy single. I made a mental note to buy their album as soon as I saw it.

A couple of months later I was in a record store when I saw "Destroyed". The cover was a funny take-off on the KISS record "Destroyer". It was the same basic cover, but instead of the guys in KISS, it was the Sloppy guys. Where the KISS cover had their name, the Sloppy Seconds version had simply marked out KISS and put their own name. I thought that was pretty funny. (I doubt whether anyone affiliated with KISS had actually seen the Sloppy cover, or else they probably would have

sued.) After listening to the record, I knew why it was called "Destroyed". What music would be left if all of popular culture was destroyed? Sloppy Seconds. Junk Rock. It made perfect sense. Fast and furious playing with references to John Waters movies, Traci Lords (!), surf music, B-movies, Nazis, and Sammy Davis Jr. make more sense on vinyl than on paper. This was the record that I wanted to hear. There were four other miscreants out there who had the same interests as myself. This record was so sincere that it sounded like a record that me and my friends could have made in our garage.

I decided that I was gonna see these guys live as soon as possible. Fortunately, I didn't have to wait that long. On my next trip to the record store, I saw a poster for an upcoming show. I was psyched. I got as many of my friends together as I could, and

we made plans to see the show. That whole

week we listened to nothing but "Destroyed".

We were going to see the mighty Sloppy Seconds. (Sloppy is that kind of band. Whenever they play locally, they have the sense to play on a Saturday night. The first time I saw them it was on a Saturday night during summer vacation. Weekend shows just have a better feel.)

On the drive to the show, we speculated about what type of crowd the band would draw. Indianapolis had some pretty bad bands that people went crazy over at the time, so we were naturally skeptical.

It was incredible! The place was packed. Apparently, we were latecomers to the world of Sloppy. The crowd cut across generations, labels, and sexes. There were thirty- and forty-year olds next to teen punkers next to teen metalheads next to college kids. I knew that the sincerity that I had heard on the record was felt by everyone else who heard it.

Finally, the band came on. The crowd lost it. It was like someone had electrocuted everyone there simultaneously. People in the crowd began stage diving, and at

some points there were dozens of people on the stage. Girls took their tops off. It became insanely hot, and beer (illegally smuggled in) began splashing through the air. And the band kept on playing. Someone stuck a trampoline on the stage, and the stage divers were getting crazy air. Each time the band finished a song, there were yells, screams and applause. No one was disappointed.

Trash Brats, the Queens, the Riverdales, Bobby Steele from the Undead, the Murder Junkies, Marky Ramone, and dozens of other bands. I have seen Sloppy give local bands barely out of the garage a chance to open for them. They truly support the scene. But no matter which bands have shared the stage with them, Sloppy have always managed to steal the show. They have a sense of showmanship that isn't

success that Green Day was destined to have with "Dookie" a few short years later. For whatever reason, that didn't happen. Other Indianapolis bands were signed and forgotten, but the Sloppy guys kept playing great shows and releasing good music. (Sweet FA? The Why Store? I am almost embarrassed to say I live in Indianapolis.)

While on Taang, Sloppy re-released their first 7" record (cleverly entitled "The First

Seven Inches. . .and Then Some"), the "Lonely Christmas" E.P., and the full length "Knock Yer Block Off!", which was a solid record. The kings of Junk Rock paid homage to Russ Meyer's beautiful women, comic book characters, and the local ice cream man (in the same song, the band nods its collective head to 60's garage rock with its chant of "H-E-N-R-Y"). They also found time to parody the lameness of pretentious guitar solos with "Ejaculation." (Does anybody remember Van Halen's "Eruption"?) Due to problems with Taang and a lineup change, it was five years before the next Sloppy record

Someone stuck a trampoline on the stage, and the stage divers were getting crazy air. Each time the band finished a song, there were yells, screams and applause.



After the band left the stage, the crowd began chanting, "Sloppy, Sloppy." No one moved. The band came out and did an encore and left the stage. Again, no one moved and the chant started again. This scenario played itself out again. Every person in that crowd wanted the show to keep on going forever. It was a fantastic show. The music was just like on the record: fast funny, and sincere. I was hooked.

Over the years, I have seen Sloppy dozens of times. I saw them play with the

contrived or jaded. It is as natural and sincere as their music. I have never been disappointed by a Sloppy Seconds show. Never.

(Sloppy has toured Europe and the United States dozens of times.)

At some point after "Destroyed", Taang signed the band. Every reasonable person in Indianapolis was sure that Sloppy was about to explode. There was no way that the world could ignore this band. We were all sure that Sloppy would have the kind of

came out. In that five years, punk bands (and not-so-punk bands) found a home on "alternative" radio stations. Bands like Green Day, the Offspring, and Nirvana were in the limelight. This looked like a perfect time for Sloppy to finally get some serious exposure and recognition.

After extricating themselves from the Taang contract, Sloppy released the live record "No Time for Tuning". A testament to what live Sloppy shows are all about: fun music for those who can appreciate it. The

record is notable for containing a new song about humorous sexual fantasies complete with cheesy sound effects, "Queen of Outer Space", which was everything we had come to expect from Sloppy.

By that time most of us Sloppy fans were desperate for a new song. Many of us began to wonder if the band would ever get back into the studio. More importantly, we wondered if any label was on the same wavelength as the rest of us. This was an incredible band that seemed to be just wasting time. A loyal legion of Sloppy fans was desperate for someone to put out the kind of music we were waiting to hear.

Returning to the studio with a new label and a new guitar player, Ace (Spice) Hardwhere?, the band fortunately maintained the same qualities that had always made Sloppy great: loud, fast guitars, catchy songs, and junk! What other band could sing the praises of drive-in movies, ephedrine, Zero candy bars, pizza delivery drivers, the wonder that is lesbian love, and cover a Connie Francis song? Only the kings of junk rock. "More Trouble Than They're Worth" is Sloppy's debut release for Nitro, and another



er great chapter in the ongoing Sloppy saga.

Along with a new label came the chance to make videos. "15 Minutes or It's Free"

really pounds home some of Sloppy's obsessions: pizza, parties, and...well that's about it. But their next video shows Sloppy doing what they do best, since "Let's Kill the Trendy" captures Sloppy actually playing live. The song echoes what most Sloppy fans already feel should be done to some of the phonies clogging up our radio airwaves and record stores.

And what about that? Oasis? Bush? Marilyn Manson? Alternative to what? How can these bands sell so many records? Doesn't anyone see that these bands have nothing in common with the great unwashed record buying public? How the hell can Marilyn Manson sell millions of records while Sloppy Seconds still plays bowling alleys? You got me. All I know is that Sloppy Seconds is the real thing. They've been making some of the greatest records I've heard for years now, and I'm glad I was there for some of it.

If you're disgusted by what has happened to rock and roll, and you want to guarantee its future, buy the next Sloppy record.

Sloppy just finished a tour with Marky Ramone's new band, the Intruders, and has plans to tour Europe in May, with a huge U.S. tour to follow this summer. If you want to see Sloppy live, you can check out

their web page at Nitro records (www.nitrorecords.com). If you don't see a listing for a show in your town, contact the label and complain. ☺

SLOPPYSECONDS DISCOGRAPHY

7 inches

The First Seven Inches. . . and Then Some
(Indie/Alternative Testicles)

Come Back Traci/ Leaving on a Jet Plane
3 Different Covers
(Toxic Shock) Out of Print

I Don't Wanna Be A Homosexual/ Human Waste
(acoustic version)
2 different covers
(Toxic Shock) Out of Print

Germany E.P.

4 Songs
(German Label) Out of Print

Where Eagles Dare w/ Bobby Steele/ Ice Cream
Man (Demo version)
(RoadKill records) Out of Print

Come Back Traci/Jet Plane
(Get Hip Records)

Where Eagles Dare/ Party Beach
(Get Hip Records)

Why Don't Lesbians Love Me?/ the Vindictives
Pervert at Large

(Vindictive Records)

Lonely Christmas E.P. and 7 inch out of print
(Taang!)

VML Live at the Fireside Bowl
Contains Queen of Outer Space

Comps.

Black Brittle Frisbee
Indiana Album Project
L.P. only
Out of print

It's a Punk Rock Christmas
With the Ramones, Fear, the Damned, and others
(Rhino Records)

Welcome to Our Nightmare: an Alice Cooper
Tribute
Sloppy covers Alice's Serious.
(XXX Records)
Son of Slam Chops Volume 2
I Don't Wanna Be a Homosexual (live)
(XXX Records)

Nitro Comp. Deep Thoughts
Various Nitro Bands
Contains Thing from Uranus and Let's Kill The
Trendy
(Nitro)
Look for rare Japanese Import

KPNK Punk Radio Compilation
Contains Candy Man
(Label unknown)

L.P.s

Destroyed
LP/Cass/CD
(Toxic Shock) Out of Print

Destroyed
C.D./Cass.
(Metal Blade)

Destroyed
12 inch picture disc
(Last Resort) Out of Print

The First Seven Inches. . .and Then Some
Re-Issue with demos and out takes from debut
C.D./Cass./L.P.
(Taang!)

Knock Yer Block Off!
C.D./Cass./L.P.
(Taang!)

LIVE No Time For Tuning
22 tracks in front of hundreds of junk rockers!
(XXX Records)

More Trouble Than They're Worth
L.P./C.D./Cass.
(Nitro)

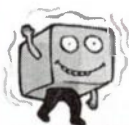
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Al promises a website's coming sometime soon



First of all, I want to thank all those who contacted me here at *Hit List* after reading the *New York Times* article. I'm glad that people want to hear my side of the story. Due to legal reasons I can't go into too much detail, but strangely the whole thing started when a light bulb in my house burned out back in 1994.

I'm sure you all know how annoying it can be when a light bulb burns out. It's even worse when it's one of those ceiling fixtures that you have to climb up on a chair to get to. There's a danger of falling off the chair, or dropping and breaking the glass fixture or the bulb, and the chance of a back injury while reaching up and trying to screw the bulb in. I went shopping for



a replacement bulb at Just Bulbs, a local store that sells bulbs and has a really great selection. I didn't realize how many different kinds of light bulbs there were; all different wattages, frosted, clear, colored, energy savers, various shapes, reflectors, spotlights, imported bulbs, etc., and of course 3-way bulbs, the most popular bulb among extremely indecisive people. I suppose

I should have asked a salesperson for help, because the selection was overwhelming. After I was in the store for about half an hour a salesperson offered me assistance. I told him I didn't need help, but shopping there was a long process because of the giant selection, and because I always try to read labels carefully. While I had the sales person's attention I commented that when working in a store called Just Bulbs I'll bet people are coming in all day with light bulb jokes, but he says he's never been told any jokes by customers about any of the bulbs. I can't believe it, this guy works with light bulbs all day, and he doesn't even seem to know what light bulb jokes are. I say, "They aren't actually jokes about light bulbs, they are riddles asking how many people it would take to change a light bulb." He says, "Normally just one." I say, "You don't understand, let me try one on you. How many necrophiliacs does it take to screw in a light bulb?" He doesn't guess, so I say, "Just one, now why don't you hold your finger in the socket until I come back with a new bulb." The guy's just standing there, he doesn't seem to have a clue. I try again: "How many mice does it take to screw in a light bulb? Two, but the hard part is getting them into the bulb." The sales guy tells me he has to help other customers. He must have the worst sense of humor of anyone I've ever met, so it's back to shopping.

I read the guarantee on a bulb I was thinking of getting: "If you are not satisfied with the performance of this bulb...it will be replaced with a new bulb free of charge". I wasn't sure what that was supposed to mean. Can I just wait until the bulb burns out, and then mail it back and get a new bulb? That sounds like a good deal. I decide it might be time to ask the salesman for help. He looks at the guarantee and says he doesn't think that it means you can mail back a burned-out bulb after the life of the bulb has been exhausted. I point out that there is nothing in the guarantee to indicate that. He goes over to have a talk to the store manager. The store manager comes back with the sales guy. He says that the guarantee doesn't cover burned-out bulbs unless they were defective. Now I'm getting a little pissed off. I point out that if they wanted to write the guarantee to exclude burned-out bulbs it wouldn't be too fucking hard to say that. I tell the manager that since his whole fucking life is selling people bulbs he ought to check on stuff like this. I ask if he can call the company that made the bulb and ask them, so that I have proper information on which to base my purchasing decision. He says he's kind of busy at the moment, as there are a lot of customers in the store. I point out that I'm busy too, and I've been shopping in his store for the past 45 minutes, and I'd like to make my purchase, 'cause I have other things to do in life besides just shopping for a light bulb. He finally agrees to call the company, and heads off while I continue my meticulous job of shopping.

I call over the sales person again to ask a question: "It says here on the package 'Light output 1180 Lumens', what does that mean?" He says that the number of Lumens gives you an indication of the bulb's brightness, but that seems vague to me. "How bright is one Lumen?" He says he'll check. While I continue shopping I notice the sales guy is having a conference with the manager, who's now on the phone. Meanwhile the line of customers who need help is getting long, and I'm thinking I might take my business elsewhere in the future, cause even though the selection is good here, the service is slow. The sales guy comes back to tell me that one Lumen is equal to the light from one candle. He's about to leave to help some other customers when I ask him if the 1180

"How bright is one Lumen?"

Lumen bulb would be the same brightness as if I were in a room that had 1180 lit candles. He says yes, and I say that it seems to me that the size of the room would make a big difference. He says it's for an average size room, but I point out that the color of the walls and ceiling would make a big difference too.

While the sales guy is helping someone else, I come across one of those fluorescent bulbs that screw into a normal light bulb socket. It costs more than a regular bulb, but uses less electricity and lasts longer. On the package it says "guaranteed to last 10,000 hours". I couldn't figure how many weeks that worked out to, so I call the sales guy over once again. He says he doesn't know. I politely but firmly say, "What's the name of this store?" He replies, "Just Bulbs." I stand there and look at him without saying anything. He gets the idea and says, "I'll go check on that, Sir." He comes back a few minutes later and says that 10,000 hours would be almost 14 months of continuous use. That sounds pretty good to me, and it says on the package that the energy savings would more than pay for the price of the bulb. The 1180 Lumen bulb only costs 1 dollar, and I assume that the manufacturer will send a new bulb every time one burns out. A buck for something that's essentially guaranteed to last forever sounds like a good deal. Hold that thought. The fluorescent bulb costs

ten dollars and only lasts 14 months, but since it more than pays for itself it actually costs at least a dollar less than the one dollar bulb. But then you have to spend 10 bucks on a new one, so if the bulb more than paid for itself that doesn't mean that it also would cover the cost of the replacement bulb, which is another 10 bucks. I call the sales guy over and ask if he could compute the exact energy savings on the fluorescent bulb over its 14-month life span. He says he'll figure it out right after he's done helping a customer. I point out to him that I've been in the store longer than any of the other customers. He comes back a few minutes later and tells me that the fluorescent bulb would save around a dollar a month in electricity. This is a tough decision! The first bulb essentially costs one dollar and is guaranteed forever, but I'm losing one dollar every month on the electricity. After 14 months that would mean I would have paid five dollars more than if I bought the fluorescent bulb for ten bucks. The catch is that after 14 months I have to buy a new fluorescent bulb for ten bucks, so then I'm five dollars in the hole. It's a tough decision, but I finally decide to get the fluorescent bulb, mainly so I won't have to change it as often.

I get in line to buy my bulb, and the first sales guy is the only one waiting on the customers. The manager is still talking on the phone. When I finally get to the front of the line the manager who is on the phone says to me, "I've got legal affairs on hold, I'll have your answer for you in a minute." I tell him not to bother because I decided to get a different bulb. I mention that I'll be saving my receipt, because if this bulb doesn't last 10,000 hours I'm damn sure going to get my money back. This is the most I've ever paid for a light bulb, and I don't want to be ripped off! I'm really curious to see if the bulb will last 10,000 hours, but it occurs to me that it's going to be impossible to keep track of the bulb's usage if I keep turning it on and off. I think about keeping a log. I'll have to get a clipboard with paper and pen attached, and hang it on a hook next to the light switch. I can write down the bulb's on and off times, and at the end of each day I can total up the number of hours used, and add that to the running total. It's beginning to seem like this could be more trouble than it's worth since I might have to keep these logs for the next three or four years. That's when I come up with a brilliant idea. I decide that I'll just leave the light on 24 hours a day and see how long it will last. If the light goes out in the first 14 months I'll take advantage of the guarantee and get my money back. So far, so good.

A couple months later I run into my next door neighbor, who is just getting out of his car, and right out of the blue he says, "You must work late-I've noticed your light is on all night". I don't even know this guy, and it's none of his business, but I explained to him that I bought a fluorescent bulb that was guaranteed for 10,000 hours, and wanted to see how long it would last. My neighbor says "It will probably last at least two years". I felt like saying "What are you, some fucking light bulb expert". It really ticks me off when strangers start nosing into your personal life. First of all, how I live my life is none of his fucking business, and in the second place, I wasn't fucking asking for his opinion! As if he hadn't pissed me off enough, next it was, "It will last much longer if you turn it off at night". Can you fucking

believe the gall of this guy! I'm trying to find out how long the fucking bulb will last, and if I were to turn the light off half the time, it would take me twice as long to find out. That could be years extra! I don't even know if I'm going to live long enough to complete my experiment as it is, and here's some jerk with a brilliant fucking way to slow me down. I decide to give him a taste of his own medicine, and pry into his personal life and see how he likes it.

I notice that the rear bumper of his car has a parking sticker from where he works. "I see from your parking sticker that you work at Livermore Labs, what do you do there?" He says he's a senior nuclear engineer. That reminds me of a joke, so I say, "Hey, how many nuclear engineers does it take to change a light bulb?" He doesn't know. "None, they don't need light bulbs because they all glow in the dark." I expect a laugh, but he just says that's not funny, and that the lab has stringent safeguards in place ruling out any possibility of radioactive contamination. Realizing that I hit too close to home on that one, I try another: "How many Communists does it take to screw in a light bulb? Two, one to screw in the bulb, and one to hand out the leaflets." Still nothing, but I'm not ready to give up. "How many cryonicists does it take to change a light bulb? Four, one to ensure that the light bulb is certifiably dead, one to perfuse it with cryoprotectants, one to slowly cool it to liquid nitrogen temperature, and one to wait fifty years for biochemistry to advance to the point where a cryonic coma can safely be terminated, returning the patient to full health." The guy is in stitches. I knew that one would get him. Now I've got a bead on his sense of humor. "How many light bulbs does it take to change a light bulb? Two, the old one and the new one." Again, the guy is hysterical. I've more than made up for the first two. I try one more: "How many computer programmers does it take to change a light bulb? None, it's a hardware problem." Once again my humor is a big hit with my neighbor.

Now that I'm on his good side I ask exactly what projects he works on at the lab. That's when he tells me that it's classified and he can't discuss it! Now I wish I'd said that the information on my light bulb was classified, and I can't discuss it. I can't just let this go. I'm a fucking American citizen, and just 'cause this guy has a job at a fucking weapons lab he thinks he can treat me like a foreign spy or something. I was a physics major in college, and I wouldn't be surprised if I know as much about nuclear science as this guy. I know that Livermore Labs is one of only two facilities in America that develops new nuclear weapons for the government. So I say to the guy, "I guess you must work on the W-88." The guy looks shocked. The W-88 is the newest nuclear weapon in America's arsenal. It's ultra hi-tech, and miniaturized, although its size and weight are highly classified, but I'm thinking this guy probably knows, 'cause it was developed at Livermore, and it's something I'm real curious about. The guy, whose name I later learned is Kim Lee, asks how I know about the W-88. I explain that I'm a science hobbyist with a background in nuclear weapons. "I've been following developments in nuclear weapons for decades. You know some people pronounce it wrong and say nuc-u-lar." He says that he's

One more: "How many computer programmers does it take to change a light bulb? None, it's a hardware problem." Once again my humor is a big hit with my neighbor.

noticed that, but not at the lab. I explain that when I was in High School I was in the science club and our club project was to build a crude nuclear device. "If you think it's tough to buy beer and cigarettes when you're 17 years old, just try to get someone to sell you Uranium-239." Kim asked where High School students would get plans to build an atomic bomb, and I explained that we got the plans from a group of students who were environmentalists and knew all the ins and outs of the Freedom Of Information Act. They helped us science geeks get the declassified plans for the bomb that the United States dropped on Nagasaki.

As I mention that, I realize that I might have made a faux pas, cause Kim might be of Japanese ancestry. I say that I hope I haven't offended him, and lucky for me he turns out to be Chinese. In fact he tells me that he regularly visits China to see his relatives. I mention that it must be expensive to visit China, and he says it is, but well worth it. I mention that I love Chinese food, and ask him if he knows where to get good Chinese food when he's over there, and he says it's all over the place and claims it has some of the best Chinese food in the world!

Kim Lee was a nice neighbor, kind of a quiet guy who kept to himself. Even though he's lived next door for six years, I might never have spoken with him if not for that oddball comment he made about my light being on. Kim had a couple cats, who unlike my cat generally stayed in the house. A year ago I was leaving for a one-week vacation in Las Vegas, and I needed someone to feed my cat. I ran into Kim Lee and asked him if he'd feed Fluffy while I was out of town. He said no problem, and suggested that I bring over a bag of the type of cat food my cat likes, because cats can be real picky about their food. I went over to give him the cat food, and he invited me in. I had just bought a new computer, and mentioned to Kim that I'd just bought the latest Mac, and was pretty excited about it. He said he wasn't real familiar with Macs. I told him they were the best, and that if he ever got one I'd be glad to help teach him how to use it. Then Kim took me into his computer room, and I was really impressed. It wasn't what I expected at all. Kim has a serious work place, with a high end work station. I guess a Mac just doesn't cut it for nuclear engineering. As I looked around I saw some interesting blueprints that appeared to be for bomb designs. I asked about them, and Kim told me that he was doing some freelance work for foreign companies designing reactor cores, etc. Since nuclear engineering is a kind of hobby with me I had some questions I was dying to ask a real expert. I asked what was the least amount of HEU (highly enriched Uranium) you'd need to build a bomb. He estimated that it couldn't be done with less than 5.4 KG of weapons grade Uranium, of which at least .4 KG would have to be HEU. I told him that from all the literature I'd seen on the subject producing HEU is almost impossible, which is why only seven countries have been able to build them. Kim says there are now actually eight countries, and that there are newly evolving technologies for Uranium enrichment. I asked him what was the latest, but he said it was something he couldn't discuss. I kept inquiring, pointing out that it was just for my personal information. "Come on, who am I gonna tell?" He finally relents and explains the workings of electro-magnetic isotope separation, or EMIS, as it's known in the trade. He says that EMIS makes it a thousand times easier to create weapons grade Uranium than Chemex (chemical enrichment), which most countries are still using. Kim also tries to convey to me the critical merger of engineering sciences needed to build a weapon. You'd need so many tons of HMX (high explosives), that you begin to wonder how much more damage you'd be able to do with

the nuclear device itself. You'd also need ultra sophisticated metallurgy and complex spherical geometry to produce a reflector of natural uranium metal a few centimeters thick, and a tamper of hardened iron around it in which to compress the fissionable material into a supercritical mass for an implosion weapon. The complexities Kim relates are way over my head. He tells me that it would be impossible to build a bomb without Uranium Hexafluoride resistant bellows-valves to handle the UF₆ feedstock, and there are only three companies in the world that make them. He explains that the level of detonation engineering is formidable, and that he knows of only one company that sells the ultra high-tech cold isostatic press needed to shape the explosive charges, and that's ABB in Switzerland. I ask Kim about the subject I'm most interested in, the W-88; how big is it, how much does it weigh, etc. He tells me it's top secret and he can not discuss it. He says it's so highly classified that at the lab you aren't even allowed in a room where it's being discussed unless you have a "Q clearance"! As curious as I am about the subject, I decide to drop the matter since I don't want to get Kim in any trouble.

That was a year ago. I got back from Las Vegas and Fluffy had been taken care of quite well. Then last month Kim rang my doorbell and asked if I could return the favor. He said he was going to China for two weeks and asked if I could take care of his cats. Since they mainly stay in the house, all I had to do is go over once a day and make sure they were okay and had food and fresh water. No problem. Kim gave me the keys to his house, and there were some other keys on his key chain, including the keys to the garage and car. He asked if I could start the car a few times while he was gone. No problem. The day Kim left I went over in the evening and the cats were fine. I wanted to go into his computer room to check what make of computer he had, but it was locked. I tried the keys, and sure enough found the right one. His computer was a hybrid of components with a AMD K-6 CPU. While I was looking around I saw some interesting-looking plans. Since the room had a photocopier I made copies to take home and study, and maybe learn more about this stuff, 'cause I was almost embarrassed to talk nukes with Kim since I knew zilch compared to him.

The next evening I went over to check on the cats, and as I opened the door to his house I heard, "Hold it right there." I turned around and was surrounded by maybe 15 cops running at me with drawn guns, and the closest guy has a gun in one hand and is holding out a badge with his other hand. He tells me I have the right to remain silent, and I quickly tried to explain that there must be some mistake. I explain that I'm not breaking in, and that I live next door and I'm just feeding Mr. Lee's cats while he's out of town. They take me inside and inform me that they are FBI agents, and that I'm under arrest. I don't know what this apparent mix-up is all about, but I'm being cooperative with the agents and the FBI agent in charge seems to appreciate it, but his partner is a real psycho. He actually says to the first guy, "Just leave me alone in a room with him for five minutes, and I'll beat some answers out of him." I'm a little frightened of this guy, and when he steps out of the room I point out to his partner that he seems kind of high strung, and that I'd appreciate it if he made sure that I didn't get left alone in a room with the guy. The main cop tells me that his partner won't touch me, and that I have nothing to worry about as long as I cooperate. He says his partner has already been suspended from the force twice for brutal beatings of suspects, and that the next time will be his last, if it can be proven. They search me and are looking suspiciously at a small sealed foil bag of "Cat Treats" I have in my pocket. The first cop holds it up and asks what it is. I explain to him that it's just tasty snacks you can give to cats as a reward. Then his partner grabs my shirt, pushes me against the wall and says, "Don't get smart with me, punk." The first guy asks where the cats are. Then his partner who's holding me against the wall says, "Are the cats dangerous?" I say no, they're just

very nice pets. The psycho guy leans up close to me and says, "They better be, asshole, 'cause if any of my guys gets scratched or bitten you're gonna lose a kidney." I explain again that they aren't my cats, that they belong to Mr. Lee. Cop #1 says that they're going to have to take the cats into custody. I ask what they've done. Cop #2 says, "Shut up, smartass", then cop #1 tells me it's for their own protection. They've got my ID out, and they see that I live next door. The main FBI guy gives my driver's license to another agent and tells him to get a search warrant for my house. I ask why I'm being arrested, and the second cop says, "You got shit in your ears, asshole? Didn't you just hear me tell you to shut up?" The first cop tells me I'll find out at the arraignment.

I'd noticed that there had been a cable TV installation van parked outside in front of the house, which about five of the agents jumped out of when they first grabbed me. I put 2 and 2 together, and figured out that Kim Lee might have one of those illegal cable hook-ups. I hope that's not the case, because I think that's a federal law and Kim could be in big trouble. Meantime more than a dozen agents are searching the premises, and I see two agents take away Kim's cats, Little Boy and Fat Man, in cat carriers. I notice that outside the house they are putting up yellow tape around the house with something printed on it in bold black type, but I can't make out what it says. Also, trucks from various TV and radio stations are beginning to arrive. The agents handcuff me and escort me through the throng of reporters to the police car. I try to keep my head down so the media can't get a good picture of me, although it occurs to me that usually the people who do that are guilty, and I'm not. As they are opening the door to the police car they're taking me away in, a reporter calls out, "Do you have any comment?" I shout back, "I pay for cable and have the receipts to prove it."

When I get to jail they've already emptied out my pockets, but then they also take my belt so I can't hang myself. I ask the jailer if in his experience anyone has ever committed suicide over an illegal cable hook-up, but he doesn't answer. Then the jail guy tells me I get to make one phone call. I'm having trouble deciding who to call, 'cause it's an embarrassing situation and I'd prefer that no one knew, but on the other hand everyone who watches the TV news or reads the paper is going to find out. I decide to call Jack, a friend of mine who seems about as likely to be able to help me as anyone I can think of. I tell the jailer I'm going to need to call directory assistance to get Jack's number, and the jailer hands me a pencil and paper to write it down, which I do. However when I start to dial Jack's number the jailer stops me and says I only get one phone call, and that includes directory assistance. I said then why did you offer me a pen to write down the number, and he says that it's a trick they play on the prisoners; "Works every time", then he lets out a big laugh, and the other jailers crack up as well, having a big laugh at my expense. After screwing me out of my phone call they take me to a cell which I have to share for the night with three other guys. I'm somewhat uncomfortable in this situation because I fear that I'm not sufficiently familiar with the proper jail protocols and etiquette, as well as having con-

cerns about being raped. I suspect I'm going to have to tell these other prisoners what I'm in for. The three guys are all looking at me when I enter the cell, but no one says a word. I say, "Hi", trying to maintain a friendly tone, but no one responds so I add, "My name is Mel", which gets some nods, but that's about it. So I add, "I'm here as the result of a mix up", and the other guys laugh, although I hadn't intended it as a joke. One of the guys answers back with, "Really? I'm here cause I killed a guy." I said, "You're kidding, right?" The guy says, "Yeah, I'm kidding", and all three of them laugh. Then they tell me what they're really in for. One assault, one drugs, one burglary. Then they asked what the man threw my ass in the slammer for, and I said an illegal cable hook-up. I thought that might engender hostility, but actually they were very impressed. "Way to stick it to the man, brother!" The drug guy asks if I was getting free premium channels, and I figure what the hell and say yes. They all give me a high five. "HBO dude, give me five. Show the man no mercy, bro."

In the morning they put me in a room where a public defender is scheduled to meet with me just prior to a pre-arraignment bail hearing. When the attorney shows up I try to quickly explain the mix up to him. Then he gives me the good news-I am not being charged with having an illegal hook-up. I was so relieved I can't tell you. Then he explains that the charge is espionage. I was totally stunned, since that's way more serious than the cable thing would have been. He says it's going to be hard to get me bailed out because the prosecutor is saying that a search of my

house uncovered highly classified plans for state of the art nuclear bomb components. I tell my lawyer that he should contact Kim Lee, because he can help clear me, but he says Kim Lee fled to China and that there is very little chance he'll be coming back. The attorney then informs me that I am facing possible life in prison! He says he thinks he can cut that in half if I agree to a plea bargain. I explain that I'm totally innocent, and that he should be able to get me off completely. He says he would be able to get me off if I were a drunk driver, because that's what he specializes in. I ask if it would be possible to get a lawyer who specializes in espionage, but he says there aren't any for two reasons. First, it's very rarely charged. Second, the individuals charged are almost always convicted and spend life in prison, making it hard for them to pay their lawyers.

I don't know how this whole mess will turn out, but I want to thank the editors at *Hit List* for giving me a chance to tell my side of the story. Also, I want to thank them for their patience in transcribing this column from crappy little pieces of note paper I had to write on with a pencil because that was all they would give me here in jail. I hope to be back soon.

[Editor's note - Shortly after this column was written, a Judge granted Mel home release. Unfortunately, he was returned to prison two days later after complaining to the court that the security bracelet he was required to wear was chafing his ankle] ⊕

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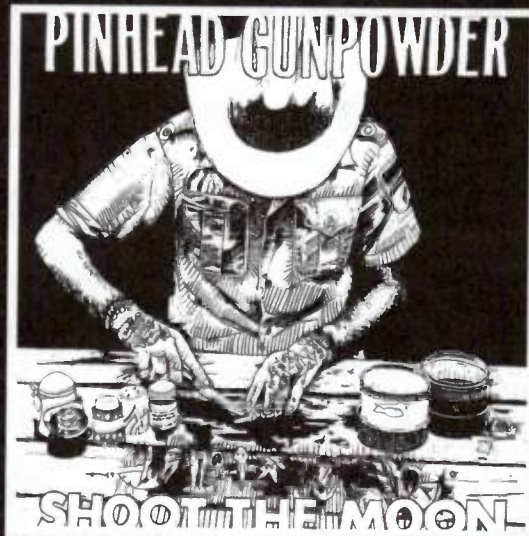


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NEW CRIMINALS FULL LENGTH COMING VERY SOON!!

1. Position of a punk, pushing 40, moving at 550 mph at 32,000 feet as the Dow approaches 10,000.

Times are good. Everybody knows it; everybody agrees. The Soviets are history. Computers are your future. Crime is down. The market is up. You need look no further than New York City for evidence. I spent this past week on the newly re-energized, renovated, and restored island of Manhattan: Times Square choked with The Chains and shopping malls, the parks clean, not an apartment on the island going for less than \$1000/month. The cops have cracked down on that American scourge, the drunk driver, and have set up checkpoints around the city where they confiscate onsite and without warrants, the automobiles of the malefactors. I sat in a taxi in one checkpoint for 45 minutes Friday night. And oh yeah, last month the cops pumped 43 bullets into an unarmed black man who'd never crossed the law.

The Dow Jones Industrials probably will have broken the 10,000 mark by the time you read this. They almost did it this week, when I was in New York. I watched in my hotel room as the expert recruited by CNN Financial proclaimed (definitively): the market is most certainly not overvalued and will go higher. "I'm bullish on America," he ebulliently expostulated.

It was the talk of the town. At the Carnegie Deli, I sat next to a 30-something stockbroker who complained about getting by on \$200,000 worth of commissions. I passed a shoe-shine stand where two businessmen in tailored suits discussed the tax implications of buying a second boat. I met one underdressed fellow who asked me for change, who after I gave it to him shuffled off, I'm sure, to invest it in some hot e-stocks. And I had to turn off the hotel television when it ran a completely unnecessary story about how these happy-go-lucky brown people from South America hitch trains and walk nearly 2000 miles through the Mexican desert to try their hand at the great prosperity casino that is America. They had these completely gratuitous and disturbing images of people run over by the trains or murdered by the Federales or the banditos.

Let's focus on the positive here, shall we? After all, they're bound to get rich picking oranges in the Imperial Valley, or in the Malequidora, making \$4.00/day.

Me? I'm with the program, relaxed in my pressurized transcontinental jet cruiser, content, like everyone else, to a life making shit sandwiches, the essential elements of which are bull and bread.

2. A bunch of talented old guys perform *The Three-Euro Opera*

I went downtown to meet Ian when Fugazi was in town. Always good to see him and touch base; and Fugazi is one of the few hardcore bands I can still abide. We chatted a little before the show; he mentioned that this gig was the last they were playing with the Ex, then dashed.

I didn't quite catch it at first. He said it like I'd know who the Ex were, but it didn't really ring. I'm so out of it and lame I thought he said X, who I do remember. I sorted through it, ended up drawing a blank, went home and ate, and picked up Tonia and went back in time to see the show start.

It was at DV8, an all-ages show, which is unusual in Seattle. Got to hand it to Fugazi: not only do they play an all-ages show in a town that outlaws them, but they make it a benefit for the local group opposing the Victorian regulations forbidding all-ages shows.

I hadn't been to an all-ages show in two or three years. They

haven't changed in twenty: pimples and dirty jeans and attitude covering up a lot of confusion. Not as much leather as in the old days, and more corporate logos on the clothes. Otherwise, same as it ever was. One new thing: the whole scene was absolutely, positively boring.

Sleater-Kinney played first. My friend Jim likes them, so I was pleased to see them for the first time. Okay, I guess. Kinda screechy. Good singer. They definitely need a bass player live. Mostly, though, I kept trying to figure out who the hell the Ex were, and where I had heard that name before. By the end of Sleater-Kinney's set I'd figured it out: I'd seen the records in Holland, on tour. Aziz and the NRA guys mentioned them: they

VIC BOND

were an old-school Dutch hardcore band, anarchists and commies out of the Amsterdam squats who'd been playing for over twenty years. I'm old; it took me a while, but I remembered.

And then the Ex came onstage and completely floored me.

Without a doubt, they were the best band I have seen in a decade, at least since Leatherface blew AoF offstage in Linz. Maybe it's the fact that I'd heard of them but never heard them, and seen the records but never listened to them. I should have; you probably have known about them for years. But the undeniable fact is that the Ex are the best band playing music right now. They are frighteningly tight and unafraid to let the songs hang out, fall down, and stumble around. They deconstruct and reconstruct sound effortlessly. They stuck rods in their guitars, slapped floor brushes on their fretboards, clanged pans like castanets. The music is adventurous and the lyrics are smart and funny and cool. They experiment, they play it straight, and they never, ever, allow their music to fall into an obvious groove. They are unexpected and exciting and unafraid and everything that is inspiring in punk and hardcore.

And they're kind of tough for Americans to get hold of. They played with such an open, friendly relish--it was hard music, but it didn't have that bullshit swagger, the macho posturing, or the I'm-so-profound-art-student ennui. To me, they were right out of the squats. They reminded me of all the great things at the Steffi or the Flora, or the Fabrik, the best European squats, with a sense of community that you simply do not find in the United States. Maybe it's the DIY ideal, the bund tradition, or socialism or working class solidarity, but whatever it is the Ex have it. They are what punk used to be, and at the same time more vital and original than 99% of what passes for punk today. If Bertolt Brecht were in a hardcore band, he'd be in the Ex. They are awesome.

The audience thought so, too. Not too many people knew who the Ex were when they took the stage, but when they left the applause was terrific. Good thing Fugazi were their usual fantastic selves, since the Ex are a damn hard act to follow.



3. All the leftists ever do is gripe and complain.

Times were good in the Fifties, too. Everybody knew it; everyone agreed. Stocks grew conservatively, but they grew; the government underwrote homebuyers; unions guaranteed high wages for anyone who shut up and worked.

Herbert Marcuse faced the complacency and consensus of his time in the only honest fashion available to an intellectual: he completely rethought every supposition he held. The few Marxists who dared rear their heads in his day fumed and railed against the suburban tract housing, televisions, dishwashers and rock 'n' roll music that the American masses traded their political activism and class consciousness for. People living the good life weren't all that interested in making revolutions. "The people," Marcuse noted, "recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment." There was no point in arguing that socialism would bring people a better material existence--clearly capitalism had done a good job of that. Instead, analysts and critics dedicated to widening the scope of human freedom needed to concentrate on what material prosperity was doing to the character of human thought and creativity: deadening it, reducing it to the banal. Marcuse argued that technical thinking and engineering, having reduced the world to its basal, useful material components, would soon do the same thing to the

irrational, unorganized material of human dreams and desires. Where once artists had sublimated their repressed desires into the creation of liberating art (which had the potential to destabilize the social order), modern advertisers utilized what Marcuse termed "repressive desublimation"--seemingly exciting, liberating artistic experiences that ultimately reinforced the status quo by appealing to repressed desire without fulfilling it.

The only way to oppose this state of affairs was through what Marcuse termed "The Great Refusal", an obstinate, stubborn refusal to go along with the way things are. Such a refusal, by art, or social protest, or simple cession from the way things work, would be inevitably seen by supporters of the status quo as irrational, illogical, or insane. "The intellectual and emotional refusal...to go along," he remarked in *One Dimensional Man* (1964), "appears neurotic and impotent." But in an age when "peacekeeping" was the function of missiles capable of abolishing all life, Marcuse saw refusal to go along as less dangerous then acceding to the status quo and "the rational character of its irrationality."

Millions of young people, cannon fodder for wars hot and cold, agreed. *One Dimensional Man* became a political referent and a cul-

tural touchstone for the turmoil of the 1960s. And at the same time, in garages throughout the United States, punk rock was born.

4. My favorite quote from Emerson is "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

I like it mostly because of the word "hobgoblin" which calls to mind trolls and small vicious things--the types of people who never understand you in the first place. To be perfectly honest, however, I like the quote because it's an easy out: I can completely contradict myself and then weasel out of it by quoting this old dead white guy and sounding witty (although maybe it doesn't work in a punk rock rag). So here goes:

Last issue I declared in my infinite wisdom that punk rock was absolutely and irrevocably dead and that all you guys and girls with safety pins stuck in your ears or lapels were way lame. Well you still are lame, and were lame in 1983 and 1988, and it was great to get a rise out of Jeff and have him solemnly decree that he "disagreed" with my "dismissive" attitude towards today's punk. But you modern Oi boys and Emo girls are no cooler than those Gap-clad teenyboppers from the suburbs who've discovered the Mighty, Mighty Bosstones and this "new" music called "ska." So let me reiterate: punk today blows chunks. It is to modern music what Fleetwood Mac was to music in 1979, and you're just fooling yourself if you think otherwise. Punk is dead.

Except for the Ex.

Except for Fugazi, and for a terrific Japanese punk band I heard in Tokyo called New Cinema. Well, the fact of the matter is that I'm discovering new bands all the time that still have something, so, okay, maybe I can't make WHOLESALE, BLANKET statements like "punk sucks." But maybe I do have a point.

5. Why it is damn hard, under most circumstances, to join a good punk-rock band.

Here's the problem, and it gets us back to Marcuse. By 1977, when the London wave of punk hit, the great refusals and cultural insurrections of the hippies and yippies had turned into cultural farce, into a vacant, anesthetized, lap-dog liberal gestures about "personal freedom," and "space" and "using the Force." It was tired, and any pretense that it might have had about changing the organization of society, or mode of production, or level of freedom, was cant and obscurantism (the same problem academia has in the 80s and 90s). And Marcuse was both, to some extent, the cause and the cure of the problem. Because intellectuals like him postulated a revolution if people followed their inner directives and sexual desires, and so the hippies

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turned on, tuned in, and dropped out, and eventually became hippie capitalists and gonzo journalists and survivalists. And the fundamental hope-destroying character of society changed not one whit. Which Marcuse had known all along, and which, in *One Dimensional Man*, he had identified as the chief characteristic of modern capitalism: its ability to contain social change through meaningless but seemingly oppositional cultural production.

Technical progress, extended to the whole system of domination and coordination, creates forms of life (and power) which appear to reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination. Contemporary society seems to be capable of containing social change--qualitative change which would establish essentially different institutions, a new direction of the productive process, new modes of human existence.

The appearance of change without change; a cultural revolution without a political equivalent--these are the consequences of the 1960s, and the legacy for our time, and (if you were to be perfectly honest) the end result of all the fury we called punk in 1981. Nothing really changed. Believe me: I saw the Sex Pistols in 1997 on their "cash-in" tour and they were completely irrelevant, and I realized that, judged by results, they were irrelevant in 1977. Because it is still fundamentally that same world, viciousness and stupidity intact. Except that a couple of punk bands had a good ride on the majors and are now shooting heroin in New Orleans and blowing what is left of their royalties.

Which gets us back to the Ex and Fugazi. I was in the basement of the Roseland Ballroom in New York in 1994 when Ahmet Ertegun came down and told Ian that he, personally, was going to sign Fugazi

VICBONDI

to Atlantic. Ian shook his head and Ahmet's bodyguards ushered us out, and (though Ian is far too modest to admit this) you know they offered Fugazi millions. And Fugazi turned them down. It's fantastic. It's a great refusal, against all common sense.

And for 20 years the Ex have run their own show and their own politics, and have refused to compromise their music or their message. That's impressive. Neither band has done this for one or two years, tapping their parent's trust fund every time the going gets rough. They live the refusal. And in a world like ours, where even "opposition" is acknowledged, internalized and defanged, the low-key, modest but complete refusal to become part of the established order is impressive. They are outside the apparatus of compromise. They are part of a broader movement. Even as the world drops into a new millennia of willful ignorance and exploitation and "just going along," some people are opting out and doing it their own way--more often than not, the right way.

What does that have to do with punk? Put it this way: Rage Against the Machine is a great band, and (musically) hardcore. Fugazi and the Ex are great bands and admirable.

There's a world of difference there, being good and being good enough for punk. ⊕

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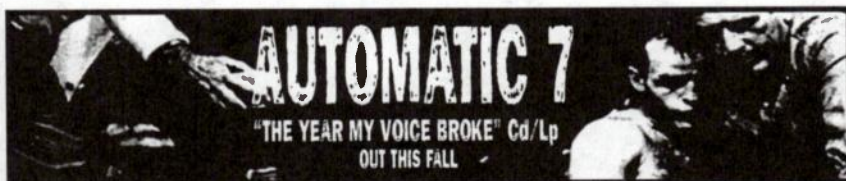
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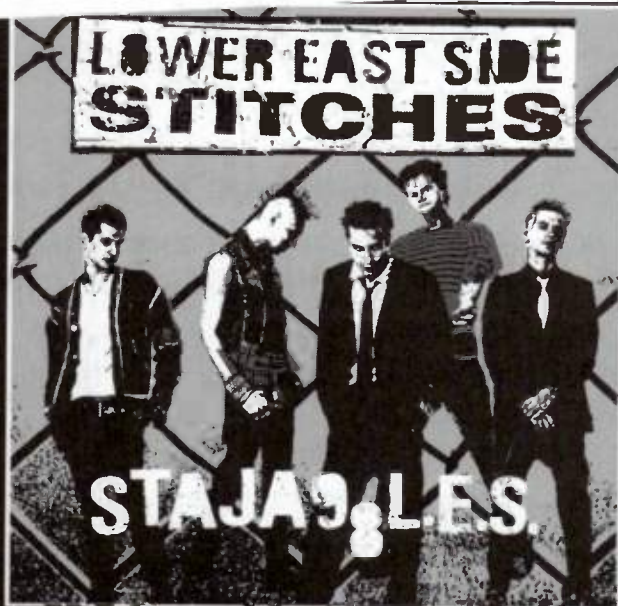
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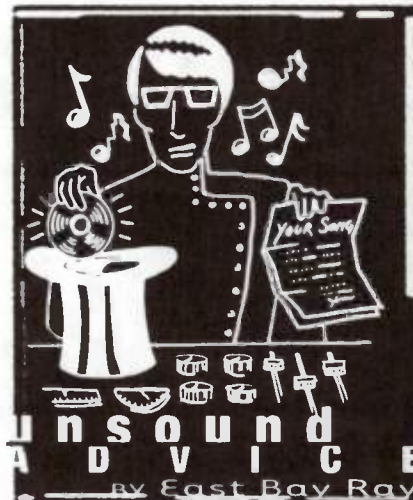
I've been asked the question, "do you need to 'cut' a master for digital recordings?" The word "cutting" comes from cutting a blank lacquer disk to make a master record from which vinyl records are manufactured, which was the main procedure back in the day when I started making records. This brings me to a slight digression. In a letter to BAM last December, a certain Carey Wilson wrote that the members of Dead Kennedys were "rotting corpses...they've all been dead for years." Geez folks, think about that attitude! It seems that it is still okay in the rock and roll world to make fun of older musicians, but I don't see what makes this "hipper" than, say, making cracks about Jews in 1930's Germany. I guess some people will always think prejudice and hate are cool. Nice uniform, though. Enough of the digression.

Before the process of cutting a vinyl record, the songs are assembled into a tape in the sequence of their final playing order along with the pauses between them; this is called sequencing, go figure. At the mastering facility, equalization (EQ), compression and level adjustments are made to fit the music physically onto the lacquer disk and to make the different tracks flow together cohesively.

These various processes can also be used to fine tune the final mixes and to make them sound better on a variety of stereo systems. This is the last step where artistic changes can still be made to the sound. For example, if a few of the tracks need the bass brought out, the bass on just those tracks can be given an extra boost. Likewise, the presence and highs can be adjusted. An experienced mastering engineer can boost or cut EQ without affecting too much of the rest of the track, if the mix isn't too horrible to begin with. A lot of times it's just better to remix the track. It's hard to polish a

turd, but it is amazing how many improvements can be made with some subtle adjustments during mastering. Keep in mind that going overboard on processing can make the record sound over-hyped—it sounds good on the first few listens but then gets fatiguing and boring because the nuances have been lost. It's a delicate balance. Good mastering takes years of experience, since lots of psycho-acoustics are involved. However, mastered projects can always sound better than the original tape.

A CD also needs to be mastered; there are technical requirements for fitting as much sound as possible onto the disk (as with vinyl records). CDs need to function on CD players at all levels of quality. In my opinion, CDs retain more high end and hence do not need to be as bright as a vinyl master, where-



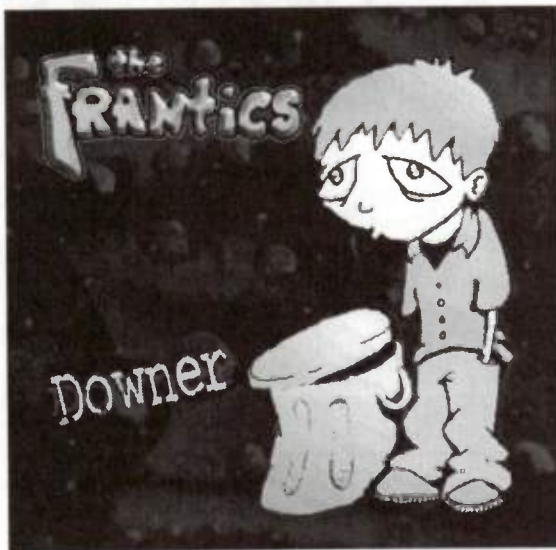
as vinyl tends to be bassier, so CDs need more in the low end. All the treatments discussed above can be applied when mastering a CD. Professional mastering labs play the most important part in these subtle adjustments, as they offer experienced set of ears. These labs additionally have very high quality analog-to-digital converters and huge computers and programs so that nothing is lost during the processing. However, they can cost several hundred dollars an hour.

Nowadays, these mastering processes are available to the low budget DIY musician if there is someone around that has mastering experience and a home computer with digital audio hardware and software. Glass masters for CD manufacturing can be made from a CD-R (CD-Recordable) "burned" at home, if it complies with what is called Red Book specifications. Even a DAT (digital audio tape) master can be put together, from which one can duplicate demo cassettes. Even if one is on a budget, mastering is now available to more musicians and is well worth the small investment because of the major improvement in sound that can be made by people who know what they are doing. Although this can be done at home, I wouldn't try it. If you don't have the experience, find someone who does, but don't let it bug you if that person happens to be a little older than you. ☺

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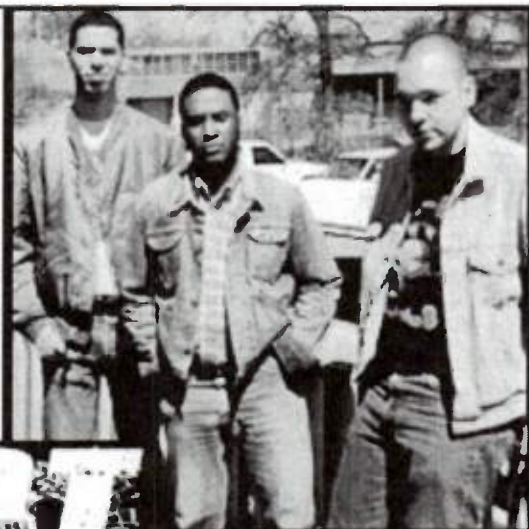
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TWELVE REASONS WHY HUMAN RIGHTS DON'T MATTER

Human rights. Do they matter? Are they *really* important? Everyone seems to have a strong opinion on the subject, believing that their own views are correct. Now is the time that we must come to some very obvious conclusions about this sometimes difficult and confusing issue.

The topic of human rights has become an issue of much debate in the United States despite the fact that people don't really deserve any rights at all. If people accepted responsibility for their own lives and their own actions, they wouldn't be so concerned about human rights legislation and organizations. Unfortunately there are a great many people in the world who can neither function adequately nor reason for themselves.

Consider the following facts:

1. Laws passed to protect human rights only end up protecting inferior fuck ups who can't get their act together in the first place because they are stupid and/or lazy.

Trying to help these kinds of people is like trying to offer assistance to a burglar who is attempting to break into your home. Remember...a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. At this point, the chain that stretches across our country is becoming dangerously weak and fragile.

2. The more we protect weak people, the more of them there will be.

This is something that many people forget as they attempt to "do the right thing" or "to help all those poor, unfortunate souls." If we continue offering our support to individuals who can't cut it in the real world, they will continue to thrive and multiply. Imagine a world filled with even more weaklings than we already have. It's already impossible to come across good workers or find anyone who can answer even the simplest of questions. By helping these people, we are actually helping to perpetuate the incompetence and stupidity that is already so rampant in our society.

3. Consider the kind of people who are so vocal and supportive of human rights.

These are the kind of people you wouldn't even want to speak to at a party. If *they're* the ones making such a big stink about human rights, doesn't that *tell* you something?

4. Scientifically speaking, it makes sense to kill off the things that are unhealthy for mankind instead of nurturing them.

Everyone is supportive of scientists developing ways to kill off viruses and infections that have the potential to harm us, yet these same individuals refuse to follow the same line of reasoning as it refers to our enemies. The media reinforces concepts like "every life matters" and "everyone is equal"...but when you actually consider these issue it becomes obvious that neither of them contain even an ounce of truth.

5. Not once in the Bible does God tell us that hard working, responsible, decent people should be responsible for retards who can't carry their own weight.

God doesn't think human rights are important. If he did, he would have never created man in the first place. Hundreds of years

ago, God warned us of the dangers of tolerance. By being tolerant, we allow sin to take hold of minds and our world. This is a very dangerous thing.

6. Purity is goodness, and goodness is purity.

If you are cooking a savory stew, would you want to throw dirt and bugs into it? Of course you wouldn't. A pure society is one that will not allow waste, ugliness and sin to flow through its veins. Once these ingredients have been allowed into the stew, they can never be removed.

7. Anything that helps small-breasted lesbians with buzz-cuts is a bad thing.

Why do you think lesbians are always shouting about human rights? Do you think that it might be because they *know* they are doomed, and they're trying to prevent their



inevitable damnation? The progressive freaks are the ones who are usually obsessed with power, because in reality they have none.

8. Anything that is dirty and bad should be done away with.

We wipe our bottoms after we go to the bathroom for a reason, and that reason is that we don't want to spread disease and we don't want our odor to offend others. Why then should we not also want to wipe the bad elements from society's bottom?

9. People who beg for acceptance and demand laws for protection are people who deserve to die.

Whine, whine, whine. Beg, Beg Beg. Gimme, gimme, gimme. If a dog begs, the dog should be kicked. If a wife whines, the husband must beat her. Human rights activists are the whiniest beggars in the world, so their actions should be rewarded with severe and violent punishment.

10. Life isn't fair.

Some people may argue that it just isn't fair that world is filled with so many unfortunate individuals. They are partially correct. Life *isn't* fair...but then, it never *has* been and *never* was meant to be.

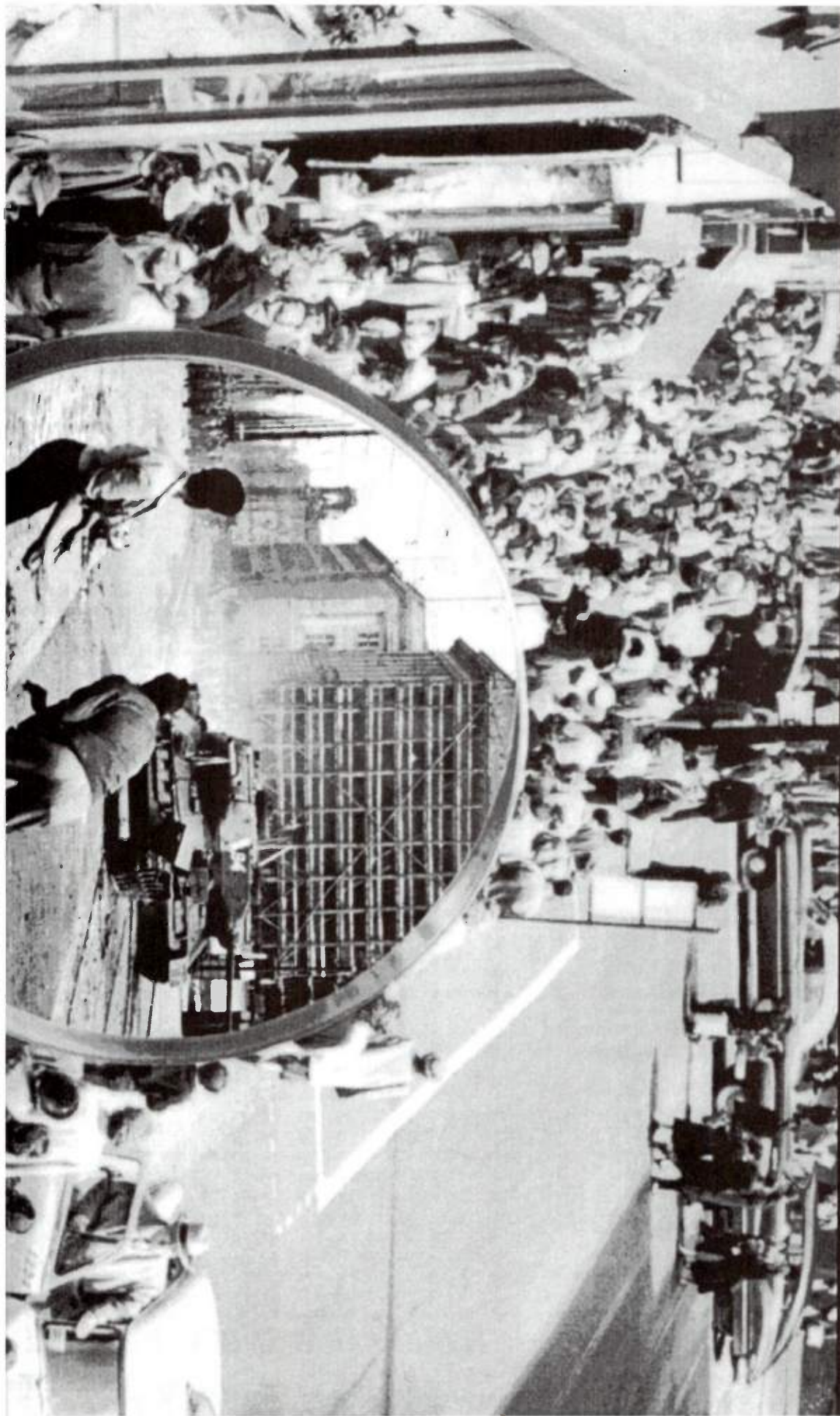
11. Legal protection is as important as sexual protection.

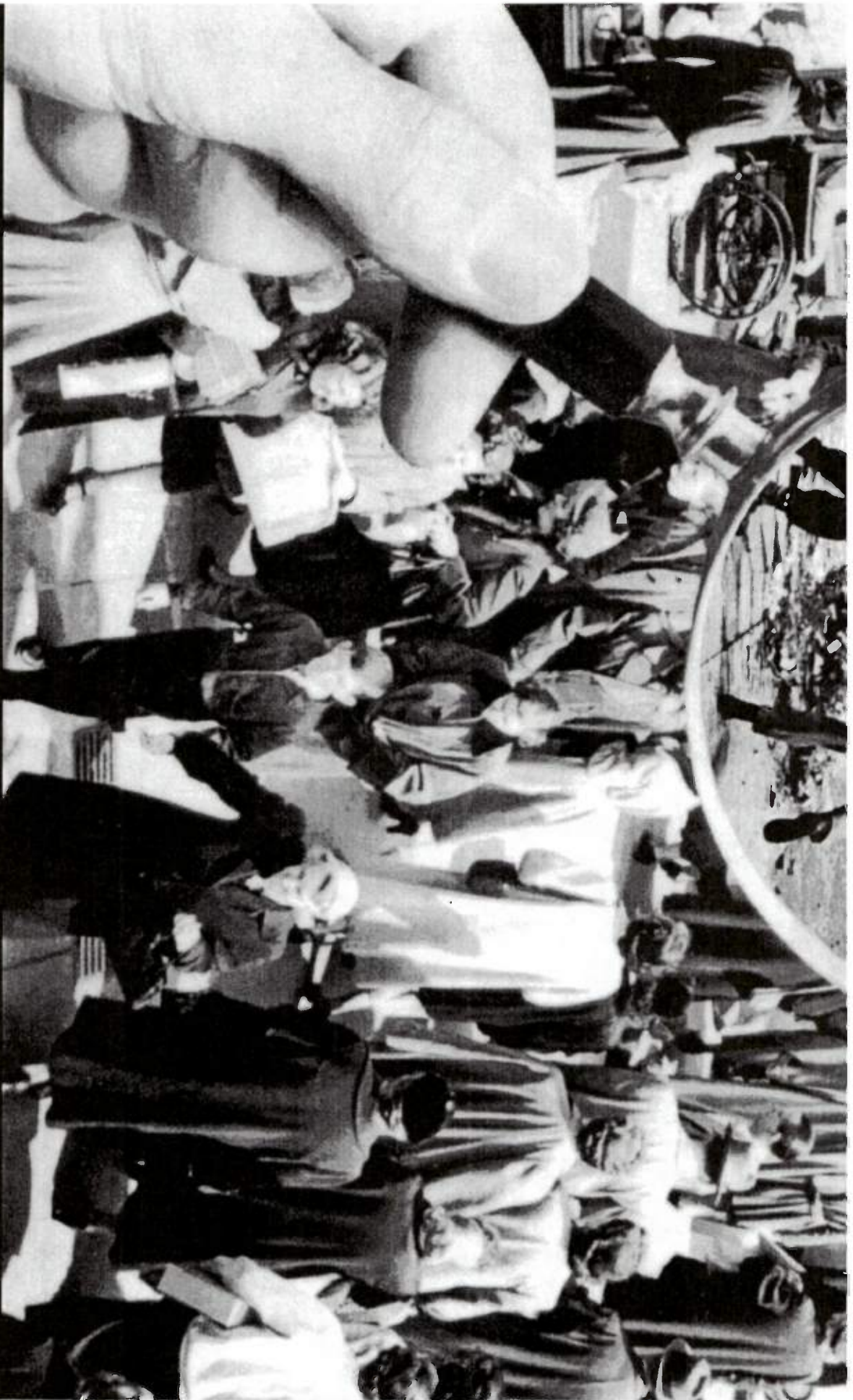
Obviously, neither form of protection is important. The only people who hire lawyers and use condoms are people who are mentally and physically deficient.

12. The more we hate, the prettier the world is and the better people we become.

Hatred is an absolute, like water in a stream, or fire in a drum. The way to make our lives better is to punish other individuals and worsen their already pathetic situation. Lifting oneself up from the reigns can be easily achieved by simply pushing unfortunate losers down into the pit that they have dug for themselves. Human rights. Who needs 'em? ⊕

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c) DICTATORS "Bloodbrothers" CD reissue

Jeff Bale

1. BLACK HALOS - LP/CD
2. BOYS - "Alternative Chartbusters" CD
3. BRIDES - "Bad Attitude" 45
4. DEAD MAN'S CHOIR - "What's Wrong..." EP
5. FLESHTONES - "More Than Skin Deep" LP/CD
6. MOLOKO MEN - "Drunk and Poor" LP
7. MURDER CITY WRECKS - "Get Wrecked" CD
8. ROCK N ROLL STORMTROOPERS - "I'm a Rebel" EP
9. V/A - "Bored Teenagers" LP
10. V/A - "Dutch Beat Explosion" CD

Ian Randumb

1. PRESSURE POINT "Cross To Bear" LP
2. DUCKY BOYS "Live From The Banks Of The River Charles" EP
3. OXYMORON "Westworld" EP
4. DROPKICK MURPHYS "The Gang's All Here" LP
5. BODIES "S/T" LP
6. AVENGERS "Died For Your Sins" LP
7. MONSULA "Sanitized" LP
8. R.A.F.R. comp. "Vol. 2" LP
9. FISHING WITH JOHN "Series" VIDEO
10. FROGS "My Daughter The Broad" LP

Jami Wolf

1. Mullens "Reggie" ep
2. Rock-N-Roll Stormtroopers "I'M A Rebel" 7"
3. Raydios "Original Demo Recordings"
4. Destructo Rock "A Tribute To Antiseen" CD
5. The Chosen Few "A Root and A Beer" CD
6. King Brothers LIVE @ Tip Top
7. Killed By Epitaph Dbl LP/ Killed By Death #18
8. Pow City! "Fabulous Shakers Soul Party" (v/a)LP
9. Bellrays "Let It Blast"
10. REDUCERS SF "Backing The Long SHOT" LP

Tina Lucchesi

IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER. THIS IS AT THEE MOMENT!

1. Raydios LP AND 7"
2. Supersnazz "Diode City" LP
3. Banana Erectors - LP/CD
4. Hot Dogs Rock n Roll Army LP
5. Fevers 4 SONG EP
6. Suicide Kings "Teenage Disaster" LP
7. Chesterfield Kings/ Lyres SPLIT 7"
8. Boys EVERYTHING THEY COULD POSSIBLY DO!!
9. ? Mark and the Mysterians — Live and the Norton LP
10. The Real Kids — Everything, plus live in SF Nov., '98

Brett Mathews

1. ALL "ALL"
2. Catheters "The Kids Know How To Rock"
3. Action Swingers
4. Bodies
5. Black Halos
6. All Systems Go
7. Diesel Boy "Sofa King Cool"
8. Hot Water Music/Leatherface split CD
9. Turbonegro "Apocalypse Dudes"
10. Watching Ruyter from NASHVILLE PUSSY play AC/DC covers on her Gibson SG.

Jermy Cool

1. Lillingtons "Death By Television"
2. The Bodies CD & Live
3. Nashville Pussy Live
4. Kid Dynamite CD
5. The Gamits "This Is My Boomstick" CDEP
6. Beltones "Naming My Bullets" 7"
7. U.S. Bombs 7"
8. Teen Idols "Pucker Up"
9. Scared Of Chaka Live (With an open bar!)
10. Weezer S/T

Zabet's Top Ten

1. Dictators live
2. Richmond Sluts live/"Rock-N-Roll Fantasy" 45
3. Black Halos LP
4. Feeders "Ever Feel Like Killing Your Boss" CD
5. No Talents "Want Some More" CD
6. Roky Erickson "Never Say Goodbye" CD
7. Swell Maps "International Rescue" CD
8. Charlie Feathers "Sun Demo" 45s (all)
9. Intrepid A.A.F. - live at Gilman
10. Bobbyteens video/ Dirty Burds "Gotta Go" EP

Jimi's Top Ten

1. Oly
2. Hamm's
3. Pabst Blue Ribbon
4. Zillionares
5. Loli and the Chones
6. Secret Hate
7. Discount
8. Banana Erectors
9. Zine Guide #2
10. Tickle Me Emo "My eyes, my pain, my backpack" 7

Dave's Top Ten

1. Jawbreaker "24 Hour Revenge Therapy"
2. The Clash s/t
3. The Clash "Give 'Em Enough Rope"
4. The Clash "London Calling"
5. Common Rider "Last Wave Rockers"
5. Leatherface/Hot Water Music split CD
7. Tickle Me Emo "Springtime means i have no friends" EP
- Negative 8. Missing Hot Water Music, Leatherface and Discount to work on this fucking magazine
9. Moral Crux reissues
10. The Onion's "Our Dumb Century" book

**Back in the garage
with our bullshit
detectors:**

Ross Fisher (RF)
Jade Puget (JP)
Jeff Dahl (JD)
Tina Lucchesi (TL)
Greg Lowery (GL)
Jeremy Cool (Jer)
Brett Mathews (BAM)
Alan Wright (AW)
Dave Johnson (DGJ)
Jami Wolf (JW)
Jimi Cheetah (JC)
Jeff Bale (JB)
Ian Randumb (IR)
Ramsey Kanaan (RK)

SHIT LIST

ALIEN BLOOD TRANSFUSION

"The Misadventures of Candy Mint" 7" EP

The second release from these hi-energy bloodsucking freaks. Good buzzsaw guitars and tight music, but ultimately the songs themselves don't do much for me. This band has potential if the songwriting progresses in the right direction. (JC)



(ACME/PO Box 441/DRACUT, MA 01826)

ANGEL ROT

"Unlistenable Hymns of Indulgent Damage" CD

Evil dirge music. Super heavy metal. Not a style I am all that interested in, but they seem to do a good job of it. It's full of scary shit that would probably give Satan himself nightmares, so you can imagine what it will do for hordes of headbangers. (JC)



(MAN'S RUIN/610 22ND STREET/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107)

ANGRY SAMOANS

"The 90's Suck and So Do You" CD

If you're expecting this to be an intense blast of old-style SAMOANS punk, you're almost guaranteed to be disappointed. What it really is is a goofy METAL MIKE record in the vein of his earlier releases, which isn't a bad thing at all. This platter is filled with satirical garage punk offerings with good hooks, not to mention Mike's inimitable vocal stylings and gui-



tar playing. I like it a lot, but it's not really the SAMOANS. (JB)

(BAD TRIP/KO TRIPLE X/PO Box 862629/LOS ANGELES, CA 90086)

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE

"Live So What" CD

Man, listening to this CD is like watching reruns of Saturday morning cartoons. It's entertaining for about seven minutes until the commercial break, then



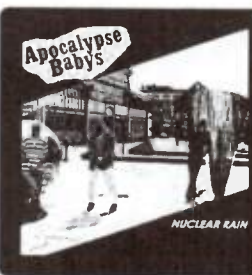
you realize that you've got better things to do than get off on kitsch. For whatever reason, the ANWL assumed that their initial success as a punk rock novelty act was enough justification to continue playing music as a serious career-type band. Although I can't tell exactly when this CD was recorded, and there are plenty of old standards on it, the novelty of their "offensiveness" has worn off. The joke keeps goin', but it's lost its fuckin' punch. (RF)

(CLEOPATRA/13428 MAXELLA AVENUE #251/MARINA DEL RAY, CA 90292)

APOCALYPSE BABYS

"Nuclear Rain" 7" EP

This is amazing pop rock, stuck somewhere in the wonderful void between MORAL CRUX and STIV BATORS. Both sides smoke. It's limited to 500 copies, so get off your asses and go find this. (BAM)



(THERAPEUTIC/JINO PO Box 534/NEW ORLEANS, LA 70148)

ART ATTACKS

"Outrage and Horror" CD

A collection of ditties by one of the first British "funnpunk" groups (along with the SNIVEL-

LING SHITS). What differentiated them from other exemplars of this musical subgenre like the NOT SENSIBLES, the SHAPES, the TV PERSONALITIES, and the DESPERATE BICYCLES was their harder-edged guitars and heavier overall sound, which is especially displayed on the "Punk Rock Stars" single. The ART ATTACKS didn't record too many songs—hence the multiple versions included here—but at their best they produced outstanding smarty-pants punk in the sharp-witted British tradition (as in "I Am a Dalek", "Arabs in 'Arrads", and "[Do the] Big Baby"). Great fun. (JB)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

ATARIS

"Look Forward to Failure" CD

Just what the world doesn't need any more of—generic professional pop punk with sappy lyrics. Pop punk doesn't have to be this insipid, but nowadays it



almost always is. If you like slick production, loud guitars, and melodic music that could have been spewed out by scores of currently interchangeable bands, this could be for you. As for me, I'm really looking forward—probably vainly—to their failure. (JB)

(FAT/PO Box 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

AUTOMATICS/STINKING POLECATS

split 7"

The AUTOMATICS (U.S.A.) play short, spastic punk that gives you the most rock for your dork dollar. Alas, the STINKING POLECATS fall into the darkest of ruts, being nth-generation boring generic pop punk a la SCREECHING WEASEL or the QUEERS. (JC)



(SAUCER REX/NIA 6. DALLO CHIESA 6K/27058 VOGHERA (PV)/ITALY)

BANANA ERECTORS

"Banana Erectors" double CD

This CD is a "banana erector" for me! I loved it, although I'm practically in a sugar coma after listening to it twice in a row. There's definitely a huge RAMONES influence apparent here, and a couple of tracks stray a little into the old DICKIES sound. All are solid straight ahead pogo-pop-punk, Japanese style, with a darling woman singer. They even manage to rock out what one would think to be unrockable territory by doing covers of the PARTRIDGE FAMILY and HERMAN'S HERMITS. (JC)

(SYMPATHY/4450 CALIFORNIA PLACE #303/LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

BARBARELLAS

"Queen of the Galaxy" CD

A quintet of Norwegian babes who've adopted the sexy spaceage chic made famous by Jane Fonda in the movie of the same name. "Teenage Werewolf" is a fabulous slice of uptempo, hook-laden girlpop with loud guitars and a Farfisa organ, "Happy Days" is a rockin' blast in the (late, great) PANDORAS vein, and "Girlie Head" is slower and moodier but no less appealing. The other tracks aren't as noteworthy, and occasionally slip into wimpier BANGLES territory (as on "I Told You Not to Cry") or quirky B52's stylings (as on "Interstellar"), but overall this is sparkling 60's-inspired pop. (JB)

(SYMPATHY/4450 CALIFORNIA PLACE #303/LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

BELL RAYS

"Let it Blast" CD

This is definitely the best CD of all the stuff I've received to review this time around. The BELL

RAYS sound like they could have been from Detroit, circa 1972. Imagine the MC5 with TINA TURNER on vocals—extremely soulful, dirty vocals backed by dissonant but not chaotic rock 'n' roll. This is completely refreshing and totally different from anything I have heard recently, and the powerful vocals make this band stand out ahead of the pack. Highly recommended. (JW)

(J)

BELTONES

"On Deaf Ears" CD

Imagine STIFF LITTLE FINGERS with Ian Stuart on vocals and you have the BELTONES. At this point, if you're familiar with TKO Records, you know what to expect: snotty street punk rock in the vein of the CLASH, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, MENACE, and possibly COCK SPARRER. The BELTONES continue this tradition proudly, but although the quality is definitely there, originality may be lacking. Good, but nothing that I haven't heard before. (JW)

(TKO/104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

BIG STAR

"Nobody Can Dance" CD

Archival recordings, unreleased until now, of the legendary 70s powerpoppers. The first eight songs are studio rehearsals with a less "produced" sound than the album recordings; the last six are live from '74, and include versions of four of the rehearsal songs, plus a slowed-down version of "The Letter." Has anyone written pop songs as good as "September Girls" and "In The Street" in the last

REVIEWS

few years? I think not. (AW)

(NORTON/BOX 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)

BIG STAR

"September Girls/The Letter" 7"

One of those bands that influenced a bunch of bands like the REPLACEMENTS, but nonetheless not a band I care much for. "September Girls" is probably their best song, whereas "The Letter" is a boring, sloppy live track. (JC)

(NORTON/PO BOX 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)

BLACK HALOS

"Shooting Star" CD

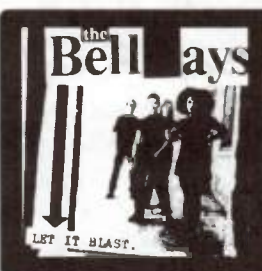
The BLACK HALOS are the missing link between the DEAD BOYS and the ROLLING STONES, and maybe also the band that will finally answer the DIC-TATORS' plea to save rock 'n' roll. Their great debut long-player has everything an inveterate rocker could possibly want—attitude and style, roaring double guitars, a whumping drum sound, a trashy aesthetic, and snarling, mannered vocals. But it also features irresistibly addictive songs that you can't get out of your head, and it's this quality that may wean the sheeplike masses away from rap, neo-soul, pretentious divas, and electronica and back to real r'n'r. Let's hope so. (JB)

(DIE YOUNG STAY PRETTY/1932 FIRST AVENUE #1103/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

BLACKS

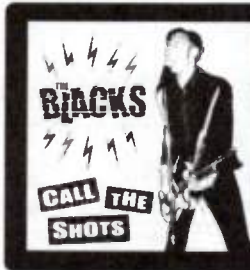
"Call The Shots" 7" EP

Man, these guys aren't too subtle about their MOBLIVIAN fixation. Lo-fi, trashed out, 1-4-5 rock 'n' roll. Not too shabby for a Euro-clone band,



SHITLIST

immersion in the neo-Memphis double 'R' sound takes away from the end product. (RF)



(BIG NECK/PO Box 8144/RESTON, VA 20195)

BLADDER BLADDER BLADDER "No Go Girl" 7" EP

Catchy punk rock that's not nearly as raunchy or heavy as the Pelado norm. The songs are good and the lyrics are clever, but this EP is too poppy for my taste despite its garagy production. The guitar sound should be a lot crunchier. Check out the hilarious "dos and don'ts" punk etiquette list on the back cover. (JB)



(PELADO/521 W. WILSON #B202/COSTA MESA, CA 92627)

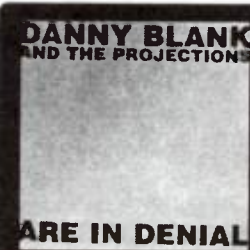
DANNY BLANK & THE PROJECTIONS

"...Are in Denial" CD

An 8-track CD by a new British punk outfit. It contains a potpourri of slightly quirky punk with some metal stylings (as in "Obscure Power" and "Fuck Tibet").

What's unique is that the lyrics seem to be satirical in that quasi-funnypunk way, whereas the music is somewhat heavier than one might expect. They sometimes reminds me of the DAY-GLOW ABORTIONS, and "I Wanna Work in the Media" and "An Obsession with Outer Space is a Sign of Mental Weakness" are great songs. (JB)

(EXILE/PO Box 24719/LONDON SE13 5WS/ENGLAND)



BLAZING HALEY ["Self titled"] CD

Rockabilly, cock-rably, schmock-ably in a REV-EREND HORTON HEAT, STRAY CATS, generic sorta way. I'm bored to tears with all of these new rockabilly schmockabilly bands these days. Yes, these guys play their guitars correctly and are probably really liked by some people, I guess. But this sound and style has been done over and over and over again. It's a big yawn in my book!! (TL)



(COOLER, NO ADDRESS)

BODIES "White Trash" LP/CD

Pretty much from beginning to end, Sonoma's BODIES deliver an LP's worth of great, catchy streetpunk. Despite the somewhat jock-ish and pseudo-political aspects of this band, they serve the shit up hot and steamy, and let me tell ya, it's dinner time. At times they are reminiscent of the "Cough Cool"-era MISFITS, which is a damn good thing. The best songs on this gem are "Down To The Beach", "Pack Your Bags", and "Blue Skies", but there are very few losers on this record. Absolutely worth your lunch money, and maybe even your beer money. (JW)

(TKO/104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)



BOILING MAN "I'd Watch You Die" 7" EP

Angst-ridden hardcore that reminds me of a cross between ECONOCHRIST and the PIST. BOILING MAN has a good singer with really strong lyrics and vocal stylings. He can scream when he has to, but



doesn't only rely on that to get his point across. (JC)

(ICE/PO Box 422965/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142)

BOOT PARTY "Bricks to Concrete" CD

Although it's hard to like the thuggish aspect of this band's name and baseball bat logo, or to take their paeans to working class solidarity and revolt too seriously, there's no denying that they've kicked out some terrific Oi songs on this LP. "Working Class Revolt", "Three Strikes", and "The Suss" are bona fide fist-pumping anthems, but most of the other tracks are less memorable. A good band that has yet to achieve its full potential. (JB)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO Box 40104/ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)



BOOZERS "Klepto-Dismal" CD

First off, there are 31 songs on this CD, so there is no way to possibly pay careful attention to even half of it. Musically, these guys play very quick, lo-fi, punchy punk rock, with extremely fried guitar sounds and rude vocals. But again, I've heard it all before. (JW)

(SEEDY/PO Box 13306/SAN ANTONIO, TX 78213)



BOYS "Alternative Chartbusters" CD

What really needs to be said about the mighty BOYS and their second LP? For those who aren't in the know, let's just say that



this is the way pop punk was meant to sound. Though not as fast and punky as their great debut, this record contains the heartbreakingly romantic "Brickfield Nights", with its thumping drum beat, hard-nosed guitar, and unforgettable chorus, not to mention a stellar cast of supporting tracks (including "U.S.I.", "Do the Contract Hustle", "Classified Suzie", "T.C.P.", "Backstage Pass", etc.) and some equally fine bonus songs (including a YOBs Christmas ditty). A must-have record. (JB)

(CAPTAIN Oi/

BROKEN/BOILING MAN

"They Won't Cure Cancer" 7" EP

I really like the cover, which has a rat saying "I'd rather eat shit and live in the sewer than work". I'm sure to think about that the next time I get panhandled.



Anyhow, BOILING MAN would be the proverbial "crusty" punk's li'l wet dream, since they play borderline hardcore with anti-establishment vocals and lots of valid complaining. But there's not much doing, which kind of detracts from the issue at hand. BROKEN provide more of the same, except that their hardcore isn't borderline. (JW)

(RIPPED MY FLESH, NO ADDRESS)

BURDENS

"Working Class Joke" CD

Heavy yet melodic thud punk from Geyserville CA (where?). The BURDENS have a nice muscular sound, write very hummable mid-tempo songs, feature good lead vocals, and generally rock pretty hard. Not earth-shattering, but damn fun to sing along to. (JB)

THE
BURDENS

WORKING CLASS JOKE

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

BURNOUTS

"Porno Queen" 7" EP

A nice raging slab of catchy punk rock in the U.S. BOMBS vein. Pelado keeps churning out these cheapo-looking records that just totally rock. The BURNOUTS are a cool-looking bunch, too. (JC)



(PELADO/521 W. WILSON #B202/COSTA MESA, CA 92627)

BY A THREAD

"The Last of the Daydreams" LP/CD

Angst-ridden and anguished Vancouver emo which is not for the emotionally unstable. Musically they are most closely akin to a minor chord "Dear You"-era JAWBREAKER, whereas the singer follows similar melodic lines as SAMIAM. Sometimes the vocals take on a weird SCORPIONESque quality, but otherwise this is first rate. Fans of the genre and everyone else ought to give this a listen. (JP)

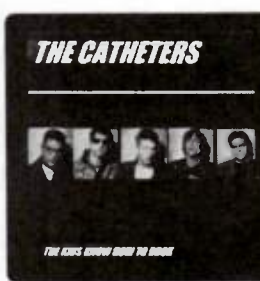


(LANDSPEED/PO Box 3206/VANCOUVER, BC V6B 3X6/CANADA)

CATHETERS

"The Kids Know How To Rock" 7" EP

They sure do. Great garage rock a la ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. It's a real trashy recording, which definitely did it for me. Find this and smoke it. (BAM)



(EMPTY/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

CHALKLINE

"In The Present Tense" CD

This seems to be a real bad version of this post-hardcore-to-emo movement that we're experiencing nowadays. Bands that are pulling this off include LIFETIME, KID DYNAMITE, SAVES THE DAY, and GRAY AREA, to name a few. If you

REVIEWS

already have all of these, and you still want more even if it's not nearly as good, then check this out. (BAM)



(SHANDLE/PO Box 1032/MENTOR OH 44061)

CHAPSTICK

"Whiskey Time" CD

Clearly, this is the piece of shit that got thrown into my pile for a guaranteed bad review. It features extremely sludgy, low-end guitar riffage with half-time drum beats and annoying samples. This is really horrible, and is undoubtedly destined to end up as beer money. (JW)



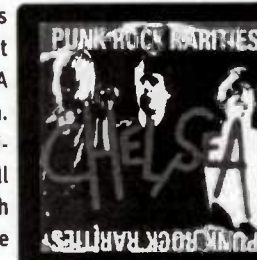
(REPTILIAN/403 S. BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

CHELSEA

"Punk Rock Rarities" LP

Captain Oi has put out yet another CHELSEA singles collection. I'm no rock historian, so I can't tell you exactly which of these songs have appeared before.

This CD contains 19 tracks, all of which are either demos or remixed versions. Tons of bands these days claim to be influenced by CHELSEA, and now I see why. This is good solid late 70's rock 'n' roll, and if you're a collector geek you should seek this one out. (IR)



(CAPTAIN Oi/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

SHITLIST

CHICKEN HAWKS "Siouxicide City" CD

This band has been around for some years, and two of its key members (guitarist Pete and his wife, lead vocalist Betsy) have played a key role in creating and sustaining the western Iowa punk scene. They've got a rockin' trashed-out sound that's perfect for stumbling around drunk, what with its distorted and impressive fretwork (including occasional slide), primitive beat, and repetitive, funny lyrics (as in "Stick It In"). At times the vocals veer a bit too much in a hard rock "bar band" direction, but there's no denying that they can kick out the jams and rock the house, especially live. (JB)

(RAFR/11054 VENTURA BLVD, SUITE 205/STUDIO CITY, CA 91604)

CHROME

"Chrome Flashback" double CD

Metallic, industrial space-rock that falls somewhere in between THROBING GRISTLE and HAWKWIND. If you're sober this tends to be kind of boring and plodding, but if you're stoned or your mind has already been blown, then this is "fuckin' too intense, man!" Fans of CHROME or HELIOS CREED (the band's enigmatic leader) will be pleased to have such a thorough offering, which contains 24 tracks spanning 2 CDs, including lots of live material and hard-to-find gems. (JC)

(CLEOPATRA/13428 MARELLA AVENUE/MARINA DEL REY, CA 90292)

CHOSEN FEW

"A Root and a Beer" CD

AuGoGo has had the good sense to reissue the late 70's 6-track EP by Melbourne's CHOSEN FEW, together with demo versions and live recordings. This is sleazy, degenerate, pug-ugly punk in the fine Aussie tradition, and alongside

their obnoxious originals one can also find cover songs by RADIO BIRDMAN, the MC5, the SONICS, and other trashmonsters. Crude as hell, which you should take as a compliment. (JB)

(AuGoGo/GPO Box 5421/MELBOURNE, VICTORIA 3001/AUSTRALIA)

CHURCH KEYS

"Oogy Wawa/Ale Up" 7"

More silly good time rock and roll from Norton records. Side A is a rowdy, chanting show stopper, whereas side B is a lively barnstormer of a drinkin' instrumental. (JC)

(NORTON/PO Box 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)

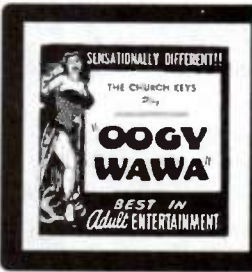
CIGARETTEMAN/DISCOUNT split 7" EP

Two great young pop punk bands with female singers. CIGARETTEMAN are Japanese and are a good match for DISCOUNT, as their big, sugary hooks will keep the kids dancing. DISCOUNT are American and are quickly amassing a decent body of recorded work. This EP contains two of their best songs—both are upbeat and have great hooks, falling somewhere between old TILT and the FASTBACKS. My only complaint about this record is the super shitty vinyl it's on. I hope they change pressing plants before the next release. (JC)

(SUBURBAN HOME/1750 30TH STREET #365/BOULDER, CO 80301)

CONDEMNED 84

"The Boots Go Marching In" CD



O! Here's the real thing—working class yobs from Britain sounding off. This CD reissue contains some of this veteran band's better compositions, in that many of the tracks have big tough hooks, raw guitars, Cockney cockiness, soccer-style backing vocals, and cliché-ridden lyrics about never surrendering and teenage "slags". It's lots of fun to listen to anthems like the title track, "Oi Ain't Dead", and "We Will Never Die", as long as you don't take things too much to heart. (JB)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

CONDEMNED 84

"Face The Aggression" CD

This is the first British Oi band in the midst of all the third-rate American Oi CDs I'm staring at. This sounds exactly like INFA RIOT, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's basically mid-tempo rock 'n' roll with obnoxious, snarling vocals. The title track is a standout, and is replete with great lead breaks, but the rest of the CD is pretty forgettable. (JW)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

CREATURES FROM THE TRASH LAGOON

"The Purple Knife" 7" EP

OK, this Hamburg 3-piece band with female vocals loves the CRAMPS. "Whisper Your Love to Me" reminds me of the PHANTOM's "Love Me". The production should be messier and more fucked up, like HASIL ATKINS' stuff. "Purple knife" has gotta be a Ghoulardi relation!! (TL)

(SINNER, NO ADDRESS)



WADE CURTIS & HIS RHYTHM ROCKERS

"Brang/Maxine" 7"

Probably my favorite of all the Norton records I got to review this issue. "Brang!!!" is a cool twangy guitar instrumental that the hip kids are sure to dig. But the real treasure here is the hauntingly desperate "Maxine", which gave me goose bumps. It also features a nice old radio promo for the band at the end of the record. (JC)

(NORTON/PO Box 646 COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)

DARLINGTON

"Mess You Up" CD

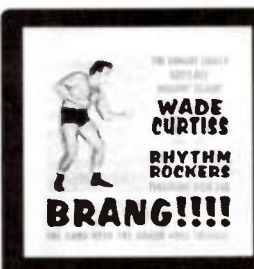
An uninspired rehash of SCREECHING WEASEL and the RAMONES, complete with vocal stylings and lyrics about goin' mental and being a creep and suchlike. If you already have all the records from the aforementioned bands, stick with them. If you don't, it's time to wise up and spend the money on the originals that you might've foolishly parted with for this. (RK)

(MELTED/21-41 34TH AVE. SUITE 10A/ASTORIA NY 11106)

DAS KLOWN

"The Day The Clown Cried" 7" EP

I usually don't like this band, but this had such a great cover that I had to grab it. A hilarious parody of the SUB-HUMANS' "Day The Country Died" LP encases this 3-song 7". Side A has an enjoyable original, followed by a pretty damn good version of the DEAD KENNEDYS "Police Truck". The B-side is a passable live version of "Ha Ha Ha". (BAM)



(PANX/BP 5058/31033 TOULOUSE, CEDEX 5/France)

DAS KLOWN/SECRET HATE

"Split" 7"

Clowns are freaky. I've heard some really cool stuff from DAS KLOWN, but these tracks don't really measure up. They have that old SoCal sound, sort of a mix between R.K.L. and the ADOLESCENTS. SECRET HATE were—and still seem to be—an awesome band. Their "Vegetable Dancing" album brought me much joy, and it seems like they still have what it takes. I can't wait to see them live. (JC)

(SKUNK/K/O CORNERSTONE R.A.S./16572 BURKE LANE/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)

DEAD MAN'S CHOIR

"What's Wrong with Me" 7" EP

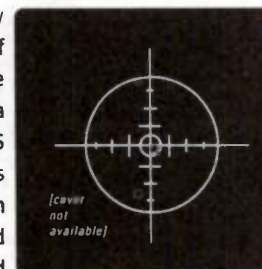
Now this is my kind of record—aggressive thud punk with a vaguely DEAD BOYS feel. The sound is punchy, the twin guitars are loud and distorted, the lead frills sound great, the lyrics are insensitive ("Gimme some domestic violence..."), and the vocals are right in your drunken mug. These rockin' SOB's are from Long Beach, and would be perfectly at home serving as the house band at Katon Junk's new club. I can't wait to see them live. (JB)

(KNOW/PO Box 90879/LONG BEACH, CA 90909)

DEE STROY & THE D-FEX

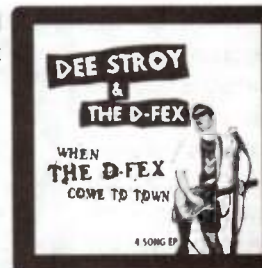
"When the D-Fex Come to Town" 7" EP

Cool rockin' lo-fi punk from Dee Stroy's (ex-JOHNIES) newest band. It's got a nice primitive feel, good lead breaks, and obnoxious lyrics, but what really sets it apart from the pack is the songwriting. Here are some jokers who actually know how to pen songs with terrific melodies. "Can't Forget About You" is a great pop song, but



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my faves are "I Like" and "Doesn't She Know". (JB)



(LAWLESS/PO Box 689/Hingham, MA 02043)

DERKS

"Six Spindle Love" 7" EP

Dirty rock 'n' roll with a heavy yet ultra-raw guitar sound, a driving rhythm section, lots of 'tude, and sneering vocals. The title song smacks you right in the mouth, so I'd advise you to scarf this limited edition EP (with handmade cover) up while you still can. (JB)

(TRICK KNEE/PO Box 12714/GREEN BAY, WI 54307)

DERKS

"What Do You Think Of Me Now" 7" EP

Jeff and I got in a fight over who was going to get which DERKS 7" for this issue. I think we both won. What a great band. Straightforward punked-out rock and roll, played in an aggressive manner. There aren't as many hooks on this as on some of their previous stuff, but this is still a must-have. The title track is a scorcher! (BAM)

(ALL GIRLS DIG/PO Box 2315/LA CROSSE, WI 54602)



DEVOTCHKAS

"Oi Toy" 7" EP

Here's that rarest of rarities, a primarily female Oi band. Three NY-area yobettes (and one guy) with Rene fringes, mohawks, and other out-

SHITLIST

DIRTYS

"Teenage Teenage Problem Child" 7" EP

dos belt out four aggressive and primitive punkers on this EP. Along with the blustering, chaotic songs one can find some funny yet bitchy and cliquish lyrics about "Oi Toy[s]" and "whores...[who] should be tested 'cause [they] must be infested." Definitely worth checking out. (JB)



(PUNKCORE/PO Box 916/MIDDLE ISLAND, NY 11953)

DICKIES

"Stukas Over Disneyland" CD

The DICKIES are one of the greatest amped-up satirical punk bands of all time, and this is a reissue of their third best record. Do I really need to say more?



Get it quick, before it goes out of print again. (JC)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

DIMESTORE HALOES

"Shooting Stars" 7" EP

Yet another impressive DIMESTORE HALOES 7" record. This one's a bit poppier sounding than their raunched-out Pelado and Junk releases, but it's still got an appealingly trashy aesthetic and plenty of rockin' power. The title track has an especially memorable vocal bridge. (JB)



(AMERICAN PUNK/802 S. BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

Extremely trashy, lo-fi production, with everything just a bit off time. "Drivin' Like A Jerk" is completely crazy, with its overdubbed guitar tracks and fucked-up noisy wah-wah, and "Rock 'n' Roll Hum" is hilarious due to all the "whoa, whoa, whoas", the abrupt key changes, and the rude lyrics. This rocks out more than their Crypt record, and is a great and completely primitive reinterpretation of Detroit rock 'n' roll. (JW)



(TRANSPARENT/INSURANCE SCAM RECORDS, NO ADDRESS)

DISAPPOINTMENTS

"Sex, Drugs, and Puke" 7" EP

Another fine offering from the people at Radio Records. Like label-mates the SHIFTERS, the DISAPPOINTMENTS offer up (a triple dose of) quality melodic punk rock. It's not "pop punk" in today's lame or generic sense, but rather punk rock from Pennsylvania with good hooks and recurrent themes of inebriation. (JB)



(RADIO/PO Box 1452/SONOMA, CA 95476)

DOCTOR EXPLOSION

"The Subnormal Revolution" CD

Psycho 60's-ish lo-fi garage trash in a variety of styles from Spain. The music is real basic a la the HEADCOATS, and the lead vocals are at times totally over



the top and distorted, so I can't really complain. Throw in the occasional female background "whoas", goofy costumes, and hilarious liner notes by Peter Zaremba of the FLESHTONES, and it's hard to go wrong. There's definitely a novelty

aspect to their image and music, but live they're probably a blast. (JB)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

DOGPASS

"Eine Kleine Pünkmusik" CD

SNUFF is one of the best bands that Fat Mike ever signed. Tight, tough, melodic and musically diverse, these guys are Britain's best export since



LEATHERFACE. This side project doesn't quite have the same appeal, but still has enough merit to warrant a listen or six. Fans of SNUFF will find both the familiar and unfamiliar here, though more familiar than un-. Good stuff, not to mention the second best album title of the year so far. (DG)

(HONEST DON'S/PO Box 192027/SAN FRANCISCO, CA)

DROPKICK MURPHYS

"The Gangs All Here" LP

If you haven't heard the DROPKICK MURPHYS yet, you must either live in a cave or on the moon. Wait a minute, I think they just played on the moon last week!



They've unleashed their second full-length record here, this time with Al Barr of the BRUISERS at the vocal helm, and he really lets us have it! The boys mix it up well with some Irish jigs and some great Boston hardcore on "Pipebomb On Landsdown Street". I think the DROPKICK MURPHYS have earned the right to claim the title, "Streetpunk Kings of the World." This is a gem. (IR)

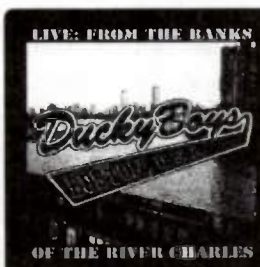
(HELLCAT/2798 SUNSET BLVD/LOS ANGELES, CA 90026)

DUCKY BOYS

"Live From The Banks Of The River Charles" EP

The DUCKY BOYS are back at it with a barn burner of a CD. There are 6 songs here, recorded live at WMBR in Cambridge. A few of the tracks appear on their recent GMM full-length "Dark Days", and the DUCKS throw in "The Wanderer" by DION, which is brilliant! These lads from Charlestown play kickin' rock 'n' roll with solid bass lines and dual guitars, non-fancy leads, and heavy-as-shit drums, all the while trading off on vocals. (IR)

(OUTSIDER/PO Box 92708/LONG BEACH, CA 90809)



that passes for rock and roll these days. Your call. (BAM)



(AUGOGO/GPO Box 5420/MELBOURNE, VICTORIA 3001/AUSTRALIA)

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN

"Teenage Shutdown/Demolition Joyride" 7"

This is the third issue of Hit List, so do I really have to tell you what ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN are all about? This is probably my favorite 7" by the riff-heavy rockmeisters so far. A finely-tuned New York rock and roll machine. (JC)

(REPTILIAN/403 SOUTH BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)



ELECTRIC EELS

"Their Organic Majesty's Request" CD

It took me a while to see the plain old fuckin' genius of the EELS—raw fucked up rock n' roll—so much so that they seem to constantly fall outside the margins of most people's taste in music. They're too fartys to be artsy, and too artsy to be fartys. Basically, ya got a great collection of previously released shit here, including hits like "Agitated", "Cyclotron", and "Tidal Wave", as well as various oddities, some of which I hadn't heard ("You're Full Of Shit" gives "Wreck & Roll" a run for its cash). There's plenty enough rockin' tunes, and with the CD format it's pretty effortless to skip over the COLTRANE influences. (RF)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)



ELECTRIC SUMMER

"Love Me Destroyer" CD

ELECTRIC SUMMER are a Japanese band that relocated to Colorado for some reason. Their live show is frantic, hi-energy, and recommended. This CD has it's moments, but does not really catch the real charm that this band has. (JC)

(SODA JERK/PO Box 4056/BOULDER, CO 80306)



ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN

"Rock And Roll Monster" CD

I believe that this is everything that Rik L. Rik did with E.F. While I love most of his previous bands, Rik just wasn't a FRANKENSTEIN. (Then again, who could fill Steve Miller's shoes?) This is the original "Monster" 10", plus 4 songs from various 7"ers. While Rik isn't the optimum singer for E.F., this is still better than most of the crap

ELECTROCUTES

"Steal Yer Lunch Money" CD

Lo-fi amateur punk from a schoolgirl band out of which the DON-NAS were later to emerge. The ELECTROCUTES have a



REVIEWS

really raw sound that reminds one of earlier generations of ultra-garage punk, and are appealing in large part due to their adolescent vibe and their musical ineptness. The only problem is that not too many of the songs actually stick in your head. (JB)

(SYMPATHY/4450 CALIFORNIA PLACE #303/LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

ENGINE

"Show Me/Field Mouse" 7"

Two rocking songs on the experimental cusp. ENGINE has a driving rhythm section and a gravelly vocalist, and reminds me a bit of the JESUS LIZARD or early COWS. This release also comes with a stupid comic book. (JC)

(DAMN ENTERTAINMENT/PO Box 4283/LOUISVILLE, KY 40204)

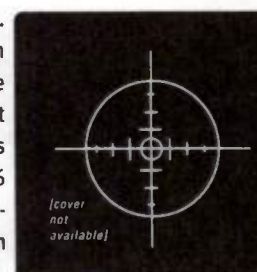


ENSIGN

"Cast The First Stone" LP/CD

Yeah, man. That's what I'm talking about. The Nitro Records debut of New Jersey's finest delivers 16 tracks of hard-as-fuck core in the vein of SICK OF IT ALL, including a guest appearance by Lou on "15 Years". The intensity is relentless from start to finish, and is exemplified most by tracks such as "Pale Horse" and "The Road Less Traveled". Get this. (JP)

(NITRO/7071 WARNER AVENUE F-736/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)



EPERLEY

"Sophomore Slump" CD

It beats me why this was even accepted for review. Overblown, gratuitous, wanna-be PIX-IES, college-rock dreck. It's not particularly well-played or produced, and the pebble in my shoe

SHITLIST

(TRIPLE X/PO Box 862529/LOS ANGELES, CA 90086)

EXPELLED

"A Punk Rock Collection" CD

This CD combines the EXPELLED's early studio tracks (which appeared on various 7"ers and comps) and previously unreleased material (including demos). The music is generally in the VICE SQUAD mold, given not only the predominance of Becki-like female lead vocals but also the musical stylings. Overall it's none too original, although there are some excellent songs that make it well worth checking out (such as "Government Policy", "Dreaming", "Got No Cider", and "Three to Twelve" [song #11], the last two with male vocals). (JB)

(CAPTAIN O!!/PO Box 501/WEST WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8BQA/ENGLAND)



FLESHTONES

"More than Skin Deep" CD

Undoubtedly the best FLESHTONES long-player since their '77 debut LP on Red Star, but much better produced. It's filled with memorable songs, 60's riffs, great musical chops, and cool-sounding vocals. Long gone are the awful horns, saxes, and keyboards from their middle period (except on the ambling, bluesy "Blow Job")—this is stripped-down guitar-oriented r'n'r with tuneage, stomping beats, and occasional harmonicas. "Laugh It Off", with its slide guitar guitar and "ha ha ha ha ha" chorus, is perhaps the standout track, but it's in good company. (JB)

(ICHIBAN INT'L/3991 ROYAL DRIVE/KENNESAW, GA 30144)



FLIPPER

"May 14th 1983" CD

FLIPPER, as live and obnoxious as ever. This is after Will Shatter's death, but it still holds a lot of magic. Dark and plodding slabs of sonic chaos, featuring most all of the FLIPPER gems you would want like "Life", "Ha, Ha, Ha", "Love Canal", and "Sex Bomb Baby". Better recordings of them are definitely out there, as this one is a bit murky, but this platter is still worth getting. (JC)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)



440 SIXPACK

"One More Round" 7" EP

I completely hate the tag "trucker-punk rock-n-roll". What exactly does that mean? Basically, this is punk rock with an emphasis on the "rawk" side.

Overall this 7" is pretty mediocre, since these guys are following in the footsteps of all the bands that are trying to ride the coattails of NASHVILLE PUSSY, ZEKE, and MOTORHEAD. If you are a fan of bands like ROLLER and SPEED-DEALER, then you might wanna give these guys a listen. (JW)

(440 SIX-PACK/PO Box 420823/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142)



FRANKENSTEIN DRAG QUEENS FROM PLANET 13

"Night of the Living Drag Queens" CD

When a CD begins with a sample of some TV show, I usually race for the eject button. Add another strike with the horror-show/crossdressing thang. Been done before, sure, but they are awful damn pret-



ty! Hey, they are plenty better looking, not to mention more fem, than the DONNAS! Thankfully, the music more than holds it's scummy own. Musically, I can hear FEAR, the DWARVES, and the ALICE COOP BAND, and I do believe I hear strains of ADOLESCENTS-quality guitar work. As one might suspect, each lyric is more twisted than the last. Why do I wanna go dust of my WRATHCHILD UK discs? Stakk attack!! (JD)

(UNCLE GOD DAMN/PO Box 666/LANDIS, NC 28088)

FRUIT EATING BEARS

"Gentle Creatures..." CD

A three-piece AR & B-style British punk band formed in 1977 and named after a 60's beat group the drummer had once been in. The F.E.B.'s weren't exactly

spring chickens in 1977, which accounts for their very tight yet tuneful pub rock/punk attack, their odd selection of covers (including "7 and 7 Is" and "Indian Giver"), and their lewd lyrical themes (e.g., "Flirt in a Skirt"). This collection contains 19 studio and 13 poorly-recorded live tracks, and will probably appeal more to lowlife traditional rock 'n' rollers than strict '77 purists. I generally dig it. (JB)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)



FUCK FACE

"Bastard" 7" EP

FUCK FACE are an intense, in-your-face punk ensemble that sound sort of like GRIMPLE-meets-MAN IS THE BASTARD [???]. The lyrics are intelligent, and there is a real "high art" packaging job on this one. (JC)

(LIL DEPUTY/PO Box 7066/AUSTIN, TX 78713)



FUSES

"Dress For The New Bomb" 7" EP

A good record filled with primitive-style punk rock and a real swank rock and roll chugga, chugga sound. This is definitely a band I want to hear more from, and this particular release also has cool graphics. (JC)

(AMERICAN PUNK/802 SOUTH BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)



GAM

"Paper 1+2/Smell My Robot" 7"

Super cool and creepy and experimental punk which is very reminiscent of old PERE UBU. I love this kind of stuff, and wish more bands took chances like this. (JC)

(INITIAL/PO Box 17131/LOUISVILLE, KY 40217)



GENE VINCENT & THE BLUE CAPS

"Blue Gene" 7" EP

Rockin' GENE VINCENT in a blue mood. On this he sounds a bit more like ROY ORBISON or an early Sun Records-period ELVIS. A great record to slow dance to. I prefer his wilder tunes, but this is a definite keeper. (JC)

(NORTON/PO Box 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



GRAVITY WAX

"Horseshoe/Prattle" 10"

Super wimpy pop—there's no punk on this one. On the faster tracks they sound like a

watered-down version of the MONKEES, and their slower tracks will put you to sleep faster than a double dose of Nyquil. Thank god this is only a 10" record. (JC)

(SILVER GIRL/PO. Box 161024/SAN DIEGO, CA 92176)



GREEN MACHINE

"The Earth Beater" CD

Heavy BLACK SABBATH-like guitars, with some nutcase screaming bloody murder over them. The fourth track is called "Barbarian Of Dope", which gives you a good idea of where these guys are coming from. Pretty cool for metal, but I think the next album should have more songs about puppy dogs and rainbows. (JC)

(MAN'S RUIN/610 22ND STREET/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107)



GRIVER

"The Letter I Never Had" CD

Utter rubbish. I guess this would be filed under angst-ridden emo of the worst backpacking back-to-the-audience type. Tuneless drive combined with awful pretentious lyrics. They thank everyone that still does house shows. I sincerely hope they never come to mine. (RK)

(POINT THE BLAME/10738 MILLEN/MONTREAL, QUEBEC PQ, H2C/CANADA)



GROOVIE GHOU LIES

"Fun In The Dark" LP

I've heard a couple of tracks from this band before, but wasn't too familiar with their shtick. The GROOVIE GHOU LIES try to sound like the

REVIEWS

RAMONES, and succeed in doing so but with a slightly thicker guitar sound. There are 13 songs about vampires and other creepy topics. If you're a fan, get it; if not, these probably aren't the droids you're looking for. (IR)

(LOOKOUT/PO Box 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)



HELLACOPTERS

"Twist Action in New York City" 7"

This record documents one of the HELLACOPTERS' first American shows in NYC. It's got excellent production for a live recording, and is definitely better than the "Bore Me" single with the super-extend wank fest. The best part about this 7" is that the wild Swedes completely avoided jamming, which pretty much put me to sleep when they were over here in SF last winter. Pick this up if you wanna hear the HELLACOPTERS rockin' out live short, sweet, and to the point. (JW)

(FANDANGO/805 T STREET NW #A/WASHINGTON, DC 20009)



INCREDIBLE KINGS/ELEGANTS

split 7"

These are two groups that featured Jerry Miller on guitar, whose main claim to fame was his role in MOBY GRAPE. He was apparently a pretty pivotal player in the mid-60's Pacific Northwest scene, and both sides of this record are solid. My taste leans a little more towards the bluesier ELEGANTS. (JC)

(NORTON/PO Box 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



SHITLIST

IRONBOSS

"Bullethole/Movin' To Texas" 7"

I swear to christ, GRUNTRUCK lives on in the form of IRONBOSS. Horrible pop metal, about eight years too late. Grunge ain't "now", dude, it's stoner-rock. Geez... (RF)



(REPTILIAN/403 S. BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

JACOBITES

"God Save Us Poor Sinners" CD

An alternately sadness- and irony-laced, ever-so-slightly punkish r'n'r outfit featuring Nikki Sudden from SWELL MAPS and a young guitarist who reminds one of Keith Richards. Most of the songs are slow-to mid-tempo rockers with plaintive vocals, fair hooks, emotive but dirty guitar playing, and (sadly) an intrusive piano or organ. I myself like it quite a bit (especially the STONES-ish title song, "So Unkind", the moody "Second Time Around", "Heartbreaks", and "Teenage Christmas"), but it's got a melancholy down-and-out feel that will surely appeal more to the worldly-wise than to the freshly-scrubbed. (JB)



(BOMP/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

JAKKPOT

"Young & Dumb" 7" EP

Hailing from Baltimore, the city with the highest murder & VD rates in America (for some reason, this fact impresses me), come this great band of wise-asses. First off, they beat me to the gun by recording a



song by one of punk's absolute best, least appreciated combos, the RUBBER CITY REBELS. They do the track justice, as well. Raunchy, punch-drunk and snotty as a motherf**ker. Toss in an ace original and a UK SUBS cover and you got a good one here. (JD)

(KEN ROCK/SKAGGETORP CENTRUM 12/58744 LINKÖPING/SWEDEN)

JON COUGAR CONCENTRATION CAMP

"Melon" LP/CD

Upon seeing some of the song titles on this disc, such as "My Favorite Show is 90210" and "Punk Rock Gives Me The Shitz", I expected to hear some WEST-ON or SCREECHING WEASEL-style pop punk, and I wasn't too far off with this stripped down, straight forward, and to the point disc. J.C.C.C. is a bit more raw than your average melodicore, but their sound is somewhere between the QUEERS, BLINK 182, and SW's "Boogada, Boogada, Boogada". Did I spell that right? (JP)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA 90067)



JOHN THE POSTMAN

"Puerile" CD

According to the liner notes on this CD, JOHN THE POSTMAN really was a postman who was a regular at punk gigs in Manchester during the early punk days of 1977. In true punk rock fashion, during a BUZZCOCKS gig one night, he decided to jump on stage and terrorize the audience with his version of "Louie, Louie". The legend of JOHN THE POSTMAN was born. Unfortunately, in postal terms this is junk mail; the story is much better than the so-called music, and even though John had a lot of help with real musicians recording this stuff, it still didn't help. Just because it was from England circa '77 doesn't mean this should ever have been released, let alone rereleased. (GL)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENG.)



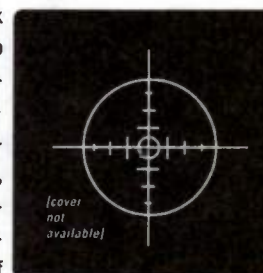
LAND)

K.G.B.

"Die Lady Di" 7" EP

German punk vets offer up the first—but probably not the last—of the satirical anti-Princess Di songs, and it's a real barnstormer with a PISTOLS-ish wall of sound. The flipside contains two humorous novelty versions of very unpunk songs, both of which are pretty darn rockin'. As usual, Incognito delivers the goods. (JB)

(INCOGNITO/SENEFELDERSTRASSE 37A/70176 STUTTGART/GERMANY)



KISS OFFS

"Goodbye Private Life" CD

I've got no idea why I am being tortured with such nondescript garbage. I was under the impression that the editors at least vaguely had some feelings of affection for me. The KISS OFFS play an awful blend of lo-fi garage, rockabilly, and psychedelia. Keyboards, lots of reverb on the guitar, grungy production, shouty female vocals. It's almost as if some particularly senseless bastards decided to deliberately fuck-up the worst 45 GRAVE outtakes they could find. (RK)

(PEEK-A-BOO/PO Box 49452/AUSTIN, TX 78765)



LADONNAS

"Rock You All Night Long" CD

Primal rock and roll excitement. A cleaner and more uptempo version of ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. Ten songs full of piss and vinegar with big fat guitar riffs and a singer that is about as snotty as they



come. (JC)

(SCOOSH POOCH/5850 WEST 3RD STREET, SUITE 209/LOS ANGELES, CA 90036)

LANDOS

"Titanic" EP

Featuring ex-members of 30 SECONDS DEEP and the BOLLWEEVILS, this is quite a weird release. Each side starts off with a quirky hardcore song that just didn't do it for me, then moves into an amazingly catchy East Bay-sounding pop punk song. I would highly recommend this for the latter half of each side. (BAM)

(HARMLESS/1437 W. HOOD/CHICAGO, IL 60660)

LOWER EAST SIDE STITCHES

"Staja98 L.E.S." LP

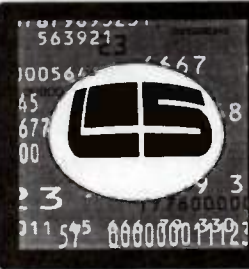
L.E.S. STITCHES are a great punk rock 'n' roll outfit from NYC that remind me a bit of S.F.'s LOWDOWNS. This is right up my piss-soaked alley, with songs about drinking, puking, and generally not giving a fuck about much. I hear that the lads put on one helluva live show to boot! I missed 'em last time they were out West, but I'm hoping they'll be back soon. (IR)

(NG/61 VAN DAM STREET, 2ND FLOOR/NEW YORK, NY 10013)

LIBERTINE

"Rise Above" CD EP

I've been hearing a lot about this New York band lately. Heard 'em described as glam, pogo punk '77, pop... 'tis all part of the brew. Think early SOCIAL D,



"Mommy's Little Monster" era. Or even earlier CLASH, the pre-reggae stuff when they were still a rock band. The bottom line is that these guys know how to write good solid tunes and recognize a nice hook. Along with the DIMESTORE HALOS, they could make radio listenable again. (JD)

(KADO/14000 MILITARY TRAIL #208A/DELRAY, FL 33484)

LILLINGTONS

"Death by Television" CD

Wow. Okay, so nothing here is exactly new. The Mass-ive (get it? Mass Giorgini? ha ha) production is reminiscent of SCREECHING WEASEL's "Bark Like a Dog," and the songs are definitely in that SW/QUEERS vein, with the lyrical content mostly inspired by a lifetime of watching bad reruns and reading comic books. But despite it all, the LILLINGTONS somehow find a new way to rock this shit. And rock it does. Highly recommended. (DG)

(PANIC BUTTON/PO BOX 14819/CHICAGO, IL 60614)

LIMP- "Guitarded" LP/CD

I have been eagerly awaiting this disc ever since I wore out "Pop & Disorderly" in my CD player. With Doug Sangalang (formerly of SCREW 32) taking over on second guitar, LIMP continues holding shit down tight like a hair net with twelve new pop tracks that provide a fine substitute for Prozac. I especially like the galloping-guitar-rock epic, "Decision", and the eerie moodiness of the staccato "DI". (JP)

(HONEST DON'S/PO BOX 192027/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

LOLIPOP

"Live at Reptilian Records" 7"

Good trashy rock and roll with a psychedelic feel to it, like the NEW BOMB TURKS meeting



REVIEWS

the old BUTTHOLE SURFERS. It's pretty out of tune at times, but what the fuck...it's a damn good recording for being in a record store. (JC)

(REPTILIAN/403 SOUTH BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

LOS GUARRIORS

"City Kids" 7" EP

Spanish punks rock out with Jeff Dahl (on the lead vocals) in LARRY WALLIS' classic "City Kids". On the B-side LOS GUARRIORS blast out two uptempo punk blasts with piercing lead breaks and, on "Tuy tus Lameculos", a fetching "ohhhh" singalong chorus. A hard-to-find gem. (JB)

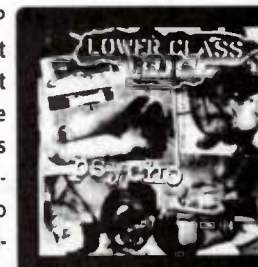
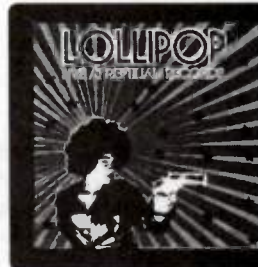
(NO TOMORROW/PO BOX 1134/12080 CASTELLON/SPAIN)

LOWER CLASS BRATS

"Psycho" 7" EP

On this import EP on the purist French Combat Rock label, the faux-yobbo Texans offer three bass-heavy, mid-tempo punkers, two originals (including the stunning "Rather Be Hated") and a decent if uninspired SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS cover ("Situations"). Not as crunchy, production-wise, as their recent GMM LP, but nonetheless worth seeking out. (JB)

(COMBAT ROCK/7 RUE DU PAQUIS/57950 MONTIGNY LES METZ/FRANCE)



SHITLIST

MAD CAP

"Americas Greatest Zeros" CD

Wow, this is original! Six songs that try their damndest to sound like NOFX. Will the madness ever stop? Their credit list includes (among others) GOD and SCREW 32, so at least they have their priorities straight. (JC)

(DISCO/3721 LAPER AVENUE/NORTH PORT, FL 34287)



MAD TRUCKER GONE MAD

"S/T" CD

I was a little shocked when my friend Jami said this band sucked, because she usually loves everything. Well what do you know, she's right. They're going for the country-bumpkin SOUTHERN CULTURE ON THE SKIDS kinda thing. This shit bores me, and all the songs sound the same, except for the slow ones that just out and out suck. Try a stronger guitar sound, get a better name, and quit trying to ape the old Koop "Monster with detached eyeballs out of a hot rod truck" for a cover. you can't get any dumber then that. (GL)

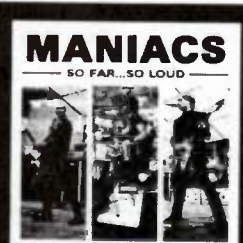
(CRUSTACEAN/PO Box 37334/MILWAUKEE, WI 53237)



MANIACS

"So Far...So Good" CD

A retrospective comp of early Britpunk group the MANIACS. After doing a stint with Twink (ex-PRETTY THINGS, HAWK-WIND, and PINK FAIRIES) in the RINGS and putting out the classic "I Wanna Be



Free" 45, they went off on their own. This collection includes their first great 45 ("Aint No Legend") plus 15 other cool 77 punk tracks (including lots of unreleased stuff). Now you no longer have to lament their earlier failure to put out an LP. (JB)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

MANUAL SCAM

"All Night Stand" CD

MANUAL SCAM were a power pop/mod revivalist band that played big in the mid 1980s San Diego/southern California Scooter scene. They were

kind of a SoCal version of the JAM. Get Hip has kindly provided us with a total "greatest hits" package here, including an extensive, detailed 12-page booklet with lots of photos, a discography, etc. 23 songs in all, many of them cool unreleased tracks. (JC)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES

"Are a Drag" CD

The sublimely stupid super-group, ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES are at it again, and this time they take on show-tunes! An admission: I was in musi-

cals in high school, so I knew most of these songs inside and out before putting on the record. And what a record it is. The arrangements are brilliant (check out the unholy melding of BAD RELIGION and the SINGING VON TRAPPS on "My Favorite Things"), and the musicianship is top notch. This could be the most fun you'll have all spring, but what the the fuck were they thinking bothering with an Andrew Lloyd Webber song? That guy totally ruined the modern musical! (DGI)

(FAT/PO Box 460114/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146)



METROS

"Hot-Wired/Go Mean" 7"

One listen to this record, and you'll immediately know that it's on Greg Lowery's label. It's got the patented Rip Off super lo-fi sound and a 77 garage ambience. The most distinctive thing about Detroit's METROS is their amazingly raw and piercing lead guitar parts, which are especially on display in "Hot-Wired" and by themselves make this platter worth picking up. (JB)

(RIP OFF/581 MAPLE AVENUE/SAN BRUNO, CA 94066)



MILLION SIX

"Clean-Head" CD

This isn't terrible; it's not even that bad. It's just....adequate. Competently played speedy punk, with a variety of styles. Unfortunately, none of it stands out at all. Actually there are a couple of tracks with enough of a hint 'Burning In Water' era MOVING TARGETS to momentarily grab, but the rest is totally forgettable. Sorry dudes. All hail the act of creation. Doesn't mean anyone will like the finished product though. (RK)

(SATELLITE/920 EAST COLORADO BLVD #151/PASADENA, CA 91106)



MOLOKO MEN

"Drunk and Poor" CD

Muscle-bound, foot stompin' Oi music of the most primitive and brutal sort, but who'd really want it any other way? The MOLOKO MEN have a very aggressive, beer-guzzling, dual guitar thud rock attack. "Violence Just for Kicks", "Fist on Fist", and "Victims of the System" are among their many great songs, but I don't understand why anyone



would want to wallow in hidebound class pride or unreflective violence. First-rate music, though. (JB)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO Box 40104/ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

MORNING SHAKES

"The Go Sounds of..." 7" EP

One of the best garage-style rock and roll bands going right now. Imagine what the HUMBERS might sound like if they had put out records in 1965 in the Pacific Northwest, where the SONICS and WAILERS ruled. (JC)

(CACOPHONY/PO Box 60578/ALBANY, NY 12206)

MORNING SHAKES

"Take You Out" 7"

This came out in 1996, a fucking oldie but a goodie. Finally, a great record in my "stack o' shit". These motherfuckers always sent my label songs, and they sucked, but they obviously gave Sack O' Shit the cream of the MORNING SHAKES' crop. These songs are flat out fucking great. "Take You Out" is raw, catchy, not overproduced, loud...fucking perfection...and "Youngblood" is just as fine. Throw in an OK B-side with a ZEROS cover and you've got a pretty awesome record. (GL)

(SACK O' SHIT/PO Box 308/KANKAKEE IL 60901)

MOTÖRHEAD

"Everything Louder Than Everyone Else" double CD

MOTÖRHEAD have been around for over 20 years. Not punk, not metal, Lemmy once described them as "like the MC5, just a guitar-based rock band." This double live CD features an absolutely blasting live show, a good song selection, and lots of Lemmy's between-song wit. They don't do "Motörhead," but most of your other

faves are on here. Lemmy's intro to the show says it all: "Hello Hamburg, we are MOTÖRHEAD and we're gonna kick your ass." (AW)

(CMC/BMG/1540 BROADWAY/NEW YORK, NY 10036)

MULLENS

"Reggie" 7" EP

The MULLENS simply keep delivering the excellent rock 'n' roll. This 7" is a bit tougher sounding than their debut LP on Get Hip. The title track is an extremely well-written song with a variety of nuances that would usually nauseate me (e.g., half-time parts), but in this case it actually works; the vocals are really heartfelt, without coming off as hokey. "Drug Test" is STONES-like song with great leads a la Keith Richards or Johnny Thunders. The MULLENS are genuinely excellent SONGwriters at a time when there is a general lack of creativity and talent in this area. Necessary. (JW)

(SAFETY PIN/PO Box 51241/28080 MADRID/SPAIN)

MURDER CITY WRECKS

"Get Wrecked" CD

The only current band with MURDER CITY in their title that matters. Here are four mugs who obviously like to drink and know how to rock out. They play aggressive thud punk with belligerent vocals, lyrics about fucked-up girls, and surprisingly good tunes. They generally remind me of the late, great DEVIL DOGS, and on occasion I even hear hints of the mighty PAGANS, which is about the highest praise there is. These boys should send the emo dorks a-runnin', hopefully all the way back to the health food stores in their wealthy suburbs. (JB)



REVIEWS

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

NEATBEATS

"Far And Near" LP

Just the other day I was pissin' and moanin' that there weren't any more 50's/60's rock 'n' roll outfits around, and lo and behold the NEATBEATS from Tokyo pop up with a new full-length chock full o' hits for your sister's next sleepover! These guys could have played a county fair tour back in '62 with the likes of the BEATLES or THE HOLLIES. The only problem with this release is the mix, as the bass seems to come in and out a lot. (IR)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)



NECROCREEP

"Creed of the Macabre" 7" EP

Metal/Punk melange that "shall feast upon your soul". It has the requisite heavy guitars with COOKIE MONSTER vocals. As cool as creepy metal gets. (JC)

(REANIMATOR/PO Box 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)



(ROZZ &) NEGATIVE TREND

"The Pop Sessions" CD

Raw San Francisco punk at it's most dangerous. NEGATIVE TREND were one of the first wave of SF punk bands, and at this time featured Rozz the "assault vocalist", who would literally attack the audience and tear up the club while they played. Musically,



SHITLIST

it's akin to the STOOGES-meet-the-GERMS, not too shabby a combination. This contains their only recorded studio work available, and thus documents a great band that might otherwise be overlooked today. But there's very little information about the band on this CD, which is too bad. With releases like this, I think it's important to include detailed liner notes. (JC)

(WHITE NOISE/PO Box 277/SONOITA, AZ 85637)

999 "Slam" CD

Wave after wave of reissues. Demos and practice tapes dug up, dusted off, and released ad nauseam. 999 are already a well-documented early British punk/rock band, and another release really isn't necessary, but there's nonetheless some cool stuff on it. They had a great hard-driving sound, and listening to this CD makes me feel like a teenager again. (JC)

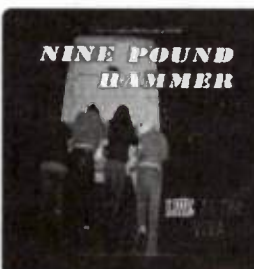


(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

NINE POUND HAMMER "Live At The Vera" CD

NINE POUND HAMMER had to be one of the best southern-tinged garage rock 'n' roll bands around in the early-to mid-90s. Scooch Pooch documents this fact with a live offering. In general I dislike live records, but this one is A-OK; the sound quality is actually crisp and the track list encompasses all their "hits" from "Hayseed Timebomb" to "Run Fatboy Run". This shit puts NASHVILLE PUSSY to shame. (JW)

(SCOOC POOCH/5850 WEST 3RD STREET #209/LOS ANGELES, CA 90036)



NITWITZ

"Landmine Heart/Ticket to Gomorrah" 7"

The new version of the NITWITZ is a less punk-oriented and more hard rockin' outfit. Both tracks are very powerful and riff-heavy in the tradition of LOVESLUG

and more recent bands like the HELLACOPTERS and GLUECIFER, and it's hard to avoid bangin' one's head and shakin' one's fist while listening. I'm rockin' along quite nicely, but I'd prefer it if the lead vocalist didn't sound so much like a Metal Warrior. (JB)

(007/534 E. 14TH STREET #15/NEW YORK, NY 10009)

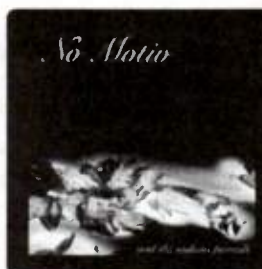


NO MOTIV

"And The Sadness Prevails" CD

This is a type of music that often gets passed off as generic, but there are certain cases where it is played well and a little something extra is added. This is one of those cases. Good songwriting, good execution. Those into the BLINK 182/FACE TO FACE end of the punk spectrum should at least check in on this one. (BAM)

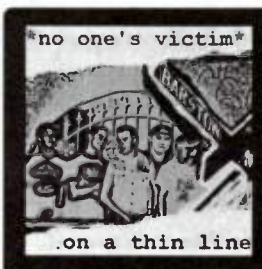
(VAGRANT/2188 WILSHIRE BLVD #361/SANTA MONICA CA 90403)



NO ONE'S VICTIM

"...On a Thin Line" CD

Hook-filled old-style punk rock influenced by lots of bands known for writing really good songs, ranging from S.L.F. to the early UTTERS. On this CD, one can find a slew of strong mid- to uptempo drinkin' singalongs with cool guitar licks, some of which are impossible to get out of your head (especially "Raggae [sic] Clash", "Gun Shots and Cries",



"77", "The Hand You're Dealt", "The Bottle", and "Omaha"). I'm not wild about a couple of the really fast tracks (such as "Always on Top"), but otherwise there's no reason not to rush out and grab this puppy. (JB)

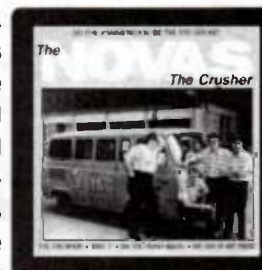
(CYCLONE/24 PHEASANT RUN/MERRIMACK, NJ 03054)

NOVAS

"The Crusher" 7" EP

The original 1964 version of this wrestling ode tore up the Billboard charts and sold over a quarter million copies. This version has the same two magic songs, and also contains cover versions of cuts by BOB DYLAN and the ASTRONAUTS. Lots of fun. (JC)

(NORTON/PO Box 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



ORANGE JUICE FROM THE CRYPT/NERDS split 7"

Two Italian bands offer you their take on fast, sloppy hardcore, but there's nothing too exciting going on here. ORANGE JUICE FROM THE CRYPT are a bit garagier and do an ANGRY SAMOANS cover, so they get my nod for the better of the two bands. (JC)

(SAUCER REX/VIA 6. DALLO CHIESA 6/K/27058 VOGHERA (PV)/ITALY)



OTHER HALF

"Mr. Pharmacist" CD

A surprisingly good compilation of material by an excellent but somewhat unheralded 60's punk band. Many 60's punks were capa-



ble of producing tremendous and primitive individual songs, but few managed to crank out an entire album's worth of killer material. This particular OTHER HALF (from the SF area) broke that mold and churned out a slew of psych-punk classics which were distinguished by the spectacular guitar playing of Randy Holden (a future member of BLUE CHEER). After checking out blasts like (COUNTRY JOE's!) "Feathered Fish", "Flight of the Dragon Lady", "No Doubt About It", and their famous paean to drugs "Mr. Pharmacist", you too can take a "trip" back to the halcyon days of the mid-60s. (JB)

(EVA/101 AVENUE DU GENERAL LECLERC/75014 PARIS/France)

OXYMORON

"The Pack is Back" CD

OXYMORON play ripping street-punk/Oi in the old-school tradition. Compare to the ABRASIVE WHEELS or the VARUKERS. This CD is the best I



have heard from this band, who really seem to be developing their sound. Each song blasts into the next with the full fury of yobs at a soccer riot. The lyrics bite into the government, the pigs, class structure, and—in the case of "Kamikaze"—the waste of someone throwing their life away. Spike up your Mohawk and pogo the night away. (JC)

(CYCLONE/24 PHEASANT RUN/MERRIMACK, NH 03054)

OXYMORON

"Westworld" EP

Get your nose out of that glue-bag, fuckface, and go pick this EP up! OXYMORON are the current kings of European street-punk. The 6 songs here will provide you with a teaser of what these yobs are all about. This is a bit more melodic than their last album ("The Pack Is Back"), but it still has plenty of teeth! (IR)



(CYCLONE/24 PHEASANT RUN/MERRIMACK, NH 03054)

PATRIOT

"Another Dead Generation" CD

Thug-rock galore with completely over-the-top tuff guy lyrics about getting into fights and being a skin-head. Oi! This CD is kind of laughable because it has such a dopey jock ethos. Musically PATRIOT have some good songs, but overall they're not that good. If it all didn't seem so damn contrived, maybe I'd be more impressed. (JW)



(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

JACKSON PHIBES

"Old Devil Moon" 7" EP

Ever wonder what it would be like if the REV-EREND HORTON HEAT was Canadian? Well me neither, but it would sound something like this. Reanimator keeps promising that they will save the world from crappy music. This one isn't bad, but I am still waiting to be saved. (JC)



(REANIMATOR/PO Box 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)

POSTER CHILDREN

"New World Record" CD

The POSTER CHILDREN are a clever bunch of indie rockers in the vein of SEBADOH or PAVEMENT. This is not a style that I care much for, but this album has some interesting tunes. It contains solid, driving music that does not conform to any set genre. They seem to be having a lot of fun, but you may not. (JC)



(SPIN ART/PO Box 1798/NEW YORK, NY 10156)

REVIEWS

LINK PROTRUDI & THE JAYMEN

"Hit and Run" CD

This CD combines the JAYMEN's first two LPs, and contains 23 retro geetar instrumentals in the raunchy LINK WRAY tradition. The ones I like best are their uptempo barnburning originals, but they've also included some covers and slower, bluesy thangs to break up the musical continuity. Once again, FUZZTONES' main man Rudi Protrudi looks backwards rather than forwards, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, though instrumentals alone don't hold my interest for long. (JB)



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

PRESSURE POINT

"Cross To Bare" CD

PRESSURE POINT sing working man's anthems in the tradition of early SKREWDRIVER and the BUSINESS. This is definitely very energetic, fist-in-the-air punk rock, but it's also pretty generic. I bet these guys would smoke live if they could transfer the energy of their songs to a live crowd, but not one song really sticks out on the entire CD. (JW)



(TKO/4104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

PRESSURE POINT

"Youth on the Street" CD

Sacto's finest Oi band belt out 12 heavy-duty yob anthems for the 90s. The sound is really powerful, the lead vocals are nonsense, the back-



SHITLIST

ground choruses are cast-of-thousands' loud, and many of the songs rock (including the covers of the UPSTARTS' "Never 'ad Nothin'" and LAST RIGHTS' "So Ends Our Night"). There are a few clunkers, especially the uptempo and skankin' numbers, but "Skinhead Justice", "Heart Like a Lion", and "Jaded Again" really stand out. (JB)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

QUADRAJETS

"A Little More Speed" CD

The one-sheet states that the QUADRAJETS are "the closest thing you're gonna get to uniting the holy trinity of ELVIS PRESLEY, JOHN LEE HOOKER, and 'SONIC' SMITH." Yeah, I'm fucking sure. Two outta three of the aforementioned people would be rolling in their graves if they ever even heard their names mentioned in the same sentence as the QUADRAJETS. Basically, what you have here are eight completely soul-less, way-too-lengthy, guitar-wanked out tracks, complete with car samples and half-time breakdowns. (JW)

(ONE LOUDER/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

RAPPRESAGLIA

"Degenerazione" CD

This sounds as if RANCID recorded an album in Italian, but not as catchy. A note-for-note shameless ripoff band. Not that I like RANCID either, for that matter. (JC)

(RIOT/VIALE MANZA 26/20127 MILANO/ITALY)



RAYDIOS

"Complete Demo Recordings" LP

Apparently this album had been scrapped by Fink and the boys for reasons unknown, and after listening to it (for about the tenth time in a row) I really can't figure out why. This is fuckin' amazing. Even without the scrotum-shakin' kick of TEENGENERATE, the RAYDIOS' stuff rocks in that meaty Bomp powerpop kinda way, with plenty of crunch to move the album along. I hope that most of you out there won't have to trade a kidney or two to get your hands on a copy of this LP, but do what it takes 'cause it's the album of the year. (RF)

(SCREAMING APPLE/?)

REDS/BOOZERS

split 7" EP

I really dislike direct comparisons, but the REDS' original track ("That's Alright") borrows equally from the PAGANS' "Yeah Yeah" and the stuff off the first LIME SPIDERS EP. Not a band tune, but given the butchered PAGANS cover that follows I gotta question whether these guys are that hot. Then again, the BOOZERS flip is absolutely awful, hyper, "riff city" stuff, so I guess the REDS could be a helluva lot worse. (RF)

(TURKEY BASTER/NO ADDRESS)

RED ALERT

"The Rarities" CD

Another reissue. RED ALERT were a solid English working class Oi band. They have never sounded that exciting to me, but they definitely have lots of fans. There are 22 little-known songs here



including a dead-on cover of the CLASH's "White Man In Hammersmith Palais". Oi completists, take note. (JC)

(CAPTAIN Oi/PO Box 501/WEST WYCOMBE, Bucks, HP10 8BQA/ENGLAND)

REVLONS

"7" 7"

When a band states on their records that they are lo-fi, I instantly suspect that they are trying to fit into the latest cool sub-genre of punk rock—the overdone "lo-fi" thing. Each song on this 6-song EP starts off pretty good but, just when you start to like what they are doing... blam...they change speeds!!! This is a sure sign that these guys are poseurs. Try as they might, they can never be a real garage band. Nice try boys, go back to hard-core. (GL)

(LET ROQ/1725 N. BETHEL/OLYMPIA WA 98506)

ROCK'N'ROLL STORMTROOPERS

"I'm A Rebel" 7" EP

Jesus, this record smokes! It has an amazingly great production featuring bright guitars and some of the best drum sounds ever captured on audiophile-quality vinyl. Their music is catchy, infectious glam punk that has you singing along almost immediately. It's very RAMONES-y, yet there is more going on due to their super choruses. Even their ACCEPT cover ("I'm a Rebel") sounds great. You're a dumbfuck if you don't pick this up. (JW)

(INCOGNITO/SENEFELDERSTRASSE 37A/70176 STUTTGART/GERMANY)

ROKY ERICKSON

"Demon Angel, A Day and Night with..." CD & VIDEO

In these days of debutantes like MARILYN MAN-SON passing as dangerous, this is the real deal



here. Ol' ROKY is still as nutty as a squirrel, and if you have any doubt about that you need go no further than these documentary re-releases. I've had a zillionth-gen

dub of this video for years, shot on Halloween night in '84. I've watched it often, and it's truly scary shit. So is the companion soundtrack. Graphic proof that the line between genius and utter madness is ever so thin. (JD)

(AMSTERDAMNED/PO Box 862558/LA, CA 90086)

RUNAROUNDS

"The Plague of the..." 7" EP

A tight three-piece combo from North Carolina. The cover has a horror show theme that does not really match the band's music. Four fast and snotty tunes, with a guitarist who can whip out the bitchin' leads when he feels like it. (JC)

(NO BUDGET/105 IDOL DRIVE/HIGH POINT, NC 27262)

SECRET LOVERS

"Run" 7" EP

Here's some pretty garage-y rock 'n' roll from Austin's SECRET LOVERS. This band features certain members of the MOTARDS, and has lots of raw power. The standout track is undoubtedly "Rock'n'Roll Rock", with its "hey, ho" backing vocals. (JW)

(MORTVILLE/PO Box 4263/AUSTIN, TX 78765)

SELF MADE MONSTERS

"Love At First Gag" 7" EP

The pain continues. Every song on this EP sounds the same: it's absolutely forgettable

mid-tempo, trashy, three-chord generic punk rock with fried vocals. I have no idea what compels people to "create" this shit, much less release it, but I hope I can get at least a dollar for it. (JW)

(SELF MADE MONSTERS/PO Box 1122/CHINA GROVE, NC 28023)

78RPMS

"New World Chivalry" CD

The 78RPMS are that rare exception of a band that is better than the bigger, more well known bands that its members emerged from, in this case SKANKIN' PICKLE and the RUDIMENTS. I'm probably saying this because they've dropped most of the ska crap and are doing much more of a power pop thing. I like this record a lot, mainly because it has lots of energy. "Short Fuse" is probably the best New Wave song to come out in 15 years. Dill put this out before they folded, but Dr. Strange picked it up from there. (JC)

(DR. STRANGE)

SHAPES

"Songs for Sensible People" CD

A fine collection of songs from early British funny-punk band the SHAPES. It has the trademark "funny-punk" characteristics—razor-sharp wit, silly lyrical themes, amateurish musicianship, and a hint of shambling chaos. Here you'll find a number of very clever punk offerings (some in multiple versions), such as "Kid's Stuff", "Airline Disaster", and "Wot's for Lunch Mum (Not Beans Again!)". I've always been a big fan of this humorous musical subgenre, but those without a well-developed sense of irony may not completely "get it". (JB)



REVIEWS

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

SHIFTERS

"Don't Care/Cat Burglar" 7"

Another impressive record from the late, great SHIFTERS. This one's got a lot more guitar power and instrumental punch, but no diminution of big melodies and hooks. Both songs are irresistible, making this a desirable purchase. (JB)

(RIP OFF/581 MAPLE AVENUE/SAN BRUNO, CA 94066)

SHRUBBERS/SCREWBALLS

split 7" EP

Basic "1,2 fuck you" punk rock. The SHRUBBERS sound like they want to an L.A. band circa 1981, since one song sounds like SOCIAL DISTORTION and the other like the CIRCLE JERKS. The SCREWBALLS are a bit faster, with more of a Fat Wreck Chords sound. (JC)

(DINGUS/900 SOUTH SILVER BROOK DRIVE/WEST BEND, WI 53095)

SHUGGIE

"Shuggie" CD

Big rock bullshit music. "Alternative" radio-friendly weakness. Dumbass lyrics and cheesy guitar. The bio on this on refers to them as FOGHAT meets BADFINGER, but who the hell wants that? Yuck. (JC)

(HEADHUNTER-CARGO/4901-906 MORENA BLVD/SAN DIEGO, CA 92117)



SHITLIST

SICK OF IT ALL

Call To Arms" LP/CD

The mighty S.O.I.A.'s debut on Fat Wreck Chords is finally here, and it continues in the tradition of classic New York hardcore that they helped to invent.

Even though the general sentiment of everyone who listened to this was, "Damn, this shit is hard!", there are a couple of forays into melodicism (such as "Sanctuary" and "Hindsight") that have Lou almost singing. This is heartily recommended, but you don't need my endorsement to know it's worth buying. (JP)

(FAT/PO Box 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)



SILENCERS

"Bleach Pit" CD

The good: it has a hot looking 60's babe on the inside sleeve. The bad: the outside sleeve is a silly race car motif; they should have switched the blond for the car.

The ugly: straight-up surf that I'm sick to death of. This should be reviewed by someone old, like Jeff Bale. (GL)

(ALIVE/TOTAL ENERGY/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)



SIRES

"It Ain't Happening Anymore/Feel No Pain" 7"

I was lucky enough to catch this band live during wild weekend last October in London, and was completely blown away. I haven't seen or heard such a killer garage band in a while, especially from England.



They have a female singer named Domi who is French, kicks ass on harmonica, and kinda sounds like SIOUXSIE SUE on vocals. She sings on my fave track here, "It Ain't Happening Anymore", and the fuzz guitar sound on "Feel no Pain" is unbelievable. I'm really looking forward to their forthcoming LP! Oh ya, Domi also plays guitar for the DIRTY BIRDS, an all-chick 60's punk outfit. Check em out. (TL)

(SMARTGUY/3288 21ST STREET #32/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110)

SMARTY PANTS

"Betty's Beheading/Lost in Las Vegas" 7"

Whatcha got here is alternative art rock. Yuck! It's totally arty farty pop rock, and it's majorly bummin me out. The songs go on forever and ever.

Are they singing in German or what? Two thumbs down and a double snap, HAAAAATED IT. (TL)

(?/1110 BROOKHAVEN DRIVE/EDMOND, OK 73034)



SOLARIZED

"Neanderthal Speedway" CD

Man's Ruin is really into these super heavy bands. Like label mates FU MANCHU, SOLARIZED play the "big" rock with fuzz guitar, thick riffs, and heavy

drums, borrowing heavily from bands like BLACK SABBATH and BLUE CHEER. The lyrics get a bit corny at times, but overall this is quality stoner rock. (JC)

(MAN'S RUIN RECORDS/610 22ND STREET. #302/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107)



SONGS FOR EMMA

"11.12.98" CD

Tommy Strange has always been a working-stiff raconteur par excellence. With this latest incarnation, his wordly wise—yet never weary—tales of lost history, class struggle, and anarchist

angst growl amidst a musical kaleidoscope encompassing the best of early GANG OF FOUR and WIRE, with an electric dash of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS. True craftsmanship never goes out of style. Undoubtedly this issue's finest release. (RK)

(BROKEN/PO Box 460402/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146)



SONICS

"House Party" EP

Billy and Miriam from Norton records sure know how to dig up the killer gems. Here ya got 4 never-been-released home recordings that their dad recorded

for them in order to make a demo tape to take around to get gigs! To me the SONICS are by far the most rockin' among the kings of the northwest garage/frat rock sound—the WAILERS (whose "Wailers House Party" is covered on this EP), DON & THE GOODTIME, and the KINGSMEN, and Gerry Rosselli is one of the best punk singers of all time. On this EP they also cover LITTLE RICHARD's "Keep a Knockin" and JAMES BROWN's "Think". (TL)

(NORTON/PO Box 646/COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



SPECIAL DUTIES

"Live At CBGB's" CD

Oh dear, what an embarrassment. If only these stalwart arseholes had called it a day in '77, instead of constantly reforming and torturing us with the worst posturings of badly-

played gumbie punk. It can only be a testament to the effects of glue-sniffing that anyone can find this crap appealing. SPECIAL DUTIES always managed to combine the worst of early 80s plodding British cookie-cutter punk with the collective



sus, wit and acumen of a decomposing slug. They proudly print a (rather generous, I thought) bad review of their last LP from *MRR* on the sleeve of this new abomination, and even wrote a song in response about how *MRR* sucks. Perhaps this review will get onto the back of their next record, together with a song about what wankers *Hit List* staffers are too. We can only hope. (RK)

(NO ADDRESS; E-MAIL THEM AT SPGREEN77@AOL.COM)

SQUATWEILER

"Horsepower" CD

This band sounds like a bad VERUCA SALT, meaning I don't like 'em! They compare the band to X RAY SPEX. No way, Jose! I'm pissed someone even made such a

comparison. Yikes! This is way too wimpy collegy pooppy pop in your poo poo pants! (Nyuk, nyuk.) I give them a big ole zero on a scale from one to zero. People, paleeeezzzz save yer dough for the dollar bin at your local record store! (TL)

(SPINART/PO Box 1798/NEW YORK, NY 10156)

STARJETS

"God Bless Starjets" CD

The STARJETS were a mid-70's Northern Irish band that straddled the sometimes fine line between pop, power pop, and pop punk. On this CD comp their trademark pop melodies

and loudish axes are on full display, and the songs range from scintillating guitar pop (such as "Schooldays", "War Stories", and "Ten Years") to slightly punkier numbers (like "What a Life" and the classic "Any Danger Love") to rock 'n' roll ("Run with the Pack" and "Do the Push") to much sappier commercial pop. Real spiffy, but definitely not up to the absurdly high standards set by the UNDERTONES or RUDI. (JB)

(CAPTAIN Oi!/PO Box 501/WEST WYCOMBE, BUCCS, HP10 8BQA/ENGLAND)



STEPSISTER

"Big, Bad World" 7"

New release from former KNIFEDANCE pilot Mr Tom Dark. Take a little STOOGES, turn it on its pointed li'l head, and pass it thru some of the more unpleasant recesses of, say, BEEFHEART or BABES IN TOYLAND, then shoot it up with some JAMES BROWN red-hot MD20/20 bump. This sucker moves like a rabid weasel. (JD)

(RED HOUR/PO Box 44302/CLEVELAND, OH 44144)



STICKLERS/KUNG FU MONKEYS

split 7" EP

I hope this record is a joke, since I got a good laugh outta it. Are they making fun of punk rock, or what? The STICKLERS play pop punk in a MR. T/QUEERS sorta way, whereas the KUNG FU MONKEYS sing geeky, pooppy pop punk songs about Hawaii and stuff. Shhhheesh, it sounds like something Lookout would've put out a few years ago. (TL)

(WET NOODLE/PO Box 235789/HONOLULU, HI 96823)



STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS

"Cherry Bomb" 7" EP

The CHEETAHS join up with Cherrie Currie herself on the A-side to do a loud-as-fuck cover of the RUNAWAYS' "Cherry Bomb". On the flip you can find two hard-driving originals, a studio track that savages the pretentious "Silver Lake sound" (thanks to ShitEd for clarifying this for a NorCal guy like me), and a live song recorded in Rochester, NY which sounds kind of like "Busy Man" by D.M.Z. (JB)



REVIEWS

(ALIVE/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

STREET WALKIN' CHEETAHS

"Live On KXLU" CD

What the fuck is this? The first five songs run down the list of commonly pilfered 70's rock 'n' roll acts—ya' know, STOOGES, D.M.Z., NEW YORK DOLLS-type stuff.

All of a sudden, after their verbatim cover of "Looking At you", the band takes a fuckin' right turn onto the SOUL ASYLUM highway, next stop horseshitville U.S.A. These losers should get a clue. (RF)

(TRIPLE X/PO Box 862529/LOS ANGELES, CA 90086)



SUBWAY SECT

"We Oppose All Rock 'n' Roll" CD

The SUBWAY SECT were a late 70's UK band led by art boho Vic Godard. After producing a couple of minimalist crunch punk blasts, including the ab fab "Nobody's Scared" and "Chain Smoking", they rapidly degenerated into a quirky postpunk outfit a la XTC or later GANG OF FOUR. This CD chronicles their sad decline and very quickly descends into a lightweight art-pop groove with annoyingly mannered vocals. In this case less is more, so a 7" EP would have been sufficient. (JB)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)



SVART SNÖ

"Bellyache and Acideyes" CD

A collection of material from the Swedish metal-lic-thrash gods. It includes some comp and EP tracks from their ten year run ('87-97), along with the only demo of UR FUNKTION, the band that metamorphasized into SVART SNÖ. The

SHITLIST

Scandinavians took early DISCHARGE and G.B.H. to heart, minced them up, and proceeded to crank them out with an added zest and fury which led reviewers in the mid-80s to start using words like "blistering", "raging", and "shredding" to describe their music. I always thought Finland's RIISTETTY were the finest exponents of this genre, but SVART SNÖ undoubtedly gave it a good fucking welly. (RK)



(GRAND THEFT AUDIO/501 WEST GLENOAKS BLVD., SUITE 313/GLENDALE, CA 91202)

TALES FROM THE BIRDBATH

"Baron Von Birdbath" EP

This shit is horrible! Cheesy bubblegum pop with crappy acoustic parts that break into limp distortion on the chorus, featuring ex-members of SICKO, the FASTBACKS, and others. Songs about snowcones and scooter rides? No thanks. (IR)



(EMPTY/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA/98102)

TEEN COOL

"That's Why" 7" EP

More raw punk rock from the depths of Texas. "Wear Black" is obnoxious, catchy, and very reminiscent of TEENGENRATE's "Dressed In Black", complete with clap-tracks. "Fuck Skool" has snotty vocals and punchy riffs, and is also great. One thing this band definitely has going for them is a really solid and interesting drummer, which serves to set them apart from lots of other sloppy



bands that can't quite play their instruments. (JW)

(MORTVILLE/PO Box 4263/AUSTIN, TX 78765)

TEEN IDOLS

"Pucker Up!" LP/CD

There seems to be a buzz about the TEEN IDOLS—at least I'm always hearing their name—and this turned out to be enjoyable. Imagine SCREECHING WEASEL without the signature guitar riffs and then add Cinder from TILT on back-up vocals. (JP)



(HONEST DON'S/PO Box 192027/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

TEN YARD FIGHT

"The Only Way" CD

Okay. I used to be straightedge. I listened to MINOR THREAT and Heavy Metal. I had no idea there were so many rules involved, but apparently there are. And somehow they can also be applied to football, which is funny, because one of the reasons I got involved in punk was that it didn't seem to be a very jock-y movement. Well, combine punk and football and you get TEN YARD FIGHT. Somebody sold out their scene and they're very, very pissed. Heavy riffs, tough-but-not-rough vox, and good production add up to a solid buy for angry, athletic ex-substance abusers. (DG)



(EQUAL VISION/PO Box 14/HUDSON, NY 12534)

TOILET BOYS

"Go To Hell" 7" EP

A beautiful picture disc from the grand new purveyors of glam punk. These guys will be a household name soon enough. The A side is a



great rocker, but the flipside tracks need a bit of work. Definitely one to pick up, as they are already getting hard to find. (JC)

(DEVIL DOLL, NO ADDRESS)

UBANGI STOMP

"Black Leather Sock Hoppin' Hell" 7" EP

I guess this came out a few years ago, but this 3-piece band are total DEVIL DOGS worshippers with more of a rockabilly flair. "End of Time" is definitely the best rocker on this EP. The other songs are a bit too "drivin' through the graveyard in my cadillac hearse playin' my geeetarr made outta human bones", if yo know what I mean. (TL)

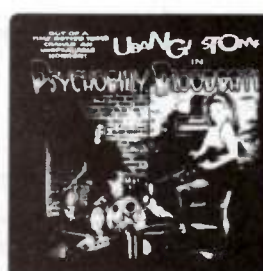


(CHAMELEON/?)

UBANGI STOMP

"Psychobilly Bloodbath" 7" EP

This band tries real hard to be spooky, cool, and shocking, but ends up seeming kinda dorky. Overall the music's not really bad, just a bit dull—garage rockabilly with too little oomph to loosen up that pompadour. UBANGI STOMP have all the right elements, and maybe next time things will all come together. (JC)



(BRAIN DRAIN/PO Box 39441/GREENSBORO, NC 27438)

UNDEAD

"Til Death" CD

Original MISFIT Bobby Steele has been putting out records as the UNDEAD forever, and here's the latest. So what have we got? We got sort



of a MISFITS-Lite, as these songs have that same feel but are just not as ballsy as a MISFITS recording. Most of the songs are good catchy numbers, but they just don't have the guitar power that is needed to put this over the top. I must admit that "There's a Riot in Tomkins Square" is great, but one song does not a great CD make. (GL)

(UNDERWORLD/10738 AVENUE MILLEN/MONTREAL, QUEBEC H2C 2E6/CANADA)

UNION 13

"Why Are We Destroying Ourselves?" CD

The first time I heard this band, strangely enough, was on Live 105, covering RANCID's "Roots Radicals" in Spanish. I adored it. It was rough and brash, close to the original but with enough of a different, quirky element that made it an effective cover. Unfortunately, this LP, their second, seems to blast by in a blur of fairly generic hardcore that doesn't get close to that sublime, singular moment on the "Give 'Em the Boot" comp. (DG)

(EPITAPH/2798 SUNSET BLVD./LOS ANGELES, CA 90026)

U.S. CHAOS

"We've Got the Weapons" CD

This is a reissue comp of early U.S. CHAOS vinyl releases, which date back to the early 1980s. Their mindlessly patriotic lyrics sound as retarded as ever, but their rockin' streetpunk music nonetheless stands the test of time. Most of the songs are powerful and catchy, the vocals are unusually emotive, and there are some genuine anthems to be found herein (especially "American" and "Eye for an Eye"). Knuckleheads rule, OK. (JB)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"At War With Society" CD

What a deal, 33 songs for 99 cents. 90% of them totally rock. This is a retrospective of the NEW RED ARCHIVES catalog, the host to such classic bands as U.K. SUBS, KRAUT, SOCIAL UNREST, CHRIST ON A CRUTCH, and M.D.C., not to mention the original home for such bands as SAMIAM, NO USE FOR A NAME and the SWINGIN' UTTERS. Also features modern greats like the LOUDMOUTHS and ANTI-FLAG. If all that wasn't enough, this even has the greatest mock straight edge song ever, CRUCIAL YOUTH's "Positive Dental Outlook". That's worth at least 99 cents by itself. (JC)

(NEW RED ARCHIVES/PO Box 210501/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94121)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Bad Stains Records Comp, Vol. 4" CD

I really am not sure what the point of these Bad Stain compilations are. I would hazard a guess that Bad Stain are teaming up some of their bands with more well known bands from other labels - WELT, 30 FOOT FALL, LINK 80, THE JACKOFFS, THE MISCREANTS, WHIPPERSNAPPER et al - to get some publicity. Good luck to them, but I fear that most, if not all, of the tracks of the bands one might have heard of previously, are already available. Having said that, this one is pretty good. (RK)

(BAD STAIN/PO Box 35254/PHOENIX, AZ 85069)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Bored Teenagers" LP

A legit comp of '77-'82 British punkers from the same folks that brought you the cool XTRAVERTS retrospective LP. You may recognize



REVIEWS

a few of the names from other not-so-legit comps, such as the excellent ACCIDENT ON THE EAST LANCES. It comes with a cool fanzine-style booklet with lots of info. Great vintage punk from bands like DISCHARGE (no, not the more famous ones), the CRIME (not the S.F. group, duh!), COMMITTED, XPRESS, the AMAZING SPACE FROGS, the ANAL FLEAS, SCHOOLGIRL BITCH, and others. (AW)

(BIN LINER/PO Box 18/MIDHURST, WEST SUSSEX GU29 9YU/ENGLAND)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Built For Speed: A Motörhead Tribute" CD

Not a bad tribute at all, considering it could've been another shitty major label attempt to get boring young country and bad funk-metal bands to cover

MOTÖRHEAD. Instead, it's mostly decent punkers, with the standouts being ZEKE, ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, the DROPKICK MURPHYS, the GROOVIE GHOULIES, and (REO) SPEEDEALER. I haven't heard of some of the other bands, and a couple fail miserably, but overall this is not too shabby. (AW)

(VICTORY/PO Box 14656/CHICAGO, IL 60614)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Contents under Pressure" 7" EP

Four rough-sounding mid-tempo punk groups share this EP, including one from Bulgaria (JUST A PROMISE) and three from the Midwest. FUX are the heaviest (which is cool) and most metallic (which is not), whereas the others have that appealingly unprofessional quality that real punk rock should always have. (JB)

(ROTTEN HOUSE/PO Box 12705/READING, PA 19612)



SHITLIST

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Destructo Rock: A Tribute To Antiseen" CD

ANTISEEN are easily one of the best bands of the past 15 years. They play tuff, pure, unadulterated, misanthropic, "fuck you" rock 'n' roll, and are one of the only bands that master three chords in such a way that almost every one of their songs is memorable. Clearly, even in this pathetic world, there are other bands who feel the same way, and everyone from LIMECELL to JEFF DAHL to the BULEMICS to HELLSTOMPER turn out to honor them on this little gem of a CD. The only weak point is the last song, which is not an ANTISEEN song at all...call me PC, but this one is even a bit over-the-top for me. (JW)

(BALONEY SCHRAPNEL/PO Box 6504/PHOENIX, AZ 85005)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Dutch Beat Explosion" CD

Wow! After listening to the awful "Biet-Het" novelty comp, I was wondering why everyone was raving so much about early Dutch beat music. Now I know.

This CD contains 28 short and sweet tracks, ranging from melodic Merseybeat numbers to crunchy freakbeat-like stompers. There are a shitload of topnotch songs on here, including the SANDY COAST's folk rockish "Subject of My Thoughts", the SCARLETS' BEATLE-esque "Now I Know", the NICOLS' fast-picking "I Can Forget Her", the KWTETS' plaintive and out-of-tune "No Time for Tears", JOHNNY KENDALL & THE HERALDS' freaky "Girl", DOUBLE DUTCH's singalong "Double Cross", the CAVALIERS' heartbreaking "You Can Not Make Me Cry", and...hell, there's too damn many others to mention. Way worthwhile. (JB)

(DISTORTIONS/PO Box 1122/BALA, PA 19004)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hell Ain't A Bad Place To Be" CD

Thirteen bands, including ELEC-TRIC FRANKEN-STEIN, ZEKE, the DWARVES, REO SPEEDEALER, the CHROME CRANKS, and the SUPER-SUCKERS, pay homage to the best band of all times, AC/DC. Does this thing rock? What do you think? Buy this one tomorrow. (BAM)

(REPTILIAN/403 S. BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hot Curly Weenie, vol. 2"

Asampler from Recess records that includes released and some unreleased tracks from the bands on their current roster—F.Y.P., the DWARVES, the CRIMINALS, the SEX OFFENDERS, the GRUMP-IES, FURIOUS GEORGE, the QUINCY PUNX, the JAG OFFS, PUD, the STUN GUNS, et al. It says "cheap!" on the front, but I got this for free and even the excellent AVENGERS cover by the SEX OFFENDERS won't stop me from trading it in. If you like these bands you should start combing the bargain bins, since promo wankers like me may be trading it in to CD emporiums across the country. (RK)

(RECESS/PO Box 1112/TORRANCE, CA 90505)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Interference Records Sampler" CD

Afairly solid bunch of punk tunes can be found here. Fifteen bands, mostly in the street punk/Oi vein, are featured. The standout bands are the CUFFS, ANTI-FLAG, the mighty WRETCHED ONES, and the

UNSEEN. Nowadays the record bins are flooded with CD compilations, but this one is surely above average. (JC)

(INTERFERENCE/5012 WESTMORLAND ROAD/WHITESBORO, NY 13492)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"It's A Kave-In" CD

Sadly, Dean Smittehauser, who compiled the original 1987 vinyl version of this comp, as well as doing the great zine The Livin' End, died in '96. This is a CD reissue of his great comp of obscure Aussie and New Zealand 60's punkers. The track order is changed, there are new liner notes, and a few songs that have since been reissued on legit comps have been dropped from the original version (what, no CHANTS R&B?), but a bunch of other stuff is added. 29 songs in all, and they all rock. (AW)

(KUSTOM '65, NO ADDRESS)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Japan in Decline" CD

Japan is in economic decline, and it sounds like most of these bands are pretty pissed about it. There's lots of screaming, growling, and frantic guitars to be heard here, and the styles range from hardcore to grindcore to straight-up punk. Not for the faint of heart or the pop punk kids. (JC)

(SIX WEEKS/225 LINCOLN AVENUE/COTATI, CA 94931)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Life in the Fat Lane" CD

I never wanted this day to come — the day that I would put on the eagerly-anticipated next Fat comp and be disappointed. To be fair it's still a fairly solid record, and it's only four bucks; the problem is, I always felt like the first three Fat comps would have been worth a standard LP

price, while this one definitely isn't. The best three tracks on the comp are NO USE FOR A NAME's "Coming Too Close", a new AVAIL track, and SCREECHING

WEASEL's "Dummy Up," although all three bands have definitely written better songs. It also pains me to say that the NOFX song is actually kind of lame. Ouch. (DGJ)

(FAT/PO Box 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"The Lost Generation" LP

Compiled by someone named "Zack The Maniac," and purporting to be limited to only 525 copies, this blue vinyl comp has "18 wild but not forgotten sixties garage punkers from the USA" on it. The cover art is another variation of the "band of Vox guitar-playing cavemen playing for caveatens" theme, leading one to think that this is just another in an endless slew of 60s garage comps with songs we've all heard on other comps. But fear not, most of these tracks are pretty obscure and seemingly uncompiled 'till now. Worth checking out, if ya can find it! (AW)

(Dig Up, NO ADDRESS)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Metal Rules" LP/CD

Well, hmm, I don't know about this. If you have an odd desire to hear ska, swing, and rap send-ups of '80s glam classics, here it is. These bands can't reproduce the operatic vocals and lavish guitar riffing of the originals, so they resort to unexpected reworkings, like the MARGINAL PROPHET's hip-hop take on DEF LEPPARD's "Pour Some Sugar On Me" and the incredibly vile-even-if-it-is-a-joke



swing version of POISON's "Unskinny Bop". HAIRSTORM 84 definitely garners the award for best name and they turn in a good version of TWISTED SISTER's "We're Not Gonna Take It". This is recommended only to those who still have a pair of leopard skin spandex pants kicking around in the back of the closet. (JP)

(SMART/PO Box 480120/LOS ANGELES, CA 90048)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Music to Kill For" CD

This comp, featuring big-name heavies like BAD RELIGION, NO USE FOR A NAME and SCREW 32, was one I had high hopes for. Unfortunately, all the songs on here that I like I already have on other records, and the unreleased or obscure songs from bands I love are all fairly second-rate. I suppose if you're just scratching the surface of punk, this might be an okay place to start, but why not just go out and buy the first three CLASH records, BLACK FLAG's "Damaged," the MINUTEMEN's "Double Nickels on the Dime" and everything JAWBREAKER ever did? It's more expensive, yes, but the dollar-for-dollar return on your investment will be a hundredfold compared to this comp. (DGJ)

(SIDE 1/6201 SUNSET BLVD. SUITE 211/HOLLYWOOD, CA 90028)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Of Things To Come" LP/CD

This BYO and Strength Magazine release serves as the soundtrack to a snowboard movie and features a strong line-up of bands who actually use cuts from their albums rather than obscure outtakes or throwaways. Highlights include GOOD RIDDANCE, ANTI-FLAG, SWINGIN' UTTERS, H2O, and an old favorite from PEGBOY's "Strong Reaction/Three Chord Monte" record. (JP)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA 90067)



REVIEWS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punkin'" CD

A strong collection of current Spanish punk groups featured on the great Munster label. Obviously, bands like the PLEASURE FUCKERS and LA SECTA

have worked their magic, since there's a newer generation of obnoxious '77 and 60's garage punk outfits on here (instead of the usual intense Basque thrash). I especially recommend the SAFETY PINS, LOS PERROS, and veteran bands CEREBROS EXPRIMIDOS and LA SECTA. Hell, yeah! (JB)

(HELL YEAH/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk Til Ya Poop!" CD

I'm not really sure what the point of this compilation is. There are 32 bands, some of them fairly well known, but I get the impression that none of the tracks are unreleased. Some of the bigger bands include LESS THAN JAKE, AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY, MANDINGO, BICKLEY, WELT, NO FRAUD, and LINK 80. If you like this sort of stuff, then this may well be a fairly pleasant audio excursion. (RK)

(BAD STAIN/PO Box 35254/PHOENIX, AZ 85069)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk Til Ya Puke!" CD

The third Bad Stain compilation this month. This one seems to feature mainly bands on their own label. Less well known thus, but



SHITLIST

LAUNDRY, LITTLE GREEN MEN, VETERAN FLASH-BOX all turn in pretty up-tempo fare. MEAN PEOPLE are suitably punk and snarly, while the TWITS, with the dueling male/female vocals and pissed off persona bring the mighty BLATZ to mind. Appalling packaging/art, but the music makes up for it. (RK)

(BAD STAIN/PO Box 35254/PHOENIX, AZ 85069)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"R.A.F.R., vol. 2" CD

Flipside brings us yet another compilation CD. 30 bands each do one track, some of which are a bit more familiar than others. They did a nice job on the packaging, which includes a 14-page booklet with photos and lyrics from all the groups. The highlights on this CD are the songs by the CROWD, ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, the WRETCHED ONES, the HUMBERS, the TURBO AC'S, and too many others to mention. This is a solid comp. (IR)

(R.A.F.R./11054 VENTURA BLVD #205/STUDIO CITY, CA 91604)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Runt Of The Litter" CD

You'd think that the bottom of the barrel would've been scraped clean after 20 or so tracks, but nooooo. Fan Attic defies reason and good taste by compiling 37 of the worst punk rock bands from New England. All the hits, from FECE PIECES (genius) to that late 90's hallmark of '77 punk, the DIMESTORE HALOS (lookout, STITCHES). I know that it's a noble undertaking for a label to showcase local noodling, but if this is an attempt to cast the Northeast in a favorable light then it ain't doing the job. There's probably better shit comin' outta fuckin' Mongolia. (RF)

(FAN ATTIC/PO Box 391494/CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Serial Killer" LP/CD

The first thing about this comp which caught my eye was the cover art, which features two stripper types in a carnal embrace. Besides these distractions, this disc is better than average and replete with big names such as NUFAN, ZEKE, and BLINK 182, but the high points for me were a track by the CHEMICAL PEOPLE and an unreleased AT THE DRIVE-IN cut. (JP)

(FEARLESS/13772 GOLDENWEST STREET #545/WESTMINSTER, CA 92683)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Scooch Pooch Records Plays: Their Original Sins" CD

Here's a compilation of a bunch of bands on the Scooch Pooch label, including the TEEN ANGELS, the COUNTDOWNS, ZEKE, the DEAD END CRUISERS, and the LADONNAS. My fave tracks are both cuts by the LORD HIGH FIXERS ("Poppa Hoodoo" and "Is Paranoia a Form of Awareness"), which are great fucked-up noisy slabs of blues punk with some catchy hooks thrown in. ZEKE does an awesome version of CHEAP TRICK's "Hello Ladies and Gentlemen", but I expected NINE POUND HAMMER to do a more rockin' version of the FLAMIN' GROOVIES' "Teenage Head". The LADONNAS' "The End of the Devil Dogs" brought tears to my eyes!! BOOOHOO! (TL)

(SCOOC POOCH/323 BROADWAY AVENUE E. #405/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Skins and Pins" CD

A cheap sampler of old and new Oi and street-punk drawn from recent releases on GMM (mainly), TKO, Knockout, and 45 Revolutions. There are 28 tracks from the likes of the ANTI-HEROS, OXYMORON, the TEMPLARS, CONDEMNED 84, the DROPKICK MURPHYS, ONE WAY SYSTEM, and various lesser-known bands. Not all



of the groups selected their best material to put on here, but this CD nonetheless provides a representative snapshot of the state of Oi in the 1990s. (JB)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Skunk Records Spring Sampler, 1999" CD

Skunk Records is now "[celebrating] 10 years of fuck' shit up". I guess if "fucking shit up" consists of releasing the 90's version of THREE DOG NIGHT

albums, then Skunk's got it in spades. About nine new editions to the MTV late night rotation roster, including hippie crap like the LONG BEACH DUB ALL STARS and a bunch of other barefoot assholes polishin' that SoCal ray-gay pecker. No thanks, dude. (RF)

(SKUNK/



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Spring Sampler '99" LP/CD

Roadrunner is recovering all its bases on this one, touching on most of the popular genres and sounds with a line-up of bands of which I've heard of only one. You got

some alt rock, some hip-hop, some swing, plenty of KORN-core, a pop-punk group with a girl singer, some industrial, and some emotional crooning with string arrangements. I'd be surprised if your tastes aren't represented somewhere on here. (JP)

(ROADRUNNER/536 BROADWAY/NEW YORK, NY 10012)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Surfbeat behind the Iron Curtain [vol. 1]" CD

Here's an LP for the historical archives. It contains surf and beat instrumentals, the bulk of which were recorded in communist eastern Europe between 1963 and 1966. If truth be told, most of the tracks here are fairly pedestrian, although we can scarcely imagine the difficulties they faced getting permission to record anything in the face of state scrutiny and hostility. The only things that really stood out were the amazing guitar playing by Takeshi Terauchi in the song by Japan's BUNNYS and the British ELIMINATORS' fuzzed out version of "Wipe Out", neither of which were from behind the Iron Curtain! (JB)

(AIP/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Swing Sucks" CD

Holy fucking christ!!! how does crap like this get in here? Last issue it was the ZIGGENS, and now this. The title itself hits the mark, but this CD is filled with 20 bands playing 20 crappy swing numbers. I bet at least one of these will some day wind up in a Dockers ad. Shove your martinis and cigars up your swingin' ass! I'll take Pabst Blue Ribbon and some shit-house punk! (IR)

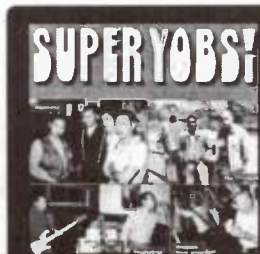
(LIBERATION/PO Box 17746/ANAHEIM, CA 92817)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Super Yobs 2" CD

The second volume in the "Super Yobs" series, which compiles songs by bands on Vulture Rock's roster. Not surprisingly, all of



the music is in the Oi and streetpunk vein. My personal faves are the irresistible tracks by BOOT PARTY, ROUGHTRADE, the TEMPLARS, BOVVER WONDERLAND, the BAD VULTURES, and CRIKEY CREW, but the others aren't bad, either. The humorous highlight has to be the TOUGHSKINS' pro-Yank, anti-Brit reworking of COCK SPARRER's "England Belongs to Me"—whilst simulating Limey yobbo vocal accents! (JB)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO Box 40104/ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Their Sympathetic Majesties Request" double LP/CD

An extensive and diverse compilation drawn from earlier Sympathy for the Record Industry vinyl releases. With 48 tracks it's bound to be uneven in spots, but with beautiful packaging and killer songs by the VACANT LOT, the NOMADS, the SUPERSUCKERS, the MUFFS, the DWARVES, the CONEHEADS, the HEADCOATS, the ZEROS, SLUDGE, the LAZY COWGIRLS, the HUMPER, etc.—most of which are out of print—it's hard to ignore. So by no means don't. (JB)

(SYMPATHY/4450 CALIFORNIA PLACE #303/LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

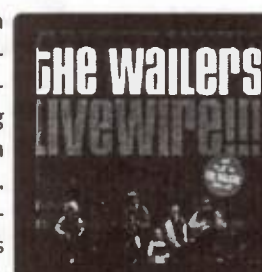


WAILERS

"Livewired!" LP

"Livewired!" is a "best of" compilation of the WAILERS, documenting their releases from 1965-1967. Excellent garage-rock 'n' roll classics such as "Dirty Robber", "Out Of Our Tree", and "I'm Down" make their way onto this great record. It isn't necessarily stuff you haven't heard before, but it is a great collection of WAILERS' songs you might wanna have, but cannot find, on vinyl. This is the real deal, as far as classic garage-stomp is concerned. (JW)

(NORTON/BOX 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



REVIEWS

WAYOUTS

"Better Ways..." CD

Seven tracks, which would've been called a mini-LP back in the days of vinyl. Largely introspective, low-key "emo"-ish type stuff. The only comparison that springs to mind would be the BLACKTOP CADENCE, or perhaps a somewhat de-fanged JAWBREAKER. Not a bad record by any means, and if you aren't particularly fond of distortion pedals, or prefer by and large to keep yours inside your backpack, you'll probably want to snap this up. (RK)

(HARMLESS/1437 W. HOOD/CHICAGO, IL 60660)



WEAKLINGS

"Grow Up Gurl" LP

I really want to like this band, but it is impossible. The most notable characteristic of this record is that not one song stands out, so that it all too easily could serve as background noise for your next party. It features speedy, snotty, degenerate punk rock that wishes it could have emerged from New York in the late 70's. Live, these guys smoked my li'l world. Too bad they have yet to deliver on vinyl. (JW)

(JUNK/PO Box 1474/CYPRESS, CA 90630)



WHITTINGTONS

"I'll Get You"

Another 7 inches of joy from Illinois' WHITTINGTONS. This is uber-lo-fi trash that is endearing in some respects but has certainly been done better before. The key to being "successful" at something like this is actually writing a good song. Unfortunately, the WHITTINGTONS don't completely deliver on this score, in contrast to their great "Daddy Did It!" 7" a while back.

SHITLIST

cover is honest yet disappointing. (JW)



(SACK O' SHIT/PO Box 308/KANKAKEE, IL 60901)

ANDRE WILLIAMS

"Poor Mr. Santa/Poor Mr. Santa" 7"

Back in more of a traditional Chicago blues set-up, ANDRE WILLIAMS delivers a pretty solid, demented Christmas carol in two versions, the "naughty" and the "nice". If you're expecting the raw, fuckin' kick in the jaw found on his "Mr. Silky" LP, you might be disappointed in this. However, if you have any affinity for what Mr. Rhythm's been doing for the last 40 years—i.e. if you've got a fucking clue—you'll be leaving this 45 on your turntable for quite a while. (RF)



(NORTON/PO Box 646 COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10008)

WIRETAPS

"Recording" CD

Featuring former members of the MAN-TEE-MANS, the FALLOUTS, the INHALANTS, and the GIMMICKS, these WIRETAPS crack out some real infectious minimalist garage-rock-meets-New Wave pop. The songs are very catchy, have great lyrics, and feature Dave Holmes' signature scratchy but clean guitar sound as well as his backing vocals. The lead singing is done mostly by Caryn Palmer, Steve Turner of MUDHONEY's significant other and co-owner of Super Electro records. Lisa Rickenberg's bass (and occasional lead singing) and Steve Malimin's drums keep the rhythm going strong.



Impressive. (AW)

(SUPER ELECTRO/PO Box 20402/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

WESLEY WILLIS

"Greatest Hits, Vol. 2" CD

This guy rules. Tweaked-out lyrics from the awesome mind of W.W., laid down to the tinkly sounds of his keyboard. These 22 songs are hand-picked from his most recent self-released CDs. It's an acquired taste, but "They Threw Me Out Of Church" might almost rival "Rock and Roll McDonald's". Check this out. (BAM)

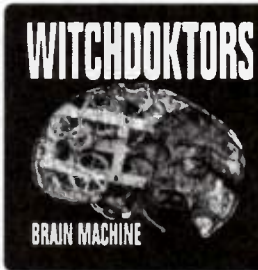


(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES/PO Box 419092/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141)

WITCHDOKTORS

"Brainmachine" CD

Don't get this band mixed up with the L.A. WITCHDOCTORS, which featured some ex-BOMBORAS. This band of WITCHDOKTORS play what I would call college radio garage or alternative garage. It blows! It's way too overproduced for my taste. Man, they make the FUZZTONES sound great. They are described as STEP-PENWOLF meets the MONKEES! I don't think so, dudes. Homey, don't play dat! (TL)



(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

WITCHERY

"Witchburner" EP/CD

Much to my delight, my latest batch of CD's included this black metal offering from Necropolis Records. They kick off this disc with a cover each from ACCEPT, WASP, JUDAS PRIEST, and BLACK SABBATH, and finish up with three originals which bring to mind AT THE GATES and SLAYER. Even though it may be a faux pas in the black metal scene to say so, I prefer the higher pitched vocals, such as those of WITCHERY, over

the Cookie Monster growling of many other contemporary bands of the genre. At any rate, this is recommended, especially if you're into the older bands covered here. (JP)



(NECROPOLIS/PO Box 14815/FREMONT, CA 94539)

WOGGLES

"Wailin' with the Woggles" CD/10" LP

Live, this band puts on a really great nonstop action-packed show, but on vinyl they just don't do it for me. Some bands are great both onstage and in the studio, but others should record live and not in a studio...like the WOGGLES, for instance. I think they should muddy up their sound a bit. Some might disagree with me, just as I'm sure some will say "potaaayto" rather than "pototo"! If you're a WOGGLES fan, you'll probably dig this anyway. (TL)

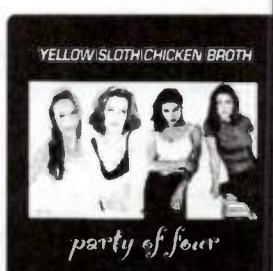


(ONE LOUDER/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE99 1NW/ENGLAND)

YELLOW SLOTH CHICKEN BROTH

"Party Of Four" 7" EP

Music to stalk celebrities to, with four songs about four different celebrity babes. It's a clever albeit silly idea, but the music is stale old generic pop punk. Listening to this kind of gives you a creepy, voyeuristic feeling. This band needs to get out and socialize more. (JC)



(BAD STAIN/PO Box 35254/PHOENIX, AZ 85069)

YOUTH BRIGADE

"Out Of Print" CD

The long awaited reissue of the original "Sound and Fury" album, plus a few never-before-released tracks. The original was hastily made for a 1982 tour and



limited to only 800. To avoid confusion, this "Sound And Fury" is quite different than the one that was subsequently released, since it shares only five of the same tracks. But is it better? Probably not, but even so it contains some pretty great raw and exciting stuff. If you're a fan, definitely pick it up. The only sour moment is the MOODY BLUES' cover, a truly awful song by an awful band. (JC)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA 90067)

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS

"Independence Day" 7" EP

There's a guy wearing an AGNOSTIC FRONT shirt and a guy wearing a Pabst Blue Ribbon shirt on the back of this record, which



should tell you everything you need to know. Rolling back and forth between punky hardcore and Oi, these guys can obviously fuck shit up. I'm looking forward to the upcoming LP. (BAM)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO Box 40104/ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

YUM YUM TREE

"I Know Who I Am" 7"

Jeff Bale, aka Mr. Big, always seems to give me records I fucking hate and end up giving to the homeless people that piss all over my steps. This is no



exception. Hardcore female vocals that are not singing but rather screeching similar to the RED

AUNTS, with male chorus background vocals over a pseudo-metal sound. Sound confusing? It is. I think YUM YUM TREE is also into that Riot Grrrrl thing, so they probably hate hetrrro males such as myself. Since they already hate me and think I'm a fuckin' pig, I've gotta say the female guitar player looks pretty fucking hot. (GL)

(THUNDERBABY/HASSELSTRASSE 120/40599 DUSSELDORF, GERMANY)

ZEROS

"I Don't Wanna/Lil Latin Lupe Lu" 7"

The ZEROS were a classic late 70's/early 80's L.A.-area punk band, and also one of the first all-Hispanic bands of that type. This is a late 80's or early



90's recording that lacks some of the magic and spark of their earlier releases. It sort of reminds me of LONE JUSTICE. (JC)

(SYMPATHY/4450 CALIFORNIA PLACE #303/LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

ZIGGENS

"Pomona Lisa" CD

I should have known what this band was all about from the cover, which contains an illustration of a big wave, a surfboard, and guitars. The ZIGGENS are one of



those bands that play every single type of popular music in the hopes of appealing to someone. Good luck. They start off with some decent instrumental surf stuff, and probably should have stuck with that. But they soon move into some awful "swing" territory, and then try their hand at folk rock in a SIMON & GARFUNKEL vein—but without the inspiration. (IR)

(SKUNK/6285 E. SPRING STREET #234/LONG BEACH, CA 90808)

ZILLIONARES

"Up To My Neck In You" 7" EP

The ZILLIONARES are the new kings of lo-fi, sometimes almost no-fi, punk and roll. They

REVIEWS

are 1/2 CRIME and 1/2 the TROGGS. One of the most fun bands going right now. (JC)



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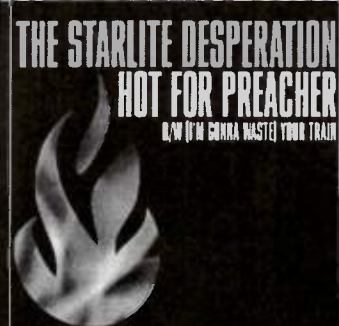
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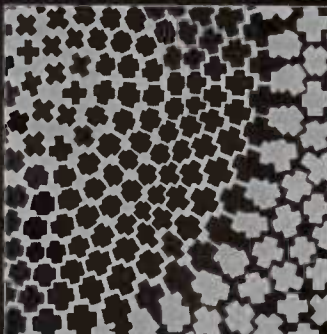
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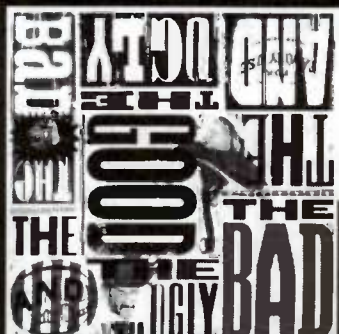
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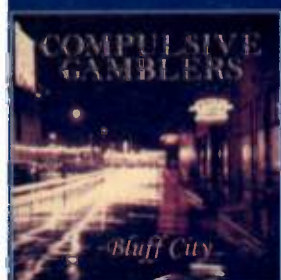
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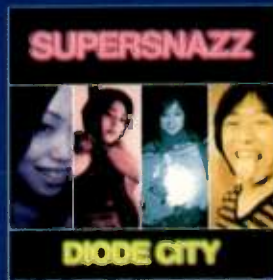
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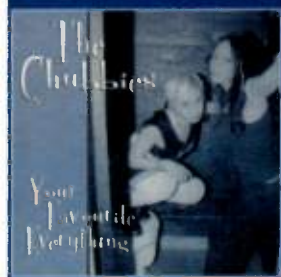
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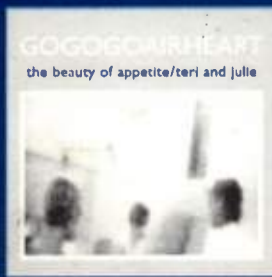
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