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ISSUE 10
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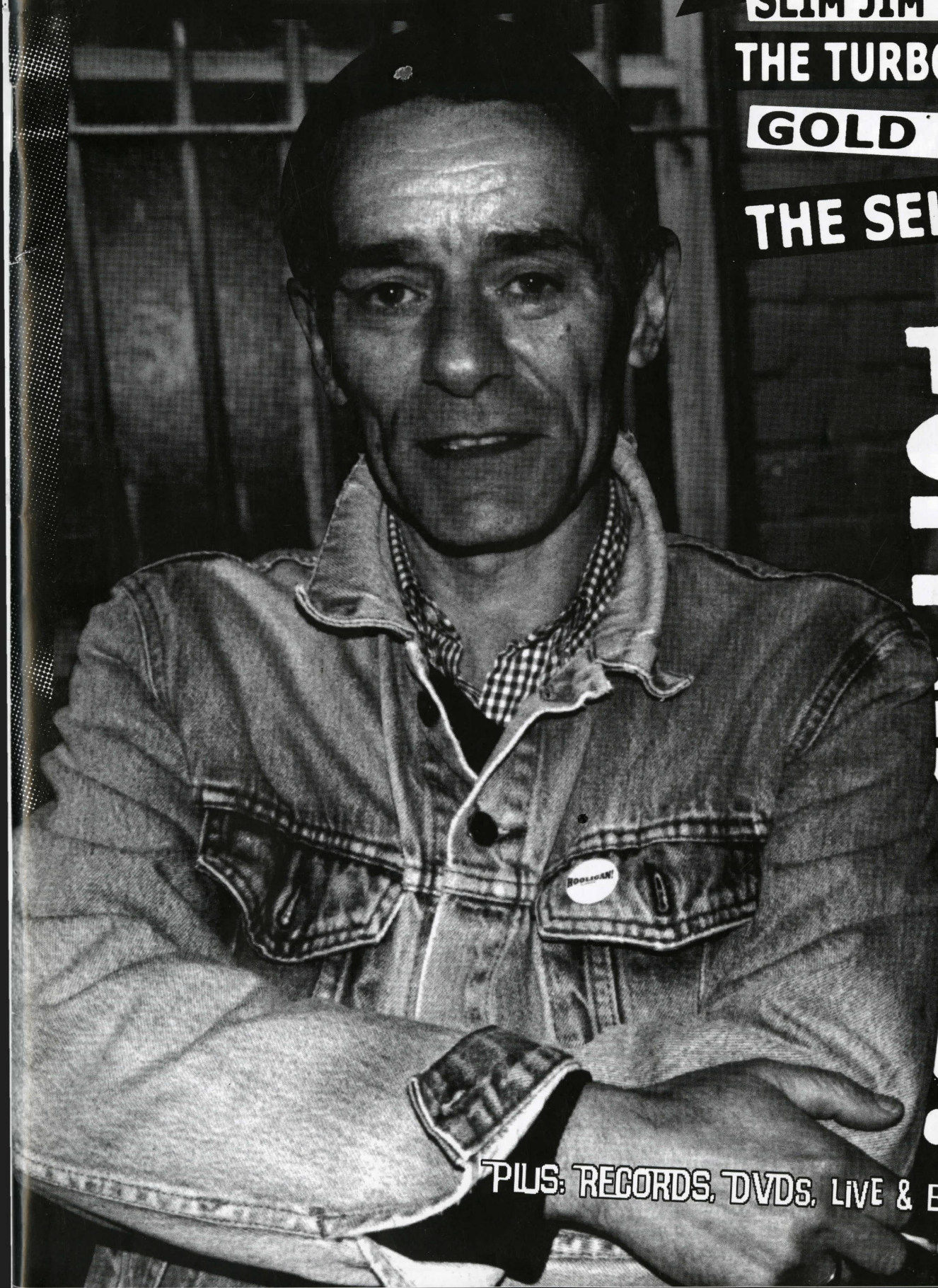
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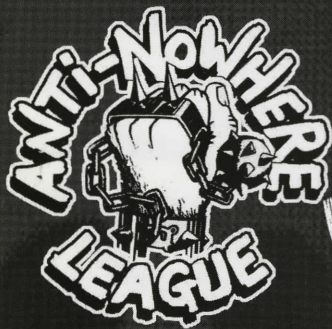
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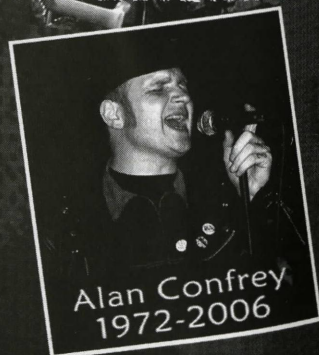
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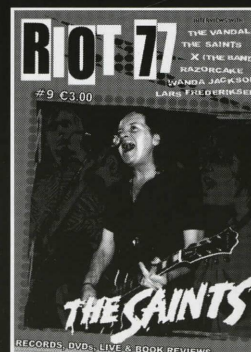
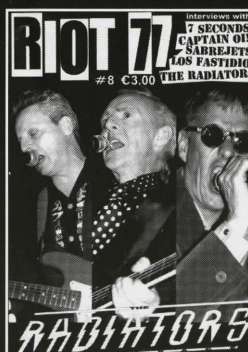
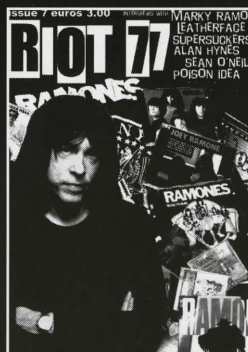
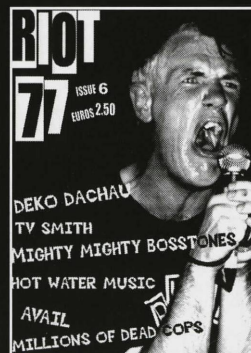
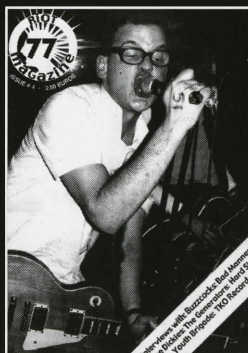
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RIOT. 77: You're over for your annual weekend in Ireland then Pauline?

PAULINE BLACK: Yeah, three dates, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. We were in Cork, Galway and then Dublin tonight. We go back home then and we've got Holland for four days next week, a week off and then out to America for ten days, which should be good. We're going to Mexico City for the first time and the other dates are down the west coast.

RIOT. 77: How does The Selecter get on in America these days?

PAULINE: Same as anywhere. It's pretty much the same wherever you go. I mean I've never been to outer Mongolia, but ... (laughs)

RIOT. 77: You play the House Of Blues when you're over there ...

PAULINE: Yeah, there's the one's in Los Angeles and San Diego.

RIOT. 77: You've had some issues with the House Of Blues in the past?

PAULINE: Have I? It's amazing how word gets around isn't it? (laughs). I just find it difficult playing a place where when I go to the toilet there's some black person in there scrubbing it out. I don't understand that. They call it the "House Of Blues", do you know what I'm saying?

RIOT. 77: You get that here too.

PAULINE: Yeah I know, I'm not trying to take a job away from anyone; I mean a job is a job. I just thought it was a bit peculiar from that aspect. I don't know what the alternative would be ... (laughs). It just seems odd when they base their club on that whole Southern thing ...

RIOT. 77: But you don't mind playing there again?

PAULINE: Well, that was a long time ago when we played there, so I shall see what its like this time. I mean, it wasn't an objection as such, its just sometimes I think the irony of certain things is lost on people. Americans aren't big on irony ...

RIOT. 77: You done an arena tour with No Doubt over there, didn't you?

PAULINE: Yeah.

RIOT. 77: How was that?

PAULINE: Soul destroying! (laughs). Arenas are soul destroying anyway, without all the rest of it. Gwen Stefani is a great performer, but they're about as far removed from Ska as anyone possibly could be. If someone asks you to do something like play in front of eighty thousand people, you don't really say no. You'd be fuckin' daft wouldn't you? So you go! I wouldn't say it was the wackiest time I've ever had in my life, but it was ok. Obviously a lot more people got to see us, but they had an average age of ten (laughs) ... and presumably the music meant absolutely nothing to them at all (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Was Gwen Stefani just a Selecter fan?

PAULINE: Yeah, she was a Selecter fan. When she was twelve or something like that she went to one of these talent competitions and sang "On My Radio" (laughs). I think her brother was into Madness and stuff like that.

RIOT. 77: Some dance band sampled "On My Radio" last year.

PAULINE: Oh god yeah, Basement Jaxx sampled it and put it out under the name of

"Same Old Show". Someone else did a mix of Avril Lavigne's "Skater Boy" over the top of "On My Radio" and seemingly it fits perfectly (laughs). It just turns up in the most obscure places.

RIOT. 77: This all has nothing to do with you I take it? (laughs)

PAULINE: God no, you've gotta be joking. What, you think I've got that much imagination? (laughs) No, I can assure you it has nothing to do with us. So long as they send the royalty cheque they can do what they like (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Obviously you still own all the rights to your music?

PAULINE: Yeah, yeah.

RIOT. 77: What sort of a touring schedule do you keep these days?

PAULINE: Every week you'd probably find us doing two or three gigs.

RIOT. 77: You live in Coventry still is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah, have you been there?

RIOT. 77: Uhhh, no I haven't. It's full of Paddy fuckers, isn't it?

PAULINE: There're whole streets where everyone is either Irish or Pakistani (laughs).

RIOT. 77: You were brought up in London though, is that right?

PAULINE: Well, not London, Essex. There's a difference, but it is a London borough I suppose.

RIOT. 77 ... and how did you end up in Coventry?

PAULINE: I went to university there ... as did half The Specials. We all went to the same university; it was a Polytechnic. Boris and Jerry Dammers went there I know. I didn't meet them there; I didn't even know them at the time. That all happened afterwards.

RIOT. 77: What did you study?

PAULINE: Chemistry.

RIOT. 77: How did you do?

PAULINE: I did alright at it, actually.

RIOT. 77: You played the 100 Club the other day, how was that?

PAULINE: Yeah, that was good. Funnily enough they still have gigs there. The Beat played it not so long ago and I think Neville Staple did it or is doing it. In 1982 I think it was, the Stones done a secret gig there and I remember standing watching Mick Jagger and thinking, "Fuck, I'd really like to play here, this is a nice little club!". But I never ever did 'cos the band had split up and all the rest of it, so it was cool to get back and have a chance to play it. The first time I played it was earlier on this year when we did that 3 Men & Black thing, but this time with the 2 Tone Special they were having Dave Wakefield, Rhoda Dakar and Roddy Radiation do it also.

RIOT. 77: I was going to ask if you were still working with Rhoda ...

PAULINE: Rhoda comes along and does gigs if people are looking for that kind of bill. It's difficult though, when someone comes along and does something with you, you're "working" with them. She's got kids n' things like that. It's a loose arrangement, in the same way that 3 Men & Black is different configurations at different times.

SELECTER

Widely regarded for possessing a natural flair for timeless songwriting, Coventry's The Selecter shared 2 Tone's first 7-inch single release with The Specials. The A-Side gave us an introduction to Jerry Dammers Specials, with a reworking of Prince Buster's "Al Capone" idea, whilst the flip represented The Selecter's chance to seize their moment, with a self-titled instrumental. And seize their moment they did, with the 7 inch becoming the most significant, if not the greatest of its decade. The Selecter dragged the Calypso and Ska of their 1950's forefathers into Thatcher's Britain of the early 80's. Tearaway youth of the day at last had something they could cling to, as The Selecter, along with the 2 Tone label, rose to prominence in the following months, taking to the road and going on to release more than a handful of essential single and album recordings. The supposed multicultural utopia of 2 Tone was short lived however – "It wasn't a fuckin' Pepsi Cola advert!" Pauline Black once stated, and mismanaged relations lead to the downfall of the label a short time later. The Selecter's musical influences were far reaching and incorporated everything from Motown to Jazz. With their follow up album, "Celebrate The Bullet" on the Chrysalis label, they too soon ran out of steam and went their separate ways during those ill fated years of the mid to late 80's. These days lead singer Pauline Black is back in business with a new line up of The Selecter and continues to tour and record with the band. They've remained sincere to their roots and possess a deep pride in being affiliated with the 2 Tone explosion, which is not all surprising when you consider its still where they draw the majority of their following from even today. The 2 Tone era has inspired literally hundreds of copycat bands, but it's difficult to hold any of them up to the real thing, which is perhaps one reason why all those records still sound so good nearly thirty years on. I spoke with Pauline Black in the upstairs room of Whelan's, Dublin. (Photos taken in Whelan's and the Music Centre, Dublin)



That's the whole reason it's called 3 Men & Black; it should really have been called 3 Men & a Black (laughs) ... or if Rhoda does it 3 Men & 2 Blacks (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Isn't Jake Burns living in America now?

PAULINE: Yeah, he lives in Chicago. The next set of dates with that are going to be me, Roddy Radiation, Jake Burns and Nick Welsh.

RIOT. 77: How did Roddy Radiation get involved with it, because he wasn't there at the beginning, was he?

PAULINE: Roddy lives up the road from me. He calls in on the way home from his drinking bouts.

RIOT. 77: He's still on the drink then? (laughs)

PAULINE: (laughs) ... God, yes (laughs). He fuckin' drinks for Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland (laughs). "Does Roddy still drink?" (laughs) ... oh my God, that's a good one (laughs). Is the Pope a Catholic, you know? But no, I think Roddy's a great addition, I really do. We had JJ Burnell from The Stranglers for a while, but then they put out a new album and have been on a world tour ever since kinda thing. Dave Wakefield replaced JJ I think and then the last time we went out Roddy replaced Jake, because Jake had just gotten married n' that.

RIOT. 77: Do you vary the stories much from night to night or is almost like a set list?

PAULINE: Well on a particular tour I suppose the stories would tend to stay the same, but from tour to tour the stories vary. You'd get bored and fall asleep yourself if you didn't. Chris Murray has done some interesting stuff with that idea and Dave Wakefield has taken it on in America since playing on 3 Men & Black, but the one thing that's difficult with that whole concept is touring non English speaking countries, because you're stories are going to be very short.

RIOT. 77: You're currently in the process of putting the 7th Selecter album together ...

PAULINE: Yeah, it's going very well. We're putting that together and at the same time trying to organise an acoustic Selecter one too. Hopefully they'll both come out before the end of 2006 and we'll tour off the back of that. You have to move on a lot of things ... I mean if you can. There're people who tend to just stick with the band thing, but there's other stuff out there and other ways of doing Ska music and I really do believe that. When I say Ska music I don't mean "Chicka! Chicka!" ... you can write songs and be creative within it or just sit back and say, "Oh, whatever, let's just bang out our greatest hits!". I wouldn't knock anyone for doing that, but there's plenty of other stuff to do if you want it. It can be difficult with the band because obviously people want to hear stuff like "On My Radio" and "Too Much Pressure" so you've got to do that, as people would be less inclined to listen to more meaty stuff, even if its off albums they actually know, never mind new stuff. But funnily enough in the acoustic set up, we found they will listen to a whole album of new stuff and like it, so it seems easier to write for that than anything else.

RIOT. 77: The Selecter handle all their own business again these days, is that

correct?

PAULINE: Yeah, we have done so ever since reforming I think. Obviously you've got to use agents and recording companies and things like that, but for Christ's sake I think we're old enough to be able to sit down and have a meeting without involving some tosspot manager who's creaming off the top. I had a belly full of that first time round. If you're in a band there's just yourselves to sell, it's only you, but with a manager they can get another act anytime they fuckin' like, so when they're punting you they're probably off punting someone else at the same time, you don't know what the fuck they're doing. That annoys me and I don't like managers anyway, they're a breed of people that I loathe. Agents are the same thing, but unfortunately they're a necessary evil. To a certain extent, you can't really do much without agents. I think its much better for the "artists" to know what the fuck's going on and that's the only way you'll ever know that. I mean, you must find that putting your magazine out?

RIOT. 77: Oh yeah, of course ...

PAULINE: It makes things much easier if you know what's going on, rather than having someone in the way telling you its all rosy when the bailiffs are at the fuckin' door.

RIOT. 77: Did Chrysalis take care of that stuff in the early days?

PAULINE: Well Chrysalis is a record company and they were responsible for putting 2 Tone out. People think 2 Tone was a cottage industry that happened in Coventry, where we sat around putting records in brown paper bags and stamping them with a 2 Tone label. Was it fuck?? (laughs). 2 Tone was a way for The Specials and us to sign other bands and give them a deal where they'd get a thousand quid to go into the studio or whatever. We done that with The Bodysnatchers and The Specials did it for us. It was also a way to organise tours where you could see three great bands for three quid, which was also completely stupid at the same time because that doesn't make you any money. In the end the whole thing just implodes because you can't carry on when there isn't any money. In some ways you can be a little too philanthropic for your own good. At the end of the day whatever you do you're moving into a corporate industry. There's loads of money around, so you're either going to become Mother Theresa and give it all away or you become one of them and I think that was the dilemma that everybody had. When it starts making money, what the fuck do you do then? Everybody was sort of like, "Uhhhh!! I don't want any of that!!!" ... and I don't think Jerry has had any of it since!

RIOT. 77: There were fourteen of you involved with 2 Tone?

PAULINE: Fourteen, yeah; seven in The Specials and seven in The Selecter. We'd be at different points around the world at any given time and every now and again we'd get together and say, "Yeah, give The Body Snatchers a thousand quid, give The Beat whatever ...". Then they all dutifully did one single and fucked off to proper record companies (laughs). I think after a while we just thought that we were maybe being held back by constantly being in The Specials shadow, because we did do a different kind of music first and foremost and in some ways a more adventurous type of

music in terms of the subject matter we were dealing with and the way it was being done as well. We were idiots at the time; always fighting, always angry.

RIOT. 77: Why did you never touch Bad Manners?

PAULINE: "Touch" Bad Manners? (laughs) ... Would you want to "touch" Buster Bloodvessel? (laughs). Please!! Well, Bad Manners used to come and play on the 2 Tone Tour. They weren't on the 2 Tone label, but that was their choice, it was nothing to do with us. I don't think they wanted anything to do with us. What they didn't like and what Buster used to always go on about in the beginning was that we were "political" and they never wanted any of that. They just saw it as plain, simple entertainment, which is fair enough if that's how they saw it ... and you know, maybe he was right because Bad Manners had infinitely more hits than us and The Specials put together (laughs). They really did, you know? (laughs) If you look at things that way they were probably more successful, but I would tend to look at things more in the long term. "Can! Can!" (laughs) ... Hmmm!!! (laughs) ... seemed a good idea at the time? (laughs) The reason we don't work with them now is because Buster doesn't want to work with us, down to bad blood basically.

RIOT. 77: You've done bits n' pieces with Captain Oil too down the years?

PAULINE: Mark Brennan got a licensing deal with EMI who have "Too Much Pressure" and "Celebrate The Bullet". The licensing is up for grabs to whoever wants to license them really. He put out both those albums and done quite a good job I thought. The last album we put out, "Reel To Reel" we done directly through him and that worked out ok also. He's a nice guy.

RIOT. 77: You were interviewed for that 2 Tone documentary that Mark Laamar narrated on the BBC recently, "2 Tone Britain". What did you make of that?

PAULINE: It was ok. I think I saw the one you're on about; it's hard to tell because they blend into one another sometimes. What they tend to do is sit down and think, "What haven't we done for a bit?? Ohhh!! 2 Tone!! Let's dig that up!" So they all pile up to Coventry, try and find someone who's still vaguely interested in it and interview them a couple of times. This time they found a tribute band called Special Brew.

RIOT. 77: Are you familiar with them from around Coventry?

PAULINE: Not really ... well I've heard of them. Two people called Simon in the band were in a drama group I ran for kids in the 80's oddly enough and now they're all grown up and big men in this group called Special Brew. Every now and again I would get this guy ring me up and say "You know

www.theselecter.com is free?". Yeah, I do know that! "You know

www.paulineblack.com is free?". Yeah I do know that too, I don't want 'em. The next thing I know the bastard has bought them and not only did he buy them, he put them on his site. So if anyone types in

www.theselecter.com it would go to his site, the Special Brew site. I thought that was a funny way of going about things, but anyway. I was idly sitting around this year and had some Dreamweaver and other web page programs lying about and thought, "You should do this!!", so I had a go and three weeks later I bought www.theselecter.net

RIOT. 77: And who owns www.2toneselector.com?

PAULINE: That's Charlie Anderson. He left the band a year before we did the "Celebrate The Bullet" album and lives in Panama somewhere. Every now and again he rears his ugly head and decides that he's going to reform The Selecter and I keep saying to him, "How can you reform The Selecter when you were sacked from the first band?" There's fuckin' loads of them websites though, which is why I thought maybe we should do something about it. It was just getting a bit wary having all these people pop up out of the woodwork.

RIOT. 77: What did you make of the "2 Tone Britain" film anyway?

PAULINE: I don't know, I think it was ok.



Was it ok? Did you see it?

RIOT. 77: Yeah I thought it was ok.

PAULINE: I can't remember now. I can remember some guy coming up to interview me and saying, "I'm definitely going to get an interview with Jerry Dammers!!" and me thinking, "I bet you won't!"

RIOT. 77: Nobody gets to interview Jerry Dammers !!! (laughs)

PAULINE: No ... well that's not actually true, you can get an interview with Jerry Dammers, it just depends on what you're doing. Because a fireman geezer has just made a documentary film about the whole "Rock Against Racism" thing and he interviewed myself and Rhoda for it and I know for a fact that he got an interview with Jerry Dammers, so it is possible, but not if you're just going to ask a load of arsey old questions basically, which I respect.

RIOT. 77: Any other books or films that you think sum up the whole 2 Tone era better?

PAULINE: No, none of them. I think "Dance Craze" probably sums it up the best because its just the music and visually you get to see the bands and what they were into at the time and the audience reaction n' that. I think if anyone wants to see something then that's what its about. All these other arsey things that people do, trying to make something out of it ... I mean, who gives a fuck, you know what I mean? Movements come and movements go and I think as a movement of music it was absolutely fuckin' brilliant. It had something to say and not only that but twenty-five years on most of the stuff that was around at that time still stands up. Both politically and stylistically it hasn't dated because the earlier stuff at least is not swamped in those awful 80's synthesizers. I mean that dates music more than anything or you can put a date to it, depending on what synthesizer was in vogue at the time. From that point of view I think it was really good but I was never into these books for desperate completists where they want to know everything down to what underpants Jerry was wearing in the telephone box in Blackpool when he had his pants pulled down by a bunch of skinheads (laughs) ... yeah, that was funny at the time, but does anyone really give a damn? I mean a hundred thousand Iraqi's have been wasted and I would have thought that was infinitely more important to give a damn about than anything else.

RIOT. 77: A lot of bands don't like to be linked to any certain movement, but you never seemed to have an issue with that and have kept those links to 2 Tone intact up to this day.

PAULINE: Yeah, I think it's absolutely great. Mind you, I'm sure if I was linked to the New Romantics I might feel different (laughs). But I never had a problem with that; the whole 2 Tone Man, Black n' White, chequered idea was a stroke of genius on Jerry's part. I was a fan before being a part of it, I just thought it was a brilliant idea because there weren't that many black folk around Coventry at the time.

RIOT. 77: That's interesting ...

PAULINE: Well, Reggae was around and everybody knew about Ska through their parents n' stuff like that. So to mix the white music you'd been listening to with the black music you knew was a historical reference was hitting on a great idea.

RIOT. 77: You were adopted into a white family, is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

RIOT. 77: How did you personally become interested in Ska n' that. Unlike the other kids I'm assuming it didn't come from your parents?

PAULINE: No, it didn't. The school I went to was between Romford and Dagenham and all the Dagenham kids were skinheads, so there was this kind of musical clash and by the time we got to 6th form we had this little sort of cool stable that the school let us have and all the skinheads would bring in Bluebeat records and Ska records. I was the only black kid in the school and it dawned on me listening to this music that it was black people making it. (laughs) I remember thinking the music was absolutely brilliant and that stayed with me along with my first interest, which was listening to female vocalists, black or white. I started



teaching myself the guitar and headed down all different sorts of roads for a while, but that music was always there in the background. Funnily enough about ten years ago I tried tracing my real parents and my dad was Nigerian, who had about eight wives, but one of the wives I found gave me a whole load of memorabilia of his. The first thing she gave me, and bare in mind she didn't know anything about what I did, was a Prince Buster record "Ten Commandments", which is extraordinary. Anyway it later turned out that my mother met my father going to the Hammersmith Palais for Bluebeat and Ska nights. So, it's kind of in the blood without knowing it.

RIOT. 77: Right, you're mother was Jewish is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah ... from Dagenham (laughs)

RIOT. 77: Just from what you said there I take it you don't feel the political climate in your country has changed much since the days of 2 Tone?

PAULINE: What I mean by that is more on a worldwide scale, not just in Britain. I mean as a black person things are a lot better there now than what they were in the late 70's. You've got no SUS laws for a start ...

RIOT. 77: What were SUS laws exactly?

PAULINE: SUS laws were some ancient old laws they dreamt up, which basically meant if you were hanging around in possession of thick lips and curly hair they could pick you up for whatever the fuck they liked, just to give you a hard time and to hustle you. I'm not saying that still doesn't exist to a certain extent but there are no SUS laws anymore ... people tend to be armed these days, so they're less likely to want to do that (laughs). But worldwide I would say one of the things that creates all the problems and what most of them boil down to is racism. There would be no Middle Eastern fuckin' question if the Palestinians were recognised and given their homeland, would there? There'd be none of the rubbish that went on in New Orleans if racism didn't exist. A few less people on welfare, is all

George Bush is thinking about, you know? So from that point of view I don't think much has changed, the same prob-

lems are still there bubbling away because we never really addressed the issue. We kind of addressed it in a P.C. sort of way, like "You can't call them niggers anymore!", but never really understanding what was wrong about it in the first place, you know what I'm saying?

RIOT. 77: Do you vote?

PAULINE: Of course, I always vote Labour. There's no alternative at the moment. I really sincerely wish there was some other alternative, but there isn't. If some other variety of person under socialist persuasion was standing in the constituency where I happened to voting in, then I would vote for them, but otherwise I would vote Labour. What else are you going to do, vote for the fuckin' Conservatives?

RIOT. 77: What about the Liberal Democrats?

PAULINE: No!! They're worse! Why, are you a Lib Dem?

RIOT. 77: No

PAULINE: Good. They're just a bunch of Conservative's dressed up. Fuckin' rubbish. I mean, don't get me wrong, Labour have strayed so far away from what they started out as, but what we should never forget is that Labour represents working class people and that's what we all are. That's how we get our money, I don't care what you do, but you work bloody hard for it. Conservatives may be able to pick up ten million on the bloody stock exchange in the morning and then retire to the polo club, but in the main, people don't do that and as far as I'm concerned that makes them working class. Also people fuckin' died to get the vote, to get that vote for us and to not exercise it is fuckin' outrageous. Letting a load of wankers run away with it is immoral and we should do something about it. Obviously I'm not a Blair fan, he's a horrible little wanker of a man. I don't know that much about the politics of Ireland and their

Taoiseigh n' that so I can't really compare. Obviously I've a fair idea about the history of Ireland, but let's not go there since I'm in your country and it's not for me to talk about it.

RIOT. 77: Yeah, any views on that Pauline? (laughs)

PAULINE: ... I might have some views on it (laughs) ... I'm not gonna share them with you on tape though ... my views on here in the past have gotten me in trouble, (laughs) Again, it all boils down to managers and the world is run by managers. People who just tot up the numbers and decide if a certain policy is going to go because they think X amount of people might vote for it ... what kind of leadership is that? Managers make my fuckin' blood boil ... but you know what's even worse than managers, is people who work in the work environment and actually suck up to them and buy all that shit because they want to be one themselves, you know? How fuckin' stupid can people be? They should at least be able see what's going on!

RIOT. 77: Uhuh! Ok, one more, you got into acting and theatre work after the first bout of The Selector. Can you tell me some more about that?

PAULINE: I started acting in 1982. The first thing I did was ... you know the black geezer in "Quadrophenia"? The pill-popping Rude Boy?

RIOT. 77: Yes.

PAULINE: Well we all sort of got into acting around the same time and I knew Phil Daniels n' that ... they were all coming up at around the same time and I remember going to the premiere of "Quadrophenia" and they came to the "Dance Craze" one where we got talking. Trevor, who played the Rude Boy, was doing a play at the Riverside Theatre in London and said to me that he needed someone to come along and write some music for the play and did I want to do it. Being young you think you can do anything so I ended up being in the actual play as well as doing the music for it. So I got my equity card that way and carried on from there, got myself an agent and got jobs out of it. I did that for ten years in between the end of one Selector and the beginning of another.

RIOT. 77: You done a play at The Olympia here in Dublin, didn't you?

PAULINE: Yeah, with Tyne Daly.

RIOT. 77: What, from "Cagney and Lacey"???

PAULINE: Yep ... oh yeah (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Which one is she?

PAULINE: The fat ugly one (laughs).

RIOT. 77: When was that?

PAULINE: 2001. I remember that because I ran the London marathon two weeks previous (laughs). But she was a fuckin' monster and going through the menopause when we done that (laughs). A fuckin' nightmare. She had a problem with the drink as well. She's a fantastic actress incidentally, I can't knock her there, but as a living, breathing person she's a complete nutter. She used to send us these poems about why she couldn't carry on and got us all to assemble in the bar of The Olympia and was going to come in and tell us her innermost thoughts and we had to spend the whole day trying to coax her back into the production. It was just an ego-stroke fest for her and it all went pear shaped after that because no one could take her seriously anymore. It came off ok though in the end. The play "Mother Courage" was based around the troubles in the North and I'm not too sure if anyone in Dublin wanted to hear that ... In fact I know they didn't (laughs).

RIOT. 77: You do a bit of journalism as well?

PAULINE: Yeah, for the BBC. The producer there got me in because he's just a Selector fan (laughs). That's what happens when you get old; you have all these people who were fans at the time, but now all have proper jobs (laughs). So they throw a few crumbs off the table every now and then (laughs). But, no it's ok, I enjoy writing, so long as someone gives you a decent subject to go on about.

RIOT. 77: You interview people too, don't you?

PAULINE: Yeah.

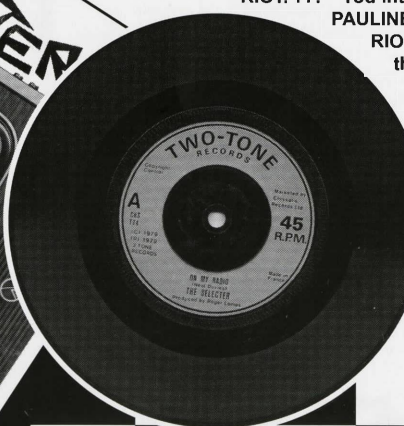
RIOT. 77: Take us through some of the ones that stand out.

PAULINE: Oh, wow! Hmmm!! God! I would say Coretta Scott King - Martin Luther King's wife. I went over to America for that and interviewed other civil rights leaders too as that's kind of what I was there to cover. It was for a show called "Black on Black".

RIOT. 77: Ok thanks' for your time

PAULINE: Cheers!

PAULINE: Cheers!



PIG CHAMPION - Nihilistic Buddha - By BOZ

"...the band needs twice as much booze, twice as much food and twice as much room as anyone. If we're going to be out on the road, it's basically like two bands going out because of the size. It's physics! We're twice as big, twice as fat, twice as loud...."
- Pig Champion 1989

When a recent version of Poison Idea rolled through Ireland in 2003, I sat backstage in Whelan's and watched Jerry A answer a string of enquiries from wellwishers about some of the colourful characters that had served their time in the band... there was a lot of "What ever happened to Myrtle and The Slayer Hippie", but mostly it was talk of The behemoth Pig Champion, absent because of continuing health problems ... "He likes to pretend he's a nihilist and hates everything but he's really a big softie and when he hears that everyone's been asking for him he'll be crying!".

Although Pig had semi officially quit Poison Idea in 1993, he still sporadically toured with them and with the bands lifestyle choices being the stuff of legend, it wasn't a surprise that european promoters were presented with a clause which stated that if one of the band members died in their country, the promoter was responsible for the cost of shipping the body home. At a highly impressive 450lbs, Pig Champion's death whilst on tour would have been more than enough to put any promoter out off business. Another popular health rumour was of UK tour dates being cancelled when they realised that the life sustaining bottles of oxygen they needed weren't readily available from the local chemist.

Thomas "Pig Champion" Roberts stole the hearts of many punk fans as one of the genre's living examples of a larger than life character, a nihilistic Buddha... someone who lived, breathed and died a punk rock lifestyle. When he died at his home in Portland on 30/1/2006 at the age of 47, going by the reaction on the internet, many thousands were saddened but absolutely no one was remotely shocked or surprised. Unfortunately, it had been a timebomb waiting to happen, and in fact, there had often been rumours of his death over the previous 10 years.

POISON IDEA was formed in 1980 in Portland, Oregon and through a string of brutal and ruthless recordings, solidified a stance and respect in the punk world as a genre defining band. In June 81, Pig Champion joined the band from the Imperialist Pigs who predated Poison Idea but frequently played together, and quickly became a landmark of the band with his ample presence and brick-wall riffing. Not only did they turn heads with music, but visually with the large frames of key members Jerry A and Pig Champion - the greatest characters yet to be made into collectable action figures.

A reputation hung like a bad smell over the band throughout the years, with written accounts of contact with band members interlaced with mentions of excessive alcohol consumption and recurring references to cocaine and Black Tar Heroin amongst other things.

But if life was all suggested to be punk, junk food, drugs and alcohol, Pig Champion still found space to write for MaximumRockNRoll, involve himself in record labels (Fatal Erection, American Leather), and become an obsessive record collector ... according to Jerry A.....

"This band, the Fix came through on a West Coast tour and they only put out like 500 singles apiece, and they sent some out as promos to the club owners. So Tom traced their tour and called the towns and found the club owners and asked them, and they just gave them away practically for \$2.00 or something. And now that stuff is really rare. Some German label is repressing both the Fix singles and their demo tape. It's just what you're into, I personally wouldn't do it myself."

Pig Champion was also a huge advocate of Elvis Presley, Hank Williams, Syd Barrett and writers Henry Miller and Charles Bukowski, who's poetry collection "War All The Time" became a Poison Idea album title. He was a trainpotter enough to note that the first pressing of "Pick your King" arrived on his doorstep on January 8 1985, Elvis' 50th birthday!!!

Pig's later years were punctuated with the odd musical project - most notably the Submissives record with MDCs Dave Dictor - and frequent rumours of ill health, desperate personal finances, home-help, sporadic homelessness, immobility and a life which consisted of cable TV and 40 ounce bottles. His homestead was affectionately described in one obituary as "a shotgun house filled with broken chairs strategically placed so that he could have something to lean on everywhere he chose to walk, with a small shelf of well-chosen books, empty bottles, dirty dishes, music". Current Poison Idea members made efforts to describe how he had lost a bit of weight in recent times and how his layers had sagged to become flesh curtains! There was talk of him coming out on the European tour in 2003, but ill health and the set size of plane seats forbade one last onslaught.

Although the band's MATING WALRUSES video showed Pig as an "I don't know man, I'm just here to eat!" type (in that legendary scene where the motorbike goes on fire outside the restaurant), interviews over the years present him as an interesting, dedicated and consistent, if somewhat fatalistic character. No better words than those straight from the mouth of the big man could round up his obituary.....



The Philosophy Of Pig

On what drove Poison Idea's lengthy existence - A FIERCE AND POSITIVE DEDICATION TO THE SCENE!! No, really just the desire to want to make records that are powerful and piss people off. That's basically it. (Long Shot #3 1990)

On the Ian McKaye EP - We had to go to the source and since he was the brilliant bald-headed genius in 1979 or 80 that came up with it we decided to lay into him. Maybe the third and fourth pressings should be called Ray Cappel, or something like that. (Long Shot #3 1990)

On personal politics - "Think for yourself, take care of yourself, look out for number one, Being greedy only so that you don't hurt other people. Being selfish only that you don't, in your selfishness, step on other people. Basically value your friendship and your loyalties to people that matter around you."

On Alcohol - it's a fine line between where it stops enhancing and it starts to impede and that's probably the mystery of life, always trying to balance that, between the enhancement and just being drunk. ('89)

On life - "My body's a total wreck, in a lot of ways, but the way I stay alive is by drinking. It keeps me alive, it keeps me happy, and when I'm drunk I'm happy, and when I'm hung-over, I'm bitching, and when I'm bitching and pissed-off it gives me a reason to live. And when I start to drink again I feel better. I think that drugs and alcohol belong in the realm of art. People that create things. If you can create things without altering your consciousness, fine. If you need to use drugs and alcohol to create something, fine. But when the drugs and alcohol stop you from creating, then you can stop."

On Poison Idea - "I can damn well tell you that I wouldn't have been in this band, doing what we're doing, for as long as I've done it, without drinking. Because when I've had a good shot of booze, and I'm feeling my oats, there's nothing feels better than to crank up the type of music we do and let it shake right through your soul. That's when it happens for me."

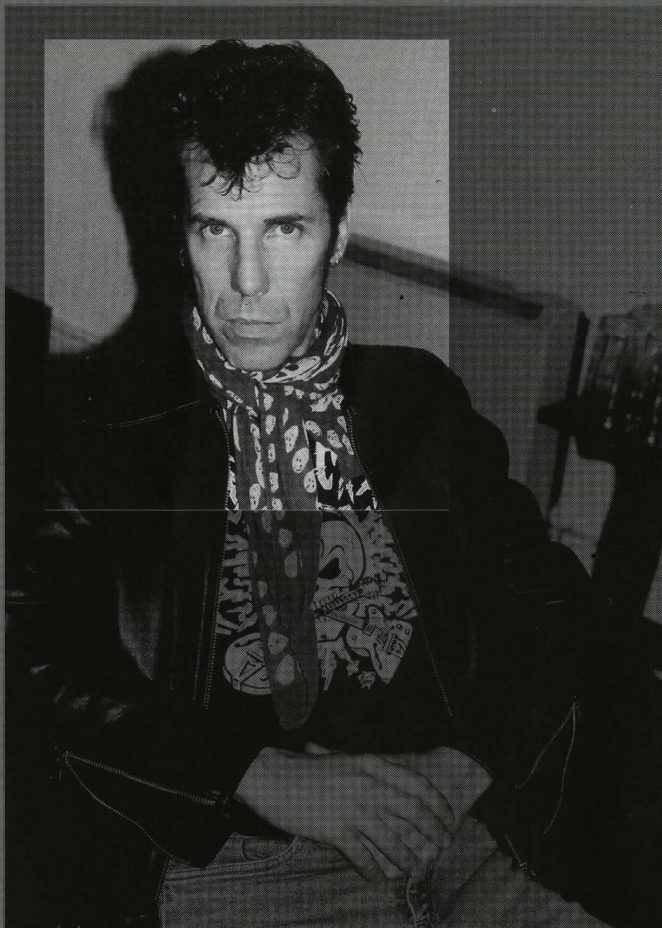
There are great bands and great entertainers: The Stray Cats were both. Hailing from Long Island, New York the trio made up of Brian Setzer on vocals, Lee Rocker on double bass and Slim Jim Phantom on stand up drums, were largely responsible for rekindling the public's interest in 50's music at the time. The Stray Cats were eager to bring back the authenticity to Rock n' Roll and went right to the source in order to do so. Johnny Burnette, Eddie Cochran, Buddy Holly and Carl Perkins all played a huge part in The Stray Cats finding a basis for their sound, which for all intents and purposes, was basically stripped down Rockabilly music, pure and simple. The Ramones had adopted a similar aesthetic some years previous, realising less was sometimes more. Evolving from the butt end of the Punk movement in New York, there was little locally with which The Stray Cats could identify themselves with, as after all America hadn't seen an image like this in nearly twenty years and had difficulty pigeonholing it. By stark contrast, the Teddy Boy explosion was in full swing in England in the late 70's and early 80's, which inevitably drew the band to British shores. The Stray Cats built their reputation through hard slog, but that hard slog was also to become the death of the group in 1985, by which time they'd simply had enough of living under each other's feet.

These days they're back touring again as a band, but all members also work on individual projects in their own time.

Slim Jim Phantom has built up an impressive portfolio in his time away from the Cats, playing in a countless string of other outfits, solo projects and even a stint with Jerry Lee Lewis. His style of stand up drumming has become legendary, tribally thumping the tubs in such a unique fashion, making his style almost instantly recognisable from the moment you hear it. More recently Jim has hooked up with a revolving door of members to make Dead Men Walking – a band consisting of musicians from the same era who take to the road performing a selection of tracks from each of their careers. A Highwaymen for the new millennium if you will. The "Right To Party" tour made it's way into Dublin last winter, which is where I had the chance for an interview with Jim.

The conversation about to unfold took place upstairs in the Voodoo Lounge, Smithfield on the afternoon of the Dead Men Walking show in Dublin. To set the scene, the interview commences with Jim thumbing his way through some past issues of the magazine.

(All Photos From the Voodoo Lounge, Dublin)



SLIM JIM PHANTOM

SLIM JIM PHANTOM: Oh, you have an interview with X in here ... good band.

RIOT 77: You like them?

SLIM JIM: Yeah, they're friends of mine. I'm actually gonna be doing something with Billy Zoom ...

RIOT 77: Do you live out there?

SLIM JIM: Do I? Yeah, I've lived in Los Angeles for twenty-three years now.

RIOT 77: You're from Brooklyn originally though?

SLIM JIM: I'm from New York City, yeah, but have been in L.A. for such a long time.

RIOT 77: What part of L.A. do you live in?

SLIM JIM: West Hollywood. Did you see Wanda Jackson playing out there?

RIOT 77: Yes, I did.

SLIM JIM: Yeah, my friend Danny Harvey is actually doing a record with her. I know John Wozniak is on it and I think Glen Burke plays drums on part of it too ... You have The Vandals here, I know those guys too ... shit, I know everyone in this magazine (laughs).

RIOT 77: So, have you been out and about around Dublin this afternoon?

SLIM JIM: There hasn't really been that much time.

We got here this afternoon and it's been about four or five shows in a row, so we literally just got here and then went for something to eat to an Italian place down the street from here.

RIOT 77: Is this your first time in the country?

SLIM JIM: No, I've been here a few times. I have some friends here so I use to come and hang out with them on vacation.

RIOT 77: You're second name is McDonnell ...

SLIM JIM: Yeah, my whole family is Irish. They're all very Irish, but I don't think any of them have ever been to Ireland (laughs). We go back a few generations and it's all very New York Irish really. They were members of Hibernian Clubs and had the whole house decorated with lace curtains and tea sets made out of Irish crystal and maps of Ireland all over the walls (laughs) ... Yeah, they're very proud of all that. Both sides of my family are Irish.

RIOT 77: It was Colchester last night for you?

SLIM JIM: Uhhh ... yeah (laughs).

RIOT 77: ... and how was that?

SLIM JIM: Yeah, that was good; they've all been pretty much the same to be honest. We've been doing two types of places, community centre/theatre type places and then clubs and last night was like a church ... It was pretty cool actually, now that I think of it. It was one of

the oldest churches in England I think and now they've turned it into a bar or nightclub type of place. All the old carvings are still on the walls and you've got these statues coming out of nowhere. I mean you can't really go wrong with a tour like this; you're playing twenty-five hit songs every night, you know? (laughs). All these guys are my friends and people who I know and respect, so that makes it all the more easier too.

RIOT 77: Where did the idea for something like this stem?

SLIM JIM: Mike did a tour with The Alarm and Spear Of Destiny, which is Kirk's band and I think they had an idea of going out and doing the songs acoustic and got Glen Matlock to go out and do it with them, but Glen is now busy doing a solo record or producing something, so we got a hold of Ray (Captain Sensible) and asked if he'd play bass and it's worked out great.

RIOT 77: You've had a few other people in there too along the way ... wasn't Billy Duffy doing something?

SLIM JIM: Duffy was in for a while yeah, Bruce Watson from Big Country plays sometimes, Glen Matlock ... and also people come and guest, like Mick Jones joined us last time in London, the guys from Simple Minds came up in Glasgow. It keeps rotating, but the hardcore of it is Kirk, Mike and myself, we've done all the tours.

RIOT 77: The last recording I heard you on was that Elvis record you put out, where you back him up on an old Louisiana Hayride recording.

SLIM JIM: Yeah, that was cool. That's actually the same guy who done the Wanda Jackson record, Brian Perera, he runs Cleopatra Records. It's a label I've done a bunch of work for and astonishingly there was some Elvis stuff that nobody owned, so he bought the rights. He put them out as the Louisiana Hayride Recordings, but the recordings themselves weren't that great, though his voice sounded pretty good. Brian asked Danny Harvey if he could clean them up or if there's anything he could do because Danny has a studio and works at that sort of thing, so he said maybe we could go one better and put some backing tracks on there. So I ended up getting involved and got Lee Rocker involved and it was just something kinda cool. I don't know how big of a deal it is, being a small label, but the Elvis people encouraged it. I feel if anyone can do it, I can do it. I think Elvis would've liked it (laughs).

RIOT 77: Was there any negative feedback?

SLIM JIM: No ... I mean I don't really pay much attention to stuff like that, I don't be on the Internet or look at websites too much, but the stuff that I did see was all

good and Lee told me he'd gotten a lot of positive feedback.

RIOT. 77: You done that record with Lemmy a few years back ...

SLIM JIM: Yeah, Lemmy's a really good friend of mine. He actually came up and played with us a few weeks ago at a show in L.A. along with Brian Setzer. That was at the K Club on the Strip. Lemmy is a guy I've known, like Mike Peters, for about twenty-five years, from when I first came to London. I just stayed friends with him, which is kind of strange in this business, because people come and go. You can have the most intense friendship with someone and then two weeks later they're gone. Lemmy lives on the next street down from me in L.A. so I see him all the time. He's a huge Rockabilly fan, which I knew from when I first saw him and he was one of the first people to ever come and watch The Stray Cats play and afterwards we went back to his house and he started playing Buddy Holly records and obscure Gene Vincent recordings from the BBC. We always talked about doing something together and a couple of years ago we managed to get it together. I have a club called The Cat Club on the Sunset Strip and we did a gig there, which is coming out on DVD next year sometime. It was myself, Lemmy, Danny Harvey and a guy named Johnny Bowler, who plays with the Guana Batz, and it turned out really well actually. It's like a Punk Rock Johnny Cash type thing.

RIOT. 77: You done something with Jerry Lee Lewis too didn't you?

SLIM JIM: Yeah I was in his band for a little while. I done a TV show with him in L.A. I got it through a guy named Jerry Schilling and I don't know if you're up on Elvis history or not, but he was one of Elvis' Memphis mafia buddies. He then became a manager and managed Lisa Marie for a while and Jerry Lee Lewis. So anyway, he called me up and said Jerry Lee was in town to perform on The Tonight Show and he needed a drummer. So I went in and did the one song that afternoon and that was pretty much the end of it. Then his wife called me and asked me if I wanted to be in his band and I said yes. This was maybe seven or eight years ago and we'd work mainly weekends, like Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It was great; James Burton was the guitar player and every now and then it would hit me, I would look around and see Jerry Lee over there and James Burton over here (laughs). Every night would be different; it was a little daunting and a little frustrating at times because there was no set list. It was kind of like The Stray Cats in a way because we would never have a full set list and more or less work around a skeleton one, same as Dead Men Walking, but with Jerry you just never knew, he didn't work off anything at all. One night he would do all Gospel songs, one night he would do all Chuck Berry songs, one night he would do all the Chuck Berry songs with all the stops in exactly the right places and then the next night he might do the same songs again but not stop at all, you know? He's in his own world, he's got his own thing goin' on and just expects you to be there. When he waves his hands around it means to go faster, but sometimes he just waves his hands around because he feels like waving his hands around and doesn't mean to go faster (laughs). It was hard, because I lived in L.A. and they were in Memphis, so I did it for a while and it was cool, a great experience.

RIOT. 77: You crop up a lot in Ramones documentaries, speaking about your love for them.

SLIM JIM: Yeah, John was my friend, a real pal. When he moved to L.A. maybe ten years ago, he didn't really know anybody, he just moved there to retire and wanted to be in the sun and have a swimming pool. We met in a nightclub I was hanging around in L.A. and our paths had crossed a couple of times in New York and on the road, but we'd never really met properly prior to that. We became close; we were both baseball fans, New York Yankees fans. We started going to Dodgers games together and I spent a lot of time in his house, he was very close to my son and got to know him very well ... it was hard. When John retired, he just wanted to have fun and liked about five things in life - he enjoyed going out to dinner, he loved Elvis and had a huge collection of his stuff, memorabilia, original tour stuff, he loved movie posters and had hundreds and hundreds of original posters, he loved baseball and of course he loved Rock

n' Roll. You could ask him what date the Stones recorded, "This Could Be The Last Time" and he would tell you what way the microphones were positioned and who was standing where, he was a very knowledgeable person. Our upbringings were similar, coming from New York and John was Irish too of course, John Cummings. He was getting better for a long time, it went away and then it came back and he got really sick when The Stray Cats were on tour and when I came back home he'd changed his phone number or something, so I went to his house and wrote him a letter and hopefully he got it. That was hard. Dee Dee was a friend too; he used to play every Saturday at my club with a bunch of friends and would do a few Ramones songs n' that. I didn't know Dee Dee as well as I knew John, but I knew him quite well and we played some shows together. In fact I think the last show we ever played was at a place called Club Make-Up in L.A. where once a month they would have a theme night and they had a Punk Rock night where I played with Dee Dee and he was talking about going to Japan to play ... that was on a Saturday and the following Wednesday he died. He'd been pretty straight for about ten years and just decided to do a bunch of drugs one night and I don't know what prompted him to do that because he seemed fine. I think the Ramones are one of those bands that are up there with the Stones, The Beatles and Elvis. It was just great Rock n' Roll and I'm



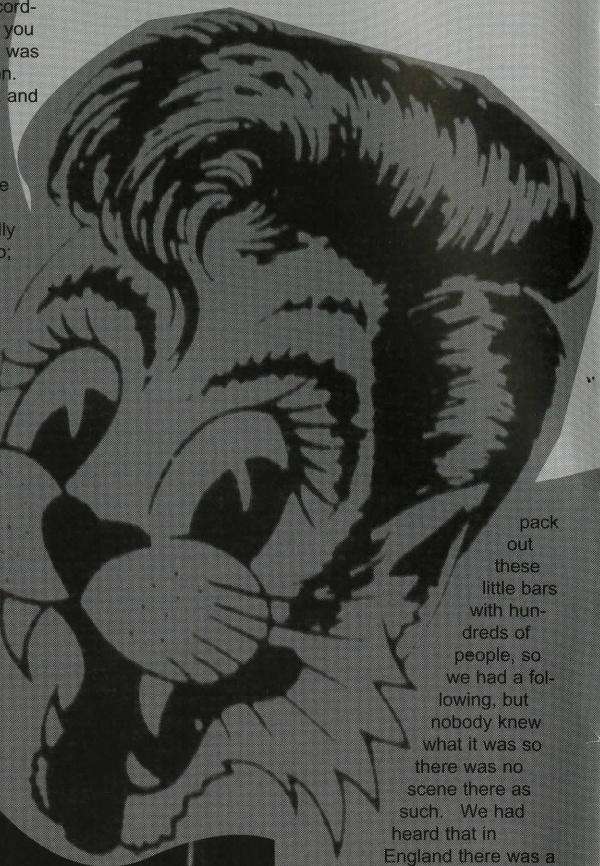
always happy to appear in anything that's associated with the Ramones.

RIOT. 77: When The Stray Cats started there wasn't much interest in the band around New York, is that right?

SLIM JIM: Uhhhhh!! ...

RIOT. 77: You were a cover band initially?

SLIM JIM: Yeah, we had four or five of our own songs. We played a lot of covers out of necessity, because we played bars, four sets a night, an hour per set, with a little break in between. I think if we had have stuck around long enough we would have done well, but we didn't give it much of a chance. There was only a couple of clubs in New York City - Max's Kansas City, CBGB's and you could only really play there about once a month if you didn't want the draw to dilute. But we wanted to play as much we could, we were just finding this music and enjoyed each other's company and got into the look and the whole thing. In Long Island where we were based it was mainly hair Metal, Zeppelin, Deep Purple was big and Southern Rock too. I mean we liked all that, but we didn't want to be that. I loved Led Zeppelin, but I wanted to do something different because so many bands were trying it. When we found this Rockabilly music, we just fell in love with it and wanted to wrap ourselves in it completely. We used to find bars that wouldn't really have music and ask the bartender, who was usually some old guy with a small handful of customers, if he would let us take the bar over on a Friday night and we would pack the place for him, if he let us keep the door money. We got a following of kids and none of them were Rockabillys, they were just people who thought we were weird, but had a good time when they came out. We'd



pack out these little bars with hundreds of people, so we had a following, but nobody knew what it was so there was no scene there as such. We had heard that in England there was a whole community of

Teddy Boys who knew what Rockabilly was and there was a chance that maybe we could do something. We wanted to be around people who looked like us, because New York was kind of square at the time, at least outside of Greenwich Village it was. Day to day life was hard and we walked around full on 7 days a week - big hair, pink suits, creepers (laughs) ... the whole Teddy Boy look and nobody knew what it was, so there was a lot of hassle. Now we've made it safe and all over America people can see you and be like, "Oh, that's a Rockabilly person". We didn't invent it but we certainly championed it more than anybody had in a long time. We met some English guys who were on to it and they kept

telling us to come to England, so in the end we did, just to see what would happen. We didn't know you had Skinheads, and Mods and Punks and Teddy Boys; we just thought that anyone who dressed up was cool. We thought it was all great. We knocked on a lot of doors and slept in squats or outside in the summertime, or slept on couches until we managed to get a few gigs fourth on the bill at a pub or whatever. That's when doing four sets a night in the clubs of New York paid off because we could really play by that point and were just waiting for our opportunity. It was like, "Give me the ball coach, I guarantee I'm gonna score!!" We knew it was good and we were very arrogant, but we could back it up. We were very good, simple as that. Then this buzz just started around us and people like Chrissie Hynde started coming to the shows and then Ray Davies, Jeff Beck, Robert Plant and Keith Richards started turning up. When you have that type of thing going on that's when the press want to get involved. You see, all those previous generation Rock n' Roll guys love American Rockabilly, because that's where it all came from. We delivered the goods and then the press takes over.

RIOT. 77: Was it a huge culture shock going to England?

SLIM JIM: Oh yeah.

RIOT. 77: Had you been outside America prior to that?

SLIM JIM: No, that was my first time ever on an airplane (laughs). I was so excited by it all though ... it was the little things like not having showers and the telephones don't work (laughs) ... but we didn't have a phone or a place to live anyway, so it didn't matter. Yeah, things were different for sure, but I was really



early on after he'd heard about us and I think he was always looking for something, in that Sam Philips kind of way. He's the most knowledgeable about that type of music of anyone I've met and there's a lot of knowledgeable people about. He knew how to get that sound, but he also knew that you couldn't go and try to make it sound like "Be Bop A Lula"; you had to modernise it on some level. He approached us and was very serious, like "Let me do your record,

because otherwise someone else is gonna screw it up! I know what I'm doing". He was very convincing, so we went to his house and he had a little pub in his basement with a jukebox with George Jones and Buddy Holly and stuff like that, so we knew we had to do something soon while there was all this excite-

drastic as splitting up. I think I was mad at him for wanting to do that and got a bit bit-headed and overreacted. By that time you had bands like Culture Club and Adam And The Ants around who I think would've been seen more as the novelty acts. RIOT. 77: You never viewed yourselves as a revival act either, did you? SLIM JIM: No, because first of all something has to be dead for you to revive it and I don't think that this music was ever dead, at least not over here, maybe in the states. I don't know if we revived it as much as we reintroduced it, because some people didn't know



what it was. Right now Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent's catalogues have probably sold tenfold as a result of The Stray Cats and I'm proud to have done that. Over here they really held on to old Rockabilly music very dearly and I always appreciated that. RIOT. 77: How important is the whole image to you ... I was looking at the Q&A section of your website and half the questions on it are from people asking you where you bought various items of clothing!! Does image have a lot

to do with it? SLIM JIM: Yeah of course, I think it's the same with any band. I don't want to go and see someone live where I can't get anything more out of it than what I get on a record. We came from that period in the late 70's and early 80's, especially in England, where you wouldn't go out of the house to buy a pack of gum unless you looked good (laughs). That's the only way I feel comfortable really. I think you have to have a look that kids can identify with and make the people who are listening to it or watching it almost aspire to it. I mean the first time I saw Elvis or Eddie Cochran it's just like, "Wow!!!" Same with Jimmy Page or Keith Richards. I always thought it was important and it's a visual age now, I mean MTV has been going twenty years, when you think about it. Yeah, I think it's important.

RIOT. 77: Equally as important as the music? SLIM JIM: No, because then it's acting I guess. For me to like it and for me to take it seriously, my taste has always been for the whole package. The Beatles, the Stones and even right down to Duran Duran, they all had it. I still think the Rockabilly look is a cool look and

I'll never get tired of dressing that way. RIOT. 77: Ok, we'll finish up with an old Stray Cats lyric "She Never Gives Me Bitchin', She's Magic In The Kitchen!" ... how does that hold up all these years later? (laughs) SLIM JIM: Not at all (laughs) ... I haven't found one like that yet; I still go out to dinner every single night! (laughs)



caught up in it, just the whole thing about London I loved. Somebody wanting to hear us play!!! All the nightclubs and everyone getting dressed up and we were a part of it (laughs). We'd hang out with The Pretenders and The Specials and The Clash and then guys like Robert Plant would want to come and meet you, you know? Wow!!! (laughs). So, yeah it was a culture shock, but in a very positive way. I'd never been around people who dressed up all the time and walked around like a Rockabilly seven days a week. I didn't know anyone like that in New York. We loved the whole thing, especially when it started to take off; we got completely consumed by it all and were just on the road for the next ten years pretty much.

RIOT. 77: Was it landing the Stones tour that broke The Stray Cats in America? SLIM JIM: Well, no not really, because we didn't have a record deal in America yet. We did the '81 tour with the Stones, but we were still concentrating on England, Europe and Japan. Maybe later on it helped, but it wasn't like we had a record out that could all of a sudden get played ... people didn't know who we were, they thought we were English I think. I mean we were playing on a stage the size of this entire street and we walk up there with two little amps and a set of drums, taking up about one square inch of this massive stage (laughs). But those guys were really cool and Jagger came out to introduce us every night and told the crowd he was a big fan, which made things a lot easier. Because you've got maybe fifty thousand people waiting to see the Rolling Stones and these three weird looking things walk out on stage and they don't know what the hell it is.

RIOT. 77: Were they receptive? SLIM JIM: Yeah, yeah. Once someone decides they're going to listen to something, then you can't not like what The Stray Cats do, it's just Rock n' Roll music and it's played well, so there's nothing there not to like. If you don't like Rock n' Roll music then that's a whole other story, but to watch us for a half hour is very entertaining and very musical. But we didn't come back to America with a record for another year or so.

RIOT. 77: The second Stray Cats album, "Gonna Ball" was recorded in the West Indies, which always struck me as interesting because Reggae or Ska is the one influence you can't hear in The Stray Cats ... you weren't interested in Jamaican music at all were you?

SLIM JIM: No, not then, that was a long time ago. I think it was something to do with tax incentives to be honest with you and we couldn't record it in England or something to that effect if I remember correctly. There was something to it alright, I think we may have been on our way to Japan and we stopped there to record the album.

RIOT. 77: So it was purely a legal thing?

SLIM JIM: Kind of ... or at least they told us it was. I mean I was only nineteen years old at the time and just went wherever we were going. I'd enjoy it more now going to somewhere like that to record an album ... now you can appreciate something like that.

RIOT. 77: Are you interested in Reggae music now?

SLIM JIM: Yeah, absolutely.

RIOT. 77: Dave Edmunds was a man you got involved with back then too and continued working with. Did you have a good relationship with him?

SLIM JIM: He was very important, probably the most important guy we've worked with. None of us had any experience in the studio at all. I didn't even know how to mic a drum set; I had no idea. He came to our shows

and ment about the band. We couldn't spend six months trying to find a producer. The Stones guys actually wanted to do it, Keith and Mick wanted it, but I think that was more of concept rather than the possibility of anything really happening. We pretty much got started with Edmunds right away. I think the next day we went and did "Runaway Boys". Once we agreed to it, that was it, I think we met him twice and went right into the studio. We had all those songs written and had played them a million times by this point. I don't know if history would've happened as it did if we hadn't met Dave. I wish he'd done the second album now in retrospect, but he wasn't available and once again they wish you and tell you is has to be done by tomorrow. If we had have waited the two months until Dave was available, who knows, everything may have been different and I think looking back it would have been a better move to wait and do the record in London with Dave.

RIOT. 77: When The Stray Cats split in '85, was a lot of it down to the fact that you were being perceived as a novelty act?

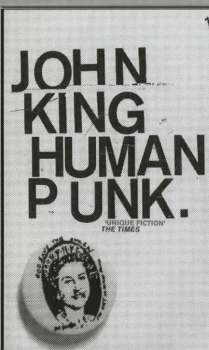
SLIM JIM: Well, yeah that's kind of how the story goes. We were very young and had a lot of success and you become sort of isolated from each other, after living on top of each other for the better part of five years. From what I remember Brian Setzer wanted to do a solo record I think. In retrospect he should have went and done a solo record and then came back, it didn't have to be as



"The Secret Life Of A Teenage Punk Rocker"—The Andy Blade Chronicles ... by Andy Blade. (Cherry Red Books)

It's been almost thirty years since Andy Blade and his band of teenage tearaways, Eater, referred to Johnny Rotten as being too old to play Punk Rock. How ironic it is that Mr. Blade himself is now in the very same category. Despite the obvious contradictions of writing a book of this nature, Andy Blade has gone ahead and published his memoirs. To be truthful he's as qualified to speak about the Punk days as anyone, after all Andy Blade and Eater were in there in the thick of it, lapping it up like any fifteen year olds lucky enough to partake in such an era would have done. Yes, Eater did indeed have an average age of fifteen whilst at the height of their success, making them a good three to four years younger than most involved with Punk Rock in the late 70's. I've read countless books on the early London Punk Rock scene and most travel over well-trodden ground, but this book takes a fresh look at things through the eyes of Andy Blade. It's more an autobiography than a book on Punk Rock, but as his life evolved around Punk music during his teenage years, that is what most people will be interested in reading about — his first hand accounts of Rotten, Vicious, Weller, Scabies, Strummer, etc. as they were to him and not as they appeared through the media. This is how one person saw it, felt it and lived it. He recalls every last detail with such clarity; so much so in fact it's difficult to believe some of these things actually happened. I'd imagine those days went something similar to what's said about the 60's — "If you remember them, you weren't there!!" Did Johnny Rotten's missus really chase Andy around so much that he finally relented and went to bed with her??? I'd like to hear Nora's version of that one! Whilst this book is set against the backdrop of the Punk movement, it goes far deeper into Andy's life than that and traces his Muslim family background, his life after Punk, battles with alcohol and heroin addiction, marital affairs and fruitless attempts at creating anything musically worthwhile in Eater's aftermath.

Andy was a burnout at the age of eighteen and his career as far as music went was over. A difficult thing to come to terms with, but no one was interested in anything he had to offer once Eater had their say. This brought about his endless search for what to do with the rest of his life. He became a hippy, new romantic, glam rocker ... you name it, tried anything in the name of fame, but it was all in vain. This in a way appears contrary to what he supposedly felt the Punk movement stood for i.e. people being themselves and making the most of your imperfections, turning things around to make your faults work in your favour. At times Andy comes across as little more than another contestant on the X Factor, Pop Stars etc. You could cut the hypocrisy with a knife!! Andy goes on to denounce the skinhead revival that followed Punk, without so much as doing the slightest bit of background research as to what skinheads stand for. Likewise for anyone who slagged off Eater. Mark Perry and Sniffin' Glue fanzine come I for an unwarranted pasting, which just makes the author look bitter, resentful and jealous. He'd had his time in the spotlight and should have been content with it and moved on. Nobody wants to hear sour grapes. As you've probably gathered Andy doesn't hold back on dishing out his opinions on just about everything, which is bound to rub readers the wrong way at some point or other, but also makes a frank and no-frills account of his life. I don't think he thought twice about offending anyone when he wrote this book, which I guess should be applauded in many ways. He can't help but trip himself up time and again however, the best example being his criticism of old Punk bands reforming to play Holidays In The Sun, only for Eater to eagerly snap up the offer when given the opportunity themselves. Overall I got a great kick out of this book and it's certainly thought provoking in such a way that will get you riled up one minute, whilst nodding in approval the next. One thing's for sure, "The Secret Life Of A Teenage Punk Rocker" looks at things from a different angle to what you've already read about this era. And that in itself is a blessing, as I don't think anyone really needed another book of "England's Dreaming" rewritten. (CHERRY RED BOOKS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



"Human Punk"... by John King. (Vintage Publishing)

I wouldn't be the biggest reader of fiction and when I think about it, probably everything I've read in the past five years or so has been non-fiction, so this was a refreshing change. I generally feel when there's enough interesting, strange and fucked up things going on in the real world, why bother making it up? When I poured into this book and completed it in five days however, I remembered how good this sort of stuff can be when done well. Author John King is perhaps best known as writer of "The Football Factory" trilogy, but those of you with more than a passing interest in the guy will know his roots lie in Punk Rock, growing up with The Clash, Pistols and The Ruts and eventually going on to publish the London fanzine, "Two Sevens" in the early 90's. His first novel was released in 1997. "Human Punk" is his fourth book and a coming-of-age tale of Joe Martin (named after Joe Strummer and the Doc Marten boot!!) — a fifteen-year-old Punk Rocker from the London satellite town of Slough. The book is believed to be semi-autobiographical. Where he crosses the line from real-life into fiction is unknown. Joe Martin narrates throughout, the majority of the book being taken up with what goes on inside Joe's head as opposed to direct speech. "Human Punk" is split into three segments — the first shows Joe as a teenager in 1977 in which his life consists of the more simplistic things working class kids have a tendency to be lured into — robbing cars, eyeing up girls, drinking cans of lager, snorting speed, fighting and of course listening to Punk and Reggae music. The entire book is littered with references to music (Punk Rock for the most part), which is Joe's salvation and follows him throughout his life. Cut to 1988 and we find the narrator travelling home to Slough, via the Trans-Siberian express, having spent three years working in China. The long trip home is used for Joe to reflect on his life, piece things together and attempt to work out what it all means, if anything. The final third of the book deals with Joe as a fully-grown adult in the year 2000. Earning a liv-

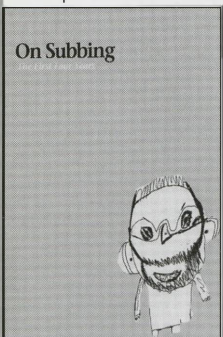
ing as a record dealer, DJ and selling the odd fight tickets here and there. He's a single man, bought a flat for himself and life couldn't be better. All is good, with the exception of a particularly nasty incident which happened to him as a child, involving the death of his closest friend Smiles. This has haunted him throughout his life and Joe has now reached the stage where its time to take care of some unfinished business. This builds the tension wonderfully throughout the book, always there in the background, no matter how good things get, this will always act as a bleak reminder of Joe's past, what he considers his downfall, his one regret in life. Much of John King's influence comes from the likes of Richard Allen and Hubert Selbt Jr. with remnants of Hunter Thompson, George Orwell and Irvine Welsh to be found also. There's a deep political backbone to the book, which delves into Britain's class structure, left and right wing, the positive and negative aspects of the western world, big business affecting the ordinary man, "Human Punk" operates on various platforms. Its clear King is a well-read, sharp and articulate person. The characters he writes about are real people — bigoted, hateful, idiotic, self-centred, funny, dumb, ambitious, rough, violent and fucked up ... he doesn't dress anything up and tells it like it is, cuts close to the bone, goes straight for the jugular. As an Irishman reading this, parts of it rubbed me the wrong way, but King cannot be blamed, as this was the attitude of many misguided members of the British public in the late 70's when it came to the Republican struggle, which he attempts to hone in on here. There's an equal amount of bigotry and Thatcherite garbage directed at anyone who isn't British in this book as you'd expect to find in a copy of The Sun, but don't let it put you off as King simply writes about the people Joe Martin meets on the street, in the pub, on the bus etc. ... A portrayal rather than a glorification. "Human Punk" will interest those of us who view music and Punk Rock as more than a passing trend, lyrics that mean something, a way of life, part of a smarter community of people, finger on the pulse. A celebration of a youth culture that never died and continues to live on in the hearts of this generation. (RANDOM HOUSE BOOKS: C/O BOOK-POST, PO BOX 29, DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN, IM99 1BQ.)



"Things Are Meaning Less"... by Al Burian. (Microcosm Publishing)

The fact that this entire book is possible to read in under an hour would suggest it could have benefited from being downsized and released as a fanzine. That in mind, it goes on sale for about the \$7 mark and thus is priced accordingly. It's also very nicely designed and doesn't scrimp on space, allowing the artist to utilize as much or as little paper as he sees fit to get the point across. For instance, to illustrate the feeling of boredom and pointlessness we are given blank pages interlinking various parts of his life. Chapter progressions are also given similar treatment, creating the feeling of entering a new phase in the protagonist's life story. The closest parallel I can draw between this and anything else I've read is Ben Snakepit's book issued some time back through Gorsky Press. Unlike "Snakepit" however there's no indication given whether "Things Are Meaning Less" is truth or fiction, but one can only assume author Al Burian is writing about his own life. Otherwise it would seem a little pointless. You may be familiar with Al through his various ramblings in Heartattack and Punk Planet fanzine's and he's also a member of the band Milemarker out of Chicago. I didn't connect with this book as much as I did with "Snakepit" for the simple fact that Al tends not to wear his heart on his sleeve as much and thus you're left

with the impression of him holding back. Also, given the length of the book, you've finished the thing before you've even had the chance to familiarize yourself with all of the characters in it. The artwork on it's own deserves a mention though and has an almost Raymond Pettibon feel to it, not fully disclosing exactly what is happening, but allowing you to put two and two together. Taking it one step further, some of the drawings don't even contain any words and are all the better for it. It's as much a case of what Al doesn't say as what he does say! His story is one much like that of any overgrown teenager — someone who hasn't moved on from around the sixteen-years-of-age mark and is having difficulty finding any reason to. Al refuses to find a steady job, get on his feet financially or even get out of bed, but seems to think he is worth a million dollars! He gives the impression of a hard day's work being below him and prefers instead to wander round the various cities he occupies over the course of this book at 5 am and then return to his room and sleep till four the following afternoon. Perhaps he's depressed or just plain lazy, who's to say! He's a good writer and artist but I couldn't connect with him on a social or political level. The guy lives in the wealthiest country in the world and still can't get off his arse to make things work? Sympathy? I think not! (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)

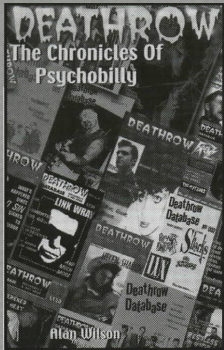


"On Subbing"... by Dave Roche. (Microcosm Publishing)

Dave Roche is a man in his late 20's who works as a Substitute Special Needs Educational Assistant in Portland, Oregon. This book is a window into his life, a collection of journal entries that document his day-to-day living over the course of four years. The first thing that will strike you about the book if you don't live in the United States is just how low down the career ladder this country views the job. The guy can't afford to buy lunch some days on the wages he's being paid. There is no holiday pay, sick pay and most concerning of all, you do not need any experience, background or qualifications in the field to get the job. It comes across as the equivalent of agency work on an assembly line (yes, they use agencies to recruit staff for this post!) Clearly the American government don't rank this kind of profession very highly, which should come as a scare to those of us living in a country that follows American policy as closely as we do! Dave comes across as an intelligent and strong-minded individual and throughout the four-year timeframe battles with finding a balance between his anti-establishment Punk Rock ideologies and those of being a Teacher for the State. On one hand he finds solace in the fact that he's doing something back to the community and providing a much-needed service at the end of the day. On the other hand, he barely

makes enough money to live off, is treated poorly by his superiors and works under conditions that most would walk out on five minutes into their first day. Despite all this he struggles to keep things going, one day at a time, happy in the knowledge he's not just working another pointless nine-to-five. He takes every given opportunity to incorporate his love of Punk Rock and an alternative lifestyle into what he does. He tries to introduce his students to music, explain to them what veganism is and attempts to pass on various radical approaches to life he picked up through his interest in Punk Rock. More often than not his efforts fall flat on their face, but he always takes something with him from each experience and views it all as a learning curve. Budgets continue to get slashed by the Government as the book enters post 9/11 and Dave tells of the various different acts of "patriotism" the schools instruct their pupils to unknowingly partake in. As the book progresses we see the author at the receiving end of every form of abuse imaginable from his students, verbal and physical, but he always finds that glimmer of hope or humour at the end of each working day. When I first gawked at this book I couldn't fully grasp the concept of it all as I've never read anything quite like it in the past, but about a quarter way into it I began to warm to the author and the light in which he showed his students in. It's very much a heart-warming account of a life that often goes unrecognised and under appreciated. Certainly anyone who's worked in the profession will want to read this, but so too will those of you who've little previous knowledge of this life. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)

Book Reviews

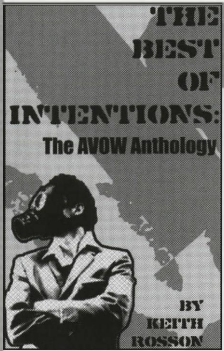


"Deathrow: The Chronicles Of Psychobilly" ...

by Alan Wilson. (Cherry Red Books)

Deathrow Database was a fanzine started up by Psychobilly figurehead Alan Wilson. It was born from a database of names and addresses held by Wilson, which he obtained through any correspondence that was made with him in the name of his band The Sharks. Early incarnations of the zine were in the form of a very basic newsletter, containing information on forthcoming releases and tour dates. It quickly gained momentum and built itself up to a fully-fledged fanzine and from there a magazine, which ran for over thirty quarterly issues. Inevitably it became too much for Wilson to handle and production was halted some time around the mid 90's I believe. Deathrow Database covered the thriving British Psychobilly scene of its day through interviews, live reports, record reviews, and various other attributes of the scene. Wilson ran it with the help of various contributors, who turned in everything from reports on gigs in their local areas to write-ups on their favourite bands. With highlights from issues one through thirty-eight, there's easily a month's reading in this book's three hundred

and eighty two pages. Personally speaking it took me over two months of evening reading to complete it and as the quality is that high, there's nothing you'll feel the urge to skip over, which is quite an achievement in itself. "Deathrow: The Chronicles Of Psychobilly" is a noble attempt by a group of people who obviously love what they're trying to write about. As far as the entries in the book, all the "biggies" are included and you'll thumb through page after page of the expected Meteors, Demented Are Go, Frantic Flintstones, Long Tall Texans, Boz Boorer, Frenzy, Batmobile and of course Wilson's own Sharks. If you're looking for the more obscure, that's here too, with the likes of Helen Shadow, Barnyard Ballers, Coffin Nails, The Highliners, Skitzo, Blue Devils and Queen B's. Basically anyone who played a part in, or passed through, the Psychobilly scene has gotta be in here. There're also reports on a large number of the "Psychobilly Rumble" festivals that went on at the time. All writers are well versed in the game and this can also act as possibly the most accurate historical account of what went on at the time, as a lot of the details are most likely long forgotten by the generation that lived it. This book is an exceptionally captivating page-perusing experience from cover to cover and right the way back again. (CHERRY RED BOOKS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

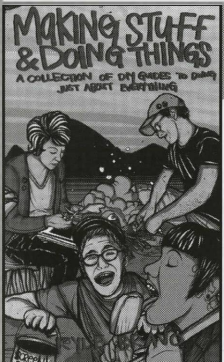


"The Best Of Intentions: The Avow Anthology"...

by Keith Rosson. (Microcosm Publishing)

As the name suggests, this is a thorough overview of the best years of Avow fanzine. I've never come into contact with any originals of this fanzine, nor have I heard about it. It came to life in Seattle back in 1995 and the first issue, like most fanzines, was a photocopied and self-stapled affair. Setting out with the intentions on blending poetry with music and merging personal ramblings with band interviews, Avow, we're told by its editor, didn't start to hit its stride until issue seven, by which time they were beginning to get a hand on things and began to focus more on the personal elements. A ballsy move, as most personal fanzines aren't worth a shit, but Rosson was determined not to let this happen to Avow. He'd primed himself well in the first six issues and felt confident to make the plunge, having gotten his schooling through interviewing bands and reviewing records, before gradually working his way on to becoming a high calibre Punk writer himself. The selections from these early issues contained here are pretty thin on the ground, but what I did read I enjoyed. By the time we reach

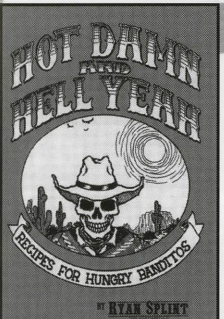
issue seven Rosson has gone off the idea of being a Punk poet, as the poets didn't like Punk and the Punks didn't like poetry, so the fanzine became increasingly filled with stories and his observations on the world. What's special about Rosson is that he's a modest guy and truly doesn't believe there's anything exceptional about what he does, but a highlighted version of the past ten years of his life (i.e. this book) may make things sound more interesting - "It's probably not high art, but it's all that I've got". Issues eleven through sixteen are included in their entirety, as this is where the author feels the quality of his work is at its best. Rosson is successful in transforming his fanzine into a 100% stories and artwork zine, which is pretty heavy going when you think about it. He becomes a keen observer in the various bars he frequents and writes about this lifestyle that inevitably seems to end up in a brawl most times. He's an honest writer and doesn't make any apologies for his feelings or thoughts. He questions himself, as much as others and the world around him, but as most people eventually figure out, none of it makes sense. The book is well written, descriptive and intelligent and puts some badly needed life back into the so-called "personal" fanzine scene. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)



"Making Stuff & Doing Things: A Collection Of D.I.Y. Guides To Doing Just About Everything" ... by Kyle Bravo.(Microcosm Publishing)

Kyle Bravo was editor of How 2 fanzine and up until Hurricane Katrina was residing in New Orleans, where he also played music and ran a Punk distro. How 2 Fanzine, as far as I'm aware, no longer exists and this is Microcosm's way of keeping his ideas in circulation. The thinking behind How 2 was an obscure one and just another example of how broad the parameters of fanzine culture can be stretched. Bravo offered us his D.I.Y. solutions to just about all of life's problems in the shape of alternative methods to resolving domestic and other issues. Ever contemplated alternative ways of disposing of your own urine? Uhhhhh ... no, me neither! Well, in case you have, Kyle recommends pissing into a bottle kept under your bed when you don't feel like making that long trek to the bathroom in the middle of the night ... once the bottle is full you empty it out in the back yard ... this will help with your garden's growth!! Can't see that one catching on to be honest Kyle, (haven't we already been there?) although I wouldn't put anything past these soap-dodgers! More useful tips include instructions for bike

repairs, plumbing, silk-screen printing, stencilling, cooking, travel and my own personal favourites "How to unstink your socks" (ever tried a washing machine?) and DIY toothpaste (I shit you not brothers and sisters). Things really take a turn for the worse when our Kyle starts offering advice on butt-plugs and a woman's guide on how to piss standing up. The term "folk knowledge" is used to describe the advice given in this book, which I think is accurate. Every generation has a wealth of solutions to everyday problems and you can relate it to times past when we didn't have such things as washing machines, toilets, printers, paintbrushes, sewing machines, glue etc. etc. but society has moved on for better or worse and certain mechanisms have become obsolete. Progression isn't always bad and for instance I like the idea that we now have the use of toilets instead of homemade bedpans, but some people will insist on taking D.I.Y. to extremes. There's some useful information contained herein, but a good chunk of it is plain ridiculous, where the author cannot bring himself to accept that our idea of change doesn't always have to be a backward step. We can move forward and be creative without becoming the next Bill Gates, but fear of the future and a blanket resistance to all advances in technology is something we will need to overcome in order to do so. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)



"Hot Damn & Hell Yeah/The Dirty South" ... (Microcosm Publishing)

Two vegan cookbooks combined. The first of the two is "Hot Damn & Hell Yeah" by Ryan Splint, who I'm told is Australian, but as the title suggests both these cookbooks draw from the deep south of America - dishes which are traditionally very meat-based. Only here they attempt to replace the meat and dairy products with vegan substitutes. The recipes are Punk friendly, given that it won't cost you a fortune to gather the required ingredients and most of them will be readily found in your kitchen already if you're a vegan. Splint's aim is to make vegan food that "doesn't taste like sawdust". He's not necessarily saying all of this stuff is healthy or good for you either, it's simply supposed to taste nice and be easily prepared. There're twenty-one desert recipes here for instance. You'll find a large variety of breads, soups, sides,

chilli dishes, sauces and main courses to keep you busy in the kitchen. Flip the book over and you begin "The Dirty South" half of the book, which is written by a girl with no surname called Vanessa. Again the emphasis is on Mexicano type dishes and with a subheading of "Eat More Grease" you'll catch on quick as to what we're talking about here. Most of it is fried, from potatoes to fake chicken and BBQ Tofu, it's all here. All the recipes are accompanied by illustrations, presumably by the authors, to give the book that authentic fanzine look. From a personal perspective I like meat a lot and no vegan or vegetarian dish I've tried has ever gone down well, so I'll inevitably always revert back to the real thing. Morally, yes there's a strong argument there, but it's tough to have a main course without meat, so this book was a bit lost on me. For the many vegan Punks out there however, I guess they need all the help they can get in making mealtimes enjoyable again. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)



"Xtra Tuf No. 5: The Strike Issue" ... (Microcosm Publishing)

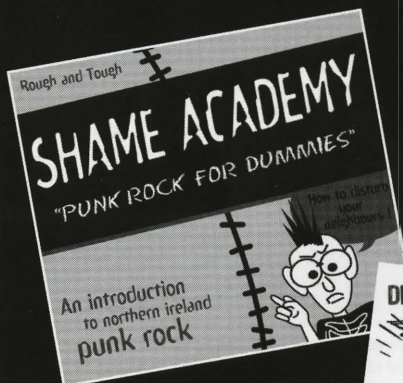
Pocket-sized book issue of Moe Bowstern's fanzine, which documents her life and times as a commercial fisher round Kodiak Bay in Alaska. I'm not sure whether all past issues of this fanzine have been issued in book format or not, but this is nicely done. Simply put, if you work a job, you will find this of interest. "Xtra Tuf" traces the history of the labour movement at sea, the workers organising themselves to improve their working conditions and fairer pay and the general stories and characters Moe pick ups and runs into on her journey. Being a trade unionist myself, this cut close to the bone as time and again people are faced with having to negotiate issues that really should be any workers "right" and not a "privilege", but you learn quickly that everything has to be fought for and nothing is granted. Thus we enter into the world of the subheading of this book - industrial action. Moe writes about what we've learned from past strikes, the victories as well as the defeats, the freeloaders, scabs and back stabbers out to make a quick buck off the backs of their co-workers. We've all been there and clearly there're strong parallels to be drawn between trade unions and Punk Rock - the obvious unity, quality of life over money

and not putting a price on everything, the power of organising, taking matters into your own hands to achieve better conditions, doing things on your own terms, working towards the common good and not solely what benefits the individual etc etc. It's a male dominated industry as you've probably realised and Moe also has to battle for acceptance from her fellow trade unionists because of her sex, which is where the book's title originated. As in most working situations, it's a case of toughening up or else getting walked on. Fishing becomes her passion and she finds herself fighting for the rights of a community she truly believes in. Giving a good rounded view that can only come from first hand experience, Moe is realistic about her goals and has researched her demands well, knowing them to be achievable. It's difficult to know what era these stories come from, but one can only assume it was around the 1980's when fishers were paid a decent wage and the value of their work was far more respected than it is now. Still even at the time, the price paid per fish was on a steady decline, but hadn't plummeted to the depths we see today. The book is also laced with tons of stories from fellow fishers whom she's crossed paths with, along with poetry, photos and sketches all related to the trade. One of the best pieces of literature I've read on the labour struggle in a long time. Worth seeking out, in particular for anyone who's ever questioned the importance of union representation. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE. PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)

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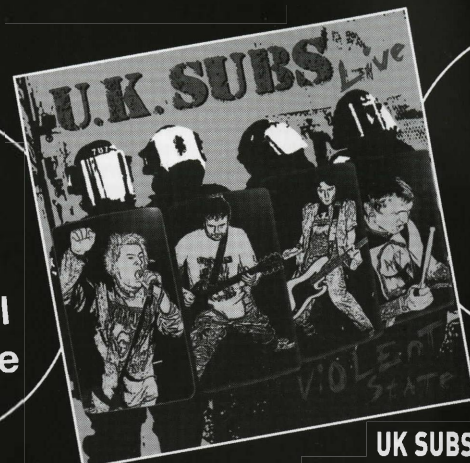
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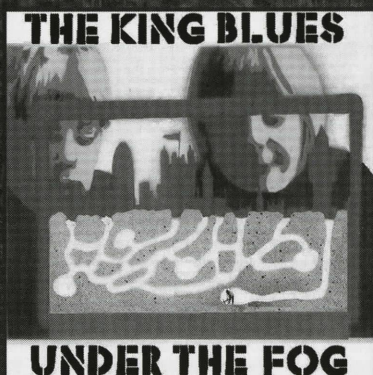
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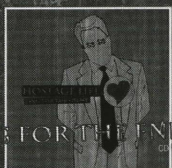


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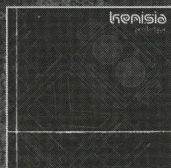
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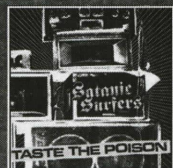
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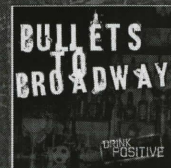
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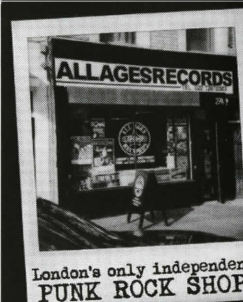


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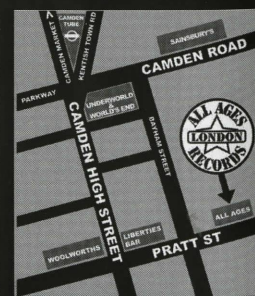
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Vocations

BY
BOZ
2006

...if I thought it'd really make a difference, I'd crucify myself for our sins...

...or
flagellate
burn myself
at the stake...

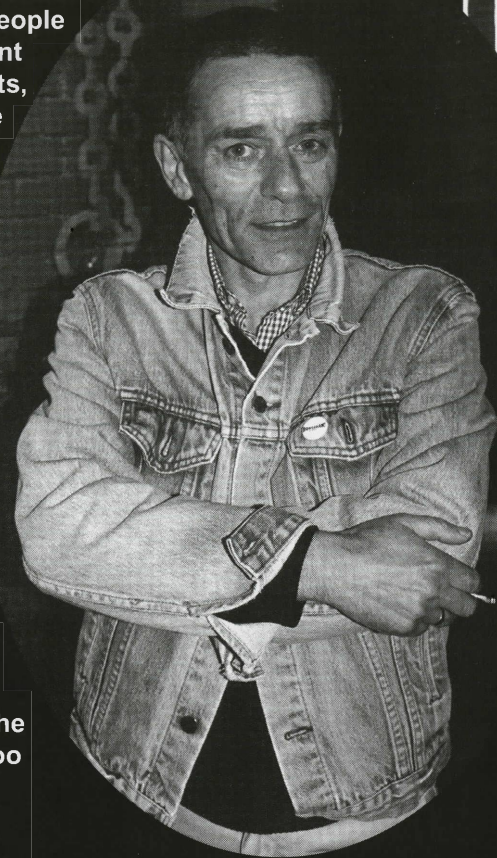
...elevate
myself through the
16 heavens in some ill
conceived backpacker fad
of eastern Karma...

...or become a righteous rooftop sniper...

...but the fact of the matter is that when it's just me and the rats and roches I'll be content in the knowledge that I chose to serve my gods with solvents!!!!

MULTI-BOND
XXXXXX

Despite their relative isolation from the often London-centric Oi! scene, Cardiff's The Oppressed, along with the northeast's Angelic Upstarts, went on to establish the Anti-Facist Oi! movement of the early 80's and beyond. Few people could match singer Roddy Moreno's commitment to the cause and it went without saying that The Oppressed, along with their Geordie counterparts, were among the hardest bands ever to fuck fascism. Although from the original crop of '68-'70 Skinheads and owning up to listening to little outside of Skinhead Reggae, Moreno's vision for The Oppressed bore a harsher Street Punk edge, having found an affinity with the early Punk Rock of '76-'78. The initial era of The Oppressed lasted less than four years, having split up in 1984 due to the majority of their gigs ending up in violence. Moreno spent the remainder of 80's establishing both his record labels, Oi! Records and Ska Records. He also brought the S.H.A.R.P. movement to Britain and played in his own Rocksteady band The Rude Boys. In 1994 he again put The Oppressed back together to use the band's profile as a reaction against the Combat 18 posters that had been pasted up in his area. The band played their farewell gig in Cardiff in 1996, which was later released on video as "They Think It's All Over ... It Is Now!". 2004 and The Oppressed are once again back defending the Skinhead culture, playing sporadic dates throughout Europe and as far a field as Canada. May 2005 and there's a Dublin gig on the cards – The first time ever for The Oppressed to play in Ireland. The Voodoo Lounge in Smithfield was the venue and I eagerly headed down early that evening for a hook up with Roddy Moreno, whom I typically found propping up the bar ... the following interview took place in the beer garden of the Voodoo Lounge. (Photos taken in Boh's Bar and The Voodoo Lounge, Dublin)



THE OPPRESSED!

RIOT. 77: How's your day been going so far Roddy? You've been about the town?

RODDY MORENO: Yeah, we got picked up at the airport by Connor and went for breakfast round his mates house ... and we've been in the pub ever since. We went to the bar in Bohemians Football Club and there's this Cardiff boy living here in Dublin who took us to the Foggy. He's been living here a few years ...

RIOT. 77: Is that how the gig came about?

RODDY: No, it wasn't actually. He organised fuck all (laughs). Connor just emailed and asked if we fancied a gig in Dublin. I said, "Yeah, why not?"

RIOT. 77: Is this your first time here?

RODDY: First time ever, yeah.

RIOT. 77: You're mother's maiden name was O'Donovan is that right?

RODDY: That's right. So I'm half Irish I suppose. My mother passed away about a year or two ago. I went into a church and lit a candle for her earlier. It just seemed the right thing to do. I'm sure she's out there somewhere looking down on me.

RIOT. 77: What's the other half of your make up?

RODDY: Spanish. It goes back about three generations I think. My father was born in Cardiff and I think his parents came from Spain. My mother was also born in Cardiff and I think it was her parents who came from Ireland.

RIOT. 77: Ok. Last Thursday's election in Britain! Did you vote?

RODDY: Not this time, no. There's no one to vote for, is there? I voted in the local election about six months ago, because the BNP had some cunt standing, so I thought I'd vote Labour just to be on the safe side.

RIOT. 77: Do you still believe in the Labour Party?

RODDY: No, they're full of shit, but when you've got the BNP standing it's a case of having to vote for someone. Labour normally gets in anyway where I live, so I just stayed with them. The reason I don't vote in general elections is because Labour has no one standing who's worth voting for, it's a waste of time.

RIOT. 77: How do you feel living under Tony Blair compares with the Thatcher years?

RODDY: Oh, well obviously it's a lot better than those days, but they're still a bunch of cunts. They dragged us into a war that was a load of bullshit ... Blair is really just a Tory in disguise. I've lost all confidence in any politicians; they're all full of shit.

RIOT. 77: What about Gordon Brown's Labour? Do you think he's the same?

RODDY: Yeah I do. They're all a bunch of middle class cunts out for themselves.

RIOT. 77: Ok, tonight you've got Runnin' Riot playing with you. They've been

covering The Oppressed for years ... you're a fan I take it?

RODDY: Yeah, top band. Never met them, but got to know them over the Internet and they sent stuff over n' that. They told me they did an Oppressed song, so I asked them to send me a copy. They sent me a couple of CD's and they're nice people ... well, as nice as you can get on the Internet (laughs). So when we were asked to play here, I asked if there was any chance of them playing as well and they said yeah.

RIOT. 77: You were over in Italy recently playing a festival. That was in celebration of fifty years liberation from the Nazis, is that right?

RODDY: Yeah that's right. It was fuckin' unbelievable, excellent. They're really friendly, the Italians. It was mad over there, a really good weekend. That was organised the same way as well. Enrico from Los Fastidios got in touch through the Internet. He asked us if we could go over for this occasion and apparently they're going to make it a yearly event now. They called it the "Work Together Festival" after one of our songs.

RIOT. 77: Is that an outdoor festival?

RODDY: No, it's in this big huge squat called CS Pedro, which is run by all these Punks and skinheads. But its unofficial, there's no Government involved or anything like that. It's a big warehouse type thing that they squat in. It's been going for like ten or fifteen years and the government seem happy enough for them to do it and just let them get on with it. It's not like the squats in Britain where they'll continually evict you.

RIOT. 77: It's just one-off dates you've been doing since getting back together is it? There've been no tours or anything like that?

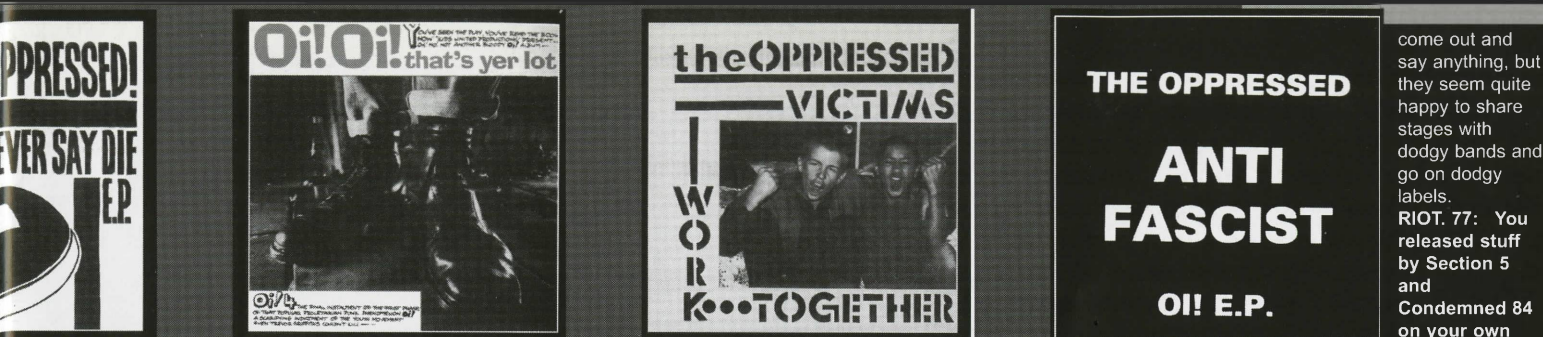
RODDY: Well, me myself I'm going over to Canada for three dates with The Prowlers. They'll be doing a set of their own and then banging away with me on an Oppressed set. Then in August we'll be doing our first tour ever of Japan. A band called United We Stand will be bringing us over. If you're gonna do a tour, why not go to Japan and do it?

RIOT. 77: You DJ'd in Toronto before didn't you?

RODDY: Yeah to celebrate Insurgence Records fifth birthday. We had an EP coming out as well as part of it, so two of us went over on the Friday and I DJ'd at their Reggae night and then the next night we played a gig and the other two came over for that.

RIOT. 77: Do you still have all the old records?

RODDY: Only Oppressed records. I haven't got any of the old Oi! records or Ska records, I flogged 'em all years ago. The only ones I kept were the ones I produced,



of which I think there were two. What I like listening to is old Reggae and a bit of Soul. If a band sends me a CD or something I'll listen to it, but I'll only listen to it once so I can tell 'em I listened to it and its good or whatever, you know what I mean? My favourite stuff is the old Skinhead Reggae, "Tighten Up" volumes 1 and 2 are the best albums ever. My personal favourites are the old Reggae love songs, I'm a big softie at heart. The old Ska is beautiful as well.

RIOT. 77: You have a fourteen-year-old son. What sort of music is he into?

RODDY: The usual nonsense. Dr Dre and Eminem. But he's not into any scene as such. All he wants to do is play football. Comes home from school, into his kit and over the park. So at the moment that's it, football and nothing else.

RIOT. 77: You like that, do you?

RODDY: Yeah, I'm happy, it keeps him away from the scum. You know the types, hanging round the streets robbing old ladies ...

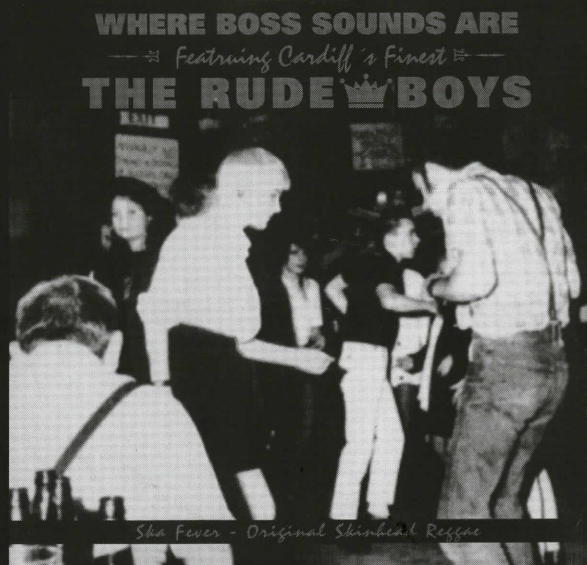
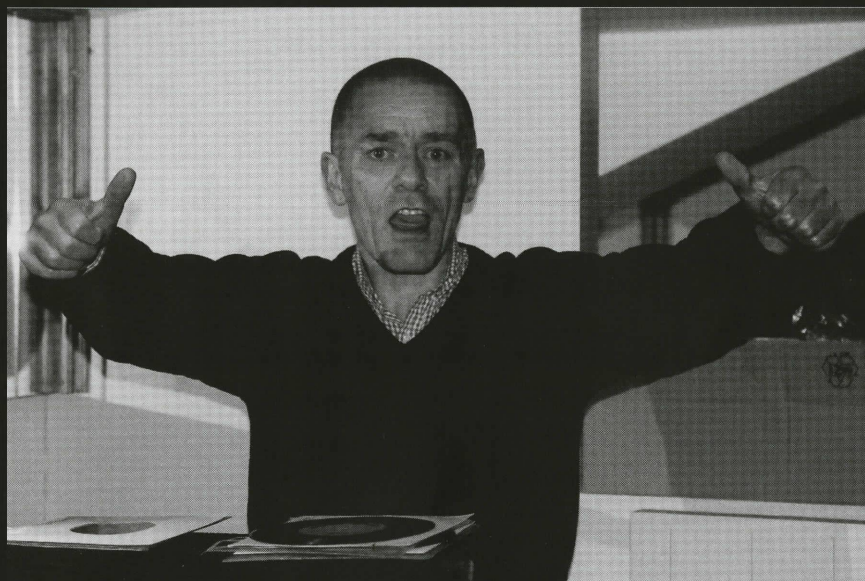
RIOT. 77: Do you still live in Grangetown?

RODDY: I still live in Grangetown, yeah. It's your average working class area. I was born n' bred in a council estate in Llanrumney and moved to Grangetown about twenty odd years ago and have been there ever since. But if I want to go out for a drink to see

RODDY: When I put them out they were totally unknown bands. They would have probably been their first releases and I told every band who came to my label that I don't deal with fuckin' racists and they all said, "Oh no, we don't want anything to do with that either". Then it was after they left my label and moved on that they started mixing in dodgy circles. In hindsight, if I'd known then what I know now, I wouldn't have put them out. At the time they were just skinhead bands and all you can do is take a man on his word. If they say they're not racists and are just in it for the music, you take their word on it. What happens after that you've no control over. But like I said, if I knew then what I know now I'd have never put them out.

RIOT. 77: What do you know now?

RODDY: Well, all I know now is what I've heard. They were kicked off a label because they didn't want to play with The Templars who had a black person, Phil, amongst its line up. They said they didn't have a problem with Phil, he was ok and they had nothing against him, but if it got out that they had shared a stage with a black they would get smashed up. I always thought the idea of being a skinhead was about standing up to people. It seems to me they're a bunch of cowards, they should have played the gig and said, "Fuck you!" to the nazis. I saw a video of them once and they



the boys or something I head back to Llanrumney, because that's where the heart is, I just live in Grangetown. My mother was actually born in Grangetown, so its come full circle you could say.

RIOT. 77: That's very much a multicultural area Grangetown, is it?

RODDY: Oh yeah, well the whole of Cardiff is really, because it's a Docks area. We've had ethnic communities for hundreds of years, growing up together, you know what I mean? There're still racist wankers there, but there's no organised Fascism or anything like that, if you know what I'm saying. You'll get people with racist attitudes, but its personal attitudes, they wouldn't dream of insulting somebody, but in their house they might be, "... blah! blah! blah! there's too many fuckin' Packies ..." or something like that. But they won't say it on the street.

RIOT. 77: Ok. So, I know you were hoping to make a few quid by getting back together, but I can't imagine there being much money to be made by playing these sorts of gigs?

RODDY: Well, the only reason we got back together was because we were offered three grand to go and play in Germany. We've been offered gigs for years but always said "Nah, I'm too fuckin' old, can't be bothered!" But when this guy said "We can pay you a few thousand pounds ...!" it was like, "Well, hang on a minute ... I'll have a word with the lads" (laughs). That was the main reason we did get back together and then on the back of that we done some other gigs.

RIOT. 77: You're doing Holidays In The Sun.

RODDY: Yeah. On the same stage on the Saturday you've got Los Fastidios, Stage Bottles and The Upstarts.

RIOT. 77: Oh, Mensi is gonna do it this year?

RODDY: Yeah, I've never met them. Only over the Internet again.

RIOT. 77: The Upstarts felt the same way as you about Section 5 and Condemned 84 ... that they'd never share a stage with them ... are they not playing this year?

RODDY: No, none of them are playing. That was part of the deal more or less.

Mensi told Darren Russell before that he would never play with any bands like that, so deliberately I think the guy has sidelined them sort of bands. They might not actually

had some seig heiling on stage and they're carrying on singing like nothing was going on, you know what I mean? If you don't stand up and say you're not having it, you're condoning it more or less. Its like if you see a fella beating a woman and you do nothing, you're condoning what he's doing.

RIOT. 77: Uhuh! You're pretty much a family man these days then Roddy I take it?

RODDY: Yeah I work a job and have a girl and kid n' that. I work nights doing security at a homeless hostel. That's my work and it's a piece of piss. I sit on my arse and do fuck all most of the night.

RIOT. 77: I wanted to ask about the "Oi! Oil Music" record, which is just about the only Oi! record I can think of where a drum machine gets put to good use. How did that come about?

RODDY: What happened was we got to the studio and they had an electronic drum kit already set up and we couldn't be bothered taking it down to set up an ordinary drum kit. I said we'd have a go and see what it sounds like. "Yeah, that'll do!" (laughs).

That's always been our attitude to recording. We're an Oi! band, what the fuck! It doesn't bother me. Lots of people hate it, but who gives a fuck. We were happy.

RIOT. 77: Yeah I think that version of "Joe Hawkins" is excellent. Speaking of which, Joe Hawkins was a right-wing character in one of Richard Allen's books.

RODDY: He was a rapist, a racist and a murderer, but to us he was just a skinhead. When the book came out I must have been about thirteen. It was simply the fact that he was a skinhead who didn't give a fuck about anything and we couldn't see much further than that to be honest. We didn't care about the story of the book. It was a book about skinheads that had an impact on us and when I wrote the song it was my way of trying to reflect what the book meant to us as kids. The lyrics of the song are based on the book but we didn't touch on the racism or the murder or anything like that. If he was a real character we wouldn't have done the song, but he was fictional. So nowadays when we're singing it we're taking it back for the real skinheads.

RIOT. 77: Wasn't Richard Allen himself a right-winger?

RODDY: Don't know, I never met him. He was just a Canadian pulp fiction writer and his publicist said to him one day, "Do something on skinheads!" So he done a bit of



Union Jack about ... why was that something you never got into when a lot of other Oi! bands did?

RODDY: I think maybe it's because I'm half Spanish and half Irish, living in Wales but having no Welsh blood in me. I've just never felt patriotic ever. I can't see the point of it. To be waving the Union Jack, to me is like kissing the Queen's arse. It's just never been my thing.

RIOT. 77: You're very proud of being a Cardiff man though, I gather?

RODDY: Oh yeah. The only patriotism I have, if you could call it that, is for Cardiff. That's about as far as I can go, you know? I can't be patriotic for Wales, because I don't know fuckin' Wales, I only know Cardiff. That's where my people are from. It's not really patriotism; it's just affection. I was born there and I'll fuckin' die there, you know? And of course Cardiff City are the best football team in the world (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Tell me some more about that. The early days of following Cardiff City!!!

RODDY: It was fuckin' mad (laughs). The good old days of football hooliganism. You went away in either a van or a coach with your mates, pay to get in on the gate, you could go in any gate because there was no fencing, take over the crowd and take over the town ... ahh, we were kids, I'm an old man now. That's the way kids go on I suppose. You go to a fight and a football match breaks out (laughs). That's what it was like.

RIOT. 77: Were you a bully?

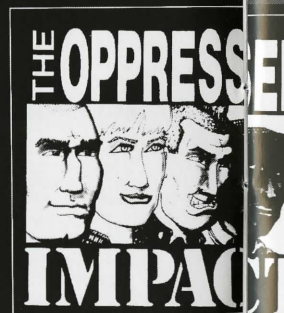
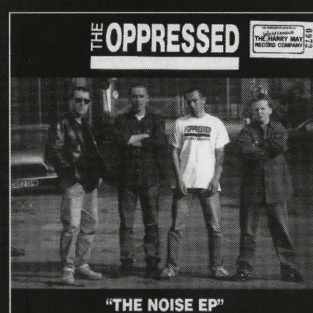
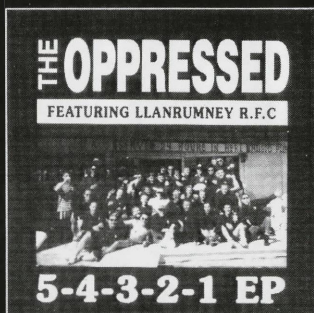
RODDY: No, that's exactly it, I wasn't. I'm not big enough anyway; I'm a skinny fucker. But if we were on the chase in Chelsea or somewhere and one of them fell over, if I got to him first I'd kick the cunt, but if I got there third and he was already being kicked, I couldn't start then; he's already fucked. That's the difference between psycho people and those with a bit of dignity. If somebody wants to fight, you fight them, but if somebody bottles it and doesn't want to know, obviously you're not going to fight them. There's no pride in beating someone up who doesn't want it. That's what I hate about the fuckin' Fascists ... you know, twenty of them chase two little Asian kids and give them a fuckin' kickin'. That's just pure fuckin' cowardice. Maybe if it was the other way round and two of them chased twenty Asian kids I'd give them a bit of credit, but they never fuckin' do that.

RIOT. 77: Do you still have that aggressive side to your personality?

RODDY: No, not really, I've sort of grown out of that. That's why I gave the drink up years ago. A lot of it is the drink; it gives you an aggressive side. But even when I was pissing it up, it was the same. I wouldn't hit somebody who didn't want trouble. If someone spilled my pint and he offered to buy me another one, then fine but if he turns around and tells me to fuck off, then I'll stick the head in. It all basically comes down to pride and sticking up for yourself and there's no kudos in bullying someone.

RIOT. 77: What do you make of the football culture today. The whole skinhead following it had seems to have been pushed aside for a different type of culture.

RODDY: Oh yeah. There aren't that many young, up n' coming skinheads around today in Britain, they're all influenced by American culture. There haven't been many teenagers influenced by skinhead since the days of 2 Tone. But that's just in Britain you know, if you go around the world you'll find the skinhead culture is even bigger now



research, went down the pub a few times, met a few skinheads and then wrote a book. He wasn't a skinhead himself, he was just your standard middle-aged suited writer who wrote fiction.

RIOT. 77: You recorded a tribute single to Richard Allen, did you not?

RODDY: I'm sure we did, yeah. It was something to do with George Marshall, because he had all the books. He asked if he could use a track and I'm pretty sure it was "Joe Hawkins" he used ... obviously! I'm not sure if Cock Sparrer were on that or not. I think Arthur Bilco had something on it. You know Arthur Bilco from The Last Resort?

RIOT. 77: Yeah, he has a Ska band as well doesn't he?

RODDY: That's right, it was a Ska band that was on it. He was a friend of George's and we were mates at the time ... when I say "mates", we spoke on the phone a few times ... that was before I fell out with him.

RIOT. 77: What did you fall out with him over?

RODDY: I wanted him to give away "Anti-Fascist Oi!" EP's with his paper ... have a competition or something. He didn't just want to give them away; he wanted me to do an interview to justify why we were Anti-Fascist. So I done the interview, but instead of printing the interview, he took parts of what I said and said "Roddy says this, but I think he's wrong because ...". In the same fuckin' issue he printed an appeal to raise money for this fuckin' nazi cunt who got shot in America. He said something like, "Politics aside, no one deserves to die. Send money to his family". He was too far on that side of the fence for my liking. I felt he didn't want to offend the other side, because they bought his books. So I wrote "Skinhead Times" about him.

RIOT. 77: You covered Skrewdriver songs early on in The Oppressed.

RODDY: The first line up I was just playing guitar, before I took over the vocals. We used to do "Anti-Social" and "I Don't Like You" off the "All Skewed Up" album. At the time Skrewdriver were just a Punk band and on the back of the album it had a quote from the "Skinhead Moonstomp" album - "I Want All You Skinheads To Get Up On Your Feet ..." etc, which was written by a black man. So who'd have fuckin' thought? But as soon as they came out of the closet, we burned their fuckin' records and dropped the songs from the set.

RIOT. 77: Did you ever meet them?

RODDY: No never.

RIOT. 77: One thing I always liked about The Oppressed was you never waved a

in these other countries than it was in Britain in the old days of the early 80's. It's like when we were in Germany there was over two thousand skinheads, punks and psychobillies and not an ounce of trouble. They've taken it on and been influenced by the real skinhead culture. The boneheads have all been pushed into their little cul-de-sac, which is the best part. They play these secret little gigs in secret places of their own, so we can go and get on with what we do. So in places like that and Canada and Belgium its huge ... we can go and do gigs there and the only people who'll come are the ones on our side of the fence. Everybody is having fun again now and its almost as if the bully boys have been taken out of the equation.

RIOT. 77: Why do you still feel the need to speak out against Fascists in the scene when you've just said there aren't any in it anymore?

RODDY: Well where it comes from is, at one of our first gigs in Swansea in South Wales, we had this cunt sieg heiling at us so I told him to knock it on the head or else get out of here because we don't want people thinking he's got anything to do with us. Halfway through the next song he starts at it again, so I got off stage and dropped the head on him, he fell to the floor and all the Cardiff Crew kicked the fuck out of him. I thought, "I can't have this!" so I went home and wrote "Work Together" and stuck a black and a white skinhead on the front just to make a point. It made it clear that this is what we're about, against racism. As time went on I got involved with SHARP n' that because I'd seen what the boneheads had done to the scene in Britain and thought it was important to push the cause and do as much as you can to prevent it happening again. It's the least you can do - give a little back to the scene I suppose.

RIOT. 77: Have you alienated many people over the years by being as committed as you are?

RODDY: Only people with racist tendencies and that was the intention anyway. It's basically saying, "Fuck you, we don't want you at our gigs, we don't want you buying our records" and so we stuck Anti-Fascist signs on our posters and Anti-Fascist songs on our records to dissuade them. We've got to show the world that real skinheads have fuck all to do with racism and educate them as to the true roots of the culture. Because there are still so many people out there today who think that skinheads started in the early 80's with the National Front. We want to show them that it started in the late 60's with Skinhead Reggae and Jamaican Rude Boys all mixing together and slowly it just got bigger and bigger and it's important people know the truth. There was a documentary I was watching recently and a German girl was being interviewed, saying when she first got into skinhead she thought you had to be a nazi to be one, but thanks

to SHARP n' that she realised it was a load of shit. Basically that's what SHARP was there for – to counteract the media lies, where they just concentrated on the boneheads and ignored the truth.

RIOT. 77: Anti-Fascist Action has always been your group of choice to support. Why do you choose them over all the others?

RODDY: Anti-Fascist Action doesn't exist anymore, at least not in London, because there're no boneheads left to fight. Most of the people who were involved with Anti-Fascist Action now support The International Working Class Association - The IWCA. It's not a political party, but they're taking it from the streets into the political arena. But the reason I did support the A.F.A. was because they didn't go out protesting n' stuff, they went and kicked fuck out of the fascists. I thought, "Yeah, good work lads!" so I supported them. They were pro-active compared to things like Rock Against Racism, which was more of a middle class movement. "Tony Benn's Clones in plastic Macs", as I think The Business said. I'll give you an example; years ago there was supposed to be a BNP meeting or something near Cardiff and they were to meet at the bus station to be redirected. So at the bus station you had all these Rock Against Racism people show up and start picketing the bus station. With that some A.F.A. lads came to the station to tell them the B.N.P. weren't coming to the station and were in a pub about a mile away. The Rock Against Racism people said they couldn't leave because they'd told all the press they were going to be here and if they leave it will look like they backed down. The A.F.A. were like, "Fuck the press, come with us and we can have these boys down the road". They got stuck in there, because boneheads don't give a fuck if you've got two hundred people waving placards shouting "You're Scum! You're Scum!" but they do care if there's a gang of hooligans lobbing house bricks at them.

RIOT. 77: Do you still involve yourself in protests?

RODDY: Not really, in Cardiff it's not a huge problem at all these days, most of it went on in London anyway. I don't know about Ireland, but in Britain everything is insular and if you live in Cardiff you don't really tend to drift that far outside of it. Because we don't have that kind of trouble in Cardiff, there wasn't any need for it. Obviously if the B.N.P. or whoever came marching through Cardiff, it would be a different matter.

RIOT. 77: You've remained a skinhead most of your life, why do think you never grew out of it or moved on?

RODDY: I don't know. Maybe its because I was a skinhead when I was twelve years old in 1969. The first time though it only lasted a few years and by the early to mid 70's had died out. It was all big hair and baggy trousers. Then Punk came along and I went to a Punk gig and got the same buzz out of that as I used to as a skinhead.

RIOT. 77: Do you remember what gig that was?

RODDY: The Boomtown Rats. "Lookin' After No. 1" had just come out and was in the charts and they came and played Cardiff. They were fuckin' excellent early on, when they had that snotty attitude. After that I thought "I'll have some of this!" and got into the Punk scene. I went to jail then in '81 and had all my hair cut off and when I came out my shoes didn't fit me anymore so I wore a pair of my brother's old working boots and thought, "Fuck me, this brings back memories!!" (laughs) ... and I just fell back into the skinhead scene again and have been into it ever since. I'm too old to change now. My wife can't understand my taste in music and how I can listen to the same Reggae

when I was in there she was my mate's missus. She used to write to me and came to visit me a few times, so when he blew her out she was heartbroken and contemplating suicide n' that. Anyway, when I got out of jail it all just sort of fell together and twenty-five years later we're still together. We got married fifteen years ago when she was pregnant with the boy, just so we'd all have the same name n' that.

RIOT. 77: The Oppressed were another band who weren't too happy with their dealings with Secret Records in the early 80's

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RODDY: Yeah, the cunts ripped us off. We didn't get so much as a free copy of the album, not a penny. It wasn't just us either; they ripped off lots of bands. So, after that we just done it ourselves, put out our own records and invented label names so the taxman wouldn't find us (laughs). First it was Firm Records, then we put something out as Skinhead Records, then Oppressed Records ... then I went and started my own label called Oi! Records.

RIOT. 77: Which ended up as Captain Oi! ...

RODDY: No, what happened was they were two separate labels, but since I had packed the label in, Mark Brennan got in touch and asked if I wanted to license my old stuff to him. I didn't own any of the music; the bands owned all their own music, all I owned was the cover designs and the name Oi! Records. So I sold him the cover designs and the name for a couple of grand. It was up to him to get permission off the bands to release their stuff and that's why you'll find some releases where it was say Oi! Polloi and somebody else on a split album and Oi! Polloi didn't wanna know so you'll have another band on there. I think it was only Oi! Polloi and The Beggars who didn't wanna know, all the other bands were quite happy. He's a good bloke Mark Brennan, sound as a pound and has always done right by me. A few years back when my brother died I needed money for his funeral, so I gave Mark a call and explained the situation to him. No problem, cheque in the post. He's good as gold and I'd never really met the man. We played with The Business once when he was with them but I didn't speak to him ... I think it was his second gig with the band. But since then I've never met him. He's reissued some of our stuff on his label and he was the only person I could think of at the time to ask for money. I needed the money and just like that he gave me a thousand pound. Can't fault him. A diamond, as they'd say in his neck of the woods.

RIOT. 77: Strange question, but how's your health these days?

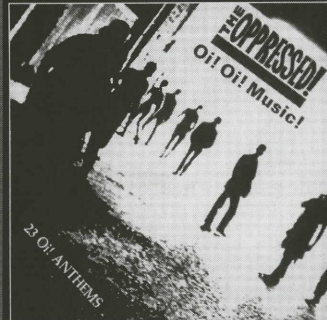
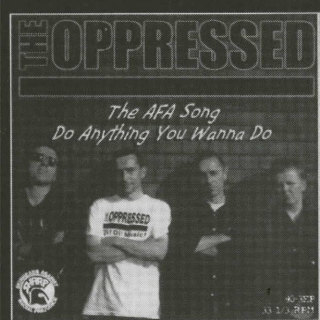
RODDY: Fit as a fuckin' fiddle. Rumours of my demise are greatly exaggerated! You get boneheads on the Internet n' that saying I've got AIDS.

RIOT. 77: Yeah I read that in a few different places.

RODDY: It's just 'cos I'm an old skinny cunt. I'm old n' fucked, but I'm alright, if you know what I mean?



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songs thousands of times over and over again. I don't how I do it, but I never get bored of it. I've had one Skinhead Reggae tape in the car for the past fifteen or twenty years. But then I don't like what she listens to.

RIOT. 77: What's she into?

RODDY: Well not so much now, but a few years back she was all into the Rave scene and would go off Raving with a fuckin' whistle and all that shit (laughs). That's not my cup of tea at all.

RIOT. 77: You mentioned there about serving some time in prison. What was that for?

RODDY: It was fuckin' students. Bastards! There were four of us and we were punks at the time and had been to a nightclub, which had a student bar underneath it, and as we were leaving all the students were pouring out of it with too much to drink. One of them barged into my mate and when he turned round he told him to fuck off or something like that so in the end there was four of us slapping students about and to be honest they didn't want to know. We were pissed, they started it ... it was the drink you know and that's why I gave it up. We all got three years for it.

RIOT. 77: Were they badly hurt?

RODDY: Not really. One had to have an operation on his eye and another one of them got some stitches in his head when he was hit over it with a brick. It was stupid really. We were young and it could have gone too far, someone could have been killed. So I went to prison and took a long, hard look at myself and decided to stay off the drink.

RIOT. 77: Really, so you haven't drank since the early 80's?

RODDY: Well ... I didn't give up; I just cut down on it. Instead of going out and having eight or ten pints, I'd go out and have maybe three or four. I haven't been drunk since.

RIOT. 77: How long did you serve?

RODDY: I done a year and then got parole.

RIOT. 77: How did you find it in there?

RODDY: It was a piece of piss; it was easy. To me it was how I'd imagined a school outing to be. All the cons were the school kids, all the screws were the teachers and you just had to do what you were told. When you're told to go and work, you go and work. When you're told to go and have something to eat, you go and have something to eat. Once you're in there and you have your mindset ... there's no point in moaning about it, just get on with it. When I was in jail I got close with my missus, because



"A HUNDRED DOLLARS AND A T-SHIRT – A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT ZINES IN THE NORTHWEST U.S." (MICROCOSM)

Interesting look at fanzine culture in America's Northwest. The Microcosm team who put this film together are from Portland, Oregon, specialise in all things D.I.Y. and are very much behind the whole concept of creating things independently. They've built up a huge library and distro highlighting their support and this DVD is just another piece of analysis, which looks into what makes fanzine publishers tick. Tracing their history back to Labour and Trade Union movements, in which similar methods were used for getting the word out, it is generally agreed upon that fanzines as we know them started sometime in or around the 1930's mark by Science Fiction fanatics. Punk Rock joined the ranks in

'76 with Punk Magazine out of New York, which was an independent magazine, but perhaps not what everyone would class as a fanzine. Since then, fanzines have branched out into all sorts of directions, one of which is the "personal" fanzine and that's for the most part what this film focuses on. People no longer felt a need to document a particular music scene or write about bands they like, but instead took the self-indulgent route and wrote about themselves. To be frank, it never caught on with me as the majority of these people's lives just aren't interesting enough to have an entire fanzine dedicated to their day-to-day living. There's been the odd one here and there that hit on something, but the bulk of it contained little more than tips on how to wash yourself, what you should be eating for breakfast and whatever demons are eating up the editor on this particular day. A lot of these people would be far better off visiting a psychiatrist than boring the rest of the world with their life story. Ok, rant over!! This film delves into all

areas of fanzine creation and not just subject matter, so there's something of interest here for anyone who's ever had even a passing interest in how or why these people do what they do. It outlines what constitutes as a fanzine, the origins of self-publishing, the resources available and what the future holds for the phenomenon. This is achieved through interviewing over seventy publishers, readers and distro owners. I don't think I'd be generalising by saying that much of these interviews focus on the college educated American middle class, which is fine, but it shouldn't speak for the culture as a whole. This I believe is the first documentary I've seen on fanzines and I really enjoyed it, despite the nipping. It's an original stab at something that hasn't been so closely monitored in Punk circles but was always there, though it's significance sometimes gets overlooked. (MICROCOSM PUBLISHING: 5307 N. MINNESOTA AVE, PORTLAND, OREGON, 97217, U.S.A.)

ALIEN SEX FIEND "A PURPLE GLISTENER/LIQUID HEAD IN TOKYO". (CHERRY RED)

Those of you who've entered the weird and twisted world of Alien Sex Fiend before will know what to expect from this DVD of two back-to-back concerts from the band. Alien Sex Fiend were an odd hybrid of the Cramps meets Industrial music and were formed around the 1982 mark. "A Purple Glistener" catches them a year into their career at the Tin Can Club in Birmingham in September of '83, showcasing material from their debut album, "Who's Been Sleeping In My Brain". A hit n' miss setlist that drags itself on occasion but also has the ability to stun when you least expect it. "Liquid Head In Tokyo" sees Alien Sex Fiend caught live in Japan three years later, by which time the

band had established themselves as a convincing force and sold out the entire tour of the country. This gig is also interspersed with a backstage interview and is the better of the two. The band appear more confident and not as scholastic as their Tin Can Club appearance. They'd developed musically too by this stage and had a firm grip on what it was they wanted to be. You can almost twin their sound with what Sigue Sigue Sputnik were doing at the time as it's upbeat Electro Punk music which has a special charm to it. Marilyn Manson would later revive this sound, but Alien Sex Fiend were a forward thinking band at the time and hit on some great ideas. The band became more

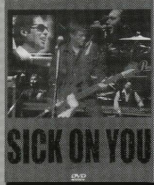
structured as time went on, but never lost that chaotic edge where the listener and viewer is never quite sure what's coming next. Collectively there's ninety minutes of Alien Sex Fiend on this DVD, which should please fans of their earlier work and also those who seek interest in what can be done with the ideals of Punk when used in another context. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

**ALTERNATIVE TV**

Mark Perry's Alternative TV have a patchy back catalogue to say the least, but much like Perry himself, when they were good, they were very good. Of course Perry was also the editor of England's Sniffin' Glue fanzine, which is generally regarded as the first to document the London scene of '76/'77. This DVD drags together footage from four separate gigs filmed between 1996 and 2001. First we get five tracks from the H.I.T.S. festival in Blackpool in '96, which sees the band pull out Frank Zappa and Throbbing Gristle covers amidst three of their own, the best of which is the cracking

LIVE SPLITTING IN TWO

This works great as a visual companion to the Souls recent double live album on Chunksaah! A full show capturing the band in terrific form, oddly playing in front of a Californian audience and not on their beloved East Coast! Still highly under rated on this side of the pond, this DVD witnesses the Bouncing Souls turn in another five star set as they have done on any occasion I've been fortunate to catch 'em on. From a visual standpoint this is of course well put together, managing to take in the electrifying essence of a Bouncing Souls show. Greg Attonito's on stage presence demands attention as he leads this band through an unbeatable collection of singalong Punk greats from their many essential albums. This band has remained consistently good and is

THE BOYS

Ah yes, The Boys... everyone likes The Boys. Good time 70's Punk Rockers with hearts of gold! Considered Punk's answer to The Beatles, The Boys were the first Punk group to sign with a major label, NEMS Records in 1977. Guitarist/vocalist Matt Danglerfield turned his own flat into a recording studio in the mid 70's – a place that became home to the first recordings made by bands like the Pistols, The Clash, The Damned and Generation X. The Boys did indeed contain many of the elements we associate with The Beatles – they were, after all, a pop band, just from a differ-

ALTERNATIVE TV "LIVE: SPLITTING IN TWO". (CHERRY RED)

"Viva La Rock n' Roll". Two numbers from Chat's Palace in '97 follow that up. Dublin Castle in London is the setting for the next batch, also from '97. To round out the live segment of the DVD we have six tracks from a gig at the 100 Club in 2001, which is a bit hit and miss. Alternative TV's sound was what would become known as Post Punk and slotted neatly into a sub section of bands such as Gang Of Four, Wire and Throbbing Gristle. Mark Perry was an informed individual and had no interest in aping the '77 bands he wrote about in his fanzine. As Alternative TV marked the end of Sniffin' Glue, it became important for him to view it as a new chapter. Though the initial run of the band only lasted until 1981, they've since reformed and that's where all material here is drawn from. The best part of the DVD for me is the fifty-minute interview

with Mark in which he sets a few things straight. His dismissal of The U.K. Subs as "trash" is odd, as is his slating of The Clash for signing with a major when his own band intended on releasing their debut record through EMI, but how or never, Perry doesn't mind being pulled on his obvious contradictions, which makes him all the more likeable. Coming from a background in 70's Rock and 60's protest music, he has no time for the notion that Punk Rock was year zero when clearly all involved had been listening to music long before Punk arrived. He's a passionate character and continuously questions everything about Punk, which can only be seen as a positive thing. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

BOUNCING SOULS "THE SHOW MUST GO OFF: LIVE AT THE GLASSHOUSE". (KUNG FU)

still as relevant and vital as ever. Their music has developed into less obvious song structures but they've always adapted that timeless approach to songwriting. The cameras really get into the thick of it, but unfortunately the stage barrier does detract from the atmosphere a lot, despite Greg's best efforts to "break down the division" so to speak. Typically energized and playing all the choice stuff including "Apartment 5F", "The Ballad Of Johnny X", "Kid", "Born Free", "Say Anything", "K8 Is Great", "Hopeless Romantic" and "True Believers", I don't think anyone could argue with the setlist on this DVD. The Bouncing Souls have had an extraordinary journey from the Punk houses of New Brunswick where they got their start to the Punk Rock big league they now occupy,

penning more memorable tunes in their lifetime than all of their peers put together. The band's sheer music and greatness can only be fully appreciated when they're standing right in front of you, but if you can't get to one of their gigs, this is the next best thing right here, making an admirable attempt at bringing a little piece of that magic into your living room. Long may they continue as living proof that you can carry on being a Punk band into middle age without embarrassing yourself. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

**THE BOYS "SICK ON YOU". (CHERRY RED)**

ent era. Their songs were fun, lively and if you looked hard enough, had something to say. They bore all the hallmarks of another big name Punk act, but commercial success was never to be for The Boys. Their biggest break came when they landed the support slot on The Ramones U.K. tour of 1980 and provided backing vocals for "Baby I Love You" whilst on that tour. So impressed were The Ramones that keyboardist Casino Steel was subsequently asked to join the group, but declined?!! In the late 90's German band Die Toten Hosen revived The Boys legacy by covering their songs and turned a whole new generation of Punks onto the band. This DVD takes a look at both eras of the band – as they were in 1980 on that Ramones tour, with a full concert filmed at the Norwich University and again in 2001 at their very first German gig in

Dusseldorf. Both gigs witness the band in flying form and though they've clearly aged they remain vibrant and competent in what they do. The Dusseldorf gig sees their friends in Die Toten Hosen join them as guests on stage, which truly brings the house down. As you probably know The Boys also had an alter ego, in which they spelt their name backwards to give us The Yobs – a fine seasonal Punk group who released that great Christmas album and they also make an appearance here. No effort has been spared in bringing you this Boys DVD, which gives you a great insight into an often forgotten about prized Punk group from way back when. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE CASUALTIES "CAN'T STOP US". (SIDE ONE DUMMY)

out paying and when refused, they set fire to the doors of the club. This is genuine and gripping stuff as the band is forced to barricade themselves inside and the gig gets shut down. The following day's show in the City goes off according to plan and is a huge open-air event headlined by The Casualties. This is a prime setting for the band and attracts a suitably insane 3000-strong audience of Mexican Punks and Skinheads. Along the way there are hospital visits, band muggings and accusations of selling out from a disgruntled punter unhappy with the fifteen-dollar admission price. Jorg pulls the offender out of the crowd and explains to him why there is an admission charge on the door and that he and the rest of the band have to pay, families to feed and tour costs to cover. Mexico looks to be one of the most intense countries there is and a band like The Casualties are the soundtrack to all of this. One week later and they're in a different world, touring Japan under completely contrasting circumstances. The Japanese show their appreciation in a friendlier manner and this really hits home on how social conditions dramatically affect people's everyday relationships with one

another. This is a country with a longstanding fanaticism for Punk Rock and they simply adore The Casualties. Stand out parts of this visit is when the band are taken to a war museum and made sit through a film depicting the atrocities America inflicted on Japan in times of conflict. The band appears visibly disgusted and the museum clearly has a huge impact on them as Americans. The Casualties may not be to everyone's taste, but this DVD succeeds in informing us that they are the real deal street level Punk band and despite relative success remain in touch with where they come from and what's important to them. Much more than solely for Casualties fans, this is a movie that should attract interest from all directions as its as much a social statement as it is a Punk Rock DVD. Needless to say it comes highly regarded. (SIDE ONE DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

**COCK SPARRER "WHAT YOU SEE ... IS WHAT YOU GET". (TKO)**

The mighty Cock Sparrer with their first official DVD release. Over two years in the making and containing a whopping six hours worth of Sparrer goodies, "What You See... Is What You Get" is an in depth look into one of the originating bands of Street Punk. Formed in the early 70's in London's East End, Cock Sparrer came from a Glam Rock background and in reality their sound had more in common with early Status Quo than The Clash. Once the first set of Punk bands had their say, Sparrer found themselves an audience amidst the remaining working class Punk Rockers who'd become disillusioned with what the '77 bands had turned into. They could relate to their lyrics of everyday life from the eye of the sussed Joe Normal. Their "Shock Troops" debut was released in 1977, but they really caught on with the Oi! brigade of the early 80's and followers of Sham 69 and The Business in turn gravitated towards this lot for their instantly infectious style of songwriting which shared more than a thing or two with the vision of their Oi! counterparts. Whilst rough round edges, it was clear their roots lay with early Glam boot boy groups such as Slade and The Faces. Cock Sparrer were one of the few bands who had great

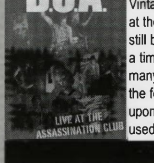
lyrics to match the football terrace styled anthems that littered their albums. Apolitical and at times viewed as dodge pots, they kept certain factions of the scene guessing. Refusing to be part of the left or the right and never particularly outspoken against either, unfortunately led to them being unable to play in their home country for over a decade. It always struck me as odd that they never outright challenged this and unlike The Upstarts almost seemed to accept being taken over by the goons. If you expected to find the answer to this here, then guess again. This is the quintessential goodtime Cock Sparrer and doing what they do best. The initial concept behind the DVD was to film their "farewell" performance in Morecambe 2003 and put it out as a straightforward live account of the band, but when they got asked if any additional footage had accumulated over the years that's when things got interesting and we ended up with these six hours of film spread over two discs. The Morecambe gig is fantastic of course and if you were there you'll appreciate how special an occasion it was; if not, this does a fine job of capturing some of that atmosphere. Belgian filmmaker Pollet Yannick, who really gets the best of the band, draws from stock interviews and others he conducted himself, to bring us the full Sparrer picture, carefully assembled on this DVD. He bundles the lads into a people-carrier and gets Colin to drive the mob around London taking in all the landmarks relevant to Sparrer's history, which provides a backdrop for the docu-

mentary included here titled "Memory Lane". This takes us back to their school days where they met each other, the pubs they drank and played in along the way, key gigs (including footage from The Astoria in '92) and bringing us right up to scratch with their reformed popularity in the late 90's at the hands of the Oi! revival. To account for this there's another mini tour documentary of their infamous visit to the states in 2000, taking in the four shows in Boston, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. From the bus to the gigs themselves and various backstage shenanigans, it's all captured here. There's also an interview with the band filmed on the afternoon of their HITS gig, which sees a hungover Sparrer take on questions fans sent in via the HITS website. "Because You're Young" and "We Love You" promo videos are included, the former in particular being quite striking with a visibly young band dressed in full bootyboy/Clockwork Orange gear, which is very reminiscent of Slade in their heyday! There's a compilation of various live gigs, mainly from Europe, covering the years '94-'96 when they played many memorable gigs over there. It's difficult to say how TKO or Pollet Yannick could have improved on this package; in fact I don't think they could have. It's all here, everything a fan could want. It took long enough, but it's been worth the wait. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 92646, U.S.A.)

DEMENTED ARE GO "HOLY HACK JACK!". (CHERRY RED)

backing music. The crowds go mental for this band and particularly on this DVD its evident their popularity has diminished little over the years. The camera angles are something of note here, getting in the thick of the action, shooting from behind the band when called for to capture the crowd's ecstatic behaviour. Their hour-long set is here in its entirety, making a fitting document for the modern day Demented. Next up we skip back to the year 1998 for another dose of 'em, this time playing in a pub setting at the Princess Charlotte in Leicester. The smaller venue gives off more energy for sure and Sparky's pink Mohawk only adds to the atmosphere! The dance floor seems mental

and it's difficult to make out whether these people are dancing or if sporadic brawls are breaking out. Some rough wreckin' here kids! This gig is also brought to us in its full-length form, which should please fans of the band. As a further bonus they've also slipped in two songs from Morcambe's HITS in '98, when Demented entertained the Punks in The Dome and were well received. Any fan of the band will want a copy of this DVD. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

DOA

Vintage live footage of Canada's finest here, from 1984. Filmed at the Bierkleier in Leeds in February of that year, D.O.A. were still bowling people over with their fresh approach to Punk Rock at a time when the term Hardcore was just a pup in the eyes of many, especially those outside North America. D.O.A. were at the forefront of this new movement and its generally been agreed upon that their "Hardcore '81" tape was the first time the term was used as a musical reference. The band formed as far back as

D.O.A. "LIVE AT THE ASSASSINATION CLUB". (CHERRY RED)

1978 out of Vancouver and released their "Disco Ducks" EP that same year. Having spent their former days touring hard up and down the west coast of America, D.O.A. picked up the energy and aggression we hold them in such high regard for today and over twenty years after this was recorded, it's lost none of the above. Joey "Shithead" Keithly was an awkward gawky frontman, but much like Joe Ramone used all this to his advantage and turned things around to where he's now one of the most commended figures from the Hardcore days. What I admire most about Joey Shithead is that he's still just as determined today and remains a firm believer that music really

D.R.I. "LIVE AT CBGB'S 1984". (BEER CITY)

were and as this is the oldest known video footage of the band, it's clearly only right that it should be made available. C.O.C were also on the bill at this show and it looks like an accurate slice of what Hardcore music was in 1984. As a bonus you also get a second gig from D.R.I. on this DVD, from the same tour. Together these make the only pre '86 footage of the band in existence. This second gig is from Portsmouth, New Hampshire and was put together at the last minute on a day the band was supposed to have off. Predictably the massive hall they play in is empty, with the seventy or so puners who showed up standing behind the camera, bar a few diehards prancing about on front of the stage. It filmed by a fan from the back of the hall and naturally, like

CBGB's, is a single camera shoot. It drifts in and out of focus and is kind of strange to see something of this quality officially released on DVD, but true fans of the band will appreciate having a copy of the earliest live D.R.I. there is. Yeah, the quintessential D.R.I. here, its just a crying pity it wasn't better documented. DVD extras include a flier slideshow and liner notes from Spike. (BEER CITY: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, WI 53226-0035, U.S.A.)



The visual document of the live album released by the same label. In 1984 D.R.I. were a young band out on the road in support of their "Violent Pacification" 7 inch, touring the land in a broken down van for little or, in this case, no money. Most of the songs here ended up on their first two albums and are being played at their most intense and forthright. The CBGB's show was part of their notorious run of Hardcore Sunday Matinees and sees D.R.I. perform at their most vital, easily the best music they ever recorded. It's certainly not the most visually appealing and according to Spike is precisely the reason why it's remained unreleased 'till now. It was filmed on the most basic of equipment available to them at the time, but you still get a good idea of how fine a band they

EINSTURZENDE NEUBAUTEN "1/2 MENSCH". (CHERRY RED)

With a band name that roughly translates as "Collapsing New Buildings", this bunch of German freaks operated at the forefront of Industrial music in its early days, alongside the likes of Throbbing Gristle and Cabaret Voltaire. It would be stretching it a bit to class Einstürzende Neubauten do as music. It sounds more like a soundtrack to a David Lynch movie than anything else. Finding a rhythmic usage for power tools and various metal objects as their English counterparts Test Dept. did, this band attempted

EXPLOITED

Someone up there doesn't like me! Not only has my record collection been soiled by numerous Exploited discs, but now they've set their sights on the DVD collection too. Even in Exploited terms this was their worst era to highlight, namely '91 and '93. The Thrash Metal years as they've become known, pounding out nearly an hour and

to push back the barriers of music as far as they could, to the point where we end up with a combination of different sounds as opposed to any song structure. This DVD is a full-length film the band made to go alongside the album of the same name. It's a full-blown promo for each of the songs on the audio release. Whilst interesting to say the least, it needs to be approached from a completely new angle. View it more as an art house flick than a band DVD and it can work on a different level. Whether you'll

THE EXPLOITED "LIVE IN JAPAN & ARGENTINA". (CHERRY RED)

half's worth of the stuff that would put even the likes of Megadeth to shame. The Exploited had completely lost their way by the time this DVD comes into action. Both gigs are of a similar quality, good sound and picture, and with a dodgy line up of musicians to back Wattle Buchan. The days of John Duncan were long behind them as The Exploited limped on into another decade. The Buenos Aires gig is the far livelier

see this as contemporary expression or simply a load of old art school pretentious wank is down to the viewer. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



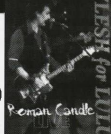
of the two and is full of energy if little else. Exploited followers may be disappointed by the era this DVD chose to highlight, but if you've gathered up everything else on the band, then maybe this is where you need to set your sights on next. As for me, I'll stick to Punk Rock over Heavy Metal any day. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

FLESH FOR LULU "ROMAN CANDLE LIVE". (CHERRY RED)

Flesh For Lulu emerged from London's "Batcave" scene of the early 80's and were a Goth/Rock crossover band, not unlike where The Cult were coming from. They kept the Rock n' Roll element and trashier leanings in their music without ever fully crossing over to the dark side, ala some of their contemporaries. Polydor got in on the act early on, releasing their first two singles and debut album, but the band clearly didn't find what they were looking for in the label and thus Flesh For Lulu moved on to Beggar's Banquet, which was more in line with where they were aiming, one would think. They

also had releases via Capital and RCA in the states later on. Much like Bauhaus, Flesh For Lulu evolved into a strong Indie outfit and received acclaim on their own terms, having never fully cracked the mainstream. This particular gig catches them in relatively early times at the Camden Palace in 1985 and is bustling with energy and attitude. The band ended up being quite prolific even in the years that followed this filming, but you still get some great music on this DVD. Tracks like "In Your Smile" and "Black Tattoo" are near impossible to resist. They split up for the majority of the 90's

with each member branching out on their own, but look to be somewhat back in action again these days. Some very strong material here, that will appeal to those who got something out of The Cult's "Electric" record. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



Everything you wanted to know about The Frantic Flintstones but were afraid to ask! Chuck Flintstone formed this band in the mid 80's and if you've ever encountered the bloke you'll know he treads that thin line between drugged out genius and drunken pathetic mess. You never really know what way you're going to get him, something similar to Johnny Thunders. To a certain point the drink and drugs enhance what he does, but on occasion he steps oversteers the mark and we're left with a fool. Chuck emigrated to Germany some time ago to live with his wife

I believe and renovate a three-story house he now calls home. In this time he has

THE FRANTIC FLINTSTONES "THE FRANTIC FLINTSTONES STORY". (CHERRY RED)

acquired himself a rather strange German accent, as he shifts between both languages in the fifteen-minute short film on the band's career that opens this DVD. Chuck is interviewed at home, in the bath, at his bar, and in his living room, reflecting on what exactly the meaning of his life is. Clearly it's a live fast, die young and leave a mark on the world, philosophy. Once we've been given this insight into exactly what the Flintstones stand for, it's two gigs back to back for our entertainment. First up is Dingwells in London from 1987. Six songs in twenty minutes in front of a rather subdued crowd. The band itself is in top form however, belting out the likes of "Hot Head Baby", "Bedrock", "Ragin' Sea" and "Alley Cat King". Next up is Nuremberg from 1990, which Chuck introduces, providing some background information on the gig in order to

set the scene. Most of the band and crew had indulged in some LSD on the way to the gig and were still in full flight by the time they took the stage. Thirteen tunes on this one, with over forty minutes of footage. The sound and picture aren't great and again the crowd appear inattentive, but it's difficult to tell, as it's extremely dark, bar the spotlighted stage. I'm sure there've been far superior gigs filmed of the band, but this one particularly seems to stand out in Chuck's head as a highlighted show. Not a bad overview of The Frantic Flintstones, but I still can't help feeling it falls short on truly documenting what the band are all about. The documentary is a keeper, but we'll need to come up with some more manic live action. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

G.B.H. "LIVE IN LOS ANGELES/LIVE AT VICTORIA HALL". (CHERRY RED)

A two-er from Cherry Red with Birmingham's G.B.H. First up is the L.A. concert from November of '88, in which they played a two-night stand at Anaheim's Celebrity Theatre. The police presence was particularly strong at the second of these gigs, following an incident during The Adicts set earlier in the evening in which a stage diver was seriously injured. The police had wanted the show called off, but fearing a riot may ensue, they agreed to let G.B.H. play a short set, under the watchful gaze of the cops and venue security alike. 1988 wasn't G.B.H.'s best era, but this is still a fine performance from a band that stuck it out during those dark days. Who else was playing Punk Rock in 1988 for fuck's sake? "To Understand" from "No Need To Panic" is

included in the set – a song which has sadly been omitted since. Their records from the time may have leaned a little heavily in the Thrash Metal direction but make no mistake, the live show is full throttle Punk from G.B.H. the way we like it. The second gig on the DVD takes us back to the Victoria Hall, England, in 1983 for a glimpse at the band in their former years. This sees them at the pinnacle of the Brit Punk scene. The songs all sound so fresh and vibrant, full of youthful energy and not to mention as tight as I've heard the band on film. Jock's guitar playing notably stands out as sharp and note-perfect whilst Colin bellows from the gut, getting fully behind each note. Few songs appear twice on this DVD and they seem to have chosen the best from both

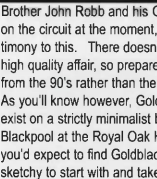
eras. Highpoints from the Victoria Hall include openers "Sick Boy", "Maniac" and "Time Bomb", the ever-popular "Generals" and naturally "Give Me Fire" which builds up beautifully to the set climax of "No Survivors" and "Alcohol". A near faultless collection of songs from G.B.H. in their prime. If you've ever wondered why this band has achieved such a cult following then the answer lies in this DVD. The ferocity of G.B.H. at their best still packs a mean wallop. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

**THE GERMS "MEDIA BLITZ – THE GERMS STORY". (CHERRY RED)**

There's been a lot written and said about The Germs legacy over the years and much like GG Allin, there's always been a divide in what regard Darby Crash should be held in. A genius to some, a moron to others. The Germs may not have been the most musically accomplished unit, but their message of destruction and excess meant way more to their following than their music ever did. Their live performances were a notorious shambles – wild, out of control and violent affairs that often ended in riots or fear of and thus resulted in the group being banned from almost all venues in their native Los Angeles. This fully comprehensive double-disc set of Germs mania is split into two parts – the first disc is a half hour live perform-

ance from the Whisky A Go Go in 1979, capturing The Germs in typically chaotic mode, traditionally climaxing with a brawl instigated by Pat Smear on a member of security who was roughing up one of their following. Besides that the performance is actually quite together comparatively speaking and has a good solid sound. Darby is predictably out of control rolling around the stage and cutting himself with broken glass in the process, but for some reason you can never take your eyes off him and I've always been intrigued by this, but can never figure out quite why. He has an almost hypnotic presence about him. This is top of the range Germs viewing and any fan of the band will be more than pleased. Highlights include "What We Do Is Secret", "Lexicon Devil" and "Manimal". You also get eighteen audio tracks from The Germs on this disc, which is a collection of live and unreleased material and is suitably frantic. The second disc in this set is a forty-five minute interview with Germs drummer Don Bolles. Though not an original member of the band, Bolles has become synonymous with their legacy and

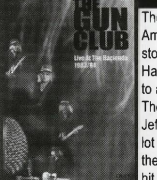
recently wrote the highly recommended book on such, "The Lexicon Devil" with Brendan Mullen. He's an entertaining and insightful speaker and with perhaps the exception of Pat Smear, who rarely gives interviews on his Germs days, Bolles is the guy most proficient in this area. Even staunch fanatics of the band will learn a thing or two they didn't already know from this interview. We're taken through Darby's various philosophies on life, the bands and people who influenced him, the relationships within the band and what it all means to Don in 2005. There's also an interesting photo gallery included of back in the day, some of which I haven't previously seen. This is the most definitive collection of Germs material I've come across and sits nicely alongside "The Decline Of Western Civilisation" for those looking for an insight into a time when Punk Rock really was the most dangerous music in the world! (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

GOLDBLADE "TESTIFY!". (CHERRY RED)

Brother John Robb and his Goldblade cohorts are just about the most exciting live band on the circuit at the moment, so it only feels natural they release a concert DVD as testimony to this. There doesn't appear to be the budget there to make this a technically high quality affair, so prepare for something more in line with bootleg Punk VHS tapes from the 90's rather than the high gloss you'd expect to find on a label like Cherry Red. As you'll know however, Goldblade were never about the big budget and continue to exist on a strictly minimalist basis, which is captured here. Shot in Robb's native Blackpool at the Royal Oak Hotel late last year, this is the typical cramped confines you'd expect to find Goldblade entertaining their following in. The sound is a bit sketchy to start with and takes a little getting used to as Goldblade have always had a

powerhouse sound, be it live or on record, which isn't transplanted too successfully here. What is outstanding of course is the realisation that this gig, like most other Goldblade appearances, is a religious experience without any of the trimmings. John Robb is a mastermind front man and has proven he can perform and excel under any circumstances. He understands the punters have paid in and they're entitled to the best possible show the band can play – no half measures here. "Fighting In The Dancethall", "AC/DC" and "Strictly Hardcore" open it up with three of their best and transcend the venue into a sweltering mass of bodies clambering on and off the stage. By the fifth song John has invited all the ladies to take up position on stage alongside the front man, where they pretty much remain for the rest of the gig, accompanied by varies

brothers eager to strut their stuff. There is no security intervention at this gig, which serves the band well and will give non-believers a taste of what it's like at a typical Blade gig. You'll also get three promo clips here for "AC/DC", "Who Was The Killer?" and "Psycho" along with extra footage of various live performances and interviews from Robb's private vaults. A cracking hour and a half's worth of action from the true warriors of D.I.Y. culture. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

**THE GUN CLUB "LIVE AT THE HACIENDA 1983/84". (CHERRY RED)**

The Gun Club's successful fusion of Punk Rock with American roots music back in the early 80's became a milestone for the spent and haggard LA Punk scene of it's day. Hardcore was on the rise, but The Gun Club belonged more to a collective of traditionalists that also boasted the likes of The Blasters, X and in some ways Social Distortion. Having Jeffrey Lee Pierce as their figurehead however, ensured this lot were in a class of their own. Formed off the back end of the LA Punk movement in 1979, their "Fire Of Love" debut LP hit the streets in 1981 and was closely followed by the equally superb "Miami" the following year. When bassist Rob Ritter left the band the same year, the beloved first line up of The Gun Club was broken. Unfortunately Los Angeles

didn't see the band in the same light as people from outside the district and thus The Gun Club spent a large part of their early career in New York, going so far as to enlist Blondie's Chris Stein as their producer. That's where this DVD takes up the story on a 1983 visit to Manchester's Hacienda Club, with Patricia Morrison as Ritter's replacement on bass. This is the first full concert from The Gun Club that I've seen and much like the first I heard the band themselves, it floored me. They always prided themselves on the live show and watching this you can see why. The musicians are second to none and Pierce is clearly one of the greatest front men of the past thirty years. Taking influence from Bo Diddley and Howlin' Wolf, his drunken swagger is steeped in all the traditions of Rock n' Roll folklore. Listen as he deconstructs and reassembles it all, creating something of his own. One year later and The Gun Club are once again back at the Hacienda for the second gig on this DVD. The band have clearly moved

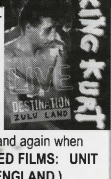
on a lot in one year, with a further line up switch and jugged setlist. Jeffrey straps on his guitar for this one and the era was around the time of the "Las Vegas Story" album, when alcohol and drugs were still working in their favour... but only just. Pierce looks more spaced and detached and the band sound a little more disjointed than before, but they still manage a solid set. The sound on this second gig isn't as good, with an overemphasis on the bass drum in particular. The staple tunes remain though, such as "Sex Beat", "Fire Of Love" and "Goodbye Johnny", along with a carefully chosen selection of old Blues numbers played in that unmistakable tribal style of The Gun Club. The first ever DVD of this outstanding band and it's a winner on all counts. Few frills on display, but who in their right mind can deny the passion and brilliance of a performance such as this? (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

KING KURT "LIVE: DESTINATION Z' LA LAND". (CHERRY RED)

The legendary King Kurt live in action at The Marquee in 1983. Archived footage of this band is about as good as it gets. They were leagues ahead of their peers and in fact weren't even fans of the majority of the Psychobilly scene which they had a large hand in forming. King Kurt's music was much more fun than that and though the perception may have been of them not taking it too seriously, on the inside it was clear there were some master craftsmen at work here. Their cunning knack for penning what are some of the most memorable anthems from the early to mid 80's often gets overlooked in favour of their onstage antics which involved covering themselves in all sorts and creating a mess of every venue they were allowed step foot in. From beans to foam and bags of flour, you name it, they all formed part of a King Kurt show. Their

influences weren't always firm but as a starting point were set in 50's R n B and Rockabilly. Being one of a scarce handful of Psychobilly bands to get picked up by the mighty Stiff Records, King Kurt certainly benefited from the label's reputation for releasing quality Rock n' Roll. From the outset it was clear they had something different and that bit more special to offer us. It is of course ironic that this kind of behaviour was going down at the height of Thatcher Tory harshness, but I guess people needed a release and that's what took King Kurt to the heights they reached. Even for those who may not be aficionados of Psychobilly, King Kurt make it more than palatable by transcending a lot of the so called rules associated with the music. The notebook went out the window when this lot formed and because there were no guidelines in place,

they chartered all sorts of musical mediums. They toyed with everything from Surf, to Calypso, Latin to Ska, Punk to Rockabilly – all of which became the basis for the King Kurt sound. It's not everyday you get a DVD of high quality capturing a band at their utmost peak, but that's what we have here. It was set up as a professional shoot and as far as I know, originally intended for a broadcast in continental Europe. As the press sheet suggests, this probably is the messiest concert you will ever witness and one you'll retreat back to time and again when that sufficient injection of prime King Kurt is called for. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



The Krewmen's inception stretches back to 1982 when they formed as a Rockabilly outfit. Their first big break didn't come until 1985, when they toured as the backing band in "Elvis – The Musical", taking them round the states and beyond. Frontman Tony McMillan felt the days of the band playing covers had run its course with this stage and was becoming more and more taken with the emerging Psychobilly scene in Britain. With a new line up of The Krewmen firmly in place, he began penning some harder edged stuff and thus we have The Krewmen of today – a speed up

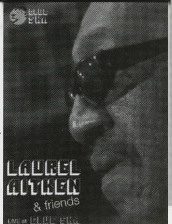
THE KREWMEN "THE LEGEND OF THE KREWMEN". (CHERRY RED)

version of the original band. As with a lot of Psychobilly, at times this amounts to little more than Thrash Metal played with a stand up bass, which I can do without, but The Krewmen can't escape their roots completely and that's where things take a turn for the better. There's a lot more going on in their sound than straight up Psychobilly. The tempos shift greatly, with good contrast between each of their songs. Featured here for the first time on DVD is a live gig from the band at Billy's in Stoke, recorded in the early 90's, just as the Psychobilly movement was on its last legs. It's a stirring performance from the band, displaying some fine techniques, making them a tight three piece, which is kind of rare for a band of their ilk. As an addition you also get five

LAUREL AITKEN & FRIENDS "LIVE AT CLUB SKA". (CHERRY RED)

ute concert was offered as a benefit, which speaks for the first disc in this set. The likes of Prince Buster, Dave Ruffy and Paul Fox of The Ruts, Dave Barker, Steve Harris, Gaz Mayall, Symarip, Rico Rodriguez and Duke Vin pooled their resources and covered songs popularised by Laurel. Club Ska also interviewed many of the participants and audience members, some of which they've included as extras here. A copy of the video was brought to Laurel's hospital bedside and though unable to communicate, he was clearly moved by the outpouring of affection and respect shown for him and his music. A year later he was back on his feet again and returned to Club Ska in west London to give his following one last great Laurel Aitken show and the second DVD contains the whole thing. Backed by The Pressure Tennyants and brewing up a considerable storm in the close confines of Club Ska, this is a remarkable performance by a man whom we now know was on his last legs. The venue was buzzing with danc-

ing Skinheads and the footage really captures this. Sadly I wasn't there to witness it and Laurel is one of only a few performers I truly regret not seeing live, but this is the next best thing. Filmed by Cherry Red from multiple cameras, it operates as the prefect swansong for Laurel. Performing some of his best loved songs such as "Sally Brown", "Skinhead", "Boogie In My Bones", "Bartender", "Mad About You", and "Swing Easy", this DVD is over four hours of prime Laurel Aitken and a must have for any self-respecting music fan. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



With the passing of the Skinhead Godfather last year, this double DVD does his legacy considerable justice. Arguably the first artist ever to release a Ska record, Laurel's earlier works were a cross section of R n B, Mento and Calypso, which eventually metamorphosed into Ska and by the time the 60's decade rolled round he had established himself as a forerunner on the early Jamaican Skinhead scene. His Pama No Beat years remain his best in my opinion, but he continued to maintain a high standard of work even as far up as the 80's with "Rudie Got Married", which quickly became a standard. He played a huge part in influencing the 2 Tone movement of the 80's and has since gone on to become something of an elder statesman of Skinheads – an audience he predominantly went back to playing to in his final years. This DVD is the definitive, two-disc, Laurel Aitken release, containing two full shows, featuring a wealth of musicians from the Ska scene. In the run up to Laurel's death he took ill in 2004 and a trib-



Very pleased to see a DVD release of what I considered one of the best live bands of 2004. They blazed their way through the Voodoo Lounge in peak form that summer and the live footage on this DVD is taken from May and December of the same year, from two gigs, the first in their homeland of Italy and the second from a performance in the Czech Republic at the Unite Fest. There's another part to this DVD – a low budget road documentary following Los Fastidios on various D.I.Y. tours throughout

NARDUWAR THE HUMAN SERVIETTE

Nardwar has interviewed many people over the years and finally gets a long overdue DVD release of his own. I first came in contact with the oddball interviewer, from Vancouver, Canada through his pieces in Flipside fanzine. Locally he's well known through working for college radio and also having his own TV spots, but outside Canada he's largely unheard of, which only adds to the fun and excitement as the majority of his interviewees have no idea what they're letting themselves in for. Nardwar knows more about his subjects than they know about themselves and gets knee deep in the nitty-gritty research he puts into all his questioning. He plays the part of a fool initially, much akin to characters like Dennis Pennis, and his irritating helium voice often gets on the wrong side of people, which is semi-intentional. Once the subjects realise there's a lot more to this interview than they had first thought, it's already too late to turn back as Nardwar unleashes one question after another, often chasing them down the street until he gets an answer. Celebrities, musicians, Punk icons and

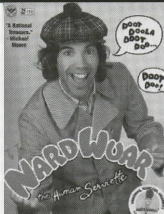
LOS FASTIDIOS **"ON THE ROAD – SIEMPRE TOUR"** (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)

Europe. Furthermore you get four promo clips for the songs, "Rabbia Dentro Al Cuore", "Animal Liberation", "Johnny And The Queer Boot Boys" and "Anitooligans". The gig from Milan is at the Rolling Stone club, which looks to be an established venue so to speak and the sound is clear and well mixed, but the usual club rules apply and I believe a barrier is in place between the crowd and band, which isn't normally how Los Fastidios would play. The Czech Republic show looks to be at a D.I.Y. Punk festival and witnesses the band strut their stuff to a couple of hundred Skinheads piled into a marquee. It's a good idea to show both sides to the band and how they can shift easi-

ly between the two, but they're clearly more at home in Punk confines. Both gigs are a single-camera-shoot and whilst the Czech footage suffers from distortion problems, it serves as a fine representation of how hands-on a band like Los Fastidios can be. The camera is situated stage right so you get as good a view of the crowd's reaction as you do the band. The tour film is good stuff too, and includes some all too brief shots of their stopover in Dublin. Kudos to Los Fastidios for a job well done. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GÖTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

"DOOT DOOLA DOOT DOO ... DOOT DOO!" (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)

view with the man himself, national news footage of his brain haemorrhage, which he survived, and some live and promo footage of both his own bands in action, The Evaporators and Three Gobins. In true Alternative Tentacles style, there's a sixteen-page booklet thrown in for good measure, containing funny press clippings and interview excerpts. Once you see a Nardwar interview you'll never forget it and just in case you do this DVD will remain on hand to replay the hilarity over and over again. (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES RECORDS: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)



NEWTOWN NEUROTICS



Newtown Neurotics have often been referred to as England's answer to the Dead Kennedys. Musically they used The Ramones as a template and built on that, but lyrically they had the social and political clout of San Francisco's finest. Newtown Neurotics were about as left wing as it gets and lived in a political world where everything was black and white. That's not to say their views weren't well researched, but more to point out the fact that there was no grey area with this band and who knows, maybe they were right. They certainly seemed to believe they had the answers for all of the world's problems and perhaps they did. I've always enjoyed what the Newtown Neurotics had to offer, even if listening back on some of their stuff today it seems a bit

NEWTOWN NEUROTICS **"THE LONG GOODBYE"** (CHERRY RED)

naïve in parts, but the music at least has aged well. After ten years of bashing it out as a band things began winding down in 1987, before finally drawing to a close with this farewell performance from the Fulham Greyhound in October of '88. I wasn't aware a visual copy of this gig existed, so this was a nice surprise. It's far from professionally shot, but still makes a nice memento from the final gig of a band that meant so much to a lot of people from the Thatcher generation. This is a single-camera shoot, taken from the back of the hall and sounds as though the audio track is also lifted from this and not off the board. That in mind, its far superior quality than a lot of other videos I've viewed shot under similar circumstances and captures the night as it was, war's n'all. On the night in question the Newtown Neurotics doubled as their own support act, coming on first to play a short half hour set. Atilla The Stockbroker, by his own admission, was the halftime entertainment and gives us a bit of his Anti-Fascist Punk poetry while the Neurotics take a breather. The band then return for their headlining slot and give us

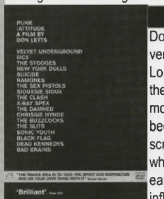
another hour and a half's worth of crowd-pleasing Neurotics numbers to see us out. Yes, the band plays for just under two hours on this DVD, culminating in the ultimate performance for any fan. Things really hot up towards the end as the firm anthems like "Kick Out The Tories" and "You Said No" cause the crowd to erupt. Whilst the band never believed they could change the world through music alone, they did want to be remembered as a band that pointed out a thing or two about the place. Music to them was the common voice of the working class and they used it as a vehicle for getting through the tough times with a belief that better ones lay ahead. Unfortunately the one striking thing you realise when watching this DVD is that little has changed since. One war has been replaced with another and the working class certainly aren't much better off. Still, their heart was in it and they played with conviction, passion and a sense of urgency that has seldom been matched since. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

PENETRATION **"RE-ANIMATED – CELEBRATING 23 YEARS OUT OF THE MUSIC BUSINESS"** (CHERRY RED)

Penetration return home to the University of Northumbria for this live gig, filmed back in December of 2002. Having split in 1979, the band spent twenty-three years apart and this reformed version features original members Pauline Murray and Robert Blamire being joined by new recruits Paul Harvey and Steve Wallace. Clearly this is not Penetration at their peak, you'd need to hunt down some footage of the original line up for that, but as far as reformed performances from some of Punk's early luminaries go, this isn't half bad. Fun and catchy Punk Rock and the band look as though they're having a blast on stage. The venue is of a larger scale unfortunately, which means

we're viewing the band in a main hall setting, something similar to what you'd expect at Holidays In The Sun. It means the quality of the multi-angle shoot and sound is great, but obviously lacks the atmosphere of a pub gig. The audience are too constrained and what little shots the camera does pick up of them, it appears as though they've been kept firmly in order by the college's security team, which is just no way to capture the essence of a band like Penetration, is it? Despite Pauline's efforts to stir it up a little, the performance is flat in parts and lacks drive to the point where you begin to lose sight of the fact that its Penetration we're watching here and not just any old band on a

big stage. That said tracks like "Nostalgia", "Don't Dictate" and "Danger Signs" do carry a certain energy with them. A complete set from their prime would be far more enviable, but as it stands this is watchable, though far from essential. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, UK.)



Don Letts' latest opus on Punk Rock wants to make one thing very clear – it didn't all start with The Clash and Pistols in London nor The Ramones in the U.S. and neither does it end there. Letts wants Punk Rock recognised as an ongoing movement, which is good news for those of us who've become fed up with various other analogies that barely scrape the surface. "Punk Attitude" takes a broad look at where it all came from and where it's headed. It explores the early Nuggets bands and Garage Rock of the 60's, the British influence, the birth of the MC5, Stooges, CBGB's and The Ramones et al, The 100 Club and the Pistols and so on. It comes from all angles and meets up somewhere in the middle, taking opinions from all who are involved and bringing the viewer to understand that there really is no definition of Punk, there is no right or wrong, only popular opinion. This cross-pollination that existed between people and music was crucial in Letts' mind to bring about the change that Punk did. Like any movement it meant different things to different people and the film highlights this excep-

tionally well. The New York movement versus England movement is well documented here and comes across as a little petty at times, each of them trying to get one up on the other, instead of accepting it was all part of a likeminded movement. Thankfully "Punk Attitude" concerns itself more with exploring the origins and key influences in the movement. Featuring great music, video clips, interviews and analysis, the only stone left unturned is the Punk/Reggae crossover, which receives little attention. Kind of disappointing when you consider who made this movie! The cast is an all-star line up, standouts of which include, Jello Biafra, Arthur and Sylvain from New York Dolls, Legs McNeil, Thurston Moore, Henry Rollins and Chrissy Hinde. There's an interesting, if too brief, look at the Punk/Hip Hop crossover in the 80's with bands like Beastie Boys, Public Enemy and of course who could forget Dee Dee King! The No Wave scene with Lydia Lunch and Sonic Youth's struggle for recognition begins Punk's journey back into the underground in the 80's and the rebirth of the independent Hardcore scene with Agnostic Front, Dead Kennedys and Black Flag. Brendan Mullen takes us through the Los Angeles scene and bands like The Screamers, The WeirDOS and The Germs who spearheaded the movement centred round the Masque in Hollywood. The East Coast

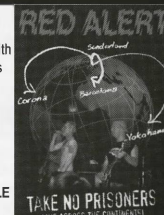
bands like Bad Brains, Minor Threat and Fugazi and the philosophy behind these bands. Letts looks into what happened in the mid to late 80's prior to Nirvana's arrival on the mainstream and how it built up to that explosion. With the door kicked open, bands like Rancid and the whole Epitaph entourage were free to walk through. The repercussions were inevitable and here we look at the likes of Blink 182 and Limp Bizkit, the pros and cons that go with this – "the manufactured anger" as Steve Jones puts it. The film ends with some snippets of political activism around the world and the re-emergence of D.I.Y. via the Internet. The spirit lives on through artists like Michael Moore and his films, who've come full circle and changed how people think all over again. As if all that weren't enough there's a second DVD contained with tons of extras such as extended interviews, the role of fanzines, record companies, women in Punk, and a where-are-they-now piece. Add to that a facsimile of two old issues of Sniffin Glue fanzine chucked in to the insert of the DVD and things don't get much better than this, do they? In short, this film is not about the fashion or guitar volume, it's about the attitude and Don Letts has successfully constructed yet another document on the world of free thought! (www.punkattitude.co.uk)

RED ALERT **"TAKE NO PRISONERS: LIVE ACROSS THE CONTINENTS!"** (CHERRY RED)

It may have taken nearly thirty years, but Red Alert have at last put out their first ever official DVD. Formed in Sunderland in the summer of 1979, Red Alert soon became stalwarts of the working class angle on Punk or Street Punk as it later became known. Their first release came out on the No Future imprint and began to cross over into Oil and Skinhead circles – a place they remain most favoured today. As the movement began to die approaching the mid 80's, Red Alert split in '85, only to reform in 1990 again as a new interest in Punk came about. They've been on the go since, making their way round various festivals and solo tours and as evident here, still have plenty to offer, at least as far as their live show is concerned. Steve Smith continues to entertain crowds around the world with his thick Geordie accent, that I don't believe anyone bar a native could make sense of, but they love him nonetheless. Always treading that fine line between being functionally pissed and a drunken shambles, generally manag-

ing to remain on the right side, Smith is a working class frontman, rough as a bear's ear, but with a similar type of appeal to Stinky Turner or indeed Mensi or Frankie Stubbs. Red Alert weren't always the greatest songwriters but I don't think anyone could argue that they occasionally struck gold with tracks like "In Britain", "Take No Prisoners", "One Flag", "We've Got The Power" and "It's Me Boys". They successfully manage to build an entertaining set round these staples time and again and with the addition of a few covers they've been known to throw in, such as the Rejects "Bad Man", you can't really go wrong... especially if you're as pissed as Steve! This DVD brings together two full-length shows from the band, plus five songs recorded live in Spain as an added bonus. The first gig is from their third U.S. tour in November of 2000 at the Showcase Theatre in Corona, California. A single camera, back of the hall job, but still managing to capture the essence of a Red Alert gig. Two years on and we

catch the band at the Japanese Holidays In The Sun for another fifty-minute set. This is also shot under similar conditions and doesn't vary that much from the first gig, with the exception of being a little more frantic. The few tracks from the Barcelona performance in 2004 is far more intimate as Red Alert entertain a small crowd of diehards in what looks to be the basement of a pub. It's a little dark but the energy and spirit remain. This is everything you could hope for from a Red Alert DVD and comes with the highest of recommendations if you're a fan. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



Spitz was an odd ball Punk Rocker who rose up alongside Souxsie and The Banshees in 1978. Souxsie had taken him under her wing after a support slot he played with the band. For the uninitiated Spizznergei also went under various other guises, such as Spizzoil, Spizz 80, Spizzsexual, Spizzvision etc. etc. but it was all the work of one man using various other musicians to accommodate him on his merry journey. An improvisational musician that experimented with both sounds and structures and oddly ended up hitting on something quite

good. If you're looking for a loose description try using the likes of Sparks, Gary Numan and B52's as a template and then building on that by adding the sense of uniqueness you'll find in a character such as Spizz. Their first couple of singles were released on Rough Trade and received a Single Of The Week backing in the NME, along with a Peel session. Possibly best known today for the eclectics of "Where's Captain Kirk?", "No Room" "Soldier Soldier" and "6000 Crazy", all of which are contained here. The central part of this DVD is a full show from Blackpool's HTS in 1996, but there's also and hour-long interview with the man, a rare chance to witness the promo video for "Where's Captain Kirk?" and finally some footage from rehearsals in 2004.

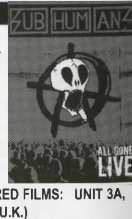
It's not clear whether or not Spizz ever stopped producing music, but he certainly hadn't been using the Spizznergei name since the 80's, so this HTS show was seen as something of a reunion. It was certainly original and a step forward from some of the other Punk of the time and the songs remain substantial units of Electro Pop that have aged gracefully. A few pounds heavier and not quite as mobile as he once was, Spizz is still out there preaching his quirky blend of Punk to the kids who wanna listen. Fans of the recent Electro Pop revival may get a kick out of this also. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

SUBHUMANS **"ALL GONE LIVE"** (CHERRY RED)

There was a time in the 80's when the Subhumans were untouchable and their late 90's reformation surprised a few people, myself included, by being equally challenging. They never really went away or gave up the fight though, but merely explored other avenues such as Citizen Fish and Culture Shock to have a say. And that's where the Subhumans reformation differs from many others – they didn't get back together out of desperation or failed post-Subhumans careers. No, they came off so because they had more to offer, which is one reason why the whole deal came off with plenty of credibility in tact. Dick Lucas was never going to be a rock star, it was never in him and besides having a face purely for radio, a band like the Subhumans just don't have the marketing potential of some of their peers, which is another reason why they've always been held close to the hearts of diehard Punks. They formed in 1982 and released the notorious

debut "The Day The Country Died", bringing them to the forefront of the 1982-1985 burgeoning Anarcho Punk scene in England. Their well thought out lyrics, challenging subject matters, diverse musical influences and D.I.Y. aesthetic carried them through five albums and six EP's – all released through their own Blurg! Records. Fat Wreck Chords got in on the deal second time round and released a live album from the band last year and this DVD is culled roughly from the same era. Filmed in Chicago, Minneapolis and Milwaukee in April 2003, this catches the band in fine form and is professionally shot on a range of cameras with excellent sound quality. It's difficult to know which footage is from where as everything flows so well and is superbly mixed courtesy of Ultra Films. They blast through each song with precision and conviction as tunes, both old and new, blend seamlessly into a solid set of rapid fire driving Hardcore.

There's also a half hour American tour documentary on this, which surprisingly is highly watchable and intriguing to get a fly-on-the-wall look at the Subhumans on the road. Dick's organisational skills keep everything ticking over as he seems to practically run the band himself. It's kind of sad that the Subhumans lustre has been diminished by countless clones over the years and that newer kids will never fully understand why they were so special in the first place. But that's life I guess and for those who've always appreciated what this band has to offer, you'll get a great deal from this DVD. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, U.K.)



VANS **"TRIPLE CROWN OF SURFING 04"** (EPITAPH)

The "Triple Crown" contest has been running for almost twenty-five years in Hawaii and next to the "World Title" is seen as the most prestigious event on the surfing calendar. This film is a sixty-minute capsule of the highlights from 2004's competition, which is sponsored by Vans. Containing tons of interviews with contenders from all over the world, they explain what the "Triple Crown" means to them and why it's held

in such high regard. Obviously you also get plenty of surfing action from the likes of Kelly Slater, Sunny Garcia and Gerry Lopez to name a few. The prize money is a million dollars, making the competition intense. The film is also used to highlight a lot of Warped type bands who's music is the soundtrack to the surf footage. To further emphasise this Epitaph have stuck in an additional CD of music from the label by bands like Dropkick Murphys, Death By Stereo, Pennywise and The Unseen, which is pretty

good. Given that Clondalkin isn't exactly hot surfing territory, a lot of this went over my head and there was little connection made. But should you be enthused by the sport this will most likely do the trick for you as its well put together and succeeds in highlighting how much this event means to certain people. (EPITAPH EUROPE: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

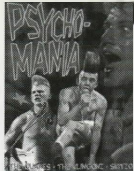
VARIOUS ARTISTS **"GIVE 'EM THE BOOT – A FILM BY TIM ARMSTRONG"** (HELLCAT)

The long awaited Hellcat movie finally makes it's way onto the shelves. Tim Armstrong has been working on this for what seems like the past ten years, filming footage from around the world of all his favourite Hellcat bands. Shot, for the best part, in grainy black & white, keeping true to Hellcat traditions, "Give 'Em The Boot" features performances from Dropkick Murphys, F-Minus, Horrorpops, Joe Strummer and The Mescaleros, Lars Fredericksen and The Bastards, Nekromantix, The Nerve Agents, Roger Mirel and The Disasters, The Slackers, Tiger Army, Transplants and U.S. Bombs. At least half the running time of this DVD is taken up with Rancid material whilst all the other Hellcat bands only seem to get one song apiece. "Rancid and Friends" probably would have been a better fitting title for this, as it isn't quite the show-

case of all things Hellcat it makes itself out to be, unlike its CD accompaniment series. The misleading name doesn't really matter though as not a second of the hour and twenty minutes of this thing is worth skipping over. Armstrong has trawled the hours upon hours of tape he's accumulated and come up with the cream of the crop for each band. Along with the live gear, there's plenty of backstage and tour antics to sink your teeth into, including a great clip of Rancid with Iggy Pop in a Seattle dressing room, running through an acoustic version of "No Fun". There's also a solo performance of "Rats In The Hallway" by Tim Armstrong shot in Dublin, in what looks to be backstage at The Olympia. As expected there's nothing fancy about this DVD, which works in its favour, achieving the intimacy the band has on the label share and whether they're playing

to a stadium audience of thousands or a classroom of twenty people, they've maintained that strong sense of community that's always been important to Hellcat. Joe Strummer opens the DVD proclaiming, "Hellcat takes over the world" from a New York City rooftop and his other notable contribution to this film is a cracking version of "Rudie Can't Fail", shot at the Brixton Academy. More than a historical curiosity, "Give 'Em The Boot" is a high-grade visual document, which also unbelievably makes the first time live Rancid footage has been officially released. (HELLCAT FILMS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)





Three-way split between the Klingonz, the Quakes and Skitzo. Filmed at the 'Night Of The Long Knives' event in Birmingham in 1988, this was one of the earlier all-day Psychobilly fests. The Klingonz go first and though they've always been a popular band with the punters, I've never seen much spark in them to be honest and this performance does little to alter that. Their brand of bad taste just never hits the spot with me, either live or on record. True testament to the perception that image carries

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PSYCHOMANIA". (CHERRY RED)

bands a long way in this scene. Doyle dressed in a nappy trying his best to convince us that the Klingonz are a credible entity ... give us a break! The Quakes next from New York make a far better job of it. "You didn't know we had Psychobilly in America, did you?" remarks their lead singer at the beginning of their set. Along with the Hellbillies, The Quakes were one of the first Psychobilly outfits to come out of the states and as demonstrated here, were a reckonable band. They mixed earlier sounding Rockabilly with peddle-to-the-metal Psychobilly and had an enviable result. There was good contrast to their music and this set here ticks most of the boxes with me. London

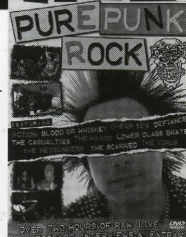
based Skitzo are also a good quality Psychobilly act with a half-decent frontman who keeps the show pummeling along nicely. Whilst Psychobilly may not be the most diverse music in the world, when it's played well in can have a positive effect on the listener. This DVD isn't life changing, but The Quakes and Skitzo definitely have their moments, making it far from disposable. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNKCORE RECORDS PRESENTS - PURE PUNK ROCK". (PUNK CORE)

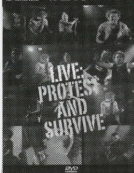
Disappointed not to see more of Blood Or Whiskey on this Punk Core sampler. I was under the impression for some reason that the gig they filmed in Dublin a few years back was to form part of this DVD, but sadly there's no mention of it here and we're made do with a brief promo clip from the band instead. Their video for "They Say No" is included in the extras segment of the DVD and whilst its well put together it falls short on giving any sort of an insight into the band, but perhaps that will come later. The purpose of "Pure Punk Rock" is to give the label a chance to showcase their prized bands in an environment, which they feel best represents them - on the stage! The film is divided into a few different segments, each of them highlighting a different band through live performances that are integrated with interviews. Cheap Sex launch the movie with a barrage of blasting Punk tunes in line with anything else Punk Core has put its name to - there's always a strong U.K. '82 influence along with touches of Glam ala Johnny Thunders and also a heavy sprinkling of Ramones structure. Most of the

bands slot into this category, which is fine by me. The label has defined a certain sound and look for bands that fit within these parameters. It's getting increasingly easier to spot a band on Punk Core, which I think could be viewed as a positive thing. They have a signature sound and an identity. A band called Havoc are next and whilst hinting at possible religious leanings in their interview (what the fuck is that all about, or did I completely miss the point?), they're still capable of kicking up a mean racket. The Virus next do the authentic mohawked style, to much effect and play in a far better suited venue, with full on crowd interaction. Shot in 2003, this bares all the hallmarks of a memorable Punk gig. Lower Class Brats maintain the high standards tearing through some good old school Punk Rock, complete with a rather interesting radio slot interview!! I've liked this band's style since I first heard them through GMM I believe and they still stand as a reputable outfit today. The Casualties then take us through two of their best, "Riot" and "For The Punk", which is the usual high-octane stuff we've come

to expect from New York's finest gutter Punks. The Scarred are caught in rehearsal next and belt out a few tunes for the camera, before Action brings it back to the stage for two songs. Defiance play us out with three cuts which also hold up to the standards set earlier. The special features on the DVD contains four promo clips along with a Japanese tour report from Lower Class Brats. Collectively "Pure Punk Rock" amounts to over two hours of footage and will appeal to those with tastes more in the spiky world of Punk Rock. (PUNK CORE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 916, MIDDLE ISLAND, NEW YORK, NY 11953, U.S.A.)



THE VARUKERS



Over an hour's worth of Varukers action here for all you Mohawks and Crusties alike. The main show was filmed at the Norwich Oval in October of '96 and is a high quality shoot, justly capturing the energy you'd expect from the Varukers live. The sound is spot on, as are the multi camera angles, getting up close and personal. The performance is burly and pissed off, with hardly a shift in pace for the entire evening. Pausing only for the odd breather here and there, they pulverise the audience with plenty of what they came here for. It's difficult to

THE VARUKERS "LIVE: PROTEST AND SURVIVE". (CHERRY RED)

look beyond the Discharge-isms at times even though it's proven an effective formula for them. What keeps this band afloat is the speed, and aggression of which they play, which is always going to be easy getting off on. A quick glance down the tracklist begs the question, "How many bloody songs can you actually write about war?", but The Varukers were never really there to tell us anything we didn't already know, despite how the band themselves may feel. Their following was there for a good night out and that's what this DVD captures, as Rat feeds off the enthusiasm of the crowd who sing along to every word. Both crowd and band express a lot of hostility through the music, raging and upfront in their approach, this is hardly the staged aggression you find in

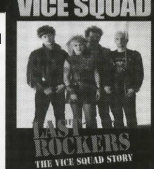
some upcoming bands of a similar ilk. A quick-strike hardcore attack on the senses. To fill out this DVD there're clips from a handful of other gigs from around the world here also. Firstly, two songs from the Lansdown Hotel in Sydney, Australia in 1998. Ditto for CBGB's two years later. The Woughton Centre in Milton Keynes, The Old Angel in Nottingham and finishing with "Soldier Boy" from the "UKDK" video. The sound and picture of these extras is of varying quality but nonetheless interesting to see the response the band gets away from home. Largely listenable and mostly fun. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VICE SQUAD "LAST ROCKERS: THE VICE SQUAD STORY". (CHERRY RED)

Original Vice Squad drummer Shane Baldwin has become the unofficial spokesperson for the band's early days and has successfully put together, with the help of Cherry Red Films, this first ever documentary on the band. He points out that there weren't too many cameras on hand to capture a lot of Vice Squad's gigs, but nonetheless has managed to pull together some early gig footage of the band from the Top Rank in Cardiff, The 100 Club, The Preston Warehouse and the Bristol Granary. Expectedly Beki Bondage doesn't contribute to the making of this DVD, so Baldwin relies on the archives for interviews of her, some of which have been readily available prior to the release of this film. There's a new interview with original male members of the group,

conducted by Ian Glasper. Simon Edwards from the Riot City label also joins in with Shane Baldwin, Dave Bateman and Mark Hambly as they sit round a kitchen table tucking into cans of Carlsberg and reflecting on the good old days. This is not a particularly enlightening interview, but still interesting to see how certain members of the band have ended up; the ones who carried the Punk philosophy with them throughout their life and the others who merely view it as something they did in their youth and have since moved on. Fortunately this film focuses on the initial years of Vice Squad, showing them in a positive light and though some ex band members chose to believe there was life after Beki Bondage, in reality there wasn't and the makers of this film thankfully

didn't feel the need to go there, making it all the more appealing. Throughout the flick vintage photo galleries and press cuts of the band crop up which adds a nice touch. As extras you get some previously unreleased live audio songs and an early demo of "Out Of Reach", which isn't anything to get excited about. (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



Wendy O. Williams



As leader of New York's Plasmatics, Wendy O. Williams emerged as a notorious figure on the American Punk scene. Rumours of a past career in porn only spurred on her reputation as the Queen of Shock Rock, with onstage theatrics soon becoming the stuff of legend. Sadly behind the scenes, Wendy also suffered with depression and was to take her own life in 1988 at the age of forty-eight. But while she was around Wendy was a much-loved Punk Rocker, not to mention one who constantly courted controversy. The Plasmatics went their separate ways in 1982 and she embarked on a solo career. This live performance

WENDY O. WILLIAMS "BUMP N' GRIND". (CHERRY RED)

catches her in London's Camden Palace Theatre in 1985, unfortunately being backed by a Hair Metal band of the day! For the most part Wendy covers up the embarrassment of the backing band, but they still manage to sneak in plenty of solo runs, as was tradition for the time, which is more comical than anything else. Ten-minute guitar solos, double bass drum and facial movements that would put Eddie Van Halen to shame. I shit you not kids, had it not been for the lead singer I'd have put money on it I was viewing a gig by Poison. Wendy's performance is still top of the range however, bursting with life, carefully selecting twelve songs from her then vastly expanding catalogue. There's nothing particularly risqué about a woman singing songs in her underwear these days, but thankfully her performances were more than that and have aged gracefully, full of up tempo Rock n' Roll with a sneering attitude. Local friends Lemmy

and Wurzel from Motorhead join the band onstage for a fantastic version of "Jailbait", which alone is worth seeing this DVD for. As the boys make their exit we're in for another four of the best to round the evening out - "Ain't None Of Your Business", "Bump N' Grind", "Fuck That Booty" and "Fuck N' Roll" finish things nicely. There're no lulls or dips in this set (at least while Wendy is on stage!) and things never lose momentum. A complete set from The Plasmatics heyday may have proved better, but this performance still stands as one of reckonable purpose. No bonus footage here, but who needs bells and whistles when you've got a live show from Wendy O. Williams to entertain you? (CHERRY RED FILMS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON, W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

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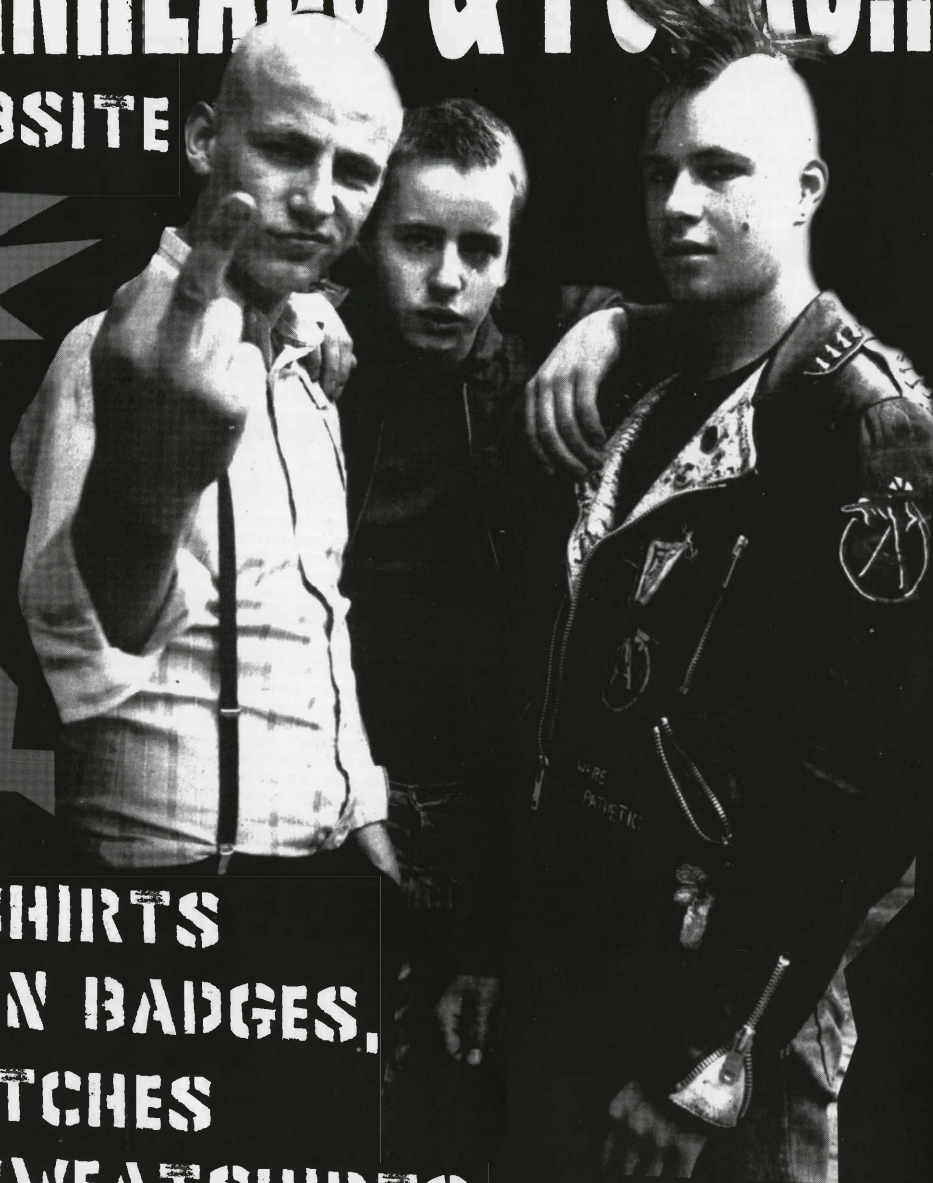
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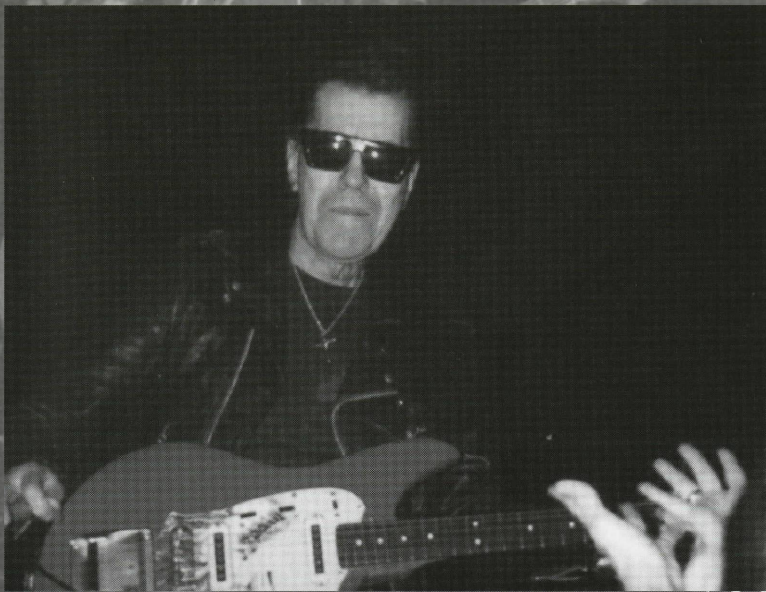
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A SALUTE TO LINK WRAY.....

by Brian Young (Rudi/Sabrejets)



I first came across Link Wray back in the mid '77, right at the height of the UK punk explosion. At the time, I'd no real idea of the Linkster's colourful history but I'd noticed Marc Bolan of T.Rex repeatedly mention him as a prime influence in several interviews and that was good enough for me!

Around the same time I'd also dug the Tuff Darts cuts on the highly rated (but not actually very good!) 'Live At CBGBs' double elpee and EP (yeah the one with the tacky punk cash in sleeve!) and when word got out that their charismatic frontman Robert Gordon had quit the band and had hooked up with the aforementioned Mr Wray I made a point of snapping up their debut LP sharpish. Snappily entitled 'Robert Gordon With Link Wray' the front cover showed Gordon looking svelte and sharp in his best rockin' threads. (uh.. pity about the jug ears!). On the reverse he was posing proudly besides this ornery looking older guy, dressed like a third rate gigolo, shirt almost open to the waist, who was grinning like a serial killer from behind thick black shades, lookin' as if he hadn't quite made his mind up whether he'd slit ya open with his switchblade first or wait until after he'd charmed the knickers off your mamma.. Yup! This then was the legendary Link Wray...

One spin of the platter and I was hooked. Sure, some of the material was kinda predictable but the execution was pretty goddam flawless - and it was cool as fuck and then some to hear the dynamic duo of Gordon and Wray beat new life into old chestnuts like 'Summerime Blues' and 'Boppin' The Blues'. Better still they totally reinvented 'Red Hot', 'The Fool' and 'Flying Saucer Rock N Roll' dragging them kickin' and screamin' slap bang up to date and making them sound totally contemporary. Thankfully, this was no schlocky revival show! Undoubtedly much, if not most, of the credit for this achievement lay in Wray's totally unique guitar playing. I'd never EVER heard anybody play quite like that...and to this day I never have! Wray literally attacked his guitar like a man possessed, hammering out frenzied killer-diller riffs like his life depended on it and for my money, Link's savage strummin' made all the much lauded punky waver guitar heroes of the time sound decidedly lame and weedy. No slouch as a songster too, the Link contributed no less than three (count 'em!) tender ballads to the record, my fave being the achingly poignant 'It's In the Bottle' - all laced with amazingly subtle yet totally unique guitar wizardry. Whatta guy!

To their credit Private Stock plugged the album enthusiastically, even issuing a weird 12" coupling 'The Fool' with 'Endless Sleep' in a snappy 50's style brown paper sleeve which played at 78rpm on one side and 45rpm on the other!

With Gordon's NY proto punk credentials already firmly established and Wray's fearsome black leather 'n' shades image it was no surprise that many erstwhile punk rockers were drawn irresistibly to this platter. Locally, here in Belfast it was a big seller, especially in the Good Vibrations emporium which somewhat mysteriously seemed to have an endless supply of those brown bagged 12"ers...hmmmmmm!

Word spread fast and the next album 'Fresh Fish Special' in 1978 saw Gordon and Wray shift up a couple of gears, delivering one of the most dynamic slabs of primo five star rock'n'roll of the last half century. Every cut was sheer greaseball dynamite and celebs were literally queuing up to pay tribute to our bequipped heroes. With Brooce Springsteen even penning 'Fire' especially for the pair it looked like a major breakthrough was inevitable.

By now too, they'd also established a formidable reputation on the live circuit and showcase gigs in London were jam-packed not only with diehard rock-'n'rollers but also with the likes of Sidney Vicious and many of his spiky topped chums who had come to pay homage to the mighty Link. Apparently Sid entertained his chums by hol-lering for 'Rumble' at the top of his voice throughout the entire set!! Proof he was nowhere near as dumb as he looked! Eyewitness accounts vary, but apparently Wray, unwilling to be seen as some hoary ol' museum piece, insisted on turning up the volume of his amps to almost unbearably deaf-ening levels, then cutting

loose and showing these young whippersnappers once and for all who really was the wildest cat in town..

A similarly impressive performance livened up the normally staid Old Grey Whistle Test where between them Gordon and Wray sported more black leather than a field of dead cows..

Sadly the expected commercial breakthrough never actually materialised and Wray and Gordon parted company, somewhat acrimoniously. Still on a creative roll, Wray signed to Charisma and unleashed the hugely impressive Bullshot album in 1979. This was a winner all the way and still ranks as one of my all time fave platters. Amazingly too, a blue vinyl 45 of Link giving bozo Bob Dylan's 'It's All Over Now Baby Blue' a much deserved pummelling almost charted! Though, in all fairness, it must be said that Dylan is a lifelong Wrayfan, even dropping 'Rumble' into his set list recently as a tribute to the great man.

Meanwhile, back in the concrete jungle, a whole new generation of scuzzy rockin' bands were crawl'n outta the gutter led by confirmed Wray obsessives The Cramps. These demented psycho cats praised Wray at each and every opportunity and their material oozed the same primordial menace (and several of the same riffs!) that characterised Link's earlier works. As the resulting international psychobilly/garage explosion went over ground, Ace Records 1978 comp of Link's Swan master-works 'Early Recordings' shifted by the bucketload and proved hugely influential. If by some slim chance you've yet to encounter the works of the mighty Link (hang your head in shame..) Ace have just reissued the selfsame platter on CD in a spiffy card sleeve at a budget price to boot!

Though Wray's visits to Europe became less frequent Ace continued to keep the Linkster firmly in the public eye throughout the late 80's and early 90's - though it has to be said that some of the albums they released were frustratingly erratic at best. Still, for me, Link at his worst is still better than anyone else's best! A special mention to Billy Miller and Miriam Linna of Norton Records whose New York based Kicks zine and label tirelessly plugged the virtues of the great man - their Wray releases are true labours of love and absolutely essential purchases...and for vinyl fiends they even press up special 'juke-box' editions of Wray's finest 45s..

Amazingly Wray's rollercoaster career took an unexpected turn for the better as the 90's progressed. Ever since John Waters had realized that Link's slop was perfectly suited to the big screen, using 'The Swag' in 'Pretty Flamingoes', film makers had been using the Wray rumble to good effect. However, when Tarentino's Pulp Fiction broke box office records worldwide it single handedly revitalised the entire genre of guitar intros, simultaneously boosting the careers of both Link and fellow serial guitar abuser Dick Dale. Wray, curmudgeonly as ever, had asked for his music to be removed from the sound-track CD as he thought the film glorified violence - but thankfully it remained onscreen and a whole new generation began to dig the rumble man.

Somewhat astutely, Ace signed up Link for a new album, offering him the prestigious headline slot at upcoming 20th Anniversary Bash in 1995 to tie in with the studio time - and so, at along last, I finally got to see Link in the flesh.

Cracking opening sets from the likes of The Cannibals, James Hunter and especially the Rough Diamonds had whipped up the capacity crowd into a near frenzy - but when a grinning leather clad Wray ambled nonchalantly on stage even he couldn't have imagined the mayhem that followed. Backed by crack bassist and drummer from European garage punk combo the Acetones, Link plugged in his battered guitar 'screamin' red', turned everything up to 11 and for the next hour or so gleefully tore the place apart, playing truly out of his skin, his raw energy level putting to shame folks a quarter of his age. I'd never seen - or heard - anything quite like it before or since. The place went absolutely nuts. Here was this guy, old enough to be my great grandfather leaping round like a demented teenager, throwing his guitar around like it was a toy and kicking up the wildest racket I'd ever heard. Mebbe, Link just couldn't get over the fact that he was being mobbed by hordes of screamin' gals too...but for whatever reason it was one helluva night!

The attached photographs come from this gig. Apparently Ace had the foresight to record it as well but it has yet to be issued. For a taster of the Link onstage experience from around this time check out Cherry Red's 'Rumble Man' DVD recorded in Manchester and London in March 1996.

Wray then returned to the studio, cutting the 'Shadowman' CD which found him back on top form, doing what he does best.

In the years before his death in 2005 Link still toured intermittently, preferring perhaps to celebrate his twilight years in the company of his wife Olive and their son Oliver in their new home in Denmark. Though occasional new recordings appeared none really captured the fury of the Linkster live - but all are well worth a listen.

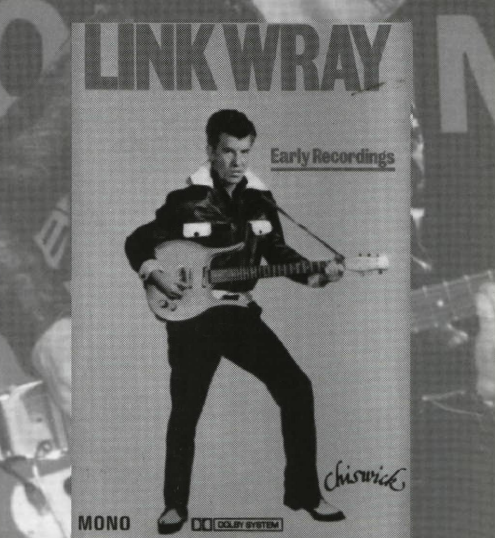
Link finally passed away on November 5 2005. For a full 'warts n all' account of his life and times check out the simply stunning online tribute by James McDonagh at

www.furious.com/perfect/linkwray.html Also don't forget the long running and encyclopaedic 'Wray's Shack 3 Track' site www.wraysshack3tracks.com and the new official site www.linkwraylegend.com

Record and CD wise thankfully most of Wray's huge catalogue is now readily available. Novices can't go wrong with any of the comps on Rollercoaster, Norton or Ace. Ace have also reissued both Gordon/Wray albums on one CD which is another essential buy. Bullshot is still available on line Records from Germany and almost all the studio recordings from the 60's and 70's are back in print too.

As one wag once so memorably quipped 'don't judge a man by the size of his wallet, but by the size of his Link Wray collection..' Never were truer words spoken!

Personally, Links guitar playing had a HUGE influence on me. He's proof positive that real emotion and gut feeling always wins hands down over sterile technique every time..and that the only rule that matters is that there are no rules! I've also lost track of the number of times I've come up with what I think was a brand new riff - only to realize that Link got there first..decades ago! I also think it was ultra cool that Link never gave in, never gave up and never compromised one single iota...and at the age when most folks are having trouble remembering what foot to put each shoe on, he was still cranking it out, wiping the floor with the competition and growing old disgracefully...what a fine example to us all! Like the t-shirt says! THINK LINK!





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The Olympia

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

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CAPDOWN

GBH

SLAUGHTER

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ROCK SHOW

PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES

STILL DOGS

radio 1 the lockup
VS
eugene butcher

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VICE SQUAD

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TOTAL CHAOS

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THE CRACK

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Down & Out

ROCKY COCKAT

GARDEN GANG

The Arena

Thursday

PRETENDERS
Section 5

Neck

Rock N Roll Gypsies

Dresses For Europe

UMB, Demob

The Astronauts

Fire Exit

Flamingo 50

Devilish Presley

Viva Las Vegas

Gorgeous The Debrettes

United Kingdom of America

Bookstone

Friday



The Varukers

M.D.C

The Straps

The Beggars

Argy Bargo

Blueball

The Agitators, Outlaw

Bus Station Leonies

Guns on the Reef

Angel City Outcasts

Templeton Pok

Mouth Guard, PKO, SAHU

Saturday

ONE WAY SYSTEM

The Vibrators

Sploogenessabounds

Sonic Boom Six

Reddy Radiation & the Stabily Rebels

Red Alert

Resistance 77

Reazione

Antidote

East End Badoes

30R, Stage Bottles

New York Alcoholic Anxiety Attack

Pickled Dick

VOX POPULI

Sunday

THE LAST RESORT



The Skeletal Family

THE DESTRUCTORS

Sick 56

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The Grit

Chemical Kees

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Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

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from the **SEX PISTOLS**

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Johnny Wah Wah

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Bobby n Jack Bonham

The Lovely Brothers

Dusty Net Digital

Robb Johnson

Gismo Unplugged

Daniel Orlick

PATRIK FITZGERALD

STZA Crack

Mike Park

Steve Drewett

Attila the Stockbroker

Babar Luck

MDC unplugged

Skylar

Neck unplugged

Kelly Kemp

Frank Million Dead

Captain Hothelives

Red Eyes acoustic

Vanilla Pod unplugged

Hugh Cornwell

Joelz Denby

Andy Blade

Urban Dogs unplugged

Nick Cash

Baby Beem

Arthur Kitchener

Hanakiiri Karaoke

Knox

Paul Carter

Chris Butler

Jessi Eastfield

The Sewers of the Strand

Kevin 2 Sheds

Ron Watts

THE SECTER

acoustic set

TV Smith

Arturo Lurkers

Punkry & Western Party

Pork Dukes acoustic

Gary Lamin

Web

The Flying Marrows

Sax 'n' Bilke

Mongolia Brothers

Random Hand acoustic

POG

Tickets and Other Information

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£75 (110euro) from June 1st onwards (advance)

Day tickets: £30 (45euro) per day (Fri/Sat/Sun only!)

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tickets@wastedfestivals.com or phone 02476 559992
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Odd Beets, 14 Alfred Street, Blackpool
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Upcoming Events:

Punk Idol 29th June, The Witchwood, Ashton under
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Australia 2/3 Sept, The Esplanade, Melbourne



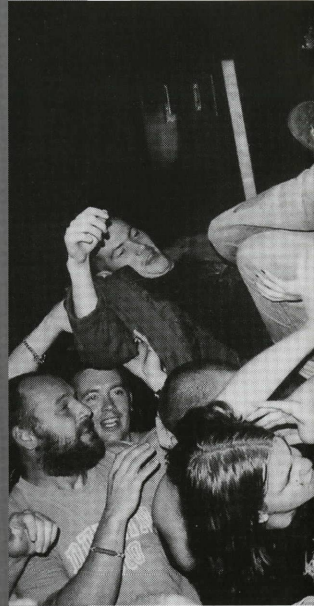
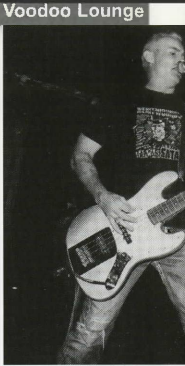
AUGUST 2005:

Dublin's own Toxic Records got together with Paranoid Visions to compile a CD consisting of the band's vinyl output down the years and to coincide with this a weekend of gigs were lined up to celebrate it's release. Firstly on the Friday was a teatime in-store appearance at Tower Records and secondly, a Voodoo slot on the Saturday. Interest in the group seems to be at a comparative high right now, when you consider some of the more sparsely attended Temple gigs some years back. They got a good turnout on Voodoo on the Saturday, with plenty of old faces eager for one more lash with one of Dublin's prime 80's candidates. The unadvertised arrival of stellar support act **The Mosquitoes** was a welcome one with their Rockabilly meets barroom style of raunchy Rock n' Roll. They get better every time I see them and tonight was no exception as they pushed it one notch further. There's a fine contrast there between both singers, with the bassist tackling the Rockabilly flavoured stuff, whilst their singer/guitarist aims for the Tom Waits flavoured Blues cum R n' B numbers. There was an extra special treat tonight with an inclusion of the old Blades drummer amidst the line up. Cover material looked towards Johnny Cash and the Stray Cats, but their own work, particularly early on in the set, held its weight well. I wasn't too sure how the present line up of **Paranoid Visions** went, but by the look of things Deko and P.A. were the known faces here, though granted it's difficult to tell with so many members having come and gone since their inception. We had the addition of some guest female vocalists throughout the night, who also may have done some time with the band and added the desired touch to the likes of "Strange Girl". Beano held it all together on drums, making this the tightest unit I've seen since Paranoid Visions again began gigging. Opening their set with "Visions" worked well with its fine build up prior to Deko taking the mic and leading the band through a lengthy set of well-honed Dublin Punk staples. With the exception of "Against The Wall" and "I Will Wallow" they came up with a strong set, standouts going to "Politician", "Death To The Poor" and of course "New Townism". Covers pulled out of the bag were the Dead Boys, "Sonic Reducer" and The Skids, "The Saints Are Coming", both played vigorously. It's always good to see Mr. Doyle up there where he belongs, doing what he was born to do and it doesn't get much better than watching this sort of performance go down on a Saturday night!

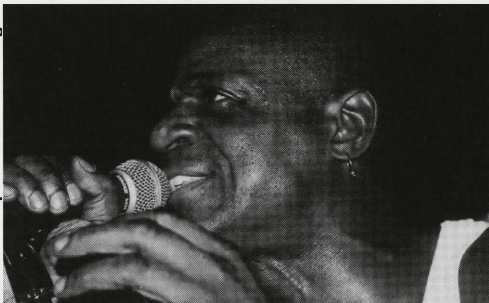
The original and unquestionably best Mascis/Barlow/Murph line up of **Dinosaur Jr.** began performing again in recent times and included a Tuesday night slot at Dublin's Ambassador on their itinerary. I never thought Mascis and Barlow would set foot in the same room again, never mind share a stage, but money changes things and considering Mascis has spent the best part of the last fifteen years driving the Dinosaur Jr. name into the ground, perhaps a run through their glory years one last time isn't such a bad idea. I couldn't spot much material tonight after the 1988 watershed, which was fine by me as they drew almost exclusively from their second record "You're Living All Over Me", along with snippets from both their self-titled debut and third longplayer "Bug". Mascis' stack of six Marshall's adorning the stage was a welcome site and some indication, if any were needed, of what lay in store. All the bands' equipment was brought to front stage to ensure as intimate a performance as possible and perhaps an effort at harping back to the spirit of those gigs of the late eighties in somewhat less grand confines!! Following an extended intro tape and a psychedelic light show, Barlow and Murph appeared humbly from behind the drum kit as Mascis dearily entered stage left in his trademark hippy get up and Discharge t-shirt. It's difficult to make out a face behind all

that hair, but one textbook lick peeled from his powerhouse geetar and we're back in the pre Nirvana days when sluggish lumberjacks with fuzzboxes roamed the earth and spoke for the tearaway youth of their day. Creating a mix of Hardcore, Metal, Psyche and Folk, Dinosaur Jr. remain the same ridiculously loud guitar band with half-mumbled singing we recollect from days gone by. Shaven-headed, sweat-dripping Murph quickly rids himself of his shirt as he settles into one of the most physically gruelling sets he's surely ever played in his time! Lou Barlow was like a man possessed as he hammered the bass consistently, only letting up to scream the odd vocal track intermittently. This was most definitely the Dinosaur of old, before it became entirely Mascis' vehicle. They didn't completely ignore the reunion tour clichés however, as they momentarily stepped offstage and returned for two short encores of "Just Like Heaven", "Freak Scene" and "Chunks".

We were back in The Voodoo Lounge on Friday to witness GBH once more. The last couple of times I've seen this band has been on big stages, so it was great to get them back where they best belong. They'd spent a good part of the summer months stateside and as far as I can tell this was their first date back on European soil. The ear-bending Heavy Metal music over the P.A. that greeted our arrival to the club was a big turn off and likewise for the predominantly hair-bag clientele. A quick glimpse at the poster for this evening reveals a band by the name of Mass Extinction on the bill. Hmmmmmm!! Never mind, vintage Hardcore enthusiasts **Pete The Killer** also had a date with GBH tonight and were first to take the stage. As you'll be aware this band takes influence from little after 1982 and make no apologies for it. Local rent-a-drummer Andrew Bushe has made himself part of the line up and as his schooling always sounded to come from this era, he makes a fitting addition to the group. Elsewhere it's chunky guitars and bass breaks to keep it all pummeling along nicely. 7 Seconds, Minor Threat and early Poison Idea are brought to mind. Not too sue what the largely rocker crowd made of all this, but unfortunately it didn't clear them from the venue. They were here to see **Mass Extinction** - an 80's Thrash revival outfit and if it wasn't for the fact that I had a pint on, I'd have been out the door and around the corner till this hideous nonsense ended. We had little choice but to sit through it all and pray that GBH would be worth it! Fortunately they were and played a blinder tonight. They always get a good reaction from a Dublin crowd and have become an honouree band at this stage. Bringing us back to "Leather, Bristles, Studs And Acne" for opener "Race Against Time" got the place hopping. The usual set opener of "Diplomatic Immunity" was held off for a while, as the band chose some more recent offerings from their "Hal" Hal" record, which worked equally well. Along with the Subs, GBH are about the only Punk group of the era who stuck with it, no reformations, since their rise to prominence in the early eighties ... and there's a lot to be said for that ... strangely they're still a highly under-rated band and I can never make out whether its snobbery or tribal Punk politics or what, but this was without question one of the best performances from any band you're likely to see all year. They cut to the chase, didn't delay between songs and retained their energy for the entire set. Good, old-fashioned Punk Rock, loud, hard n' fast.



Neville Staple - Voodoo Lounge



The Radiators (Plan 9) - Crawdaddy



SEPTEMBER 2005:

Neville Staple from The Specials has had something of a roots revival lately, with the unleashing of his latest solo opus, "The Rude Boy Returns". Clearly not enough to attain a following of its own, he's also gone about digging up the bones of The Specials back catalogue to accompany him on the road, which was where we caught up with him as he hit Voodoo for a hotly tipped performance last Saturday. Interestingly Galway, Cork and Carlow were also slotted in on his visit to the Republic this weekend. Ska is always a strange one ... there're still a lot of closet fans out there who will come out when a big name rolls through town, as was evident tonight by the packed house we walked into ... A Dublin Ska cover band (most likely northsiders) called **The Present Arms** were already a good way through their set by this time ... the singer was an irritating mouthpiece, giving shout outs to all his friends from the classy environs of The Concorde Lounge ... say no more ... **Neville Staple** looked eager to get things rolling as his fluent all-white band launched into "Man At C&A" for starters, hastily followed by Ska standard "Simmer Down" and Toots And The Maytals "Pressure Drop" ... what a trilogy!!! Decked out in almost Hardcore looking attire, with wifebeater vest and grey slacks, Neville pretty much lived off The Specials material for the evening and done it considerable justice. I think in most people's eyes Neville comes joint third with Roddy Radiation in terms of his standing in The Specials and, as good as he was solo, it was difficult not to dream of having Jerry Dammers and Terry Hall up there alongside him tonight. "It's Too Hot", "A Message To You Rudi" (difficult without Rico Rodriguez) and "Little Bitch" followed suit. The atmosphere was decidedly more boisterous than I was expecting here, with Neville only too pleased to join in with the house full of skanking skinheads, bar the two who invaded the stage at the end, much to his fury. The brilliance of "Gangsters" and "Enjoy Yourself" was second to none. "You're Wondering Now", "Do Nothing", a quick dip into The Skatalites "Guns Of

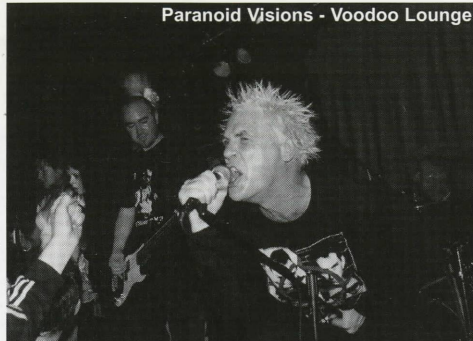
Navarone" and a surprisingly acceptable version of "Ghostown" creamed off the night. I'd definitely check him out again and no one here looked disappointed. Probably the most unexpected and rewarding comeback of the year.

Unfortunately the same couldn't be said for the attendance at The Radiators (Plan 9) gig a few weekends later. Whoever promoted this thing has a lot to answer for. I reckon there couldn't have been more than five posters put up around town for it, which consequentially left the band with a largely empty Crawdaddy Club on a Friday night. You'd have expected a capacity gathering for this one, but luck wasn't on The Rads side here. Never ones to let it get 'em down however, they pushed on regardless. This was part of a three-gig stand, over the course of a fortnight, kicking off to an audience of fifteen in Limerick the previous night according to Cait O Riardon and hopefully finishing up with some more optimistic interest in London the following week, as part of Ace Records 30 Year Anniversary bash. And so the beak was wet in The Bleeding Horse before fumbling quickly across the road to catch some of opening act **The Shakes**. From north of the border by the sounds of things, this was a determined young band, eager to pick up where Ash fell off some years back. Brimming with that brash, youthful energy, The Shakes are a lively three piece that hammer out the caustic yet Poppy Punk Rock in the spirit of their forefathers The Undertones and Nirvana. Despite playing to practically nobody the band gave 100% and could not be faulted. I'd have thought **The Radiators (Plan 9)** would have delayed their start till the numbers picked up a bit, but instead they marched on soon after the Shakes had downed tools and chose a surprise opener of "Television Screen". The set was juggled about somewhat from previous occasions, but all the staples remained, despite being fitted around a handful of newer cuts. "Hinterland" has a great hooky chorus and lends itself well to the other vintage toe tappers. The

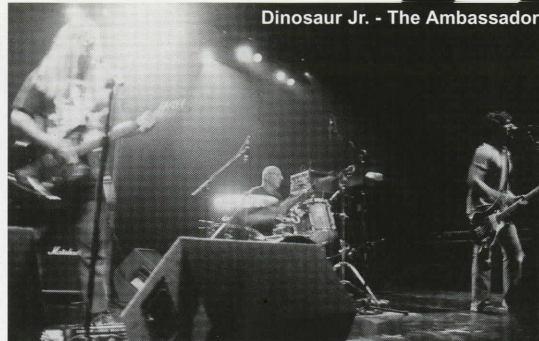
Rads look to be enjoying it more than ever these days and all members play with solid drive. Clearly Dublin's Friday night revellers haven't a clue what they're missing! Old 2 Tone favourites The Selector were back in town the following night for their now customary annual Whelan's Saturday night slot. A band from Dundalk called **The Gurriers** made for a decent warm up act. They were young, snotty and most definitely loud. They also didn't give a fuck what anyone made of them and looked to be having a ball up there on the stage. Yes, the influence is clearly coming directly from Green Day, but it was the attitude that struck me about them. Not to mention the odd winning tune dropped in there along the way. As the skinheads packed the hall, it was time for another **Selector** experience. Pauline Black is the only remaining original, but has assembled a marvellous entourage to accompany her through that exquisite back catalogue of Soul, Rn'B and Ska nuggets. Taking us back to the birth of 2 Tone for opener "The Selector" just makes you realise how this music gets better with age ... I'd nearly go so far as to say it matched that of the original 7 inch version. They had it honed to perfection and upbeat follow up "Missing Words" was simply unbeatable. Pauline Black is a great crowd pleaser and knows how to work her following. She commands attention, skanking about the stage with as much enjoyment as the crowd themselves. The Selector's set spanned the years, but obviously the greatest reception was reserved for the cuts lifted off their debut. Homage was paid to the recently deceased Godfather of Ska, Mr. Laurel Aitken and 2 Tone founders The Special AKA with a cover of "Racist Friend". Pauline Black remains one of the most intelligent and dignified personalities in her field and fans of the band are amongst the most loyal in the business, which always adds up to an exhaustive yet fulfilling live experience each and every time.



Paranoid Visions - Voodoo Lounge

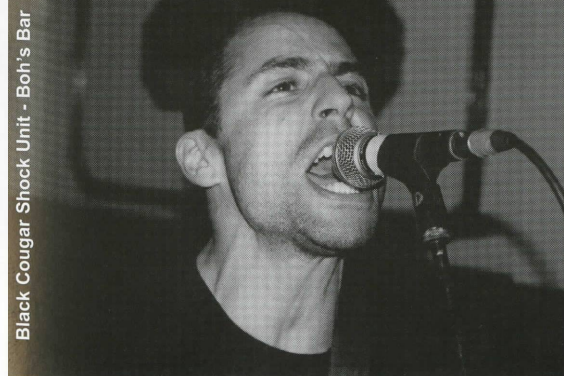


Dinosaur Jr. - The Ambassador



G.B.H. - Voodoo Lounge

Lydia Lunch - Voodoo Lounge



Black Cougar Shock Unit - Boh's Bar

OCTOBER 2005: An interesting and rare appearance by **Lydia Lunch** in Dublin was a nice way to kick off October's social activities. Initially I assumed a spoken word performance would be on the cards, but this was advertised as a musical outing and that's what we got.

Saxophonist Terry Edwards played three tunes to begin with, in what sounded like John Coltrane on speed to these ears. He stayed put as Lydia Lunch and the remainder of the band, which included Ian White of Gallon Drunk on stand up drums, joined him on the stage. The Jazz standards set by Terry Edwards remained for Lydia's endeavours this evening, but became a little more confined perhaps and with Lydia rhyming in an almost Hip Hop manner over the music, it was much like a female Rap ensemble at times. Drilling home those angry rhymes, Lydia is just as fuelled up and pumping with spite as ever, but channels it superbly well. Things got underway with "Spy In The House Of Love" ... the laidback spiralling music was the perfect backdrop for Lydia's mouthy and point-the-finger approach. Unsurprisingly much of the content was unfiltered abuse directed at the Bush administration, alongside feminist rants and cries for empowerment. Her eyes appeared to focus on each individual in the crowd with a stare that would cut right through you. It was clear she had a message and no one was leaving here tonight until that message was understood. Her recorded output has varied so wildly over the past twenty-five years, that anything from a Punk assault to spoken word to an arty drone would not seem out of place at one of her gigs. I got a real buzz out of tonight's performance and perhaps expecting the unexpected is the only way to go at something like this. A stroke of unparalleled genius!

Atlanta's **Black Cougar Shock Unit** have made a couple of aborted attempts to get over here for a few gigs and finally came through on their promise one Thursday night in Bohemians Football Club bar. Yes,

that's right, a northside spiv hangout would play host to a Punk Rock gig. I guess stranger things have happened and as the band themselves pointed out, this after all would be their first stadium show!

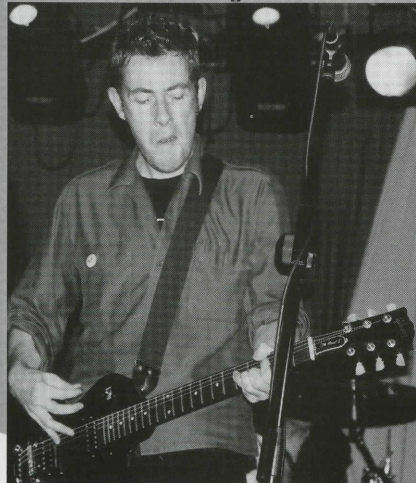
There wasn't a single poster or flier issued for promotion of this gig, so outside of a handful of diehards, there was bugger all in attendance. I hate to see this kind of thing happening ... Boh's Bar itself serves a cracking Guinness at an unbeatable price, so I wasn't complaining and the door price was kept to a measly 6 Euro ... there's no stage, the band simply set up in the corner of the bar and belted it out with the houselights on full. There were two support acts also lined up, one from Dublin first off who played a fair blend of Puget Sound styled Crust Ska Punk and another from Galway who kept it to straight forward Hardcore ... both were proficient enough but provoked little interest from the crowd. They also ran way over time for anyone who was hoping to attain the use of public transport. **Black Cougar Shock Unit** kick off their set with no need for an introduction over the mic. They simply addressed the 20-strong crowd as though they were playing in your kitchen. The band had been on British shores for the past few weeks, which had clearly taken its toll on their health, but they proceeded to give it all they had regardless and treated us to an all-too-brief collection of tunes from their handful of studio albums. They play with vigour, aggression and most of all passion. This is the true spirit of D.I.Y. Punk ... nothing more, nothing less. They belted out a half hour's worth or thereabouts, getting the job done and leaving the crowd eager for more ... no encore, but they'd done what they came here to do, which will hopefully generate further interest in the group next time round. The **Groovie Ghoulies** played The Temple pub on their first visit to Ireland a couple of years back and being gluttons for punishment made a return visit, but this time the conditions had improved somewhat and was handled by the Toxic corporation. Yes, this means the gig was

actually advertised. Having said that, it was a Monday night and that's always going to be a task in itself to get people out, but there was enough in attendance to stir up an atmosphere. The rather wonderful local act **The Dubtones** were first on and done a splendid job of warming us up. Still deeply indebted to The Clash, they'll need to shake off that influence a little more, but a cracking live band nonetheless and the best new one I've seen around the city in some time. Most, if not all of their set consisted of original material in that Ruts/S.L.F. style of caustic Reggae beat Punk. The one to watch me thinks! **Groovie**

Ghoulies had a small but boisterous following here tonight and all in attendance seemed to have a consistent knowledge of their catalogue. These past years have seen the group trimming down to a three piece with Kepi taking up bass duties along with vocals. The site of Roach on the far side ain't exactly hard on the eyes, as she effortlessly peels off the Chuck Berry meets Johnny Ramone guitar licks. Scampi on drums doesn't look a day older than twelve, but manages to keep up and supply that essential backbone to the group. If you've ever had the pleasure of witnessing a live performance from them, you'll understand The Ghoulies work off a skeleton set and then take requests from the crowd on how the remainder of it shall go. They can play every song they've ever recorded, all you gotta do is ask nicely. My own two picks "Tunnel Of Love" and "Graveyard Girlfriend" turned up a little later in the night. Ears were turned up for "She Gets All The Girls" and "Brain Scrambling Device", which really took thing to another level. Billy Bragg's "A New England", Chuck Berry's "Carol" and even a Supper Furry Animals track got the Ghoulies treatment, but where the hell was "Ghoulies R Go! ????"

The Dead Men Walking roadshow reached Dublin on Friday the 14th and with a line up that included Captain Sensible from The Damned and Slim Jim Phantom of The Stray

Dubtones - Voodoo Lounge



Groovie Ghoulies - Voodoo Lounge



Cats, it was bound to be a big crowd puller. Mike Peters of The Alarm and Kirk Brandon from Spear of Destiny were also on board, but not being a huge fan of either band, it was the former pair I was interested in seeing. If you caught 3 Men & Black on either of their Irish visits, then this was something similar, with less storytelling. This was the only Irish date of the tour and thus a moderate following drifted down from north of the border to catch a glimpse of their Punk Rock heroes in a more intimate setting than you would usually expect to see them in. **The Mosquitoes** were the surprise addition to the bill, unadvertised at that, but a nice gesture as a starter. Firing on all four cylinders The Mosquitoes took to the stage and played their hearts out, receiving an air of acceptance from the largely unfamiliar audience. They play with extreme self-assurance and a musical tightness that would put some of their contemporaries to shame. Although a proportion of the crowd weren't always fully attentive, they still had their takers who were 100% engaged with the experience. There's plenty of variety in the music of The Mosquitoes, from old Blues to up tempo Punk and the dual lead vocalists further enhance this. One of the best three pieces this city has produced in a long time. The crowd drifted forward and away from the bar as one by one **The Dead Men Walking** were introduced on stage ... strange to see Captain Sensible pluck-

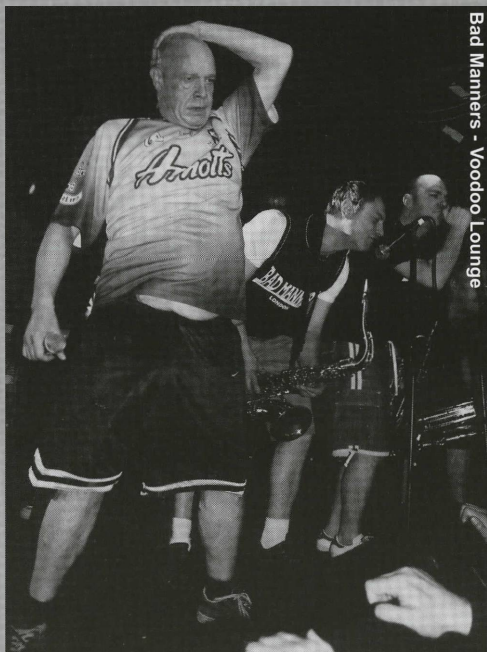


Dead Men Walking - Voodoo Lounge

ing away on the bass guitar and it has to be said, he looks a little awkward reverting back to rhythm duties! Slim Jim Phantom lead the quartet into "New Rose" to kick things off, which amazingly was greeted with a lukewarm response!! What's with these people? Clearly not as many Damned fans in attendance as one may have expected. All fell into place for the second song however "Rock This Town" when it became abundantly clear that Slim Jim had lured possibly the largest percentage of this crowd tonight, which is odd when you'd assume The Damned to have a wider acclaim than The Stray Cats, at least on this side of the water. The Alarm were never quite sure whether or not they wanted anything to do with Punk Rock in their earlier days ... it could have gone either way. I'd grant little credibility to the band in all honesty, and whilst parts of their work shined tonight, the majority of it has dated poorly, much like Mike Peters. Kirk Brandon isn't far behind as he desperately clings to any remnant of cool-ness he may have stumbled across in his youth ... but there's little there worth talking about either. Still, together they put on quite a show and kept the spirits up almost exclusively in my mind by relying on the material of The Damned and Stray Cats. The night finished with homage to The Beastie Boys formative "Right To Party" years as the Dead Men Walking concurred yet another city.

November 2005:

Des Bishop had a lot to live up to tonight, as not only was I missing The Damned's performance across town, but to add insult to injury Captain Sensible was also DJ-ing in Voodoo afterward. Grrrrr!!! All roads lead to Vicar Street then! It's a bit of a culture shock taking in Bishop's following these days and those who've been attending his gigs since the International days are bound to feel a little out of place. He's been on a roll of sell-outs lately, not just in Vicar Street but around the country and has just completed a documentary series for RTE, in which he sets up comic workshops nationwide in some of Ireland's more "underprivileged" areas. Tonight's show was entitled "Fitting In" and that's where it comes from. With a rather lavish stage set, Bishop broke us in this evening with some lighter humour for the first half of the show. Some truly side-splitting material here, including poking fun at those Dubliners buying property in the midlands, whilst commuting in and out to the capital daily, in a bid to save money, only to spend the rest of their working life stuck in traffic, in a rush hour tailback that stretches from the Red Cow Roundabout back to Naas. Heh! heh! The support act was saved for the half-time interval, which was a great idea and meant an upcoming comedian and Ballymun native got to play to a full house. Obviously lifted from one of Bishop's workshops, this guy was quite good. Some of the material leaned a bit far in the Brendan O'Carroll direction, but there's definitely something there. Bishop buggered off to watch the Cork vs' Derry soccer match while we got another one in at the bar and settled back for the second half of the show. This is where things took on a more serious and socio-political edge. Bishop has had an extreme drift to the left in recent years and appears to increasingly aggravate those who've ever been on the receiving end of crime caused by heroin addiction. It's the typical middle American view of a working class issue and Bishop is clearly speaking from the standpoint of someone who never had any experience of growing up in a so called "underprivileged" area. Claiming none of these people have any choice but to become heroin addicts is a sweeping generalisation, revealing he hasn't done as much research into the subject as he'd like us believe. Most people do have a choice and Bishop taking that stance is a copout. Heroin addiction stretches right across the board and different people have different reasons for choosing that path, but we need to take responsibility for our own actions and not constantly look for someone else to blame. Either way Bishop is entitled to his opinions but I could tell he rubbed more than a few people the wrong way tonight by



Bad Manners - Voodoo Lounge

getting into an area he really has no first hand knowledge of. I found that patronising and didn't appreciate being preached to by a self-appointed authority figure. Back to the good times with Bad Manners making their now customary visit to Ireland for their handful of dates, that included amongst others, a Spide's nightclub in Naas no less. I think S.L.F. got collared by the same place last year! Strange! We put in an early appearance this evening as **The Dubtones** were yet again offering their services to warm up the P.A. Tonight they got free range by the looks of things and clocked up close to an hour's worth of stage time, which was a bit much for a support act, particularly when the vast majority of the crowd weren't familiar with their songs. They still put a smile on my face though, with about 50% of the playlist being made up of worthwhile bootstomper. There was the addition of a second guitarist tonight also and assuming it's his first gig he pulled through relatively unscathed. Their neo-Clash styled Punk has become more palatable than anything else I've heard coming out of Dublin recently. The latest news from the **Bad Manners** camp is of **Buster Bloodvessel** having undergone surgery to shed twelve stone. He's more or less back to the way we remember him from the early 80's "Dance Craze" footage. Looks really weird. Like his head has been transplanted onto another man's body. Hitting the stage following an instrumental opener with "This Is Ska" and dressed in a fabulous cheetah design suit, Buster is understandably a tad lighter on his feet since the operation, but still not quite as frantic as he was during the golden age of Bad Manners. "My Girl Lollipop" followed from that before Buster got rid of the suit to reveal a Dubs jersey no less!! This man knows how to win over a crowd, lemme tell ya! Bad Manners continue to pull a vast skinhead following and tonight was no exception as the Voodoo packed itself out full of skanking beer bellies in boots n' braces. We get the full works tonight and all the classics to sing our hearts out to. "Lorraine", "Special Brew", "Just A Feeling" and their massive homage to The Specials with "Do Nothing". Buster's larger than life personality that goes along with his Ska juggernauts never falls short of getting the entire place hopping. Rest assured the remainder of the line-up, that beefs up the Bad Manners sound, carry their own weight, with some excellent brass section playing. The band as a unit give off so much energy it's impossible not to be affected by it all. Ska is the ultimate party music and Bad Manners are the ultimate party band ... you can't really go wrong with a formula like that.

December 2005:

Blood Or Whiskey took to the road in support of their "Cashed Out On Culture" album and marked the return of their trek around Europe with a hometown gig. The band is capable of drawing a large enough crowd these days to fill the Voodoo Lounge, as their popularity continues to grow. The Toxic muscle was put behind this appearance and a strong group of supporters turned up. **Dead Girls And Boys** were just about to go on when we got in. I've seen the name tacked on to a handful of gig posters around the city of late and was eager to check them out. They look to be coming from the Good Charlotte end of things, but have also embraced the likes of Misfits and Ramones along the way and this gives them an almost Gun Club edge at times. A lot of the songs are still a bit weak, but there's plenty of potential there. The underground Punk circuit perhaps isn't the best market place for a band like this, but it's always nice to see a group of youngsters with good intentions. **Runnin' Riot** took up the challenge of further warming up the Blood Or Whiskey crowd next, as they launched into yet another well-received

Dublin town throwdown. "This is a working class protest song - nothin' more, nothin' fuckin' less" - and we're off! Not the best form I've seen the Riot in and the absence of a second guitarist was noted. But what they lacked in technicality, they more than made up for in attitude, that could only come from a born n' bred Belfast Oi! group. "P.T.A." was disappointingly played too slow, whereas moments like "Johnny Reggae" and "Judge, Jury, Executioner" saw the band in better spirits. **Blood Or Whiskey** were rarin' to go by the time Runnin' Riot stepped down and wasted no time in belting out a bucketful of Dublin Punk lifted from their latest record. Early on was "Take Me Along" off the first album, which went down well and was my chosen moment along with "King Of The Fairies" tonight. Looking a little haggard from the road, the band refused to give in to the tough constraints of being a working band, until another victory was marked on the cards. There's not as much contrast with Blood Or Whiskey's music these days as there used to be, but that appears to be how their current following likes it. Tracks from

their two predecessor albums were used sparingly, but had all the more impact for it. Newer material worth a mention includes "Doors Of Hope" and "Glory-O". Their now infamous Clash cover of "White Man In Hammersmith Palais" brought about a rapturous response, before an encore or two later when the band bid us a pleasant evening. The plot was about to thicken however. As I'd only an inch taken off my pint I decided to hang on and check out a band called **Th' Legendary Shack Shakers** who were setting up on stage. Seemingly they'd come from a Robert Plant support slot in the Olympia and fancied their chances at playing in a more intimate setting in Dublin to get a proper feel of the city. A word in a Toxic ear on the door and up they went for a crack at it with Blood Or Whiskey's gear. Truthfully I was bowled over by this band. Jello Biafra has tipped their frontman as the last great Rock n' Roller and he's not too far off the mark as it turns out. Th' Legendary Shack Shakers cooked up a mean cocktail of slinging Hillbilly with a Punk sparkle. They have all the stage presence of someone like The

Frantic Flintstones, but have clearly taken a shine to the roots of their own country's musical heritage. There's everything from Hank Williams to Leadbelly in there, Charlie Feathers and Link Wray, they've got it all. Delighted to have caught a band like this under these circumstances. Hell Yeah! The festive season just wouldn't be the festive season without **Stiff Little Fingers** would it? This year they stopped off at the Village for the over 30's Christmas night out!! You can tell half of these guys only get out once a year, which makes it all the better as they simply go nuts at the mere whiff of an S.L.F. anthem. They've got all the records at home from their teenage years when they were actually allowed spend money on records and once a year they let it all hang out. There're few more devoted fans than those of the S.L.F. variety. The singalong to "Go For It" began as we made our way up the steps of The Village just in time to catch Jake Burns and co. strut on stage and kick into "Tin Soldiers". Always ones for the strong openers, they followed it up with a little "Roots, Radicals, Rockers And Reggae" and

JANUARY 2006:

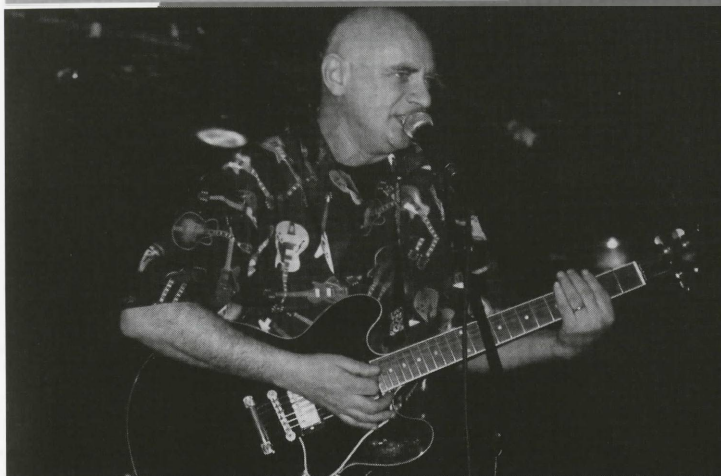
Roddy Moreno brought his bag of Skinhead Reggae tunes over to Dublin to DJ at a benefit night for the Anti-Fascist Action. Preaching to the converted perhaps, but a great night nonetheless. I think the days of fascists walking round in turned up jeans and shaven head's are a thing of the past. These days you're more likely to see 'em in pin-stripe suits n' ties than boots n' braces! Joining Roddy Moreno tonight in keeping the dancefloor buzzing was Traycee from A Trip To Oil! Town fanzine and Colin from Runnin' Riot. On arrival we're greeted with the sad news that Boh's Bar has undergone a makeover since we last set foot in here. Gone is the scruffy old boozer, to make way for yet another Dublin bar with plasma screens, polished floors and a hike in drink prices (still, at 3.50 a stout, it remains the cheapest pint in this particular postal code). Tonight's play list was strictly confined to Reggae and Ska, with the odd cheeky Oppressed tune thrown in for good measure. Spanning the glory years of '68-'70, the early Trojan releases, and some vintage Ska, made for the best

Roddy Moreno - Boh's Bar



selection of music I've heard in a Dublin club in years. The Pioneers, Toots And The Maytals, John Holt, Symarip, The Upsetters, The Mellotones, Dandy Livingstone and Prince Buster to name but a few. This was one night nobody wanted to end. It started off a bit sparse on the dancefloor with a mere handful of Skinheads holding the fort, but with a bit of Dutch courage they were joined by more n' more hot stepers as the night wore on. The pints were perfect, atmosphere spot-on and the music simply delightful. The place was heaving by the time Roddy took to the decks for the first time. Following some teething problems with the turntables in the switch from CD to vinyl, things were soon taken to the next level with a copious supply of late 60's Rude Boy anthems. Even with the addition of a bar extension here this evening the night was never going to be long enough, with the punters hollering for more as the houselights came on. A very special night indeed and I'm glad I was on hand to witness it, when begrudgers say there's no longer an audience for this type of stuff???

Rocky De Valera & The Grave Diggers - Eamon Doran's



FEBRUARY 2006:

That old shit-stirrer from the bleak days of Ireland's recession Rocky De Valera reformed his band of Gravediggers for a trip down memory lane. Following on from a warm up gig in his hometown of Howth some week's previous, he soon brought the show to the city centre environs of Eamon Doran's. Originally the gig was booked in the now revamped Isaac Butt, but was quickly given it's marching orders upon the revelation that Rocky's following might tarnish the reputation of the club's newly christened Radio City venue, which now aims for a more "upmarket" crowd of Saturday night revellers. Say what you will about Dublin on a Saturday night, but one thing it aint is "upmarket". So into Temple Bar we went, amidst the congestion of Stag parties, Hen nights, Skangers and cheap after-shave. A crowd calling themselves **The Undertakers** were strutting their stuff as we made our entrance. Not a bad act of straightforward Psychobilly in the vein of The Cramps meets King Kurt. They've a bit of work to put in yet, but are certainly on to something. **Bastard Sons Of Boris Karloff** next were less than impressive ... it takes more than a stand-up bass, a Johnny Cash cover and a quiff to get the job done, but clearly someone's forgotten to tell Bastard Sones Of Boris Karloff this. The music was second rate and the band came across as not having done their homework. Expect a lot more of this to come if the current Psychobilly bandwagon keeps a' rollin'. **Rocky De Valera and The Grave Diggers** was the band everyone was here to see, which was immediately apparent by the stage rush that greeted their arrival. Visually you'd be forgiven for thinking we were at a wedding and the lads decided to get up with the house band after one too many, but you also realise that's what separates the headlining band from the support slots in many ways. Where as the upcoming younger bands place a heavy emphasis on image and not enough on music, Rocky De Valera and The Grave Diggers in stark contrast don't really have an image, but instead rely on their musical ability to wow the audience. With this in mind they kept the banter and posturing to a minimum as they played a 50/50 set of covers and originals. Their sound is rooted in old R n'B with a hint of Rockabilly. The surroundings were far from ideal and 4.30 a Guinness certainly wasn't putting a smile on anyone's face, but we stuck it out regardless and marvelled at how well the band can play together. Each musician was accomplished in his own right, but together they made for a powerhouse ensemble. The haircuts in attendance tonight didn't seem to appreciate what these guys were doing, but I thought they stayed truer to what Rock n' Roll should encompass than the thousands of revivalists that blacken its name today. There was no pretence here and the band had a competence we don't see too much of these days. It's difficult to put into words how good it feels to sing along to a song like "Sinne Fianna Fail Blues"!!

Stiff Little Fingers - The Village



Th' Legendary Shack Shakers - Voodoo Lounge



Blood Or Whiskey - Voodoo Lounge



then of course "Nobody's Hero". Time for a breather as Jake introduces "Tinderbox" and things settle down for a while. It's wasn't long before "Barbed Wire Love" brought us back to the Fingers glory years and kept the crowd happy. "Bits Of Kids", "Wasted Life", "At The Edge" and "Strummerville" were suitably rowdy also. Jake Burns hasn't seen a barber in six months, looking more like a drabbed Aidan Walsh than the prototype Punk Rocker he once was. The waif-like Bruce Foxton to his left is always a pleasure to listen to and never misses a note. Time rolled around all too quickly and it seemed like we'd barely settled into things when "Suspect Device" came crashing to a close. There was of course the encore of "Alternative Ulster" and "Guitar And Drum". Continually keeping their standards to a high, S.L.F. remain a well-oiled machine and could give any band on the touring circuit today a good run for their money.

MARCH 2006:

I've been having trouble recently with a sticky couch but made the effort to get out of the house for Against Me!'s return to Dublin. I don't need to tell you how much things have changed for the band since they last visited and played to a bunch of devoted Punks in the City Arts Centre one Saturday afternoon. This time it was on to the medium-sized venue we know and hate as the Temple Bar Music Centre. Six o'clock doors meant there was barely time to neck two pints in the Long Hall after work, before we skipped across to the venue as Derry band **Fighting With Wire** were already on to their forth song. It took the lead singer to tell me who they were as it wasn't made common knowledge they were performing tonight. I'm familiar with their stuff through their recently released CD singles on Schism and was only too happy to see how they panned out in the flesh. It's clear Nirvana and Kurt Cobain play a huge part in inspiring this lot, which is no real bad thing to be honest and the airborne guitars, feedback and vocal melodies are straight off of the "Nevermind" demos. Noisy, passionate and with enough aggression not to get lost in the current Indie Rock vacuum. The next crowd and main support act for the tour, **Murder By Death**, were dire in comparison. This was their first gig outside of North America and I couldn't help feeling they should have prolonged that plunge a little longer. Their ideas are good, but they're not at the level where they can be orchestrated properly yet. They focus on a Gothic Punk type deal, something akin to Tom Waits singing for Type O Negative, if you can imagine such a thing. Unfortunately if falls flat on its arse and has little or no delivery. With most of their songs being drawn out far beyond their potential, any good ideas that may have surfaced at the outset get drowned in monotony by the time we've reached the midway point in any of their songs. To make matters even worse, they were given a ridiculously lengthy stage time that dragged on for what had to be over an hour, which was even longer than the headline band played for. A glimpse around the venue during Murder By Death revealed an astonishing number of people sitting down against the wall – something I don't think I've ever witnessed during a band's set in here before. This band really sapped all the energy out of me. Obviously this all worked in favour of **Against Me!** as they marched on stage to the sound of their own backing tape track "A Brief Yet Triumphant Intermission". They plug in, check their levels and away we go. It's clear Against Me! are of a rare breed that don't like or need to hide behind anything. There's an almost Ramones-like aesthetic about them – four blokes up on the stage, playing stripped-to-the-bone Punk Rock. It's essentially back to basics protest music and you can see Tom Gabel has carefully studied his craft and the foundations of this movement, displaying elements of Billy Bragg and back as far as Woody Guthrie. It's obvious that Against Me! belong in a small room with no stage and hordes of Punk Rockers around them chanting along to every chorus, but I have to admit that even I was taken back by how well this transformed itself to the bigger stage in the Music Centre tonight, when I think a lot of people were having aspirations of it flopping outright. Against Me! proved a lot of people wrong and I think the band worked a lot harder in order to do so. Eager to maintain their roots, they seemed adamant that no one goes home tonight with any doubts of who and what Against Me! represent.

The Buzzcocks are back on the road in support of their new "Flatpack Philosophy" album and wrapped up the tour in Dublin after six or so weeks throughout the U.K. and Ireland. It's common knowledge the Buzzcocks have been at the top of their game for the past few years and have almost found a second lease of life and thus have been drawing interest from all manner of directions. They certainly span the generations and musical niches, as was evident by the diverse following awaiting them tonight in The Village. As Shelly and Diggle make their entrance, it's clear both parties are showing their age and Shelly in stark contrast to Diggle always looks as though he'd rather be someplace else. Luckily he's a gift from a god when it comes to his musical prowess and doesn't require any of the stage theatrics; it just emulates from him naturally as he belts out one classic after the next with the greatest of ease. Diggle on the other hand is having the time of his life and can't stay still for a second, which in many ways is what makes that Buzzcocks chemistry work so well – it's the effortlessness of it all. It shouldn't work, but it does. I'm not sure how much cocaine Diggle is doing these days, but by the looks of things he's still ingesting his fair share. Possibly the only man on the planet who could twin a polka dot shirt with a pair of white jeans and still look shit hot, Diggle is an all-round great performer and musician. Tony Barber, on bass stage right, gets stuck in and provides those essential nuances to tracks like "Boredom" and "Sixteen Again", whilst drummer Phil Barber leaves little to complain about either. With barely an introduction the Buzzcocks launch into the title track off their new album and quickly follow it up with the first single lifted from it, "Wish I Never Loved You". The sound in The Village tonight is as good as it can be as Manchester's finest Punk exponents tear limbs off their back catalogue, that includes "What Do I Get", Diggle's excellent "Harmony In My Head" and Joe Strummer's fave "Autonomy". The first half of the set featured an unspeakable amount of material from their new album, but they more than made up for it later on with some older stuff like the unmatched "Fast Cars" and "Breakdown" – yes they delved that far back! For the encore we got "Sick City Sometimes", "Ever Fallen In Love" and I believe "Orgasm Addict", for which the place completely erupted. The Buzzcocks never lost their ability to write and perform some perfectly sculpted Pop Punk, though sadly the only memory a Hot Press hack seems to have of this gig is a pint glass being

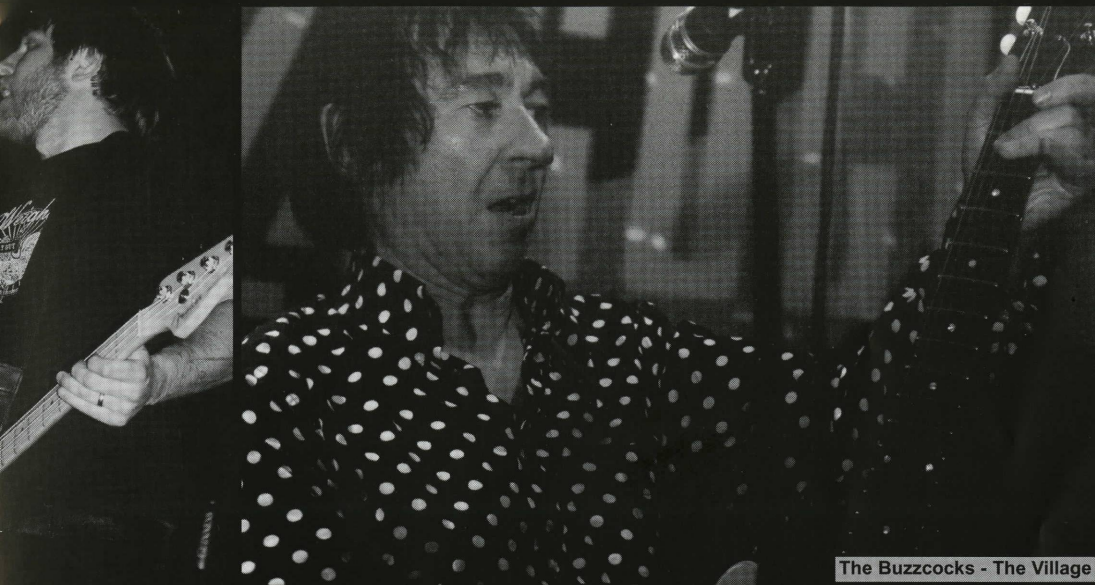
lobbed in the air!?!?!?

Wednesday night in New York City and Captain Eyebrows himself, Mr. BP Fallon is running his American version of the **Death Disco** nightclub down on Manhattan's Lower East Side. He's had this Wednesday night residency at The Delancey for quite some time now and has been garnering some favourable reviews for his troubles. The basic set up is a bunch of bands play up to midnight, following which BP and his mates DJ 'till the wee hours. On the night in question we managed to catch three live bands and a little slice of BP on the decks before the jet-lag kicked in. The Delancey venue isn't the best and it looks as though its desperately trying to shake off what has to be a Dance music bar history. BP did his best to roughen the edges of the place a little, putting plenty of Death Disco paraphernalia around the basement, which helped matters somewhat. The first band I caught were a crowd from London calling themselves **The Fairies** ... their attempt at Shock Rock didn't rub off to well on me and seemed a little too choreographed for my liking. It's four girls wearing angel wings and singing songs about sex, but too much time is put into the image and the music suffers because of it. They weren't too bad, but I got bored quickly and retreated to my seat. BP also had a DJ over from England spinning tracks between the bands, who didn't do much for me either – this guy clearly spends way too much time in front of the mirror. **White Man Kamikaze** who were also British came on next and had their shit together a lot more than The Fairies – the guitarist looks obsessed with Johnny Thunders, but they orchestrated a good show. It's all very Hives-ish, but make no mistake, they can play. Plenty of beer, spit and attitude for forty minutes will never go astray. Finally Miss Argentina put things to bed band-wise for the evening. The place began to empty as they belted out their female-fronted Raunchy Garage Rock. **Miss Argentina** were the only American act I caught tonight and overcame the difficult circumstances they were performing under to drag the upstairs crowd down to the basement for a gawk. BP kept things rolling once the bands had packed up and treated us to a fine mix of everything from T.Rex to Beyonce Knowles and somehow managing not to make either sound out of place. We stuck it out till close to 2 am before our body clocks finally gave up on us ... always interesting to see how this type of thing goes down across the water.

Friday night and back to the East Village for a bit of Punk Rock. The Midnight Creeps were headlining at CBGB's, along with Turbo AC's and The Sleazies who were also on the bill. With this club on its last legs, it was nice to be able to take in one last gig here. After some over-priced food across the street it was over to the club where we bypassed the brawls going on up and down the Bowery and found our way into the secluded environs of CBGB's. Beer prices are always a bit tough on the wallet here, especially when it's practically non-alcoholic, but this is still a great place to see a Rock n' Roll gig and they've got the best P.A. in the city for this type of music. Hilly Kristal once claimed it took him fifteen years to pay it off!! There were at least five bands playing tonight, but we only managed to catch three. **The Sleazies** were the first and lived up to expectations. With a Showcase Showdown t-shirt and bleached spiky hair the laziest comparison would of course be The Briefs. '77 styled all the way, with just a hint of U.K. '82 is what this band bases its sound around. This style has been over popularised of late, but it's always nice to see it done well. **Turbo AC's** were breaking in their new bassist tonight, which is no mean feat, when you consider they've had the same line up since their formation over a decade ago. The two Kevins took the pressure off him a little bit by taking over the visual side of the show, but all three members had the pedal to the metal this evening. From their slick and effective intro tape, straight into the sound of big, scraping guitars, this band doesn't fuck about in bringing us the energy of Motorhead combined with the intimacy of a Dwarves show. Regardless of what you may read elsewhere Turbo AC's are nothing short of a straight up Punk band and this is clearly where their hearts lie, despite having expanded their record collections over the years. I was expecting their set to be longer, but I guess it's always better this way – The Turbo AC's left the stage to a rapturous applause from their rabid fan base in what seemed like no time at all and I for one would have killed for another twenty-minutes of this stuff. **The Midnight Creeps** were the final band of the evening and I was looking forward to checking them out. Singer Jenny Hurricane is clearly an admirer of Wendy O'Williams and makes no attempt to conceal it either. They've earned their status through word of mouth on their second-to-none live show, which by all accounts, was impressive. The ghost of GG Allin is in there somewhere, along with remnants of Iggy, Alice Cooper and New York Dolls. Visually Jenny is The Midnight Creeps, but has a fine band to back up her antics, trashing away happily in the background. CBGB's is the just the kind of club for this band, as she spends most of night with the microphone jammed down someone in the front row's throat. Her lyrics are equally wonderful ... everything you would want from a solid Rock n' Roll band that takes no prisoners. American gutter Punk at its best!

Midnight Creeps - CBGB's





The Buzzcocks - The Village

APRIL 2006:

Back on home turf once again for the arrival of Goldblade at the Voodoo Lounge. They've been subjected to some lukewarm receptions in their time from Dublin audiences, but John Robb and his cohorts never come over here looking for a pat on the back, they come to bring the music of the Blade to the people and if you don't like it, you know where the door is. **Dead Girls And Boys** were first on and fuck me if they haven't gotten their shit together since we last crossed paths. They've evolved into a fine young band and can most definitely hold their own a lot more now than they used to. Confident and persuasive, Dead Girls And Boys take all the spirit of the Punk Rock I grew up with and inject a dose of good old fashioned teen angst in there to piss off the older generation who mightn't get it. There's nothing synthetic about this band; it's all from the gut and played with a wealth of character and fluency that you just don't find in many young bands anymore. **The Things** next played longer than Goldblade bloody did, but this was by far the best form I've seen the band in. I'm surprised they're still around but they're clearly trying to convince someone out there they're for real. They work hard and you have to credit them for that, but there's just something about them that has never sat right with me and still doesn't. Their sound is immaculate and almost too perfect as they howl and wail their way through endless numbers of Cramps meets The Sonics Rock n' Roll. The crowd seemed up for it once they were reeled in and I'll have to confess even I found myself tapping the foot for this one. Make way for **Goldblade** as Mr. Robb flexes his muscles and has the rest of us sucking in the beer gut! "Fighting In The Dancehall" blasts out of the P.A. as Goldblade open with what is perhaps their best song in my book. A guitarless John Robb leaps about the stage as he pistakingly shoves the microphone out into an empty dance floor for an audience sing-along. They're not long catching on as Goldblade's irresistible charm lures the punters away from the bar and up to the stage. Anytime I see this band live you can tell they simply live to play music and would gig in your toilet if you let them. Still bunny-hopping about the stage, Robb loses the shirt within minutes and push-

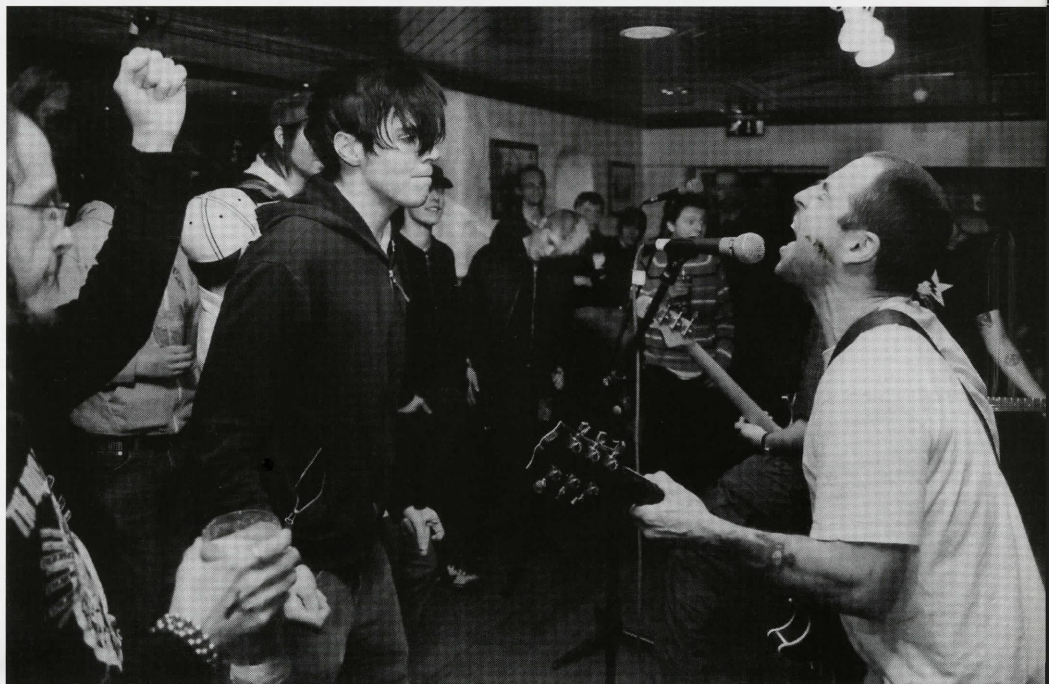
es himself even further; not content until everyone in here tonight's knows they're witnessing one of modern day's greatest Punk bands. Still looking like an action figure brought to life, this guy probably eats Duracell batteries for breakfast. At forty-five years of age, this guy is more youthful than any frontman I've seen in a long time, with an age-defying stage presence. Goldblade are one of the most exciting live bands around and appreciate the importance of putting on the best show they possibly can, always giving the paying customer full value for money. They always perform well and tonight was just one more reason to get

seduced by the powers of the Blade.

Florida's Grabass Charlestons and Atlanta's Black Cougar Shock Unit hit the road in Europe together and stopped off in The Lower Deck for an Easter Thursday showdown. No such thing as fliers or posters for this gig, it was strictly on a need-to-know basis!! I gave the secret password on the door and in we went.

Unfortunately I didn't catch the name of either of the opening acts, but having already ordered a pint it was too late to turn back as the first of these proceeded to thrash their way through a set that even they themselves didn't seem to recognise. Second band were a breath of fresh air by comparison. The missus thought they sounded like The Vandals, the lads reckoned Dag Nasty, I say somewhere in between. One thing's for sure though, they were a lot more with it than their young years may have suggested. I don't think the less than impressive turnout surprised anyone,

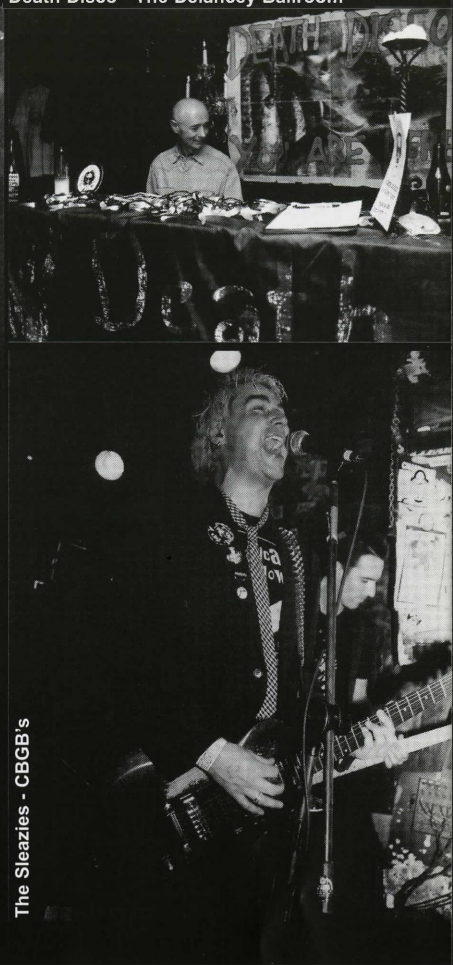
least of all **Black Cougar Shock Unit** and it's only been a number of months since they last played Dublin under similar circumstances. The Lower Deck is an awkward auld' venue if you wish to go up the front. There isn't really an "up the front" so to speak as tables and chairs represent 80% of the place with barely enough space to squeeze a stage and band in. On both occasions that I've seen them, this band has played their hearts out. They've a handful of recorded works up their sleeves and never rely on obvious song structures to win people over. Most of their stuff is assembled around a driving guitar chop that builds up in a manner



Black Cougar Shock Unit - Lower Deck

not unlike some of the very early DC records. Government Issue seem to be a strong influence on their sound. They kept things short and focused, played for little over a half hour and like an episode of the Twilight Zone, got out of there just as we were getting into it. Neither band overstayed their welcome here tonight, with **Grabass Charlestons** adopting a similar approach to their predecessors. Last years record on No Idea was a highpoint for me, but they don't kid themselves and appreciate

The Sleazies - CBGB's





Grabass Charlestons - Lower Deck



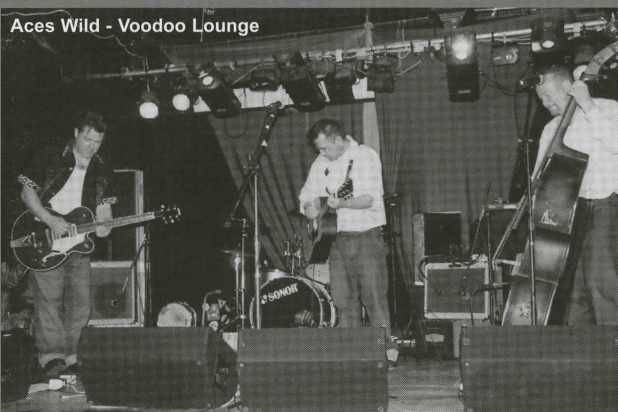
The Sabrejets - Voodoo Lounge

that the majority of the kids in attendance have never heard them before. Their drummer/vocalist leads the band wonderfully and has an almost Frankie Stubbs-esque vocal style that fits like a glove over the Beltones meets Against Me back-drop. "Atlanta Is A Cocaine Town" is their trophy number, dedicated tonight to their touring buddies of course. The crowd seemed marginally more receptive to them compared with Black Cougar Shock Unit, but then again, by this point they had consumed more alcohol so it balances itself out. At times it felt as though we were watching the band rehearse in a shed, but there's an unmistakable quality about Grabass Charlestons that you can't help but be drawn in by their charm.

Easter Saturday and The Sabrejets make the trip south of the border to perform at new Psychobilly club The Stompin' Ground. The Voodoo Lounge was the setting once again for East Belfast's quipped up greaser kings. On hand to back them up were locals **Aces Wild**, whom I recollect as placing a heavy reliance on cover material the last time I checked them out, but tonight they put on display a staggering amount of high quality originals. They were in flying form and with the addition of a second guitarist (he of The Mosquitoes fame), seemed unstoppable. They're shit hot and they know it. Their style is undiluted Rockabilly, heavily inspired by the early Sun years. It's great to see the acoustic guitar being reintroduced to this scene, which gives Aces Wild a heads up on a lot of Psychobilly bands who've neglected that all important sense of rhythm. Aces Wild have a new CD out and focused a lot of their attention on showcasing this, which sounded well above par to these ears. They play tight as a unit and each musician provides a strong input into their overall sound. As there was but one support slot, Aces Wild got to play a lengthy set and were given plenty of room to spread their wings. The Sabrejets got a formal introduction on stage from tonight's promoter, following a plug for the other upcoming gigs Stompin' Ground have lined up for the summer months, which seemed to leave Brian Young a little lost for words as they got into gear for another rocking assault on the senses. The crowd appeared shy at first, but it wasn't long before the dancefloor filled up with a mass of generation-spanning movers and shakers. From old school Teddy Boys to young Rockabilly renegades, Skinheads to Punks and just about everything else in between, the music of The Sabrejets transcends all genres. Drawing from their vast repertoire of rockin' works, once they'd settled into the atmosphere of The Voodoo Lounge, there was no stopping them. The fast moving tattooed Rockabilly of The Sabrejets outshines all trends and fads, with Brian Young's obvious ties to early Punk Rock sparking through the blast riffs of his guitar strumming. With no shortage of material to joust with, it was take-your-pick time really - "Hard Rockin' Daddy" always does it for me, but really it's impossible to narrow down what we got tonight to any specific highlights. It's impressive how little Brian Young's passion for music has weathered over the years as he continues to blend Rockabilly licks around those early Bolan and Thunders influences. The fact that the remaining Sabrejets are also well schooled in their trade doesn't hurt either. The Sabrejets are very much into the roots of music ... using Punk before it was Mohawks, Rockabilly before it

was Psychobilly and Glam before it got stale, they appreciate the importance of taking influence from the era when it was still fresh, which is perhaps just one reason why this band always sounds like the one by which all other current Rockabilly groups are measured. The Propaganda And Information Network have enough Irish ties to ensure a strong turnout whenever they cross the water and this year's appearance at the Voodoo was about as packed as I've seen it for any gig there this side of 2006. Old friends **Paranoid Visions** were on hand to provide the support and this was also the launch of their new album "Live In Stab City". The band have been working hard at re-establishing the Paranoid Visions name and technically have come on a long way since they first got back together. Every gig it seems there's at least one or two members replaced from the previous time and tonight we had the addition of a young female backing singer, which no Paranoid Visions performance would be complete without. As the focal point of the band Deko can do no wrong, peeling off one song after another. The only slip up tonight was the band playing "New Townism" at break-neck speed, which was a disappointment. Clearly Deko felt the same as he gave up about halfway through the song. The Skids "The Saints Are Coming" was again covered to powerful effect. Top marks. **P.A.I.N.** got their set going to a packed house, who were clearly in the mood for plenty of Reggae, Dub and Punk on this Saturday evening. There was no holding back with this lot as the punters were hopping from the moment the first chord was struck. Ploughing through a set of old favourites had everyone cheered up with plenty of chanting along down the front as P.A.I.N.'s powerful sound filled the club. "British Justice" and "Its The Pigs" are the definite favourites here, along with a run through of old Reggae standard "Money (The Root Of All Evil)". Their energy is boundless as they compliment their up-tempo Ska and Punk with laidback moments of Dub, creating that trademark bite we've come to expect from them. With their snotty Brit-Punk attitude, P.A.I.N.'s set continued to tear on, working the crowd up into a frantic dancing mass. All the songs were fired off with little crowd banter in between, bar the odd cry to match Belfast's enthusiasm the previous evening. Unwilling to commit to one sound or groove, they kept things interesting right through the night exploring all avenues, and topped it off wonderfully with a guest spot from Deko of Paranoid Visions for a blasting rendition of The Ruts "Babylon's Burning".

Aces Wild - Voodoo Lounge



Paranoid Visions - Voodoo Lounge



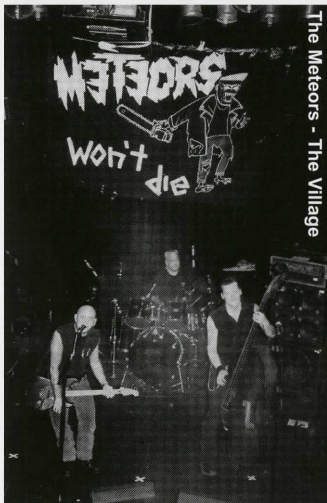
P.A.I.N. - Voodoo Lounge



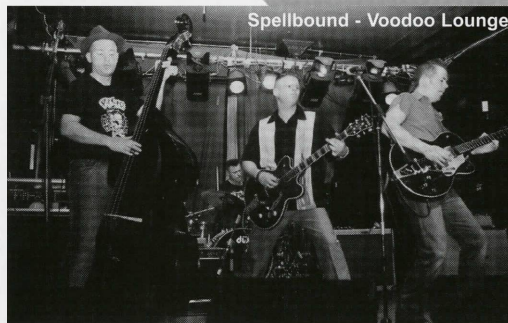
Th' Legendary Shack Shakers - Voodoo Lounge



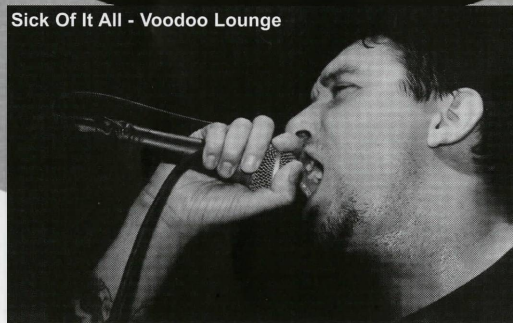
Gary Fitzpatrick - Anthology Books



The Meteors - The Village



Spellbound - Voodoo Lounge



Sick Of It All - Voodoo Lounge

MAY 2006

I first saw Th' Legendary Shack Shakers last December, playing a late night unscheduled set in The Voodoo Lounge and suffice to say they went down a storm with the handful of stragglers left in the venue after a Blood Or Whiskey gig. Their profile has boosted considerably in the six months that have passed since, seeing them return to the same venue once again to entertain their ever-growing lesions of Irish fans. **Spellbound** had the task of loosening up Th' Shack Shaking audience and with the charismatic Frankie Hayes doing his best Larry Gogan impersonations, this turned out to be a riotous affair. There's an additional guitarist on board, who fills out the sound somewhat as Spellbound get increasingly tighter as the gigs go on. They joke about being around as long as they have and still nobody's ever heard of them, but something tells me that may change. There's a new CD fresh on the shelves and the rekindled interest in this type of music around Dublin should make Spellbound one of its leading figures. Someone has poured **Th' Legendary Shack Shakers** lead singer Colonel JD Wilkes into an awkward looking pair of denim peddle pushers as he makes his entrance onto the stage. Skinny as a beanpole, he makes no effort whatsoever to hide it and proudly flails about the stage, clearly possessed by some spirit or other. Howling into an old fashioned microphone, designed to add rasp and crackles to the voice, the Colonel also honks wildly on a harmonica while he's at it. Th' Legendary Shack Shakers have stripped R.n' B down to its nasty, raunchy roots to reveal an aesthetic in the music we've been hard pushed to find since the days of Jerry Lee and Howlin' Wolf. The Colonel is really a showman and together he and his band can be reminiscent of a circus sideshow at times, which is no negative comment. His bloodied knees and glass hurling confirm he is a man who has proven his worth, spitting forth a sound so feral and impassioned you can't help but be moved. Guitarist David Lee just about matches him, operating as a dynamic duo, the more macho posturing of Lee is nicely balanced by Wilkes almost Jello Biafra-like gawkiness. Th' Legendadry Shack Shakers are a band you'll have a hard time forgetting.

Nobody can quite remember the last time The Meteors played Dublin, but there was a general opinion going round tonight that we've got to be talking the guts of twenty years? The promotion for this event was being handled by the Sick n' Twisted crew – an offshoot of the Body Shock tattoo/piercing parlour in Temple Bar. The gig benefited from healthy advertising and as we're talking about the Kings Of Psychobilly here after all, surely expecting a capacity crowd in The Village on a Friday night wasn't being too optimistic?? Seemingly, yes it was, as we breezed in just as support band **The Bastard Sons Of Boris Karlof** were wrapping up, the near-empty Village took us all by surprise. Reports on their set were positive and the one or two songs I caught from them sounded favourable enough. **The Meteors** following crosses all boundaries, Psychos, Biker scum, Punks and Skins all revel in the sound of the Kings. As everyone left the bar and surrounding seated areas to circle the stage, things began to look a lot more positive once The Meteors took the stage. For reasons unbeknown to all bar the band themselves, they felt the need to position two burly roadies on either side of the stage for the entire gig. I'd heard through the grapevine there was expected trouble at this gig, but nothing came of it. How did we get to the stage where Punk bands now use bodyguards? Kind of puts to rest their hard man reputation, don't you think? Aside from that irritating factor, once The Meteors got down to it after an extended tune up, it's clear they mean business. There's a new German stand up bass player in the ranks, slapping out those rollicking rhythms, whilst Paul Feneche remains just as much of an entertaining schizo as he always was. His signature guitar sound is legendary and sounds even better live than on record. It drives the tunes with a spooky, twangy moan, heavily influenced by Hank Marvin's style, simultaneously carrying out the work of lead and rhythm. There's not much space for crowd interaction here, The Meteors let their music speak for itself, which I can appreciate. "Slow Down You Grave Robbing Bastard" was my choice cut of the night, alongside "In Heaven" and their encore of "Mutant Rock", which really kicked up a storm.

JUNE 2006 Anthology Books in Dublin's Temple Bar played host to an evening dedicated to fanzine culture in Ireland. The first time I've been to such a thing in this country and nice to see the healthy volume of interest it generated. At a time when there're less and less outlets for independent publishers, tonight was used to highlight whatever bodies still remained out there in these trying times. Boz opened the evening with a few short words on exactly what all this means, but I missed a good chunk of his ramblings for no good reason other than the assumption that this thing wouldn't kick off at the 6:30pm advertised time!! It was 6:45 when I got in, to find a packed store and Boz making the last of his observations on fanzines. Next up were two girls - one local, one American, reading assorted extracts from their own personal zines, in journal-entry style. King Of The Sad People was an old Dublin fanzine which is no longer active and Conor Dervin, it's editor, got up to reflect back on Dublin Punk life in times gone by. He brought along some old issues of the fanzine and read some of his choice pieces from them. There was a Punk Rock Cosmopolitan quiz in there, along with tales of squatting in London as a transported Paddy Punk. Times have changed since and as Conor pointed out, these were pre SSIA Punk days!!! Local rabble-rouser Angus from Smegma fanzine was next - another piece of Dublin history that is no longer published. Angus is known about town as a bit of a poet and revived some of his vintage ramblings for the occasion. Very much in the style of Atilla The Stock Broker, we were treated to readings with such names as "My First Erection", "Drunken Contemplations", and my personal favourite "The Busman's Friend". Reflecting on what Punk was like in his teenage years and times spent knocking back flagons by the canal was his build up for the excellent "Mohawks In The Sun" which finished things beautifully. Of course Angus neglected to mention the canal he was referring to was in Dublin 4!!!! As a special addition Gary Fitzpatrick (ex Pincher Martin/Great Western Squares) brought his acoustic guitar along to belt out the soundtrack to these times. He played about a twenty-minute set to end the evening, and even took the odd request. The place was sweltering in the heat and I think everyone was gumming for a drink including Gary himself, who mentioned this might have been the first gig he's ever played outside of a pub. It does detract from the atmosphere a little, but on the whole I enjoyed the evening. Nothing wrong with a bit of nostalgia now and then!!

Sick Of It All in the Voodoo Lounge!!! Could life get any better? My first time to see the band live in Ireland and the setting was perfect. I'd caught a performance by them stateside in '99 and still have vivid memories of it today. They visited Dublin's Temple Bar Music Centre that same year and in ways I'm glad I didn't have to contend with seeing them in that hovel. **Pete The Killer** were the fitting support act who delved into their growing catalogue of old time Hardcore. The vocals had more of a growl attached to them tonight than before, but the music remained high velocity primal Hardcore Punk, in line with many an act from the early 80's. As the crowds filled up the dance floor it was clear **Sick Of It All's** arrival was looming. They've scaled down their profile somewhat lately and are back to playing the

same size clubs they started out in, which I think suits the band far better and gives their sound much more of an impact. There was no venue security or stage barrier in sight, meaning this was a free-for-all, but the band did keep a couple of their own tough nuts on hand to deal with anything that got out of order. They also insisted on serving all pints in plastic cups, but you can't have everything I guess. The favourite set opener of "Good Lookin' Out" sent Voodoo into a frenzy of stage divers, much to the band's approval, with the exception of Peter Koller, who appeared more occupied with his malfunctioning microphone and monitor than anything else. Once the teething problems were rectified it was back to the gorilla stomping and back up shouts for the tattooed one, swapping stage sides vigorously back and forth with Craig Ahead. Celebrating their twentieth year together as a band Sick Of It All have kept their standards impeccably high in relative terms. The energy of Sick Of It All on stage further fuels the crowd, intent on not letting up till both band and audience have been completely spent of all energy. The mark of a great band is when the end of the set comes, you honestly feel like they just started. Crammed into their hour plus stage time tonight were the likes of "My Life", "Just Look Around", "Sanctuary", "Injustice System", "Clobbering Time", "Step Down", "Call To Arms" and "Scratch The Surface". Seeing them in a small club like this just takes everything to a whole new level. Long may they continue!

A fresh line up of London's East End Baddoes, pieced together recently by Oi! luminary Terry Hayes, was over in the emerald isle for two nights of gigs this month. Belfast on the Friday and Dublin's Dalymount Park on Saturday. With the World Cup taking over the usual Boh's Bar, we were shifted down the hall to a smaller setting, which probably worked in the gig's favour, compressing the large handful of skinheads into a tight corner so to speak. Naturally Runnin' Riot were down for the night alongside new band **Excuses**, who appeared to have Sligo origins of some degree, though their singer spoke with an unmistakable Brit accent. This may have been their first gig and was a bit sloppy, but the spirit was there. Colin from **Runnin' Riot** was on the pints of tap water as he lead Belfast's finest through another punishing set of Street Punk favourites. Arguably most of the crowd came to see Runnin' Riot and were over enthused tonight with so many great tunes to raise their glasses to. New song, "That's When The Boots Go In" is another classic in the making and already a certified pleaser. The usual rundown of 'Riot staples followed suit and kept the skinheads happy for another Saturday night. As the gig didn't kick off till near ten o'clock it was late into the night when the **East End Baddoes** stepped up. Many of the punters had bugged off by this stage, but those who did stick around were treated to some old style London Oi! very much in the vein of the Cockney Rejects in their formative years. Terry Hayes is a casual looking middle-aged skin with grey hair and opts for the shorts and Adidas runners over doc martins and braces. There's something very Mickey Fitz-like about his stature as he riles up the crowd in the only way he knows how. I must say, I enjoyed the East End Baddoes set – it was simple, straightforward and well structured Oi! music for jobs!

John Robb has become a legendary figure in Punk Rock circles, having been at the forefront of making some fantastic music since the age of sixteen, when he co-founded The Membranes in Blackpool. Since then John has involved himself in all manner of projects and not all of them have been of a musical nature. He has established himself as a well-known author, journalist and TV pundit. He has recently released his oral history on Punk Rock and you'd be hard pushed to find a man better qualified for the job. John's encyclopaedic knowledge of all things musical (with a special emphasis on Punk) is staggering to say the very least. He is also the singer/guitarist for Gold Blade – a band which exploded onto an unsuspecting Punk public in 1996 with their "Soul Power" 7 inch and have since gone on to release a handful of records very much through the medium of D.I.Y. and self-promotion. Gold Blade have no limitations and will take their music everywhere and anywhere they can. They have played in Dublin many times and this occasion saw them back to their old stomping ground of The Voodoo Lounge. The following interview took place in the cosy yet bustling confines of Frank Ryan's pub in Smithfield, where we were fortunate enough to find the one quiet corner that existed in any Dublin pub on a Friday evening. Pausing only to take a sup from his pint of iced water, John brought me up to speed with everything that he's been up to lately, so sit back and enjoy the ride as his enthusiasm for living life to the full is unleashed courtesy of his hugely exhilarating way with words. (Photos taken in Frank Ryan's pub, Whelan's and Voodoo Lounge, Dublin)

RIOT. 77: How was Belfast last night?

JOHN ROBB: It was ok, a bit quiet. We never do that well in Belfast for some reason. It's always around sixty-to-eighty people. It's alright, it's not shit, but it's not our best city. The crowd that goes is good though. It's a good, tight little crowd that turns out. It was in some venue we never played before and I can't remember the name of it. Every time we play it's a different venue, which kind of gives you an indication of what the scene is like up there. I think if you're an old school band or a big new American band it's ok, but everyone else is almost stuck in between, aren't they?

RIOT. 77: Tell me about the time you applied for a job in the Civil Service.

JOHN: When I left school I went on the dole, like everyone did back then. In Blackpool at the time they made you take a job that you didn't want, just to get you off the dole and the Civil Service was one of those jobs. So they sent me down there to be interviewed by three guys and one of them was a police officer ... anyway the first question they asked was if I knew why they had this special flag hanging up today ... "Do you know what day it is today?" and I said "Uhhh!! Wednesday??". They said, "No, it's Prince Charles' birthday and that's why that flag is up there!". They were appalled that I didn't know it was Prince Charles' birthday (laughs). They told me I'd have to cut my hair if I wanted the job and this guy was telling me this as his own toupee was slipping further and further down his head during the interview (laughs). I said, "Look at your own hair!! At least mine is still attached to my head!!" (laughs). I didn't get the job. You have to get the balance right, because if they thought you weren't genuinely trying to succeed in the interview they'd kick you off the dole. This was in 1981 or '82 when it was cushy to be on the dole and they'd give you money to get a suit and set you up with a flat. Whereas now it's gotten to the point where you need qualifications to get on the bloody dole.

RIOT. 77: How many times have you played Ireland at this stage? Do you keep track?

JOHN: Yeah, I think it's about six times. We like coming over, it's good coming over here.

RIOT. 77: You came over with The Membranes as far back as 1986 ...

JOHN: Yeah, at the Belvedere Hotel. We played with Paranoid Visions and that's where I know Deko from - a fine upstanding chap (laughs). I know he's a bit crazy and all that but he's a really good bloke Deko. I really like the guy; he's one of the few genuine characters left on the scene isn't he? Paranoid Visions were a great band and all the other bands he was in were always good, but they all kind of fizzled out. I remember once when we played here and he pissed on someone's leg and got kicked out of the venue (laughs). I think some girl was just standing at the bar and said something like, "Go on, piss on my leg, I dare you!" and you don't say something like that to Deko do you, because he'll do it (laughs). I tried to get him back in but it was too late; he'd already gone (laughs). I was going to sneak him back in around the side door. But that's the kind of behaviour you want from Deko, isn't it? You don't want him sitting there reading a book, do you? (laughs). He's a nutter, but he's one of those guys who's actually a lot smarter than people give him credit for. He's a true Punk ... every city has got their one original Punk and he's the one here, isn't he?

RIOT. 77: Do you remember much about that gig at the Belvedere Hotel?

JOHN: Yeah, I remember it really well. It was a good crowd from what I recall; I think about a hundred and fifty people turned up. Niall McGuirk put it on and I think it was his first ever gig to promote or something to that effect, which I didn't know at the time, but he told me that later. In them days there was a big Punk scene and the Punks would go to everything, it didn't matter who was playing. It wasn't like we were a big band; it was just a Punk night out. We made a lot of friends that night and they're people we're still in touch with today. We stayed in a squat in Dublin and there was this knock on the door and I opened it and all these guys with guns came barging in. I thought, "Fuckin' hell; what's goin' on here?" It turned out they were cops and as there was a bank next door to the squat they thought we were terrorists trying to rob it or blow it up or something. We had to explain that it was just a Punk squat (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Did you come back again with The Membranes?

JOHN: Yeah we did, I think we came back a couple of times. I remember playing down the country in these little towns and villages and staying in people's mum's houses, where they always look after you really well, don't they? They cook you these massive breakfasts that there's no way you could eat your way through (laughs). One of the kids who was putting us on, we stayed at his uncle's house in Cork, where he got us a vegetarian meal, 'cos we were vegetarians, but it had chicken in it because he thought a cooked chicken was vegetarian (laughs). I couldn't eat it, but I felt so bad after he'd gone to all this trouble. The one person with us who did eat meat had to eat all six of these little chickens (laughs). I'd say he was sick that night ... and we were starving 'cos we'd had nothing to eat (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Are Goldblade all vegetarians?

JOHN: No, it's about three to two. Most Punk bands tend to be like that; it's normally about half and half. There's always someone in there holding the vegetarian flag up (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Are you happy enough with the following Goldblade have over here?

JOHN: It would be nice if it were bigger. We do really well in England now at Punk festivals and on bigger tours like the Stranglers, Buzzcocks and S.L.F. But we do alright in Ireland; last time there was a good crowd, but you never really know what to expect. When we headline in England we get between a hundred and fifty and three hundred people at a gig so that's going well. Here it's smaller, but that's ok, we're not here to be rock stars, we're here to play Punk Rock music. The promoters here are great and look after you well. John Toxic is probably the best and most honest promoter on the circuit and that's why it would be nice if it sold out and he made some money back.

RIOT. 77: I haven't had a chance to read your new book on the history of Punk yet ...

JOHN: Yeah, it's not exactly a ten-minute read, is it?

RIOT. 77: No, it's not. How has it been doing?

JOHN: It's selling well in England, I'm not sure about over here.

RIOT. 77: Tell me a bit about it.

JOHN: It's all based around quotes; an oral history. A lot of Punk books are based on the theory of Punk, which is fine too, I thought John Savage's book was a fantastic read, but I like to get the story from the horse's mouth. You get to hear what it was really like, such as the bands who actually liked The Beatles or whatever. It didn't always go from Bowie and Roxy Music straight to Punk; it wasn't as hip as that and some people even owned up to liking things like Yes. It came from a lot of different places and met up at a certain point and I think the book really reflects that. There were a lot of very different types of people playing Punk. And also it wasn't just London, you had people like TV Smith in Torquay starting stuff down there. There was a great scene in Belfast and you had Manchester with The Buzzcocks. Punk has become the story of The Clash now, hasn't it? Even Mick Jones thinks that's a bit of a joke. I mean, The Clash are an amazing band, but it isn't the whole story of Punk. Punk is also about The Buzzcocks, The Adverts, The Outcasts and Rudi in Belfast, The Radiators from Dublin, who were around in '75 and '76, you know?

RIOT. 77: Do you remember The Rads, yeah?

JOHN: Yeah, they were a great band. Dublin had its own little mini Punk scene, didn't it? Even the U2 guys were heading in that direction when they started and their first singles are good records, so what I'm saying is that everybody who was around at that time was onto something. Dublin put a bit more Bowie, Springsteen, Stones influence in there, Manchester was more arty and London had their own thing going on as well, which I loved, but it's not the whole story, even though London seems to lead it. It was a national story and that's something I tried very hard to get across in the book. There're a lot of great stories and anecdotes in the book and a lot of people totally contradicting themselves as well as each other. There's also a lot of really funny stuff from the likes of Captain Sensible, who's always entertaining.

RIOT. 77: These are all original interviews too I take it?

JOHN: Yeah, I think there were two that I got from other people, because I couldn't get hold of them myself in time, but it's all original interviews, yeah.

RIOT. 77: How many people did you interview?

JOHN: About a hundred and fifty. It's not the same old faces; I've got Crass in there and Cockney Rejects. I mean, yes there are the same old faces in there too from '77 which was where I started, but it goes up to 1984 so you've got people like Angelic Upstarts and The Ruts in there. I never realised The Ruts had split up when Malcolm Owen died; I thought they were still going. Seemingly they had agreed to reform and Malcolm went out with some friends and partied and that's when he overdosed that night. Even I found out some stuff writing the book that I didn't know about.

RIOT. 77: Who from The Ruts did you interview?

JOHN: Segs. They're an amazing band, The Ruts. If they hadn't fucked up I think the Punk scene on this side of the Atlantic would have kept going at the same scale it had. The Ruts were an interesting band because they tied both the late 70's bands and early 80's bands together. They had the whole Street thing down, but also people who were more into the Gang Of Four end of things liked them as well. Much like The Clash they held a lot of the Punk scene together. You need a band to carry the standards and to be on things like Top Of The Tops, don't you? The Ruts would have been that band, but when they fucked up the Punk scene went underground in Britain, which is how it still is now and its only the American bands really that make the scene. People don't expect British Punk bands to get any good, but there're some amazing bands still around like here in Dublin for instance you've got stuff like Blood Or Whiskey.

RIOT. 77: Did you have a strict cut-off point of

1984 with the book?

JOHN: I wanted to carry on 'till now, but I had half a million words, which had to be edited down to a hundred and sixty thousand. So 1984 was where I decided to stop ... just like The Clash song (laughs). 1984 was really when the first explosion of Punk ran out I think. Nothing new really came after that until Nirvana, when people started checking out Rancid and all those other bands and then it started taking off again. From 1984 to about 1991 it was all the same bands that just kept getting smaller and smaller. When you get to about 1989 or 1990 there is no Punk scene at all. You'd go to gigs then and there'd be about twenty people there, literally. It really died for a while, but its great now that it's gotten big again. Nirvana got a lot of kids back into Punk and bands like the U.K. Subs always kept the banner flying and were always great. It's also down to things like the Holidays In The Sun festival for making a big Punk festival of its kind actually work. You can definitely see it on the upsurge in England now and I'm sure if tonight's gig here was an All-Ages show there would be a lot more kids turning out, because they're the ones who're getting into it. Next time we're hopefully gonna try an All-Ages gig maybe in the afternoon and have another gig that night kinda thing.

RIOT. 77: Who approached you with the concept of putting the book out or did you have to chase people?

JOHN: For years I'd been saying to them I wanted to do a Punk book and eventually they said yeah. I always had it in my head that I wanted it to be an oral history type thing and you've got books like "Burning Britain" out there that deal with the second wave, so there was no point in repeating that; it had to be an original take on it all. What better way than to go straight to the source? You have to get it from the people who were actually there at the time. I think the best books on Punk are the ones that the people write themselves about their own experiences and how they viewed it from the inside.

RIOT. 77: What did you make of Andy Blade's book? Have you read it?

JOHN: I've read bits of it, yeah, but I haven't had the time to sit down and read it properly. But the bits I have read have been really good, yeah. They're the best books aren't they, by people who aren't necessarily famous authors, but they get into the real nitty gritty of it.

RIOT. 77: How long did it take you to put it together?

JOHN: One year of writing it and thirty years of living it. I've been into Punk since '77 and have read everything I can about it since I was a kid, which makes the research part of it very easy.

Transcribing the tapes was the nightmare. I knew most of the bands so I just rang them up and the ones I didn't know, I would know someone who knew them and would get in touch that way.

RIOT. 77: Anyone you wished you'd interviewed but couldn't?

JOHN: Joe Strummer, obviously. He was dead by the time I started the book so I couldn't get his stories.

RIOT. 77: Have you ever interviewed him before?

JOHN: No, but I met him about three or four times. He's a really nice bloke and very interesting person. He can talk about tons of different things at the same time; a clever guy. It was tragic that he died just when everything was coming right for him. He was about to play The Apollo in Manchester to about three thousand people. He played some great shows with the Mescaleros. It was nice to see someone from the Punk scene grow old gracefully. He was a veteran and proving that you can still sound great in your 50's and that's what its all about. I thought he was going to take it to through to his 60's, 70's and 80's.

RIOT. 77: He looked really well.

JOHN: Yeah, didn't he? What a bad time to go as well, at Christmas. We played Newport in Wales the night he died and done "White Riot" and there were guys in the front row crying. That's how strong the bond was and there aren't many bands

you can say that about. It's difficult to explain to people how important those bands were at the time. It's always sad when anyone dies but there was just something so powerful about The Clash.

RIOT. 77: You've written a few other books down the years as well ... you done one on The Stone Roses?

JOHN: Yeah, I did a book about them.

RIOT. 77: Where do you see the connection there or is there one?

JOHN: Well they started out as a Punk band. Their attitude to what they do is quite Punk and I like the music as well, I think its great. I like all sorts of music. Punk is always the music I'll go back to, but it's not the only thing I like. Ian Brown was big on the Punk scene and used to hang around with the Angelic Upstarts and is still a big fan of



OLD BLADE

theirs. That's where The Stone Roses were coming from but they went in a different direction. But if you listen to a Stone Roses album and put it next to "Sandanista", they're not that far apart. Punk isn't necessarily heavy is it? It's all styles of music mixed in there. The Stone Roses initially weren't a trendy band; there was definitely a Punk thing about them. The following they had was very similar to a Punk following, only ten years later and ten years younger. The way they operate is pretty much the same.

RIOT. 77: You were around that whole scene when it was on the rise, were you?
JOHN: In Manchester, yeah. I'd go see the U.K. Subs but I'd also go and see the Roses while I was at it. I'd go and see any band that came through town, because you can't talk about music unless you really check everything out. You can't say, "That's a load of shit" unless you actually know about it.

RIOT. 77: You championed the Acid House scene as well ...

JOHN: The early days of it was great. All the illegal Raves were fantastic; it was wild. They used to squat in blocks of flats and knock the walls through and you'd have these big parties with about four hundred people there going crazy. When it got codified and made into wine bars and clubs with superstar DJ's, by that stage it was all over. In the beginning we used to just play records, which was a lot like Punk really. When Acid House went to the mainstream it was just shit and became all about the money – all Thatcher's children grabbing the money. The Rave scene in Manchester around '87 and '88 was wild; it was somewhere to go after gigs.

RIOT. 77: A lot of these cultures that you're interested in tend to be centred round the excesses of drink and drugs, yet you're straight as an arrow ...

JOHN: I used to take drugs, but I just got bored of it by about 1992. I don't mind other people taking them, but I got fed up with having hangovers all the time and realised I could have a good time without it.

RIOT. 77: Can you honestly put your hand on your heart and say you could listen to an Acid House record without being on drugs? Without the drugs there was no scene and that's why the arse fell out of it. Whereas you don't need to be off your head to enjoy a Punk record and that's why it's still around, isn't it?

JOHN: Some of the Rave records I could yeah, some of them are really good, but certainly not all of them, no (laughs). Some of the early records are better because it was more eclectic then and there wasn't a set style to which way the music was going to go. Some of the bands that came out of that, like The Prodigy, were really good. The Chemical Brothers as well, but that first Prodigy album I think is a great record. It's like Punk/Acid House. It's what you get when you mix the two rebel cultures of that last twenty-five years into one. How they managed to get it to number one in so many countries I'll never know; it was a massive achievement.

RIOT. 77: What about these 80's TV shows you keep showing up on?

JOHN: Yeah, they're a good laugh doing them. I did a book about 90's Pop music and they got me to write a script for one of them and then asked me if I wanted to appear on the show and I did. They liked what I done and asked if I wanted to appear on another one and it just snowballed from there. I don't actually seek them out; they just ring me up to do them all the time. It's easy money, I get a hundred quid and my train fare to London to sit there and talk about music for two hours.

RIOT. 77: Do you follow the Top 40 that closely, because that's mainly what you're asked about isn't it? Chart music?

JOHN: Yeah, well the gym I train in fortunately has MTV on all the time, so I actually know what's in the charts. I know most of the shit that's in there alright (laughs). There're very few records where I wouldn't know what they sound like. I don't follow the charts as much now as when I was a kid where I could tell you the exact chart position of a record. I know what's in the Top 10 but I couldn't give you the exact number. The charts aren't as important as they used to be. When I was growing up the singles chart was everything. But if you look at it now, bands like Dropkick Murphys and Rancid are huge bands, but they've never had hit records, you know? In the old days they would've had hit records because it meant something then. You only have to sell about a thousand records now to get in the charts. It's lost its meaning; now it's all about how much the record company hypes the song, which is a shame because it used to be all about the song, didn't it? But even then you can see bands like Arctic Monkeys coming out of nowhere, where it's just a bunch of kids with guitars singing about their lives. I love them; they're another version of Punk really. They're not playing to Punk Rock fans; but they're playing abrasive guitars and sing about their lives in Sheffield.

RIOT. 77: What else have you been doing lately besides Goldblade?

JOHN: I'm still writing bits of journalism and doing TV stuff, then promoting the book on things like Richard And Judy (laughs) ...

RIOT. 77: Oh yeah, I heard about that ... with Pete Shelley and Captain Sensible wasn't it?

JOHN: Yeah, that was a great laugh with Captain Sensible and Pete Shelley. I've been doing interviews and that to try and get the word out about the book. The feedback's been really good so far. There've been a few negative reviews, but a lot of the positive stuff is coming from people who actually went out and bought the book and came up to me telling me they liked it, which I think is more important. We're not the type of people that get patted on the back by the media; they think our culture is shit, so I'd rather have it from other people.

RIOT. 77: Do you keep track of how many people you've interviewed throughout the years?

JOHN: No, but its got to be about four of five hundred. I did the very first Nirvana

interview.

RIOT. 77: Yeah, what was that like?

JOHN: It was over the phone; I just rang Kurt's mums house. He'd never done an interview before and was very quiet. I'd only heard one song by them at the time. I must say it was a classic interview (laughs). This was about 1988 so it's not on tape; it was just handwritten for a piece in Sounds. Sounds was a great paper; they used to let you write about whatever you liked.

RIOT. 77: Kurt was a big fan of that paper, wasn't he?

JOHN: Well he used to wear the shirt, yeah. He was big into all the outsider Punk bands as well that you mightn't have expected. Same thing with Dinosaur Jr. they love Oi! bands. People think they're wearing their t-shirts to be ironic, but that's the actual music they like and why not? There're some brilliant Oi! bands out there.

RIOT. 77: What other interviews stand out for you?

JOHN: Manic Street Preachers.

RIOT. 77: The early days?

JOHN: The early days yeah, when Richey was with them. They were really opinionated and had a clear idea of what they were about. They didn't give a shit about fucking people off. They were almost deliberately trying to destroy themselves. That interview was with all of the band, but Richey did most of the talking. Nicky would do little bits and the other two would just nod in agreement. They were very serious as well, because most bands just want to have a laugh, but it's great to see a band that has a bit of passion about what they do and don't care if you don't agree with it. I remember some of their early gigs in colleges outside of London and people were just mesmerized by them.

RIOT. 77: Yeah I went to see 'em here in McGonagles early on and its still one of the best gigs I've ever been to.

JOHN: Definitely. Now you can go and see a guitar band play pretty intensely any night of the week, but at that time there was hardly anybody doing it. Essentially they were a Punk band when they started, but they were really glammed up which also freaked people out, because that was the Baggy era, where everybody dressed down. They really wound people up and it was great to see. I'll still go and see them today and support them because I think he's got a great voice and a lot of passion. Some of their later stuff isn't bad, but I don't pay to get into their gigs (laughs) ... the recent stuff has gone very Coldplay. I get the albums but there're less and less tracks I like on each album. There's always one song you half like and you try and make yourself like it more. At their gigs you still get the thousand leopard skins at the front and twenty thousand other blokes behind them going, "Who're those weirdos at the front?" (laughs).

RIOT. 77: You've interviewed Wayne Kramer

...

JOHN: Yeah, he was good. I've interviewed him a couple of times.

RIOT. 77: Were the MC5 a big influence on you?

JOHN: To a certain extent, yeah. They're all about the show and put on a great gig. I love the revolutionary shtick they have as well. They grew up watching Soul bands and stuff like James Brown, where it's all about getting the crowd involved, which is a very important thing – to break down the barrier and get everyone to sing along or get up on stage. * I didn't see them in 1969 but I seen them recently when they came over and they were still doing the same kind of show. That's what they're into – all the ethics of Soul music.

RIOT. 77: Who of all the bands and people had the biggest impact on you personally?

JOHN: There's no one person, but obviously the more Punk type bands, because that's where I'm coming from. I grew up with Glam Rock initially as a kid before Punk Rock hit me. I am one of

those people you read about where Punk literally did change my life (laughs). Before Punk I was just plodding around Blackpool bored out of my head. Everything was there with Punk, you know, it had everything – musically, politically, stylistically, it had it all.

RIOT. 77: What age were you then?

JOHN: I'm forty-five now, so I was sixteen when Punk hit, which was the perfect age to get into it. That's always the right age to get into any scene, isn't it? You're young enough to get blown away by it, but old enough to go out and enjoy it ... even if you live in Blackpool.

RIOT. 77: Would it be fair to say that all these big music papers you've written for practically ignore your own band ... if so, how do you feel about that?

JOHN: Yeah, yeah. When we started we got loads of press, but to tell you the truth its actually better now without any press because it all comes down to word of mouth and the scene we're in doesn't really follow the established music papers. It's always flattering for your ego to get good press, but what really counts is playing gigs and people liking you. For instance we just played the S.L.F. tour around England and it was fuckin' great every night, you know?

RIOT. 77: I thought Blood Or Whiskey were the support on that tour?

JOHN: They done the first half because we were in America then. We got back from America three weeks ago and went straight onto the S.L.F. tour; then we had two days off and came here.

RIOT. 77: How did you find touring with S.L.F.?

JOHN: Nice blokes, very quiet.

RIOT. 77: Did you get to hangout with them much or were both bands kept completely separate?

JOHN: They go to the hotel, come in and play the gig and then go back to the hotel after the gig. That's how they operate. They treated us good and always made sure we had a dressing room and got a proper soundcheck. We got about an hour-long



soundcheck and we don't even get that when we're headlining. The tour manager was great too. They're nice blokes; they're just quiet and people think they're a bit funny because of it. They like to just chill out and play a good gig, but they definitely don't act like rock stars. Headlining bands don't have to hangout with the support bands, you know?

RIOT. 77: How was America?

JOHN: Oh it was amazing. We played with G.B.H. and did about twelve gigs. G.B.H. do very well over there; I think they're a seriously underrated band on this side of the Atlantic. But every night was kickass. It was up and down the west coast and then out as far as Salt Lake City. The kids were mad for it. We weren't too well known before in America, but we are now and by the end of the set each night they were singing along and knew what it was about.

RIOT. 77: Do you have anyone putting your records out over there?

JOHN: Cleopatra done the latest one and we had a compilation of the first three out before that on another label, who actually organised the festival over there that we played at in Los Angeles. I dunno if you heard about it, but there was a big riot. We got to play and then Broken Bones were on and some Nazi Skinheads turned up and started sieg hieling, so the kids beat them up. One of the Skinheads got stabbed so the cops went in tear-gassing everybody and while they were at it they threw a canister of tear-gas into the main room. Nobody knew what was going on outside until someone shouts, "Tear-Gas!!!" and everybody ran out. I said, "No, lets stay here!" because I've been tear-gassed before and thought we could sit it out, bit it got harder and harder and we ended up being the last ones out (laughs). There were loads of helicopters flying round when we got out with these big microphones saying, "The show is over ...

Everyone disperse!!" It really did kick off though; all the kids ran into town and smashed the place up, blowing up two police cars. It was on the national news in America. We got back to our room and put the TV on and it was on the news (laughs). When we were there it didn't look that exciting, but on the news it did – "RIOT AT PUNK SHOW!!!!!" and footage of all these burning police cars (laughs). There were lines and lines of cops and they all had their toys out ... just thousands of cops with machine guns, it was like a fuckin' warzone. There were over three and a half thousand people

the army too and they're not happy about the situation they're in out there. Why should they go and clean the government's dirty washing? It's all being fought under false pretences and everyone knows that, including the governments behind it and that's the most annoying part ... especially being a Labour government. I mean the government is never going to get it right all of the time, but you like to think that Labour are sort of on your side and when the war happened it was just like, "What the fuck???" ... how can we fall for that?

RIOT. 77: Do you vote Labour?

JOHN: I used to vote Labour, but I gave up on them. I vote for the Green Party now and they actually win in the local elections where I live, which is the squatty part of Manchester city centre and it's a bit more bohemian there. Labour council is shit there and has become more Thatcher-ised in most people's eyes. Still if I had to vote Labour in, in order to get the Tories out, then I would, but other than that, no. I think everyone can agree that the Tories are a bunch of wankers. It's usually the Conservatives who get into power in Ireland isn't it?

RIOT. 77: Yeah, pretty much ... Fianna Fail are the equivalent of the Tories in England and they've had the most votes at every election since the war, I think I'm right in saying.

JOHN: Rural countries tend to be more conservative anyway, don't they?

RIOT. 77: I think that's a fair point.

JOHN: It doesn't feel like a conservative country though. I know there're a lot of conservative attitudes here, but when you go around the country it doesn't really feel that way I don't think. For instance you could sit in a pub in the countryside all night and it wouldn't shut and is a very chilled out atmosphere. It's a lot more laidback than England in that respect. There's a lot more space here and I think that's why all the Travellers got fed up of England and came to Ireland (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Why did you get rid of the Horn section in Goldblade?

JOHN: We've got too many guitars now and it drowns them out. We tried using the Horns live, but you could never hear them. Too many bands have them as well and we didn't want to be like one of those Ska Punk bands.

RIOT. 77: Something a lot of people seem to say about Goldblade and Mark



at the gig. G.B.H. didn't get to play and neither did Vice Squad who'd only flown in especially for that gig and were flying back out the next day. In some ways they were lucky because when we played the sound was awful; probably the worst I've ever heard.

RIOT. 77: Ok, last year you put out that "Psycho" single, which included two bands covering "Strictly Hardcore" at the end of the disc. How did that come about? Tons of bands have covered that song, right?

JOHN: Yeah, every now and then someone will cover "Strictly Hardcore" so for the laugh I thought I'd stick two of them on the B-Side. They were the two I had at the time, but there's a lot more than that. Outlaw are just a bunch of twelve-year-old kids and a great Punk band. Everyone just goes, "Ahh, aren't they cute?", but they're actually a really good band worth checking out. The other band on there, Buzzbomb, are from Scotland and I've known 'em for years and their version is probably better than ours (laughs). There's been about ten cover versions of "Strictly Hardcore" and it's quite a simple song to play, so maybe that's why they chose to cover it? (laughs).

RIOT. 77: "Rebel Songs" was the last full length ... how's that been doing?

JOHN: I'm really happy with it. It's our best album and received the best reaction and also sold the best. It's on Captain Oi! too, which is a great label and we finally feel at home. You can ring up Watford John or Mark Brennan and it's like talking to your mates down the phone. "Rebel Songs" is still selling; it takes a long time to get out to everybody and I still meet people who've never heard of us. People don't find out about new bands by watching the TV or listening to the radio anymore. Like most Punk bands our audience is either under twenty or over forty (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Are you staying with Captain Oi! for the next one or is that a long way off yet?

JOHN: Yeah, we're talking about doing another one, unless someone comes up to us with an offer of a million pounds (laughs). We've written a load of songs and will probably record them late this year or early next year.

RIOT. 77: "Rebel Songs" is far more of a political album than your previous work, isn't it?

JOHN: It's always been political, but it's a bit less subtle this time, yeah. The whole Iraq thing and going out to all the marches brought most of that up. I know people in

Brennan pointed it out too – you seem to use your three or four best songs to open the album and then follow it up with your weakest stuff ... listening back have you ever felt there isn't a consistency there?

JOHN: Is that what Mark Brennan said? I'll kill him (laughs). But, yeah, I think you do that, don't you? You put your strongest songs first to get people interested. With the first album we definitely done that; we went into the studio and started fucking about and added those tracks onto the end of the album, so it had about eighteen tracks on there and a lot of it was stuff that we would never play live. It was messing about really. I think the ten songs on "Rebel Songs" are all really good.

RIOT. 77: Goldblade always struck me, as the type of band that would like to breakaway from underground confines and have a crack at the mainstream ... is that a fair comment?

JOHN: We'd like to be in the mainstream, but we wouldn't like to break away from the underground because we really like the underground. I love the whole Punk family thing, you know? Yes, you would be a mug not to want massive hits and nobody writes songs for twenty people; they want people to hear what they have to say. It would be nice to be a big band if you could do it without being a wanker ... bands like Rancid, Dropkick Murphys and even Green Day still run it kind of like a Punk show and they're cool guys, I don't think its gone to their heads. Yeah, why not play stadiums and chat and hang out with people all night? It would be nice to have some money as well instead of always scrimping and scraping and being broke.

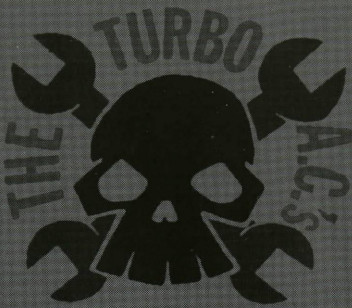
RIOT. 77: Are you still broke?

JOHN: I get a hundred quid here, a hundred quid there, borrow a tenner off my girlfriend (laughs). Sometimes I'll have a grand in my bank account and think I'm loaded, but two weeks later its all gone again 'cos I forgot I had to pay all the bills. It's basically like being sixteen-years-of-age all the time. But I'm not complaining about it, because it's a really good life.

RIOT. 77: When was the last time you had to work a job?

JOHN: Well, that's exactly why I don't complain, because I've never had to do that. I couldn't bear to work for anyone. I couldn't handle being told what to do: it would do my head in.

From the deepest bowels of New York City,



The Turbo AC's
countless tattoos,
non stop touring and
classic Surf guitars
has made them house-
hold names in some
quarters. Rock n'
Rollers with a long
Punk pedigree, lead
growler and gui-

tarist Kevin Cole's history is steeped in
all things Punk and Oi! and can be traced
back to the early 80's, where you'll find
a young runaway getting off to bands like
G.B.H. and the Anti Nowhere League. Cole

resurfaced in the mid 90's and put
together The Turbo AC's - a band named
after a gang from urban cinema classic
The Warriors. Someone once said if kick-
ing ass had a soundtrack it would feature
more than a few songs from The Turbo
AC's. They've created that almost per-
fect melding of Rock and Punk, satisfying
all factions of the community and have
released a substantial amount of good
records since their humble beginnings
over ten years ago. This interview was
conducted with Kevin Cole in the front
bar of CBGB's, shortly before the Bowery
audience received a thundering blast of
Rock n' Roll assault at the hands of The
Turbo AC's.

(All Photos Taken In CBGB's,
New York City.)

RIOT. 77: Tell me about this Turbojugend organisa-
tion you're involved with?

KEVIN COLE: Turbojugend? It's German for Turbo
Youth and is part of the Turbonegro fan club. Our label
in Germany who put our stuff out in Europe called
Bitzcore started the whole thing pretty much. It spun
wildly out of control and has turned into this secret socie-
ty now. When we signed with Bitzcore we got in with the
whole Turbonegro thing and done a bunch of shows with
them and got given this jacket as a signing bonus, which
automatically gave me the title of Vice President of
Turbojugend New York. I was drafted without even
knowing (laughs). The craziest bunch of Turbojugend
people I met were in Belgium where we played a show
with us and The Meteors and a couple of other bands
and Turbojugend organised it. They also organised
some drunken sailing trip during the day, with two hun-
dred people wearing these sailor caps, all getting wasted
on some boat somewhere or other. It's a lot of fun and
what's cool is that it's not always just about Turbonegro,
it's just people who like the same kind of music who're
getting together now and just having big parties.

RIOT. 77: You're a Turbonegro fan obviously?

KEVIN: Oh, yeah, I love the band. We've played with
them a few times in Europe.

RIOT. 77: They've been to America haven't they?

KEVIN: They have; they've been here a few times and
we've always ended up seeing them when they come
over. I've been trying to talk to their guitarist Euroboy
about recording some stuff and him producing, because
they've got some really cool studios, but it's so expensive
to go to Oslo ... even more expensive than New York.
RIOT. 77: Ok, since you're playing here in CBGB's
tonight, let's talk a little about what's happening to
the place.

KEVIN: Well, it's shutting down. It's really sad; this is

my favourite place to play or to come see another band
play. I'm not too crazy about going to big venues; this is
just the perfect club and the sound is great. But things
change and there's nothing we can do about it; this whole
Bowery neighbourhood is changing and people have
fought it for a while but we just have to let it go, there's
nothing we can do unfortunately. I think they've accept-
ed they're leaving in October. We'll maybe get one or
two more chances to play here before it closes. It's
funny you know, you get like Japanese guys hanging out
front all the time taking pictures (laughs).

RIOT. 77: It's owned by a homeless shelter upstairs
is that right?

KEVIN: The building?

RIOT. 77: Yeah

KEVIN: I'm not sure who owns the building but Hilly
Kristal still runs the club. I'd imagine once they're out
they'll just knock this whole place down. It's happening
all over New York City, but it's also happening every-
where else I find. All these cities you used to go to that
were dangerous years ago are all changed places now.
You can't stop the future from happening and you can't
go back, you have to move forward. We've just got to
figure out a way to still have a good time.

RIOT. 77: What do you still like about the city?

KEVIN: New York? Oh there're still lots of good things,
I just like the people here in general and I don't think
that's going to change too much. It's gonna take a lot
more than some businesses changing hands to change
the way the people are. There's an attitude that the peo-
ple in New York City have which I think is unique.
There's so many different types of people from every-
where all living together. I don't know how many differ-
ent places you've been in the states, but if you go to a
place like Los Angeles it's a different feeling because
people aren't so piled up on top of one another, as they

are here, so you have to have a different mentality.
That's what I enjoy and it feels comfortable for me.

RIOT. 77: Do you live close to here?

KEVIN: Yeah, I live about five blocks away in
Chinatown. Most of the people in my neighbourhood are
Chinese, oddly enough (laughs).

RIOT. 77: How can you afford to live somewhere like
this and play in a Punk band? Is that tough?

KEVIN: Well, I don't pay much for my place at all. You
have to know people who can work deals for you (laughs)
... you gotta be in the Mafia basically.

RIOT. 77: Do you work outside of the band?

KEVIN: I do lots of other jobs outside of the Turbo AC's.
I do some freelance work with photography here, touch-
ing up photographs and getting them ready to send to the
magazines. I'll go on tour, then come back and get a job
or a couple of jobs.

RIOT. 77: What did you think of what Guliani done to
New York City?

KEVIN: Well, yeah that's when things really changed. I
don't know if it was so much Guliani, but at the time
everything was changing. He of course made things
really happen and ensured these changes took place and
that everyone would be safe in New York City and right
now it's a safe place as far as crime goes, it doesn't real-
ly happen anymore, you know? Now whether that's a
good thing or a bad thing I don't know; you've gotta get
the balance right. Now it's a little harder to have a beer
in street, but at the same time you won't get stabbed on
your way home. You have to decide which one is better.

RIOT. 77: Did you live here before he was Mayor?

KEVIN: Uhhhh ... yeah I moved here in 1989.

RIOT. 77: ... and you see a big difference between
the two?

KEVIN: Yeah, definitely ... and I know people who've
lived here prior to that and they see a bigger difference





again, going back to when it wasn't even safe to be walking around this area by yourself at night. So, it's a lot safer now, but maybe not as much fun. I'm an easy-going kinda guy, so I don't get too upset about it or spend too much time dwelling on it.

RIOT. 77: *Ok, you're not touring at the minute; tonight's gig is just a one-off?*

KEVIN: Right. This is kind of a big show for us, because we haven't played a show in a while. We were on tour with the Dwarves the end of last year, which was great, but after that tour our bass player Mike decided he couldn't do it anymore. He'd been in the band since the beginning and had other things he wanted to do. He actually felt the problems of New York a lot more and got fired from his job, so he had to move on and try get something else. So, tonight is our first show with our new bass player, Tim. The rehearsals have been going really well and he's an old friend of ours anyway, so it doesn't feel like that big of a change.

RIOT. 77: *What's his history?*

KEVIN: We met him through our friends in Flogging Molly. We were on tour with Flogging Molly and he's good friends with those guys, so one of 'em called up our drummer Kevin and said, "Hey, we're sitting here with one of your biggest fans!" and that's how it happened.

RIOT. 77: *Did anyone else try out?*

KEVIN: No, actually. When Mike said he was leaving the band we called Tim up and said, "Ok, you ready to go?" and he said "Yeah!". I don't think I could've ran an ad in the paper or anything like that.

RIOT. 77: *You haven't started writing with him yet then, I take it?*

KEVIN: We haven't started writing songs with him yet, but we have some new material and we're getting ready to record a new album, so he'll be working on that with

us. We're taking this summer off from touring to enable us to do that.

RIOT. 77: *Are you sticking with the same record labels again?*

KEVIN: We might not do it on Gearhead and maybe just stick with the guys in Europe and try work something out that way, where Blitzcore would handle the whole thing. Gearhead is having a lot of problems with getting the records out here in the states. They try very hard and are a cool label, but they're limited with what they can do and things are tough for them. We can't get the support we need from them unfortunately. Basically they just don't have enough money.

RIOT. 77: *How do you support yourselves on the road? Is it mainly through merchandising?*

KEVIN: Luckily we do alright on the road. If we could stay on the road all year we'd be alright, but that will kill you. Last year we did about five months on the road, but this year will be a lot less with the new album.

RIOT. 77: *You produced the last one yourself ... was that your first time to attempt something like that?*

KEVIN: Yep, it was great. I learned a lot from working with the other guys on previous records, like Roger Mirret and Blag Dahlia. Then doing the album on my own the last time really taught me a lot too, so I'm really excited about this upcoming one, which I'm going to produce again. Now I'm warmed up! (laughs)

RIOT. 77: *Do you record in New York, yeah?*

KEVIN: Yeah, we did "Avenue X" about five blocks from here. We're gonna do this one in a few different studios actually; we've some friends who're gonna help out. It's good to have friends (laughs) ... we're back to that whole Mafia thing again (laughs).

RIOT. 77: *What was it like with Blag Dahlia in the studio? (laughs)*

KEVIN: It was an experience (laughs). We went out to L.A. to do that, which I didn't like so much. I couldn't wait to get home. The whole time Blag Dahlia is smoking pot and telling these long stories about Rock n' Roll. I mean, I love Blag, he's great, he's a genius, but c'mon (laughs) ... he didn't want to do things the way I wanted to do them ... but, no it was cool (laughs). Being on tour with them was really fun too.

RIOT. 77: *Was that a completely different crowd you were playing to or was there any crossover there?*

KEVIN: A slightly different crowd, but there was a lot of crossover there. A lot of times when we were opening up people came to the show in Turbo AC's t-shirts and didn't even know we were on the bill.

RIOT. 77: *There's a huge divide in America between licensed venues and All-Ages gigs ... do you generally attract the bar crowd?*

KEVIN: We have a little of both. It's a big country so when you're out on the road you can end up playing anywhere, depending on the city, but we try to do as many All-Ages shows as possible. It really varies from city to city ... some places don't have much of a scene, but we try and get everywhere if we can, whether it be All-Ages or a bar.

RIOT. 77: *You've worked with both Billy Milano and Roger Mirret, both of whom are known for their right-wing politics ... any affinity there?*

KEVIN: Billy Milano was our manager for a time actually. He's got a lot of politics and things like that, but really he's more of an entertainer, he's like one of those professional wrestlers. I don't necessarily agree with his politics, but I like him and I think he just likes to piss people off more than anything and will do whatever it takes. When we done the record with Roger Mirret he played it for Billy Milano because he was managing

Agnostic Front and U.S. Bombs at the time. He loved the album and organised the deal with Nitro. Things weren't working out with them, so he flew out to Huntington Beach to have a meeting with Dexter Holland and was telling him to take us out on the road with The Offspring and ended up getting in a huge fight with them (laughs) ... and now we're no longer on Nitro (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Oh that's what happened there then?

KEVIN: Yeah. It didn't work out. A lot of people, especially in Europe, were complaining they couldn't get the record and promoters couldn't get posters or CD's. Nitro wanted to handle everything themselves but told us they weren't too concerned about Europe and we should concentrate on the United States. We said ok, then maybe we could organise something like Epitaph do with a big Punkorama tour and put all the Nitro bands on it. That's what Billy went to talk to them about, but they thought it was too much hassle.

RIOT. 77: Nitro would seem like a good label to be on ... I'd imagine there was a lot funding behind it?

KEVIN: Yeah, it was cool and I really liked those guys, but they had their problems. At first I thought it was going to work out great, but we always felt that we were kind of like a redheaded stepchild. They were all west coast and had their whole mafia out there and we kind of got forgotten about. Maybe we should've moved to California (laughs). Actually Roger Mirret really wanted that record to be on Hellcat, but the guys from Hellcat didn't want to do it, but thought Nitro would be interested and Billy took it over from there.

RIOT. 77: Who were you with before that? It was Cacophony was it?

KEVIN: Yeah.

RIOT. 77: And what went wrong there?

KEVIN: They just folded as a label. They put out a bunch of records and stopped ... they were a small label and as far as I know don't exist anymore. Blackout, who we did the first album with, was the same. They're small labels and we do as much as we can with them.

RIOT. 77: That's known as more of a Hardcore label isn't it?

KEVIN: Yeah, it is. Bill Wilson, the guy who runs Blackout, really likes Punk Rock and other types of music as well. When he first started he had another band on the label called The Goops and I was hanging out with the girl who used to sing in The Goops. I guess we were all just drinking somewhere and I had just recorded some Turbo AC's songs and played it and the guy from Blackout thought it sounded great and asked us if we wanted to be on "Punk Rock Jukebox". So we said yeah and recorded an Anti-Nowhere League song.

RIOT. 77: Which song?

KEVIN: We recorded "Woman" for "Punk Rock Jukebox", then did a couple of 7 inch's, but that turned into a mess too because he had a distribution deal here with Caroline, but thought he was getting ripped off so he decided to make the records in Europe and bring them over to the United States and distribute them that way. It worked alright for a band like H20 at first, because they already had a lot of fans through Sick Of It All and the whole Hardcore scene, but we were like this Garagy Punk Rock band and it didn't take off at all. Again people couldn't get the records in the stores and when they

did they were imports so they were more expensive. But at the same time it was in Europe as a regular release and people really liked it, so they were calling us up to tour there before we even had anything going on in the States. They told us it was getting really good reviews and did we want to come over for a tour. "Yeah, why not??"

RIOT. 77: When was that? When did you first go to Europe?

KEVIN: In 1997 and we'd only formed in 1996, so it was pretty quick. Me the bass player and another guy who sang were doing things prior to '96 and we called it Turbo AC's, but we always say the band really started in '96.

RIOT. 77: You got ripped off while on a tour of Europe didn't you?

KEVIN: Oh yeah, that was in Italy.

RIOT. 77: ... and what happened there?

KEVIN: The booking agent showed up and we were supposed to have five shows in Italy and I think we only had two. The first one went fine, but the cops turned up at the second one, which was in a squat, and shut it down. The guy who organised the tour just left and never showed up again and he had all the details for the next three shows. We basically had to stay there until we could figure out how we were going to get to the next part of the tour.

RIOT. 77: All Turbo AC's record sleeves seem to have a theme of pretty women running through them. What's that all about?

KEVIN: It's supposed to be kind of like a picture of the music inside. The energy of muscle cars or whatever else and then the beauty of a hot woman. Beauty meets the ugliness and energy of Rock n' Roll. The European cover for "Automatic" has a really beautiful girl, with a big ugly Turbo AC's tattoo. It's supposed to be a contrast. A lot of people don't get it and just think its corny, but I don't have any problems with it (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Did "Automatic" have a different cover in the States?

KEVIN: It did have a different cover in the States. Gearhead like to do their own artwork, so I said ok, I trust them, they do cool stuff. They want their releases to be unique. Their cover was of some chick driving a car, I think (laughs). It was acceptable (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Is the whole image of the band important to you?

KEVIN: Yeah, kind of. We're not lazy, we want things to be as good as they can, without being poseurs at the same time. I want things to be a certain way to project what we're about.

RIOT. 77: Do you think people pay attention to bands more in America if they look a certain way?

KEVIN: I don't know; no one pays attention to us! (laughs). Maybe not!

RIOT. 77: You said before, "If Surf Music means the Beach Boys then we're not Surf!". I thought everyone liked the Beach Boys?

KEVIN: I'm not saying there's anything wrong with the Beach Boys, but it isn't what we're doing. I don't want people getting the wrong idea, because sometimes when you say Surf Music people automatically assume you mean the Beach Boys, but when we say Surf Music we mean more Surf Guitar, like Dick Dale or Link Wray which is a little more crazy and Psychobilly-ish, but done before there was such thing as "Psychobilly". We're not doing three-part harmonies with barber shirts or anything like that (laughs).

RIOT. 77: You don't like being mistaken for a Rockabilly band either, do you?

KEVIN: No. We have a bit of a Rockabilly look, so I can see where that comes from, but I know what Rockabilly is and I like it, but it would be wrong to say to people that we're a Rockabilly band. We're Punk Rock with a lot of 60's Garage kinda stuff added in. But people who like Rockabilly also like us. I like to be clear but at the same time I don't like putting a label on it, so it's a bit awkward that way. If someone comes to see us play and says, "Hey, you guys are a great Rockabilly band", then fine.

RIOT. 77: Do you get more than just a Punk crowd turning out for your gigs?

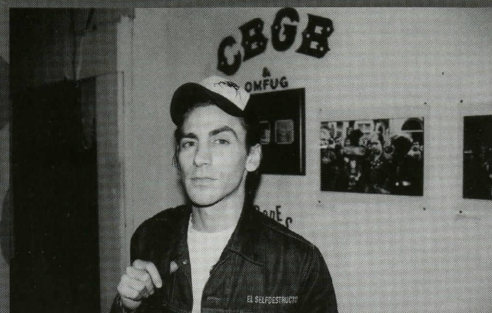
KEVIN: Yeah, we get allsorts. Psychobillies, Rockabilles, whatever and that's what we always wanted. We wanted to be a band like The Cramps or Rocket From The Crypt where you don't only see Punk Rockers at their gigs; it goes right across the board and is just anybody who's into music.

RIOT. 77: You were originally a Skinhead

KEVIN: Yeah.

RIOT. 77: Didn't you play with the Anti-Heros?

KEVIN: I did. That was when I was fifteen. When I was a kid I ran away from home and lived on the street and eventually ended up in Atlanta. I was living in squats and things like that and heard the Anti-Heros needed a drummer, so I was the second drummer in that band. Before me there was a black kid with a green



Mohawk playing drums. Back then it was an all Skinhead band and we were doing all the songs off of "That's Right". I was in the band for about six or seven months. I was on the run so to speak and there was a big riot in Atlanta at the time where the cops put the heat on the Skinhead scene, so I had to get out of town and didn't go back for a few years, by which time they had a new drummer, so I ended up drumming for another band. I've been doing music for a long time. (Kevin shows me a "Skins" tattoo on his inner lip).

RIOT. 77: Did you do that yourself?

KEVIN: I did that myself with a little help from a friend of mine (laughs).

RIOT. 77: How did you make the transformation from that into what you do now?

KEVIN: Well, shortly after that, especially here in the States, everything got really crazy around the Skinhead scene and things got way too political. Every news programme was about Nazi Skinheads this and Nazi Skinheads that, which was never what we were about. We were about the music and the unity and still to this day I don't follow politics at all. Being a Skinhead to me was about being proud and not being a loser and that was the message I was interested in, not all the other shit. I didn't see the point in fighting this, so I got into other things. I never turned my back on it though and I still love that music, it's a big part of my life. It's still in my heart.

RIOT. 77: You still listen to old Reggae music?

KEVIN: Oh yeah, definitely.

RIOT. 77: How did you get into surfing, in the name of Jaysus? You're from Chicago right?

KEVIN: (Laughs) Yeah, when I moved out here I met these guys who surfed in Long Island and asked them to take me along. I loved it and got into it and since then I've been surfing all over the world, from Australia to California to Portugal. In New York City I go out to Rockaway Beach to surf. That's my beach.

RIOT. 77: You picked up a serious injury from that, I read somewhere.

KEVIN: Yeah, that was in Puerto Rico actually. The water there sucks out really drastically and I wasn't prepared for it. A wave came up and I was going to take it, but ended up getting my head messed up. It was pretty bad for a long time. That was in '98 I think.

RIOT. 77: You tour an exceptionally wide circuit round the world for a band of your size. Where have been some of the standout places you've visited?

KEVIN: Australia was really interesting. We do the best in Europe and Germany in particular. It's amazing to see the support we get over there. But to be honest, even though we've done these huge shows in Germany, I like it best right here at CBGB's.

RIOT. 77: You were never content with being a local act though, were you?

KEVIN: No, not at all. We don't play very much in the city to tell you the truth. There's not much of a scene in New York City anymore. We'll do better in Boston or somewhere like that. Manhattan is almost like a tourist place now; nobody lives here anymore; it's like going to Hawaii or some shit (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Is CBGB's the only place left where you can play in New York City?

KEVIN: It's the only place I'm interested in playing. There are other places if you look for them, probably more in Long Island or New Jersey.

RIOT. 77: Ok, this is a five band line up tonight ... tell me about the other bands you're playing with.

KEVIN: The Sleazies I really like. They're a bit like The Briefs, totally '77 style, you'll like 'em, they're really good. They're from Providence, Rhode Island and so too are the Midnight Creeps who are headlining tonight. They're more like a Plasmatics type of Punk, which I'm sure you'll see.

RIOT. 77: Didn't they back up TV Smith when he came through here?

KEVIN: Yeah, they played with him and they were also his backing band. They've a female singer and are kind of theatrical. Then the other two bands I don't know much about; I hear there's a transvestite involved, so we'll have to see what's up with that. It could be funny (laughs).



ADAM WEST "LONGEST SONGS FOR BROKE PLAYERS, 2001-2004". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)
 People Like You probably wouldn't be impressed if I mentioned this sounds like The Darkness, but some things have got to be said regardless. Adam West would like to believe their band is hipper than hip and deserves a place alongside Black Sabbath, AC/DC and Kiss, but in reality it's more like Thunder, Stryper, Judas Priest and stolen Motley Crue riffs..... Ouch! **(PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)**

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY "THIS MICROSCOPIC WAR". (NEWEST INDUSTRY)

A Death In The Family is the latest signing to the Newest Industry label and I believe their first release of 2006. Hailing from Melbourne Australia and formed in 2004, their demo release of that year was their first steps in building a profile for themselves. It was followed up with a slew of live dates supporting local and international acts, before eventually bagging full national tours with Against Me! and Leatherface. Frankie Stubbs was flown back out to Australia to produce this debut record of theirs, which came out on Australian label Poison City in January of this year. Its initial pressing sold out and so Newest Industry enter the picture to tackle its reissue for the remainder of the world. I'll confess to having no previous knowledge of the band, but the Frankie Stubbs connection is bound to raise a few eyebrows. Musically it's that old Hukster Du, Hot Water Music and Leatherface category it's thrown into, but as I've stated many times over, those three bands are one-offs, much like Gang Of Four and Wire, so there's a little point in comparing yourself to them, as nine times out of ten, as I've come to learn, it constitutes for bad Emu guff. There's certainly that side to A Death In The Family, as their name would suggest, but it's quite a bit edgier to other likeminded outfits. The drone of the vocals and overall lazy feel to this record further shoves it in that direction, but there's also energy of a different kind trying to push its way through. Frankie's production emphasises the muscular guitars and pounding drums, which brings out the best in the band. Undoubtedly not the most memorable record you'll hear this year, but perhaps a band worth keeping the sly eye on. **(THE NEWEST INDUSTRY: UNIT 100, 61 WELLFIELD ROAD, CARDIFF, CF24 3DG, WALES.)**

ANDY BLADE "TREASURE HERE". (CHERRY RED)

"When the planet seems distinctly queer, remember... there's treasure here", or so goes the new solo album from ex Eater frontman Andy Blade. I've recently completed Andy's "The Secret Life Of A Teenage Punk Rocker" book (published by the same label) and was eager to hear what he's up to musically these days. This is his first album in ten years which he commenced writing pretty much immediately upon the completion of his last record, so you've got eight years of living gone into this! Andy has long since turned his back on his Punk Rock roots, but then again Punk was never a sound, it was an attitude right? On those grounds this could be just as Punk as Eater's first record, but being released minus a lyric sheet, I guess we'll never know. Musically this draws from Folk, Country and 80's singer/songwriter type stuff, so as you can imagine sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. There's a severe lull midway through the album that just about redeems itself by closer "The Astronauts" (which interestingly Robbie Williams asked for permission to use and was told to fuck off). Andy is now aged forty-three and clearly the years have taken their toll. "Treasure Here" will be perceived as way too chilled out for those fans of Eater who'll pick this up in the hope of reliving some of that old magic. Andy's Punk years are well and truly behind him and still using the Punk medium as a means to distribute his work is perhaps a mistake. He needs to get back to the drawing board and have a rethink about this if he's genuinely serious about pursuing a solo career at this stage of his life. **(CHERRY RED RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)**

AGAINST ME! "SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

It's been an interesting couple of years for Against Me! Nurtured in the relatively obscure underground of their Gainesville home, they quickly went on to crack the mainstream, taking in the likes of Conan O'Brien and Warner Brothers along the way. Stranger things have happened I suppose, but where does all this leave us in 2006? Well, they're now on their second record for Fat Mike's establishment and have completed their crossover phase. This album naturally picks up where "As The Eternal Cowboy" left off, twinning the caustic edge of "Reinventing Axl Rose" with the bigger production budget they now find themselves on the receiving end of. Against Me! now sound like the kind of band that could take radical idealism to new levels of mainstream recognition. There are tons of bands in the Punk underground that sing about the things Against Me! does, but few take it with them once they leave those confines. Against Me! however have not filtered or diluted their message and still firmly stand for something. Their sound has sweetened to the extent of attracting some FM interest, but the lyrics remain as poignant as ever. The Punks are always going to favour the No Idea years, but perhaps its time Against Me! were cut some slack as they're let out to the masses and no longer retained as Punk's best kept secret. **(FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDE-MARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)**

THE ANALOGS "TALENT ZERO". (JIMMY JAZZ)

It seems no issue of Riot 77 would be complete without an Analogs review. This time it's a round up of all their favourite cover tunes they've binged out. Naturally we're looking at the Oil and Skinhead spectrum of things here, with versions of Sparrow tunes, the Rejects, The Clash, Blitz, Buzzcocks, Undertones, Ramones, The Business and the Last Resort. There's also room for some vintage Skinhead styles with a version of Symarip's "Skinhead Girl". All tracks are well handled and sung in Polish to give 'em that extra twist, but the songs that shine above the rest are "Oil Oil Oil!", "Banned From The Pubs", "Voice Of A Generation", "Ever Fallen In Love", "Sunday Stripper", "Beat On The Brat" and "Drinkin' And Driving". It sounds like the band had a good time making this CD and I certainly enjoyed myself listening to some old Punk nuggets being given the once over in the Polish language. **(JIMMY JAZZ RECORDS: P.O. BOX 184, 71-507 SZCZECIN 5, POLAND.)**

ANNALISE "HERE'S TO HOPE". (NO IDEA)

Brit band Annalise have a patchy portfolio to say the least. Operating under no strict guidelines and choosing to play live or enter a studio whenever the mood grabs them, rather than maintaining anything resembling a schedule. I believe I last encountered the band on some split 7 inch or other and was suitably impressed. The packaging and image of the band hints at Emo trappings, but in reality Annalise doesn't really touch the dreaded E word at all, opting instead to keep their influences to the more integrity-driven sound of early Mod and proto Punk. The Jam meets China Drome has been used as a reference here, which is quite fitting. They don't mimic what came before, but instead use it as a launching pad. The production brings out the band's strengths - muscular guitar sound, pumping rhythm and expressive vocals. Good job. **(NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)**

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE "KINGS & QUEENS". (CAPTAIN OII)

Considering, by and large, the Anti-Nowhere League were a one-album band, this is not a bad effort. Their comeback album of sorts, "Kings & Queens" attempts to deliver all the bad taste of a League record, which their fans have been crying out for since they again rejoined the touring circuit for the Holidays In The Sun gigs some years back. Their hearts are far from in the right place, but they've still got an idea or two up their sleeves. Shocking for the sake of shocking, as was often their form, continues here with the likes of "Mothers Cant", which they've decided to censor, completely contradicting everything they're supposed to stand for, but more proof if any were needed, that clearly the only people the League are offending is themselves! Where their strength lies is their knack for crafting those singalong street anthems we remember them for. They were never the sharpest bunch, but used what they had to the fullest of its capability and had a good time while they were at it. The title track sees the band at their best on this CD, with some good fist-in-the-air moments to be found. Needless to say, this is more of the same from the Anti-Nowhere League and will no doubt give the fans what they want. **(CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)**

ANTISEEN/HANK III "SPLIT 7-INCH". (TKO)

A white trash double header, as the story goes! Hank III from Nashville, shares this 7-

inch picture disc with Carolina's Anti Seen. Limited to two thousand copies, it kicks off with Hank's "Rubby, Get Back To The Hills", which is a cover of an old Anti Seen song and lifted off a forthcoming tribute album to the band, entitled "Everyone Loves Anti Seen". There's an Anti Seen original on the flip, which is pretty good, called "Fuck The Kids" or "F T K" for short. For Punks and screwed up Country folk alike. **(TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)**

ARMALITE "ARMALITE". (NO IDEA)

A bunch of Philadelphia stalwarts with a side-project that's been running for three years and has played roughly as many gigs! You'll be familiar with some, if not all, of the line-up, already. First we have Atom Goren, better known as Atom And His Package on guitar and vocals, secondly there's Mike McKee from Kill The Man Who Questions also singing and playing guitar, thirdly there's Dan Yernin from Paint It Black and Kid Dynamite on bass duties and lastly Jeff Ziga who plays with True If Destroyed on drums. Interestingly Armalite fit the No Idea roster well, as they fuse elements of Hardcore music with a more angular influence. I'd have expected a more mish-mash result from this lot, but Armalite have a tight musical focus and direction that may come as a surprise to some listeners. **(NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)**

ATARASSIAGROP "NONSIPOUFERMAREILVENTO". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)

What sort of a name is that to be calling your band's album? I dunno, the kids of today! Oh, right they're Italian, that explains it. Atarassagirop have been around since 1993 and appear to have a past in Street Punk, but what they're now peddling has a far wider appeal to it and incorporates everything from Rocksteady and Ska, to Punk and Rock n' Roll, but seldom all within the one song. They've got the fists-in-the-air anthemic Punk stompers, followed by a laid back Ska number and then onto some straight up guitar Rock music. All of this is of course steeped in Italian traditions and you can't help pointing out the Los Fasdios comparisons. There's some almost Folk-tinged moments here too, that bring to mind the Angelic Upstarts more contemplative side which Menis has been known to showcase from time to time. There're lyrical translations here too, which certainly helps matters. A difficult one categorically speaking and for some boot boys I can imagine they've drifted a little too far, but I still got a kick out of this and heard plenty I haven't come across elsewhere. **(KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)**

AUTISTIC YOUTH "BANNED FROM THE ROSELAND". (BLIND SPOT)

Blind Spot Records from Portland, Oregon has sent through three incredible 7 inch's by three bands I've never heard of before. This label has a great attitude and maintains Punk's sense of irony and humour without losing its razor sharp edge and Autistic Youth are the first example of this. "Banned From The Roseland" is a storming 7 inches of vinyl, the way it should be, getting in there doing the damage and leaving the building before anyone knows what's hit them. Three tracks of alcohol and adrenaline fuelled Punk, straight from the gut. You definitely need to acquaint yourself with this label. **(BLIND SPOT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 40064, PORTLAND, OREGON, 97240, U.S.A.)**

THE BABOONZ "TOO MUCH IS NOT ENOUGH". (BLACK BUTCHER)

Some easy-on-the-ears Ska from Bavaria's Baboonz. This is very much 80's influenced Ska and bares far more hallmarks of a band like Bad Manners than it would the late 50's Jamaican breed. Granted there's a thread there that links the two, but you can always tell whether or not a band has bothered to trace the roots of the music they're playing and The Baboonz clearly haven't. Not that this makes them a strikout, in fact I quite enjoyed this album and they're more than capable of writing their way out of a lack of musical heritage. They describe themselves as "politically correct" in the press release like it's a good thing! Not sure what that's all about! Based on past releases, this fits in well with the Mad Butcher catalogue and has that definite Euro feel to it. There's hardly a blip to be found throughout this album and every note is played to perfection, giving it an almost overly clean sound, but still there's something about it that's gotten on my good side. Not so much recommended for fans of the old gear, but likely to be used as a pathway to the rootier stuff. **(BLACK BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)**

BELIGERENTS "SUCK ON THIS 7 INCH". (BLIND SPOT)

Beer soaked Hardcore from Portland, Oregon, splattered across two sides of a 7 inch single and totalling ten songs (none of which break the one minute mark). There's a real old style D.I.Y. spirit about this 7 inch, right down to the hand numbered packaging, which I love. Folds out into a neat sheet, revealing full lyrics to all the songs. Early MDC sounding stuff that gets a firm thumbs up, by a band that doesn't take itself too seriously. **(BLIND SPOT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 40064, PORTLAND, OREGON, 97240, U.S.A.)**

BITCHES N' BASTARDS "BITCHSLAPS!!". (PUNK SHIT)

Early Youth Brigade influenced Punk Rock from Bergen, Norway. The opening song in particular could easily be put over as an early Shawn Stern outtake! The band appears to be a 50/50 mixture of Punks and Skinheads and sing about the usual streetwise shenanigans from what I can tell, though a bunch of the lyrics are written in Norwegian. They make a point of being non-political and stick to a more universal outlook that will bring people together by what they share in common as opposed to their differences that will serve only to segregate. How they attracted the attention of Birmingham's Punk Shit label is anyone's guess, but an interesting outing for each party no doubt. Not much to get overexcited about here to be honest, but at the same time not much to complain about either. I could take it or leave it. **(PUNK SHIT RECORDS: 74 BRISTNALL-HALL ROAD, OLDBURY, WEST MIDLANDS, B68 9TU, U.K.)**

BLACKFIRE "BEYOND WARPED: LIVE MUSIC SERIES". (IMMERGENT)

Blackfire seem to have a checkable history in tow, dating back to 1969, that covers countless American tours and ten European ones. They even boasted a guest appearance by Joey Ramone on their last studio album, but I'm having difficulty recognising the band. To my knowledge this is a first for me. They're a Native American band and deeply involved with educating the masses on their culture. The idea is interesting but the reality doesn't hold much weight with me. The music is just dull. Whilst lyrically they may have something to say, we'll never know as they've neglected to include a lyric sheet and the vocalist has a Slipknot style of singing. This "Beyond Warped" series combines a live audio CD on one side with a live DVD on the other. Smart idea and making good use of the technology that's available to us through the digital medium. If you can use both sides of a CD, why don't more bands adopt this approach? **(IMMERGENT RECORDS: 2231 S. CARMEINA AVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90064, U.S.A.)**

BLACK MARKET BABY "COULDA ... SHOULD ... WOULD - THE BLACK MARKET BABY COLLECTION". (DR. STRANGE)

Much like the Captain, I'll always trust the Doc when it comes to reissuing the old Punk greats, as he was there at the time and knows the quality from the crud. Should you have been unfortunate enough to have overlooked this Washington DC band first time round, now is your chance to put things right with this twenty-six-track collection of out-of-print material from the band. Black Market Baby really kicked the door open for bands like Minor Threat, S.O.A. and Government Issue to walk through. They were formed off the heels of the 77 bands and occupied a similar ground to The Heartbreakers and Dead Boys. This was the sound of DC before it went all Coca Cola and Ice Cream. Black Market Baby had a bit of an edge to them that later bands didn't and kept it all true to the spirit of Punk than what a lot of the so-called "Hardcore" groups from the region did later on. The band went through five different line ups in their time and all are represented here, including some live work from their 1995 gig at the 9.30 Club. Producers on this CD include the likes of Ian McKay, Skip Gifford and Don Zientarra. John Stabb provides the liner notes and there's a bank of unseen photos included too, but the real importance of this CD lies in the awesome music provided by Black Market Baby. When you see what the whole DC scene has turned into today, it kind of makes you sad that bands like

this got stamped out by the fighting jocks in sport's tops who spent most of their time beating up bands like Black Market Baby. I guess nothing lasts forever, but enjoy this trip down memory lane and thank the good Doc for keeping another vital piece of Punk's history in circulation. **(DR STRANGE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1058, ALTA LOMA, CALIFORNIA, 917 101, U.S.A.)**

BLASTMAT "THEME FOR A DYING WORLD". (SELF-RELEASED)

Blastmat are a new band from Connecticut in the United States and this is an eleven-song demo CD from the band. Plenty to get excited about here as they work their way through a varied selection of foot stomping anthems. There's some fine Metal influenced guitar playing on this, that I normally wouldn't be a fan of, but this guy uses the Metal influence stylistically rather than technically and it brings out a wonderful flavour to the overall sound of Blastmat. They're a far cry from one of those Metal-core outfits and they create a groove more reminiscent of the Circle Jerks jamming with Zeke. Second track "Desensitized" works best for me. **(BLASTMAT: P.O. BOX 380152, EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, 06138-0152, U.S.A.)**

BLOODHAG "HELL BENT FOR LETTERS". (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)

I've previously been informed of this band's existence through their coverage in Razorcake fanzine, and in particular Todd Taylor's seemingly endless obsession with Bloodhag! Their band is based around its members love for books and I think I'm correct in saying that the line up includes some science fiction authors of note. All their songs are the name of an author, for instance "Gene Wolfe", "Douglas Adams" and "Edgar Allan Poe". Their music is stripped down Death Metal - i.e. two-minute songs and no guitar solos. Slayer speaks for a lot of their influence, but the vocals are closer to Gwar. They've done loads of actual libraries across America and take their book reading so seriously they've termed their music Edu-Core. Also their motto is "the sooner you go deaf, the more time you have to read!" ... so there you go. Sounds like fun! It is! **(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)**

THE BOILS "FROM THE BLEACHERS". (TKO)

The Boils are old favourites of mine. I haven't heard a record from them since 1999 and wasn't even sure if they still existed until resurfacing here on TKO, which should be a label that can assist The Boils well with their endeavours. I'm not sure what's been going on with their release-wise in the past six years, but this twenty-five track CD appears to be all new material recorded in one shot. Their songs are short and snappy but with great punch. For the uninitiated they combine the styles of Sick Of It All with Stiff Little Fingers and utilize it with much effect. Like S.L.F. they also have a Reggae leaning at times, which compliments the aforementioned one-two kick of their Punk Rock nuggets. You can tell Greg is really shredding those chords in that throat getting the vocals out. The Boils are firmly rooted in the origins of Punk Rock, but have sped it up that much you can't help notice that someone here's a big Hardcore fan. There's more than enough strong material within to keep you entertained long into the night. If you have any interest in finding out what the real Punk Rockers of America are up to, The Boils are a pretty good place to start. Oh, did I mention there's a Dropkick Murphys' pisstake on this??? **(TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)**

BOMBSHELL ROCKS "THE CONCLUSION". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)

Bombshell Rocks net a deal with London's Household Name Records and release what has got to be their fourth of fifth album at this stage. I haven't always tracked this band's activities too closely, but can enjoy them when they crop up from time to time. Yes, they're another Voice Of A Generation type deal really, but have progressed somewhat from their Rancid-clone origins. The soundalikes are still there though and there's no getting away from it on tracks like "Bloodbrothers", but they've developed in other areas in terms of drawing inspiration from further a field, perhaps demonstrated best on opener "Move Rhythm City". I enjoy the gang vocal technique they use, particularly when they double-up on the meaty choruses. While I don't always get a lot of the shtick surrounding this band, I'll readily admit they're good at what they're doing and sound like they're having a blast in the process. Definitely some infectious stuff going on here that will appeal to even the biggest cynic of Swedish Rancid-Punk. **(HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)**

BOOZED "TIGHT PANTS". (BITZCORE)

Boozed came to the fore a few years back with their "Seizin' The Day" full length, when they were quickly snapped up to support touring bands the likes of The Hellacopters, Flaming Sideburns, Nashville Pussy, Rose Tattoo and Zeke. If that doesn't give you an idea of what Boozed sounds like then nothing ever will! Being on a label like Bitzcore will always score me brownie points with me and once again the label appear to have nailed it with this new release from an upcoming band. All the influences stem back to the 60's decade, most notably early Faces and Stones (listen to the cheeky Keith Richards lick on "Laserlight"). If I were to push it, the cut off point musically on here would have to be the Flamin' Groovies with their sludgy and Punk-ish sounding overdriven guitar chops. This band will quite comfortably slot into the recent revival scene in early Rock and most probably tour the arse out of that circuit, which will only serve to tighten the band up even more. Throw in some obligatory Skynard riff-riff along with some tunes about ass and we can safely hook the Turbonegro crown in here too. Bound to be a popular one in today's market! **(BITZCORE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 30 41 07, D-20324, HAMBURG, GERMANY.)**

BORN DEAD/CONSUME "SPLIT LP". (YELLOW DOG)

Real soap-dodger's music this! Both Born Dead and Consume are as Crust as Crust can be, with Born Dead having the slight heads up in musical terms ... but only just! Some of the lyrics from both bands are quite insightful as it happens, but the barrage of noise they kick up leaves a lot to be desired. Being diplomatic I could say there's a lot of energy off these recordings and they put a Punk angle on things, but it's hardly my thing, now is it? Taking a page from both Crust Punk and Hardcore and delivering it through a series of blast beats, this album leaves little time for contemplation. The musical equivalent of a swift kick to the bollocks! **(YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550208, 10372, BERLIN, GERMANY)**

BOUNCING SOULS "LIVE". (CHUNKSAAH)

If there's one Punk Rock band out there today that's worthy of putting together a two-disc 29-track live album then the Bouncing Souls are about the only outfit I can think of who've got the material to back it up. This band has been turning crowds on their side since the mid 90's, though actually formed as far back as 1987. The first time I caught the Souls live was in a community hall in Boston in 1999 and I thought they were the best out there at the time. Quite simply they were top of their game. Strangely the Souls infection never quite spread through Europe as it did the States, but the band still continued to release anthem after anthem. Granted, later Souls LP's weren't quite as littered with these anthems as earlier outings had, but they've never lost their appeal with me. Further back down the line the Bouncing Souls put out the "The One On" live EP, so I guess this could be classed as its accompaniment. Everything is included here, tracks as far back as "Joe Lies" right up to their last stroke of genius, "Sing Along Forever". In between we get gems like "Say Anything", "East Coast Fuck You!", "The Ballad Of Johnny X", "Kate Is Gr8", "Hopeless Romantic", "True Believers", "Lamar Vannoy" and "Fight To Live". Always ones to shoot for the timeless type of songs about life, living for the moment and hopefully not having any regrets when you look back, the Bouncing Souls could easily be classed as the true embodiment of the Punk Rock spirit. **(CHUNKSAAH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 977, ASBURY PARK, NEW JERSEY, 07712, U.S.A.)**

THE BRIEFS "STEEL YER HEART". (BYO)

Happy days round here with a new Briefs album finds it way out of the review bin. In what seems like no time at all since they last stunned me with "Sex Objects", Seattle's finest are once again back in the saddle with another slice of Punk n' Roll cum New Wave.

BYO have struck gold with this lot. Placing their influence between the '78-'82 years of Punk. The Briefs have all the sassy energy of early Elvis Costello, Boomtown Rats, The Adverts and, I can't help noticing, a dollop of our own Radiators From Space! The Briefs have a clear understanding of what made 7 inch's like "Watching The Detectives", "One Chord Wonders", "My Perfect Cousin" and "Television Screen" so great and set their sights on achieving an album load full of 'em. The production on this album compliments the music perfectly - the songs are a jangly blend of Rock n' Roll, Garage and Pop, with the sound clear enough to hear everything, but not so squeaky clean that it detracts from the garage sound of it. The vocals are slightly distorted on some songs, which also works in their favour. Another great record, would love to see 'em live. (BYO RECORDS: P.O. BOX 67609, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90067, U.S.A.)

BROILERS/VOLXSTURM "GOOD FELLAS NEVER SPLIT E.P.". (DSS) Two German street bands team up for a digi-pack split EP on Austria's DSS label. Four tracks apiece and it's Volksturm who kick things off with a short round of snappy Euro Oi! I've come across this band before, through former releases on the same label, but can't say they made much of a lasting impression on me. Listening to this, its clear they know what they're doing and have worked their Oi! roots around some newer, more interesting structures. I'd almost pin this as commercial Street Punk, if that isn't a complete contradiction of terms. The Broilers on the other hand I'm already a huge fan of, as damn near everything they've put their name to has been of good quality. They're on form here again and have assembled their own unique blend of Punk Rock. Good and rough round the edges, but with a smooth centre that's heart-warmingly addictive. Parts of it remind of a German Dropkick Murphys and it's clear they've been influenced by the Boston boys, but the geography issue will always set them apart. Rounds off with a fine version of Jimmy Cliff's "You Can Get It If You Really Want". (DSS RECORDS: P.O. BOX 739, 4021 LINZ, AUSTRIA.)

BROKEN BONES "F.O.A.D.". (BEER CITY) Aside from those awful screaming Heavy Metal guitar leads, this isn't half bad for Broken Bones - a band I'm no fan of. The title track has an almost contagious chorus to it, which is not usually in Broken Bones style. They were formed by their guitarist, Bones (duh!) when he left Discharge in 1983. Taking pride in the fact that they were one of the first bands to merge Punk with Heavy Metal, (where's the pride in that???) this one-side-studio, one-side-live album originally came out on Fallout Records in 1987. The seven studio tracks are certainly of their time and offer little by way of challenging songwriting. There's the odd good idea here and there, but the rest ought to have been canned. The ten live songs that follow it up, recorded at the Fulham Greyhound in August of the same year, are of a good quality and they reproduce their studio sound quite well. Also included is the "Never Say Die" 12 inch from 1986, so a good buy if you're a fan. Personally I think this whole thing reeks of bad 80's Thrash Metal when Punk was no longer popular and bands like Broken Bones jumped on the Metal bandwagon. Never forget this kids, Broken Bones lacked the integrity to stand by Punk Rock during the dark days and for that they deserve a good kick in the bollocks. I find them about as convincing as Busted. (BEER CITY RECORDS: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 53226-0035, U.S.A.)

BROKEN BOTTLES "SUBURBAN DREAM". (TKO) It's been about the three-year mark since I last had the pleasure of reviewing anything from this Orange County band. Broken Bottles really do sound like the Posh Boy era of Southern Californian Punk. Their singer has that whine of Mike Ness when he was still in short trousers and the music is a cross between the first albums by Social Distortion, TSOL and the Adolescents. Gritty, Hardcore Punk, clearly influenced by the likes of Dead Boys and New York Dolls. Shit, the guy in the picture has even gone so far as to smear charcoal across his eyes!! This 7 inch contains two songs - the title track and the side of "Broken Bottles", both of which will more than carry their weight. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

THE BUFFETS "SAUCY JACK". (DAMAGED GOODS) An all-girl tribute to The Buff Medways here folks. The background to this album is that it was mixed and recorded over two days, whilst Sister Tiffany Lee was on a flying visit to London from Seattle. This kind of thing generally turns Ian Damaged on, and me too for that matter. The band they're paying homage to, in case you're unfamiliar, were the type of Garage Punk outfit that took all the self-indulgence out of Rock and turned it briskly inside out, revealing a new beautiful ugliness. You'll be pleased to hear The Buffets stay true to that tradition here, making their way through fourteen of the band's greatest moments! Most cuts barely make the two-minute mark, but are loaded with hooks n' attitude and hardly a guitar solo in sight that isn't played on two strings. Bands like The Buffets have the true essence of Punk down, this sort of stuff is priceless and cannot be reproduced, no matter how hard the mainstream continue to try. In short, it's good. (DAMAGED GOODS: P.O. BOX 45854, LONDON, E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

BULLETS TO BROADWAY "DRINK POSITIVE". (HOUSEHOLD NAME) It's news to me, but it looks like the Teen Idols have split and core members Kevin, Heather and Matt have gotten together with a couple of the guys from Army Of Ponch and Rehasher to form this band, Bullets To Broadway. You'll fondly recall the Teen Idols for their twin vocal attack that hovered over Bad Religion styled music, which was soon to become the basis for a small handful of classic CD's released on some Fat Wreck Chords offshoot or there. The formula for Bullets To Broadway is not a million miles away from that of the Teen Idols, but unmistakably contains the Gainesville influence from its remaining two band members. The outcome is a little more straightforward and less distinctive, but not without its sense of urgency, that is to be found on each of the eight tracks on offer here. Includes a reworking of the recent Go Go's hit, "The Whole World Lost Its Head" with amended lyrics. One to watch! (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

BUZZCOCKS "FLAT-PACK PHILOSOPHY". (COOKING VINYL) Anyone will tell you the Buzzcocks have been at the top of their game recently and I for one have been eager to hear how they'd follow up the genius of their last album - the self-titled minimalist piece of work surfaced on the Cherry Red label a couple of years ago. Strangely they've gone for a different approach and another label this time out, when all seemed just about perfect before. "Flat-Pack Philosophy" has a more driving guitar sound and relies less on the classic Pop hooks we tend to associate with the Buzzcocks. The two lead off tracks, "Flat-Pack Philosophy" and first single "Wish I Never Loved You" don't appear to contain that addictive spice the band drops into all their songs, but on repeated listening you learn there's definitely something there and can't help but get reeled in by it. This type of form follows throughout the album and works as a learning curve for what lies ahead. There're some interesting arrangements and structures on this and the Buzzcocks could certainly never be accused of being predictable or safe. This is a bold record for them to make, but I think it will work for most of their hardcore fans. It is, after all, a Punk Rock album and the Buzzcocks at their best will always be a Punk Rock band. Fine guitar noise from Shelley and Diggle, the great dual vocal delivery and a rough-cut production job handled by latest bass playing recruit Tony Barber. They've a few good years left in 'em yet! (www.cookingvinyl.co.uk)

CAN'T DECIDE "CAN'T DECIDE". (BOSS TUNEAGE) Approaching the tail end of their existence, 80's Crust bands Heresy and Ripcord pooled their respective resources and put this band together. Surprisingly it marked a departure from the full throttle noise mongering their former bands tended to favour. In its place was something akin to early SNFU as the press sheet rightfully points out. I knew they reminded me of someone!!! This CD of twenty-seven tracks packs everything they ever released onto a single disc (which for the record is two albums and a split 7-inch), plus eleven previously unheard demo takes. The early 90's pre Nirvana days were a strange time for Punk Rock and the few bands who were still out there playing it didn't really know what to do with themselves half the time, so there's an air of mysticism about recordings from that era.

They're not quite Punk, not quite Metal, not quite Indie Rock, but something of a mish-mash of all three, which doesn't always strike a chord with me. They had some good tunes right enough, but never really delivered on any of them unfortunately. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

CHAOS U.K. "ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU SICK/THE CHIPPING SODBURY BONFIRE TAPES". (ANAGRAM) A two-for-the-price-of-one deal here from Anagram. This looks to have been released back in 1993, but I guess they've dug it out of the vaults again. Chaos U.K. originally released both these albums in sequence quite late in their career, around the late 80's/early 90's, when the band actually formed in 1979. Though unquestionably part of the Discharge brigade Chaos U.K. oddly wrote more melodic and hokey songs than probably even they themselves would like to admit. There was definitely a Clash influence in there somewhere along the way. As well as rallying against all forms of authority Chaos U.K. also took time out to humour themselves and others with song title like "Cider I Up Landlord" and "Drink Thru". "Enough To Make You Sick" is the best sounding of the two albums and although released after "The Chipping Sodbury Bonfire Tapes" has wisely been placed in first order for this CD. Over an hour's worth of Chaos U.K. on one CD is a bit like overkill, but on the value-for-money stakes you're probably not going to find a better buy if you wish to stock up on this band's past catalogue. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

CHARGE "PERFECTION-PLUS: THE BEST OF CHARGE". (ANAGRAM) Charge are an often-overlooked London Punk outfit who had a six-year reign between 1977 and 1983 and this release marks their first appearance on the compact disc format. Though quick to get lumped in with the U.K. 82 brigade of bands like The Exploited, Charge rightfully distanced themselves from such cartoon Punk and wished to remain part of the original 77 movement. Singer Stu P Didiot went as far as appearing on the cover of Sounds dressed in drag, in the hope of alienating what he perceived to be the macho following they were beginning to attract. Charge's music has an early Killing Joke feel to it and is experimental beyond anything else from the market at the time. This collection features all the recordings the band made for the Kamera label, including the full "Perfection" album and eleven bonus cuts consisting of singles, EP's and B-Sides. Contemporary Punk at its finest! (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

CHELSEA "FASTER, CHEAPER AND BETTER LOOKING". (CAPTAIN OII) Pleased to report there's still plenty of fire left in this band. Gene October, James Stevenson and Chris Bashford here with recent Buzzcocks-recruited bassist Tony Barber, who takes the place of Dave Martin and fits in well ... though in truth he's been filling in for Chelsea since Dave first developed MS Disease midway through the Social Chaos Tour of America in 1999. Chelsea were renowned for their chunky, guitar driven Punk of the late 70's that fused plenty of vocal melodies with their gritty music and played a big part in influencing the Street Rock of today, in particular bands like The Reducers SF. The spirit of Chelsea's early work is evident on this release, particularly with album opener, "Living In The Urban U.K.", which demonstrates Stevenson's slicing guitar technique perhaps better than anywhere else on this CD. At times this brings to mind what Charlie and The Subs are up to these days as it contains an undeniable energy that I haven't felt off a reformed old 77 band in some time. With the exception of Barber on bass, this is the same line up that recorded the very first Chelsea LP and is the first time they've all recorded together since 1979. Far from a write-off. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

CHRON GEN "CHRONIC GENERATION". (CAPTAIN OII) What I always loved about this band was how they became almost like a thread linking the caustic '82 sound of Britain with the harmonious edge of the '77 brigade. Not many bands offered the best of both worlds as Chron Gen did. They basically sound like G.B.H. with the songs of the Buzzcocks. The band members were playing instruments long before Punk Rock hit, but were avid fans of the initial outburst, which kind of explains where their sound comes from. The Exploited were quick to tune in on the band's activities and took them on the "Apocalypse Tour" of '81 around Britain. This, their debut album, was originally released on Secret Records back in March of '82 and secured a number two position in the Indie chart of the day. I still have the original 7 inch of "Jet Boy, Jet Girl" which was their first release for Secret and it sounds just as good here on CD all these years later. There's an additional twelve songs thrown in as a bonus, made up of singles and EP's, including the excellent "Disco Tech". Liner notes are compliments of Mark Brennan and there're also full lyrics and artwork contained on this excellent release. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

CIRIL "PINK CAVE". (VINYL DOG) From Long Beach, Ciril are a varied concoction of venomous 77 Punk and the later breed of Killing Joke, Cabaret Voltaire et al. There're industrial leanings of Throbbing Gristle and less obviously Virco on the title track, which speaks for the a-side of this 7 inch. Flip it over and we've got ourselves a version of Souseix And The Banshees "Metal Postcard" which further explores their gothic interests. Strange one and in line with what I've come to expect from the Vinyl Dog label. (VINYL DOG RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

CONFLICT "IT'S TIME TO SEE WHO'S WHO". (MOTORHATE) Cherry Red have added the irrepressible Motorhate Records to their ever-expanding empire and begun an extensive reissuing campaign on their back catalogue. Motorhate Records is of course home to Conflict, who launched the label way back when as an out-let for their own music as well as others whom they felt an affinity towards at the time. These three reissues are all housed in digi-pack format and feature a wealth of bonus tracks between them. First up is their debut "It's Time To See Who's Who" which set the precedent for hard-line and militant Punk at the time. Actually released on the Corpus Christi label in 1983 and seen as Conflict's "Fresh Fruit For Rotten Vegetables", this took the Punk world, who weren't used to anything quite so in-your-face, by surprise. In typical Conflict style this release blinded the buyer with social and political information, which was far too much for anyone to take in. In ways bands like Conflict and Crass also

marked the turning point in Punk, when it went from encouraging people to think for themselves to telling them how to think. The animal rights and meat-is-murder issue was high on their agenda and anyone who didn't comply was written off. Good to have a piece of history back in the arena, but if this culture taught us anything it was to question everything - and yes that includes Punk Rock. (MOTORHATE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 448, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 2QS, ENGLAND.)

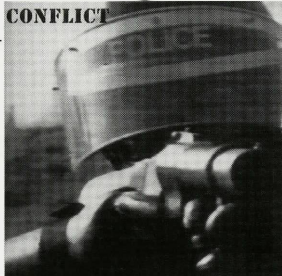
CONFLICT "INCREASE THE PRESSURE". (MOTORHATE) "The second album, full of same old songs ... Fighting back against a system which is cruel and wrong". One year on came 1984's "Increase The Pressure", by which time Conflict had severed all ties with Crass and their record label and set out on their own path, which was seen as career-suicide by many at the time, but they were to prove their detractors wrong by establishing their own Motorhate label to handle their business, furthering the band's staunchly DIY ethic. Their radical politics and dreams of anarchism continued, as did the shock-value of their non-meat-eating beliefs. Conflict are perhaps the greatest example there is of preaching to the converted, as its doubtful they were going to change the minds of the establishment with this approach. On the other hand they meant what they said and were members of practically every social activist group there was in England in the 80's. The music is once again as powerful as anything you were likely to hear in the mid 80's Crust Punk range. Additional stuff on this includes a gig from the Brixton Ace in '83,

"The Serenade is Dead" EP and "Is Not Enough" EP. I'm not too up on past Conflict reissues, but the extras on this alone have got to make it worth the purchase for fans. (MOTORHATE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 448, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 2QS, ENGLAND.)

CONFLICT "THE UNGOVERNABLE FORCE". (MOTORHATE) Arguably the best loved Conflict album here, which was recorded in 1985 and released in '86. "The Ungovernable Force" was their coming-of-age record and still today the lyrics to "This Is The A.L.F." are banned from being reprinted. Taking on familiar subjects such as police brutality, anti-Thatcherism and smashing the state, this record didn't offer any surprises, but more refined what they had been doing up to this point. In my mind it's the best thing Conflict ever did and things went downhill from here on in. The songs are at their strongest and the message most pointed. There were other musical styles breaking through also and it offered more contrast with impressive breakdowns and instrumental pieces. Conflict were beginning to realise that you didn't have to play everything at 100mph to get your message across. They hadn't mellowed with age, but had become more accomplished at what they do. Tacked on after the original album was had its say is "The Battle Continues" EP and several alternative takes on album tracks. Expect plenty more reissues in the pipeline! (MOTORHATE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 448, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 2QS, ENGLAND.)

COUGARS "PILLOW TALK". (GO-KART) Like an amalgamation of the Jesus Lizard, Melvins and Shellac, Chicago's Cougars are from the right city to draw attention to this sort of stuff. Cougars are an eight-man unit that come complete with a two-piece horn section. Eager not to be pigeonholed by critics by describing their music as simply "rock" (don't they all these days), drafting in Steve Albini to produce this will unfortunately achieve just that - Pigeonholing! Yes, this album slots all too easily into most other things Albini would produce that you're likely to find on various low-fi record labels scattered across the United States. Not necessarily a bad thing, but this certainly isn't the hardcore/emo press sheet would have us believe. There's a wide audience for this Hardcore/Emo stuff and Cougars are as good as any at it. The distinct lack of anything memorable or a good melody along the way is what wanes my interest. It's brimming with energy but loses it ineffectively quickly and settles into a repetitive beat by track number three. (GO-KART EUROPE: POST-FACH 12 07 50, 68058 MANNHEIM, GERMANY.)

CRASHED OUT "PEARLS BEFORE SWINE". (CAPTAIN OII) The latest offering from old school Brit Punk revivalists, Crashed Out. From the Angelic Upstarts neck of the woods, Crashed Out have been building a loyal following over the years and offer some more hard hitting and rough-cut Punk here with fifteen newly recorded songs. They may be twice the age of your average Punk Rocker these days but Crashed Out stay true to the spirit of their teenage years, which can be both a blessing and a hindrance. On the one hand it's nice to see a bunch of older guys who haven't mellowed with age, but at the same time you can't help feel a little embarrassed for them. They're fat, old and at times sound a bit passed it, to the point where you'd wish they'd



step aside and let the next generation take over. I can't help noticing the obvious slip up on first track, "Fast n' Loose", where the band claim they don't like Soul or Jazz music and only want to listen to Johnny Rotten ... isn't it only fair to point out that with-out Soul or Jazz music there would be no Johnny Rotten, as Lydon himself has often cited Miles Davis as one of his biggest influences and was of course a Soul Boy in his pre-Pistols days. Maybe I'm splitting hairs here and the lesson to be learned from a band like Crashed Out, and many others for that matter, is not to overanalyse what they do as there's little at the end of it. Enjoyed for what it is, I can think of worse ways to spend an hour - which for the record is far too long for any Punk Rock album! (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

CRIME DESIRE "WE HATE ALL LIFE". (COALITION) More noise to burst your eardrums here, courtesy of those Grind addicts over at Coalition Records in Holland. Crime Desire from San Diego are described in the press sheet as "a sexually twisted and fucked up masterpiece", which comes pretty close to describing what I hear on this CD, though I'm not too sure about the "masterpiece" part. If you can imagine a Punk band playing Dark Throne or Venom tunes, you won't be far off. The pace and attitude is firmly on the Punk side, but the influence definitely comes from other areas. A difficult one to make a call on, but if you've got stars tattooed on your elbows and skinny black jeans, you're probably gonna like it. (COALITION RECORDS: NEW-TONSTRAAT 212, 2562 KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

DAN "THOLOGY". (BOSS TUNEAGE) Just as I thought this band from the late 80's UK scene had slipped into obscurity for good, out comes Boss Tuneage giving their entire back catalogue the reissue treatment it deserves and somehow managing to fit it all onto two CD's. Yes, sixty-four tracks worth of Dan in all their glory. This female fronted outfit from the bowels of Darlington, England worked on a melodic twist of Punk, not unlike early Chumbawamba and The Sect. Their music kept a relatively fast pace and always maintained a sharp edge despite its knack for working infectious Pop hooks around Leatherface-styled guitar chops. Upon splitting up, various members of this band went on to do time with Wat Tyler, Sofahead and Blyth Power amongst others and listening to this extensive CD of their work, it's not difficult to make that transition. You can clearly hear how most of those bands picked up where Dan left off. Sean Forbes even rounds this release out by offering liner notes. The ultimate Dan anthology, that no one in their right mind should be without. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

DAY OF CONTEMPT "THE WILL TO LIVE". (EPITAPH) A six-tracker here from the latest signings to the Epitaph roster. It's not good news, I'm afraid. When was the last time Epitaph signed a good band? They've got a back catalogue to drool over, but Gurewitz appears to have lost his ear for quality Punk Rock. This is more of that Emo sludge he's been trying the peddle these past years. Unsurprisingly the guy who produced the Linkin Park album has been enlisted to produce this! Credentials or what??? (EPITAPH EUROPE: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

DEAD MAN'S SHADOW "THE 4 P'S". (CAPTAIN OII) Pride, pacifism, passion and perseverance, was how Dead Man's Shadow summed up their ethos back on this 1983 debut. Another obscure band from a London borough, Dead Man's Shadow were inspired by the free thinking and no rules approach of Punk Rock, but frowned upon bands like Discharge for not having the tunes to back it up - something which Dead Man's Shadow never lacked. There's a lot of shouting and bawling, but beneath it all they carry a good tune. Reeling against the state in all manners possible these young degenerates gigged around the British scene of the early 80's and caught John Peel's ear on occasion or two. This reissue includes the entire album along with a further thirteen tracks lifted from singles, EP's and the like. Italian label Get Back reissued this before, but it's near impossible to get a hold of these days, in which case this becomes the definitive version of their early workings. Mick Mercer from the Melody Maker also lends liner notes. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

DEAD TO ME "CUBAN BALLERINA". (FAT WRECK CHORDS) San Francisco's One Man Army called it quits in 2003 and this is the first recorded evidence of founding members Jack and Brandon I've heard since then. I did catch Jack at a live gig by the Swingin' Utters a few years back, where he filled in for departed Max Huber, but was curious as to whether or not he'd given up his own bands. The answer lies here, where both One Man Army ex-members team up with Fat Wreck employee and Western Addition bassist, Chicken and his cousin Ian to create what transpires to be quite a unique sounding record. Co headed by Jack and Ian who share the vocals, Dead To Me is the coming together of that Fat sound with the Street Punk edge One Man Army carried so well. Jack's roots I'm told are in Skate Punk, prior to discovering S.L.F.

so in a way it all comes full circle here. You've got the power and aggression of the aforementioned S.L.F. with the pace and structure of NOFX and Bad Religion. Ian has seemingly done some time in alcohol and drug rehabs, so this record could also be seen as an extension of that rehabilitation process as lyrically it tends to be quite poignant and personal. By all means, give this one a whirl! (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 37 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

DEFIANCE, OHIO "THE GREAT DEPRESSION". (NO IDEA)
Defiance, Ohio come from a staunchly underground D.I.Y. Folk and Punk background. Included amongst the group's instruments are stand up bass, violin, banjo and harmonica, with all six band members singing. Their inception dates back some four years and they've a handful of U.S. and European tours under their belts at this stage. They also make all their music available for free download from their website. It's no secret that this whole Folk Punk thing has become the new trend in Punk Rock circles, but it hasn't gotten to the point yet where its out of hand and currently most bands doing it appear genuine and are quite good. These songs sound almost like campfire Hardcore songs, sloppy and heartfelt, and with excellent lyrics to boot. These are trying times to be an American right now and any band with integrity is clearly having difficulty defining what exactly it means to them to be an American in 2006. Defiance, Ohio search for something positive in it all, but you can pick up from the air of pessimism that engulfs this CD, that it isn't always easy. However, at the same time you get the feeling that there is still a community left out there that isn't morally bankrupt and because of that bands like Defiance, Ohio become all the more significant. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

DESTRUCTORS "PUNK SINGLES COLLECTION". (CAPTAIN OII)
UK '82 band the Destructors have rather shockingly never appeared on CD before, so yes, this makes this Captain OII reissue the first ever Destructors CD, released in 2006!! I'm sure the band will be proud that it took them over twenty-years to get a CD out! Hailing from Peterborough, the Destructors quickly became forgotten about following their split in 1984, partly down to having zip from their catalogue reissued. The Destructors weren't as Discharge-esque as you may expect or as that of their contemporaries. In fact, songs like 'Jailbait' sound more like the 4 Skins than anybody else to me. Probably their biggest claim to fame was having Giz Butt from the English Dogs and later The Prodigy in their line up, but let's talk about this compilation, shall we? This pulls together every single and 12 inch the group put out between '82 and '84, which amounts to twenty-eight songs in total. The band themselves would be the first ones to admit they had shit gear and thus the sound on many of these recordings suffers for it, in particular the drumming which is simply just the worst I've ever heard on a recorded album. They do have their occasional moments though and there's a bit of spirit to be found on these songs if you look hard enough. The social climate at the time in Britain was dull and depressing and not a place anyone would like to revisit I don't think, which is something this album captures more than anything else. There's an air of desperation about it. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

DESTRUCTORS "EXERCISE THE DEMONS OF YOUTH". (CAPTAIN OII)
The debut album from the Destructors, which originally appeared on the illuminated label in 1982 and spans three weeks in the indie chart, peaking at number twelve. This re-issue contains a further eleven bonus tracks, along with the eighteen which appeared on its original release. Again the sound on this is not great and the playing is very one-dimensional. The Destructors seemingly were a far better live band than they were on record and supported G.B.H. on their 'Attacked By Rats' tour, to much acclaim. The band released a further three albums after this in the space of two years, but called it a day shortly afterwards, having failed to ignite the right people in the Punk world. Jerry A from Poison Idea was apparently a bit of a Destructors fan, but for me they offer little that holds it weight against other bands of the era. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

DESTRUCTORS 666/THE RUINED "PLUS CA CHANGE POUR LA MEME CHOSE". (ROWDY FARRAGO)
The title is French in case you're wondering. I did a bit of research on this Destructors 666 band as I hadn't a clue who they were. Interestingly Destructors 666 are an extension of the original Destructors from the early 80's, reviewed above. Containing at least three members of the original line-up it's a little confusing and perhaps unnecessary to add the 666 to the end of their name. For my money, this version of the band sounds a heck of a lot better than the original version, which further complicates matters. Track number two 'City Of The Dead' could be the best they've ever written ... and no it's not a Clash cover! Sharing this split CD with Destructors 666 is another Peterborough band I believe, calling themselves The Ruined. Once again there're further complications here as both bands appear to have some degree of crossover with their members and song-writing credits. It evades me, but the twenty minutes or so of music on this CD is of a high calibre, regardless of which band we're talking about or who wrote the music. (ROWDY FARRAGO RECPRDS: C/O FLAT 4, 101 PARK ROAD, PETERBOROUGH, CAMBS PE1 2TR, ENGLAND.) (www.destructors666.com)

DOWINA "BREZALAUSPURCH". (SELF-RELEASED)
Dowina are a Bratislava based band and this marks their debut official release. I would assume there've been some demos or such knocking about previously. The gothic imagery of this particular CD would suggest Black Metal to some degree, but as luck would have it, we've got something closer to The Stranglers on our hands. This is a promising effort from a Slovakian Punk group (perhaps the first one I've heard?) and sounds impeccably well for a self-released CD. It's far more developed than you'd expect and light years away from the full-length-CD-instead-of-a-demo mentality of a lot of up and coming bands. I'm pleased to report Dowina held out until they had the material to record a proper CD and have benefited greatly because of it. (MARTIN JANKOVIC: P.O. BOX 172, 820 05 BRATISLAVA 25, SLOVAKIA. dowina@zoznam.sk)

DOWN AND AWAY "TO SERVE AND PROTECT". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)
I reviewed Down And Away's first effort two years ago and whilst there was nothing technically wrong with the record, it did tend to get lost in a sea of other Swedish Punk bands of the time. That particular release came out on Rock Star records and here's the follow up, having joined the split splanks of Kob and Mad Butcher, which should help to boost the band's profile in Europe. This is Marcus from Voice Of A Generation on vocals and his latest outing does little more than pick up where the previous one left off. This is strictly textbook Swedish Street music, ala Bombshell Rocks etc. Quite fluent, but nothing to get excited over. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY)

D.R.I. "LIVE AT CBGB'S 1984". (BEER CITY)
From the glory days of Texas Dirty Rotten Imbeciles comes this live off-the-board recording from CBGB's. Recorded during one of their now legendary Sunday Matinee gigs in 1984, D.R.I. at the time were spending months on end living in Manhattan's Lower East Side, taking turns between sleeping in their van and on friends' floors. This really is fourty songs in forty minutes here, long before D.R.I. transformed themselves into a Thrash Metal outfit and quickly became forgotten about. The sound off this is as good as could be expected for the timeframe and circumstances it was recorded under, with the only notable slip up being when the tape cuts out for eight minutes towards the end of their set. Luckily they were also videotaping the show and cut to the sound from this until the audio recording could be sorted out. This was a proper Punk gig after all and just to further prove it the band never got paid a penny as someone smashed up the toilet in CBGB's during their set and seeing as they were the band on stage at the time, the onus was on them and thus whatever money they were to receive for the gig now went toward a new toilet! Some good stuff on here that should keep the early 80's Hardcore nuts happy. (BEER CITY RECORDS: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 53226-0035, U.S.A.)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE "HOTLINE TO HADES". (PUNK SHIT)
The ever-popular Drongos For Europe cement a deal with Birmingham's other institution, the Punk Shit Empire! Having graced compilations by the label in recent times, here we see them take the leap and have a crack at a full length with them. First impressions

are of a winner as the Drongos pour into a half hour's worth of thumping old school Punk Rock. Drongos For Europe is a stripped to the bone brand of GBH meets The Clash styled Punk outfit. Tommy spits out his vocal parts with pure repulsion and does it best on the short, sharp blast of "Punk Rock Radio". Probably the most appealing aspect of this band, and something you wouldn't always expect to find on a CD like this, is their knack for penning some truly memorable and singalong hooks. Barely a song is without that sense of build up that climaxes with a crashing finale. If the sound of the late 70's, twinned with the aggression of the early 80's turns you on, then this CD will rank highly in your playlist for the year. (PUNK SHIT RECORDS: 74 BRISTNALLHALL ROAD, OLDBURY, WEST MIDLANDS, B68 9TU, U.K.)

DUANE PETERS AND THE HUNNS "BEYOND WARPED: LIVE MUSIC SERIES". (IMMERGENT)
The Master Of Disaster Duane Peters with his "other" band The Hunns, featuring ex Nashville Pussy bassist and now Duane's missus Corey Parks. You'll know Duane and you'll know it's not always pretty, but this is the real deal here and was never meant to be safe or sanitized. Livebefore Peter's knows how to turn a crowd on their side and if you've ever had the good fortune of catching one of his performances you'll know he always delivers on his promise. As solid as you like, these live tracks don't let up as The Hunns energy and presence alone easily carries them through. The Hunns have accumulated a fine batch of songs on their own that easily stands alongside anything the Bombs have put out recently and they appear to have recaptured that Bombs punch of old. The DVD lives up to the audio tracks and adds that extra dimension to The Hunns with a fine onstage chemistry between Parks and Peters. There's also and extended interview with the pair which is equally insightful. (IMMERGENT RECORDS: 2231 S. CARMEINA AVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90064, U.S.A.)

DUBTONES "ONE FOR THE ROAD E.P.". (SELF-RELEASED)
From the armpit of Dun Laoghaire and its surrounding areas, the Dubtones, who formed from the remnants of Stigmatamartyr, first got together in 1999. The first incarnation of the band got as far as releasing the "Whole New Nation" CD, but seemed to disappear into obscurity shortly after. 2004 and there's a fresh version of the band put back in the firing line. Giggling solidly for the past couple of years has brought about this six track mini album. Their combination of roots Reggae, Ska and upfront Punk has been effective on the stage, but this I believe to be the first results from the studio. Recorded in Dublin last January, 'One For The Road' is the sound of a well-rehearsed band, who've rightfully waited until they had the goods up to scratch before entering the studio. The quality of songwriting on this definitely stands out as they successfully incorporate choppy guitars around loose Ska rhythms. Whelo's rasping vocals gives it the sharp edge it calls out for. S.L.F. The Ruts and naturally The Clash all sound to have influenced the band. First number 'Subhuman' is a nice chunky Punk tune, with a killer chorus, whilst 'Cops Are On Their Way' is a more laidback Reggae induced track - something that wouldn't sound out of place on S.L.F.'s 'Go For It' album. Bassist Gipo handles the vocals for 'Neurotic', adding another dimension to the band. Live favourite 'Outside' has been captured beautifully and sees the Dubtones at their striking best. Title track is a caustic Members-sounding Reggae Punk cut with another hooky chorus. 'Against The World' plays us out sweetly in what can only be described as Strikinen DC-inspired!!! This band have somewhat plugged the hole that's existed in Dublin since the break up of many luminaries from the late 90's and 'One For The Road' ranks among some of the best work to emerge from the city's Punk ghetto in the past ten years. Mark it! (www.thedubtones.com)

THE EXPLOITED "COMPLETE PUNK SINGLES COLLECTION". (CAPTAIN OII)
Does as it suggests on the label, making this the definitive and most comprehensive of Exploited singles collections to date. I'm not a fan of The Exploited as you probably know, but if I have to endure them then the earlier the material the better as far as I'm concerned. Tracks like the debut 7 inch 'Army Life' did have a certain charm to it, complete with a nice raw edge, but unfortunately they were to lose that further down the line. This CD has twenty-eight tracks in full, taking us from their abrasive-sounding beginnings right up to their final official singles release on the Rough Justice label - 1988's 12 inch 'War Now', by which time they were a complete write off and had to resort to dodgy Thrash Metal labels to issue their material. As expected this release sets itself apart from other Exploited comps, as it's been given the Captain OII once over, meaning you get extensive liner notes from Mark Brennan, along with full artwork for each of the singles. I'd imagine this is every Exploited fan's dream come true! (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

FIGHTING WITH WIRE "MACHINE PARTS". (SCHISM)
Two track CD single from Derry's Fighting With Wire. Also on board here is a promo video for the title track. The lead off song is quite good and pushes their initial idea that bit further, with the ever-apparent and huge Foo Fighters influence still proudly on display. Fighting With Wire have been hard at it since we last met and managed to get themselves on a few profile-boosting tours around the U.K. This is certainly aimed at the more mainstream audience judging by their preferred choice of production techniques, but the songwriting remains strong. (SCHISM RECORDS: UNIT 8, VICTORIA HOUSE, 68-72 MAIN STREET, MAGHERA, CO. DERRY, N. IRELAND, BT46 5AF.)

FLESHIES "SCRAPE THE WALLS". (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)
One of the more intriguing bands to emerge in the past number of years has been Oakland, California's Fleshies. Many bands have merged the sounds of 70's Rock with Punk and Hardcore over the years, but few have come up with such imaginative results as Fleshies. This is their third full-length album, recorded in drummer Brian Hamilton's Sugar Mountain studio. It is reported they used 1970's technology for this and the outcome is highly effective without sounding retro. In ways it reminds me of New Bomb Turks on some of their better records, but in truth this simply sounds like Fleshies. Jello makes a guest appearance on their cover of Sparks 'Happy Hunting Ground' to give it that extra bit of character. The seventeen tracks come in at just over half an hour and range in everything, from velocity and tempo to structure and orchestration. A definite highlight of this year's Punk releases so far. (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)

4 PROMILLE "ALTE SCHULE". (KNOCKOUT RECORDS)
Translated as "Old School", this album has been five years in the making for German band 4 Promille. Oddly they've decided to change the words of the U.K. Subs 'Riot' and rename it 'Alte Schule' for the opening track, without awarding so much as a writing credit to old Mr. Harper!! Tut! Tut! Cheap shots aside, this band have been firm favourites of the Euro Street Punk contingent for a long time and are easily in the top ten bands doing it. Volker also plays with German Irish band The Porters and even this album isn't safe from his MacGowan obsession, as we're landed with a German version of 'A Pair Of Brown Eyes'. It's a 50/50 set up of German and English sung lyrics, including one strange song by Melanie about killing young boys in underwear. Each to their own, as they say! The old 'lost in translation' problem often applies, but that's generally to be expected with continental bands who sing outside their mother tongue. 4 Promille's roots lie in Oi! and Street Punk, but it's evident they're listening to a lot more than the Upstarts and the Rejects these days. I like that they've developed and it suits their sound to bring outside influences in. You'll hear a lot of Folk leanings on this album, along with some hardened Country and even the odd Rockabilly guitar lick is to be found, if you listen close enough. (KNOCKOUT RECORDS: POSTFACH 10 07 16, 46527 DINSLAKEN, GERMANY.)

46 SHORT "TRUTH DENIED". (TKO)
Bloodthirsty Hardcore here from 46 Short and it's just the way we like it. No room for nit-picking, this band aims straight at the jugular and keeps the passion and no-bullshit approach of Poison Idea and Millions Of Dead Cops to the fore. When a label like TKO signs up a Hardcore band, you know it's going to be good. Hardcore to them means the

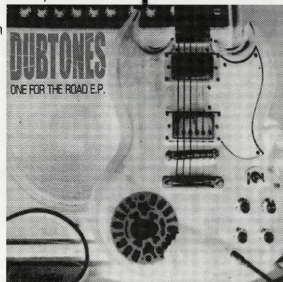
same as Hardcore to me - I'm talking sick, twisted, from the gut, containing all of Punk's energy and wild musical abandon. A solid kick in the bollocks that lasts for a half hour. 46 Short have been schooled in the early 80's approach of many SST bands on their earliest of recordings. There's a whole heap of Black Flag influence on here, along with the aforementioned Poison Idea and MDC. If you know what the words Hardcore and Punk mean, you'll want this release. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

FOUND DEAD IN TRUNK "UGLY VERY UGLY". (SELF-RELEASED)
80's Thrash Metal and Punk Rock come together here for this outfit's influence. At times this works for me, at other times it simply doesn't. Some of it brings the Cro-Mags to mind, some of it brings Exodus to mind. The entire CD docks in at just under the twelve-minute mark, creaming things off nicely with the Keith Morris/Black Flag number "Wasted". (FOUND DEAD IN TRUNK: P.O. BOX 380152, EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, 06138-0152, U.S.A.)

THE FRANTIC FLINTSTONES "THE LEGENDARY MUSHROOM SESSIONS". (ANAGRAM)
These sessions were recorded over eighteen years ago when members of The Frantic Flintstones and The Magic Mushroom Band got together at a studio, aptly called the Opium Den, and spent six months there getting high and recording Rockabilly music. This entire session (eighteen tracks) has never been released in its entirety before and remained lost in the Link Records vaults until recently when Cherry Red bought up Link's entire back catalogue. Frantic Flintstones singer Chuck Harvey was well known to have psychiatric issues, which I think only helped his music career, and was off his head pretty much the entire time on whatever substance was closest at hand. This music varies from Rock n' Roll to Psychedelic, Country and Reggae and is far from Psychobilly by numbers. Whilst the band members themselves don't have much recollection of these recordings, whatever they were on, it seems to have worked. There're eleven musicians playing on these recordings, whether all simultaneously or not I don't know, but there's certainly a lot going on. For Psychos who like their music a little more far-reaching! (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS "SELF-TITLED". (CRIMINAL IQ)
Chicago label Criminal IQ is everything that's cool about Punk Rock in America. It's equivalent in Europe would be England's Damaged Goods, as they adapt a similar philosophy to the types of bands they chose to put out. It's gotta be Rock n' Roll, it's gotta be played with a Punk aesthetic and the bands need to sound as self-destructive as humanly possible. Sound good? You betcha! Imagine the wild abandon of Gang Of Four's, 'Entertainment' album, couple it with the avanté garage of Wire's 'Pink Flag' and finally get the original Stooges line up to put it through a blender and you'll probably come up pretty close to what this record sounds like. It's experimental without going too far, Garage Punk without getting predictable ... it all comes down to the balance and if you get it right you've backed a winner. The Functional Blackouts have it down to a fine art, there's no slowing down for this band. Fans of early New Bomb Turks work are also highly likely to sit themselves over this. (CRIMINAL IQ RECORDS: 3540 NORTH SOUTHPORT AVE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, 60657, U.S.A.)

THE GENERATORZ "BAD DEEDS". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)
Montreal's Generatorz twin the sounds of old 77 with 2 Tone. The Canadians have a rich tradition in this sort of thing and Montreal in particular has spawned more than its fair share of contemporary Punk Rock this past decade. Mad Butcher and KOB have picked up on it to a large degree and here again we see 'em back at it for the release of The Generatorz latest album. According to the CD booklet this was actually recorded in Göttingen way back in 2002, but for some reason has only come to light now. The combination of male and female vocals gives it a little distinction, where you get the harmonious sound of one, roughened up by the hoarseness of the other. They're lean, tight and hook-filled, pounding out boisterous tunes that carry plenty of sass. They also take time out to offer their services to some old S.L.F. and Hermins Hermits songs. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)



GG ALLIN AND ANTISEEN "MURDER JUNKIES". (TKO)
A mere three years after TKO last reissued this, it's back by popular demand. Possibly the best representation of GG's later years, this pairing of his with Anti Seen could not have been better chosen. It was originally released back in 1991 and reissued to commemorate the tenth anniversary of his death. A lot of GG stuff out there has been poorly packaged, but being on a label like TKO, the expected trimmings have been added here. Classic photos, posters, fliers etc. have all been thrown in to at last provide the public with the quality GG Allin release they've been holding out for. There's no difference between this and the last reissue in 2003 however, bar the catalogue number, I guess they just sold out of the initial pressing? Musically it's sledgey Garage Punk, with the usual self-destructive lyrics GG explicated during his short life. If you missed out first time round, be sure it doesn't happen again. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

GL'XO BABIES "DREAMS INTERUPTED: THE BEWILDERBEAT YEARS 1978-1980". (CHERRY RED)
Gl'Xo Babies were often overlooked in the hype surrounding their contemporaries the Pop Group, but this Bristol band had plenty to say for anyone willing to lend them an ear. Musically there was the huge Jazz influence to speak of, which lay side by side with P.I.L. like arrangements. The voice of Rob Chapman starkly resembles that of David Byrne on those early Talking Heads recordings, but it's doubtful that Byrne was a direct influence on Chapman. What made this band work was the fact that Chapman was into songs whilst the rest of the band was not, which brings together an interesting blend of experimentation. You've got the robotic ideology coming together with strong craftsmanship which often collides to make some riveting listening. On the other hand it can also have a less than pleasurable result at times and border on irritating to the ears, but this is an inevitable result in the search for new sounds. For the record this is everything the band put their name to on one CD and truly deserves to be heard. Gl'Xo Babies was the sound of Punk moving forward and exploring new avenues. Their influence can be heard across a wide range of music today and their legacy is something to be proud of. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

GO BETTY GO "NOTHING IS MORE". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)
One of those dumb American bands that are so dumb they're actually good! They turn it into an art form. Go Betty Go are an all-gal Punk Rock group from Los Angeles. Lazy comparisons would include early Go Go's, Distillers, Runaways and naturally The Donnas. They're on the go just under five years and in that time have tightened up their act considerably for the release of this - what appears to be their debut album. Maybe it's something to do with coming from Los Angeles but this band really captures the feeling of growing up and making that difficult transition from teenager into adult. The reviews I've been reading for this record have been mixed to say the least. People either love 'em or hate 'em and that usually constitutes for some good music. You either get it or you don't, it's that simple. I give 'em the thumbs up! (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

GOOD RIDDANCE "MY REPUBLIC". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)
Album number seven for Good Riddance and once again it's in that time honoured tradition of Bad Religion meets NOFX. Santa Cruz's Good Riddance have never strayed too far from their roots, keeping things safe and in line with what one would expect from a band like this. A blend of west coast melodicism and Hardcore fury, but definitely staying on the sweeter side of the equation. I don't find their rebellious streak too credible anymore (if I ever did) and their lengthening list of corporate sponsorship almost appears like

a paradox to their anti-establishment pose. Socially acceptable rebellion aside, their music also isn't challenging in any way... at least not to me it's not. "My Republic" isn't a bad album, but this far down the line they'd need to start raising their standards a little, as sub-par offerings of this nature aren't going to hold the listener's attention for much longer. To me, Good Riddance are a band who've seen better days. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

THE GOP "ENGLAND SUCKS". (BLIND SPOT)
Class stuff indeed and great to see a sense of humour from an American band, I'm sure you'll agree. "All they do is get fucked up and say O! ... they've even got shitty names like Charles and Roy!", say The GOP on the title track. The cover art for this 7" inch is even funnier and has to be seen. Musically The GOP are shit hot too as it happens, brewing up some early Negative Approach sounding Hardcore and splicing it with a bit of vintage Descendents. The band look to be aged about twelve, which is another good asset and hopefully a sign of more great things to come. (BLIND SPOT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 40064, PORTLAND, OERGON, 97240, U.S.A.)

THE GRINDOLLS "KILL YOUR DARLINGS". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)
I've reviewed The Grindolls before and from what I can recall I thought they had it down. A glance at the packaging leaves you anticipating something along the lines of Social Distortion, which could spell disaster as there is only one Social Distortion and no band has successfully replicated their sound, though countless numbers will still insist on trying. I'm drifting here... but The Grindolls thankfully do not fall into that category... at least not to these ears. They've been described as "the last 25 years of Punk", which I think sums it up best when you think that includes the likes of the Damned, The Clash, Subway Sect, Nipple Erectors, Weiridos and X. They tread the thin line between Punk and Rock, which has had a hit n' miss result in the past, but I think The Grindolls are accomplished enough to pull it off. They also like to throw the Glam tag about and on closer inspection there're elements of T.Rex, Slade and Heavy Metal Kids to be found amidst this melting pot of ideas. On the whole though this is still basically a Punk Rock record that bustles with energy and lines itself up alongside other releases in recent times by the likes of The Briefs, Smut Peddlers, Turbo AC's and the One Man Army. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

GUTTERMOUTH "BEYOND WARPED: LIVE MUSIC SERIES". (IMMERGENT)
Guttermouth could easily be seen as typical Warped Tour material - goofy, wacky, poppy and Californian. You could say they're the embodiment of it. Their lyrics mainly focus on drinking beer, skateboarding and getting your end away. At times I kind of like them and their two fingers in the face of political correctness is something I will always applaud. On the other hand however, they're extremely irritating and you get the impression they only do certain things to cover up for a low I.Q. With a band like The Vandalis you always suspected there was a brain behind it, but with Guttermouth I'm just not so sure anymore. (IMMERGENT RECORDS: 2231 S. CARMEINA AVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90064, U.S.A.)

HERESY "1985-87". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
Boss Tuneage have begun an extensive reissuing campaign of Heresy's back catalogue and this is the first of three CD's on the band to be released over the coming months. This digi-pack format containing nineteen songs and huge booklet is probably the first decent attempt that's been made at getting their catalogue back on the shelves once more. I can still recall receiving a Heresy cassette tape in school in exchange for an early Misfits album and thinking they were about the most extreme band I had ever heard. I'm pleased to say their intensity has aged well and this still pisses over most Hardcore bands of today. Earache were involved in the beginning and you can certainly hear how a lot of their earlier releases would fit the picture well with this type of stuff. It's not something I'm likely to listen to all that often, but I can appreciate a job well done and Heresy put their hearts into it when Punk Rock was a dirty word. They done their time in the trenches and laid the groundwork in Europe for a lot of bands that would soon follow. There's no doubt their influence can still be clearly heard today amidst the upcoming neo Crust Punk scene and for that I salute them. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

HERESY "FACE UP TO IT!". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
Part deux in the trilogy of Heresy reissues. I can't recall if I heard this album first time round or not, but this is the cleaned up version, completely re-mastered in an attempt to rectify the botch job done on the recording by Rich Bitch studios in 1988. Basically Rich Bitch acquired a new soundboard and Heresy were part of a bunch of bands used as guinea pigs for their new toys. They were also talked into using a sampled snare drum, which didn't do them any favours either. By the time they realised how bad it was, they'd already blown their entire recording budget and had no choice but to release it. Oddly the initial pressing of this album was released by four separate labels and gave the band more exposure than any other release, going on to shift in the region of ten thousand copies. So if you only own one Heresy album, it's most likely this - what the band believe to be their worst. I must admit, what I hear on these modified versions of the recordings sounds nothing like what the originals are described as in the liner notes, so someone clearly done a blinding job here. Being released on CD and gateload vinyl, this should give the old stalwarts of U.K. Hardcore something to sweat about. The CD version contains an extra eleven songs lifted from demo recordings the band made, prior to entering the studio to record this album. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN "ENEMIES". (NO IDEA)
The appeal of a band like The Holy Mountain really boils down to what day of the week I listen to them. Their last CD on No Idea struck a chord with me for some reason, but given the fact that I am listening to this advance copy of their upcoming album on a Saturday morning with a raging hangover perhaps takes away from the full impact it should have. The Holy Mountain certainly aren't morning music! They're a stomping Hardcore outfit that capture a certain mood perfectly. I don't know what it is that prevents them from being a Metal band, perhaps they've just got Hardcore music in the blood and can't play any other way. Other bands could use a similar format and would flat flat on their arses, but The Holy Mountain somehow manage to keep it all ticking over just right. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

INFA RIOT "THE BEST OF ...". (CAPTAIN OII)
Fantastic career overview of London's late great Infa Riot. Formed in early 1980, Mensi from The Upstarts was the first to pick up on them, when he penned a positive review on the band for Sounds magazine. He followed it up by taking them on a profile-boosting tour the following year. They later involved themselves with Secret Records and appeared on many OII compilations. Captain OII have previously issued their debut 'Still Out Of Order' album along with 'Sound And Fury', by which time the band were simply calling themselves The Infas. This collection here brings together much of the highlights from both those releases, nicely placed amidst a handful of their best singles. The twenty tracks on offer justifiably summarise the band's achievements during their all-too-short career. From the early venomous boot-boy anthems like 'Riot Riot', 'We Outnumber You' and 'Still Out Of Order' to the more developed songwriting of their later Infas work such as, 'Punch The Air With Glory' and 'Sound And Fury'. Interestingly Infa Riot were one of the few Street Punk bands the NME gave backing to, but it didn't matter that much, as by 1984 their records were selling poorly despite a change of name. Infa Riot packed it in soon after, but have left us with an impressive catalogue to delve into, littered with hell-raising abrasive Punk ditties. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE INOCULATORS "DROPPED THEIR BRAINS". (SELF-RELEASED)
The magical world of fanzine culture enables you to uncover gems like this from to time, that you otherwise would never have come across. It's always a shot in the dark when a

new band you're previously unfamiliar with sends you their CD to review. Most times sadly they're not up to much, but it's the ethos behind the DIY spirit that counts I guess. L.A.'s The Inoculators on the other hand are that rare treasure that has actually hit on something good. It's a damn shame when bands like this fall through the cracks, so hopefully someone out there with a bit of muscle and sense in the Punk circle will pick up on it, or who knows maybe the band want to get it alone and for that you've also gotta salute them. This debut full length CD was completely self-financed and is the result of more than a few trips in and out of the studio as money became available. In all it took eighteen months to get the job done right and the outcome is impressive. Singer Murphy Lynch has a steady background check in L.A. Punk and has notched up a fair few bands in his time, which all lead to this. There's plenty of that early regional Hardcore influence on here, but it's been dragged into modern times via bands like Dropkick Murphys and The Dwarves. Quite an interesting formula, but it works so much better than anything else new I've heard recently. (MURPHY LYNCH: P.O. BOX 352399, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90035, U.S.A.)

I OBJECT "TEACHING REVENGE". (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)
The Saint Vitus-like intro caught me by surprise, but it isn't long before I Object slip into the punishing Hardcore I was expecting from reading their bio and flicking through the CD booklet. New York's I Object are a staunchly D.I.Y. band and look to have been brought to Alternative Tentacles attention through Brad Logg of Leftover Crack, making this a co-release with his label Blacknoise Recordings. Female fronted and a throwback to when the term 'Hardcore' actually meant something, 'Teaching Revenge' is chock full of spite, anger and disgust, spitting its venom out at the establishment with every passing sentence. Barb's vocals are particularly impressive and you can imagine if Keith Morris were a woman this is how he'd sound. Pissed sounding stuff that incorporates both muscular Punk and heavier styles, with lyrics about life's pressures and the pride in non-conformity. I Object pack 'em in with sixteen tracks in under twenty minutes - the only way to have it. They don't overstay their welcome and provide just enough to make us want more. (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)

IPANEMA "ME ME ME". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
Six-tracker mini-CD from Ipanema, who, if I'm not mistaken, have previously appeared in the review section of this rag with a 7-inch release. Ipanema features, amongst their ranks, Wiz from the now defunct Mega City Four and later Doughboys, whom he formed having relocated to Canada. It's well known that Mega City Four existed in pre Seattle days, but Ipanema sound like a complete throwback to the post-Nirvana times of clean up acts like Pearl Jam, Kerbdog and Stone Temple Pilots. I can't stomach it. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

ISAWS "BURN'T OFFERING". (SPIRAL ARCHIVE)
Eleven badly recorded songs lifted from two cassette-only releases from the '78/79 years. Isaws, from Northampton were a band influenced by the first wave of Punk Rock like The Damned, The Clash, X-Ray Spex and Stiff Little Fingers. They played with a bunch of bands I've never heard of and went on to form another bunch of bands I've never heard of. The music has its moments but sounds as though a bunch of teenagers going through their five-minute Punk phase made it. The songs lack any energy or range and are carried out in such a manner that you're half expecting the singer to nod off at any second. Strikes me as strange that the band decided to release this on CD in 2006. If they were genuinely interested in being in a band again, perhaps rerecording the songs would have been a better idea. (ISAWS: P.O. BOX 210, NORTHAMPTON, NN2 6AU, ENGLAND.)

JACK AND THE RIPPERS "I THINK IT'S OVER". (DIRTY FACES)
Some long lost Swiss Punk uncovered here by Germany's Dirty Faces Records. Jack And The Rippers were formed by two brothers having heard the Pistols in 1977. Prior to that they'd been interested in bands like the Stones and The Stooges and you can hear where both these influences cross paths in their sound. None of their material has been released on CD before, but most, if not all, of these recordings stem from 1978. I like their sound a lot and played alongside bands like The Briefs today, there's a strong thread that links the two. Jack And The Rippers nicely bridge the gap between U.S. and U.K. influences, giving as much of the early CBBG's sound of Blondie and Television as they do the cranked up aggression of the Pistols and the Damned. Two of the band have since died, but this music has aged exceptionally well and come full circle back to the point where bands spend millions trying to get a sound like this in 2006, which I'd imagine was achieved in '78 through a combination of too small a budget and too little studio time, which just goes to show, you can't put a price on authenticity. (DIRTY FACES RECORDS: UNIVERSITÄTSSTR 16, 44789 BOCHUM, GERMANY.)

JELLO BIAFRA WITH THE MELVINS "SIEG HOWDY!". (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)
Seems Jello and The Melvins enjoyed the collaboration so much the first time round, they've decided on a second outing. Good thing too, as I thought last year's 'Never Breathe What You Can't See' was by all means, another certified classic from camp Biafra. We're off to a winning start here again as the boys open the album with a run through Alice Cooper's 'Halo Of Flies', giving it that unmistakable Biafra going over. In terms of song length The Melvins have certainly had their say here, with the first two clocking in at over seven minutes each. Not normally what you'd expect from Jello, but it works superbly well and is a wonderful coming together of both bands. Buzz Osbourne has one of the best guitar sounds in the business, taking leaves from the books of Sabbath, Hawkwind and Black Flag to create a powerhouse effect unrivalled in any league. Osbourne contributes writing credits to a lot of the music on this, which is very appealing by the screaming riffs that dominate a large chunk of the instrumental moments. I believe a lot of this material was recorded in the same session as their first album, but don't let that fool you, this ain't no leftovers stopgap and easily rivals that of its predecessor. There's a half hour of new music, followed by some interesting remixes of three songs by Al Jourgensen, Deaf Nephews, and Dalek. Check out the hilarity of track number seven - a live and updated version of 'Kalfornia Uber Alles' in which Jello takes on the role of his current favourite Californian Governor and soon to be president of the United States. Yes, it will happen kids! Another outing for Mr. Boucher that never comes up short of hitting the spot. (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)

JOHN KASTNER "HAVE YOU SEEN LUCKY". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
John Kastner's musical origins stretch back to the eighties when as a sixteen-year-old Punk he formed the Montreal band, The Asexuals. Most people however, will be more familiar with the band The Doughboys, which he fronted and recorded seven albums with and kept on the road for over ten years. The Doughboys were the sound of Indie Rock meeting Hardcore halfway and were picked up on by fans of later Lemonheads/Mega City Four. Now that John has gone it alone for this record, he's drifted even further and left little trace of his Hardcore or Punk roots. Don't get me wrong, this album has its Rockier moments (see 'Trainwreck Magnetism'), but it sounds to be coming from a different direction to Punk Rock. I can appreciate parts of it, but as John was generally the driving force behind his previous bands anyway, you wonder why he felt the need to go all out and release a 'solo' record. Midlife Crises? Ego stroke, maybe? What really threw me here was Lee Ving from Fear laying down the vocals on 'Art Of War'. Didn't see that one coming! (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

KEITZER "SUICIDE ANTHOLOGY". (YELLOW DOG)
Mother o'Jays! Glen Benton has a lot to answer for! I'm baffled, at a loss for words. Keitzer are the furthest thing from Punk or Rock n' Roll. This is full on Death/Black Metal that is of absolutely no interest to me. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550208, 10372, BERLIN, GERMANY)

THE KING BLUES "UNDER THE FOG". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)
The King Blues formed out of the protest music scene in inner London and use folk-inspired, acoustic tribal beats to get their message out. Some of this reminds me of the foul Sublime, in particular check out their first single "Mr. Music Man" which is horrendous, but that's what's kept buttons on CD players are for. For instance the next track 'Come Fi Di Youth' is a knockout winner, presenting us with some Augustus Pablo styled melodica playing over a Dub-induced backing track. "Under The Fog" is the furthest thing from cohesive that I've encountered in a long time, and at times is just too disjointed for its own good. Their attempts at covering as much musical ground as possible leaves them with no definite style or direction and their delivery is all over the shop. The important element to The King Blues is their message of non-conformity, resistance and celebrating diversity. They've clearly got broadminded tastes in music, but I think any band needs a firm style or direction. Some can piece many styles together into something of their own, but The King Blues appear to have difficulty in merging these influences into something unique. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

THE KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE "A CHALLENGE TO THE COWARDS OF CHRISTENDOM". (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES)
I think the last time a record from a spoof Christian band came in I fell for it, hook, line and sinker. It was of course Germany's Jesus Skins, who operated under the guise of a Christian Skinhead band. Proficient prankster Jello Biafra and his Alternative Tentacles label have gone for something similar here with a Christian Hardcore group. Musically in line with the likes of The Cheifs, early Descendents, Black Flag and Circle Jerks, The Knights Of The New Crusade are an anonymous bunch of East Bay Punks, whose mission is to spread the word of the lord to the Hardcore community and beyond. Rumoured to feature many stalwarts of the Punk scene amidst their line up, they offer up such ethics to live by as "Keep It Real!", "Admit You Are A Sinner", "Tell Others About Jesus Christ!" and "Read Your Bible Every Day To Get To Know Jesus Christ Better!". Their song titles include "Got Some Gospel For You!", "E Is Still Evil" and "Why Do You Want To Go To Hell?". They also dispense some considerable justice to an old Charlie Rich favourite of mine "Big Man". Actually I believe it's an old traditional Christian song, but the chorus is undeniable, ain't it? Seemingly this band has been causing an outrage in America with those who believe Jello has stooped so low as to sign a legitimate Christian band!!! They play the Voodoo Lounge, Dublin in August. Bring your bible! (ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)

THE KRUNCHIES "IN DE WINKEL". (CRIMINAL IQ)
Criminal IQ certainly have a wealth of new and interesting Punk on their hands and perhaps none more so than on this CD by a band calling themselves The Krunchies. Again Chicago is the geographical region we're talking about and when you think about it the coming together of Hardcore and old '77 Brit Punk is no stranger to this town. If you look at stuff like The Effigies and later Los Cruces, then cast your memory back to the influx of East Bay bands, that swarmed the city in the early 80's, and that's where you'll find The Krunchies slotting in. If you could imagine Dead Kennedys being fronted by a female, The Krunchies would be the aural equivalent of this image. The music is played at breakneck speed, but is more inventive than you might think. Layered over the top are squealing females vocals and all this comes as tightly packed as possible. Lord knows how they keep this kind of pace at a live show, but I for one would love to find out. (CRIMINAL IQ RECORDS: 3540 NORTH SOUTHPORT AVE, CHICAGO, ILLNOIS, 60657, U.S.A.)

LAGWAGON "RESOLVE". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)
This record was hastily put together in the aftermath of Lagwagon drummer Derek Plourde's suicide last year and is intended as a tribute to him. The majority of the songs are inspired by his life and the band's subsequent loss. Musically there's little departure here from what Lagwagon have been doing since their first record in '92, as they continue to harness that SoCal sound we've become only too familiar with over the years. Given that this band are one of the pioneers of the movement, I've always made time for them, but even their most diehard fan couldn't deny they're churning them out a bit much these days. The first eight years of the group are the essential ones, anything after that I could take or leave. I can sit through this CD and enjoy it, but its by no means giving us anything we haven't heard before on previous Lagwagon records. I think all these songs just sounded so much better the first time around. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

LA PAR FORCE "WORK ETHIC". (DANCING IN THE DARK)
Over fifty minutes of music for the price of an EP. Five new studio tracks followed by a live set recorded in Munich's Backstage Club. La Par Force' big draw for me prior to sticking this CD on was including The Cranberries as an influence in their bio!! Jesus, who writes these things? Things could only get better... well, just about! La Par Force are pretty dire, there's no easy way of putting it. The first track on this 'Ashes' is not that bad, but it goes rapidly downhill from there, I'm sorry to say. This is female fronted bad Emo music, with bugged all to say. (DANCING IN THE DARK RECORDS: C/O RONSBERGER, BRUNNWEIG 6, 93080 PENTLING, GERMANY.)

THE LAST CALL "FUN IS FUN". (SELF-RELEASED)
Last year's European City of Culture is alive and well in Punk Rock terms as well it seems!! From the banks of the Lee comes this fine sleazy Punk n' Roll group, made up of four snotty nosed young fellas. Hand written bios, rough-cut production and bags of attitude makes this one a sure-fire winner in my book. The influences mentioned in the bio are oddly spot-on for once - Stoooges and Dead Kennedys. The guitar and vocals are what's really unique about this. If there were such a thing as a Cork City Iggy Pop, Sully would be a high contender. There's nothing prettied up about this band - it's raw in your face and most definitely Punk Rock. This five tracker never runs out of steam and keeps the ideas flowing right up to 'You Gotta Woo'. This is available for 5 Euro from the address below and worth every penny. (THE LAST CALL: 10 DELWOOD GROVE, SKEHARD ROAD, MAHON, CORK CITY. thelastcall2@hotmial.com)

LITTERBUG "SPEAKING THROUGH THE GAPS". (J.S.N.T.G.M.)
Andy Higgins and his Just Say No To Government Music label are back with another CD release from a local Blackpool band. Housed in a cardboard promo type packaging to save on costs, which they've passed on the buyer, this seven-tracker retails at three quid. Litterbug are also something of a departure from this label's usual shenanigans that tends to look more in the direction of solid streetwise sounds. What we have here draws more form the Pixies and Sonic Youth angle on Punk, bridging that gap between Post Punk and Indie Rock, but managing to stay credible at the same time. Litterbug have a Fugazi slant at times, demonstrated best on 'A Simple Contradiction' where you sense the anger rising to the surface. Not the type of stuff that can easily be written off. (J.S.N.T.G.M. RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1025, BLACKPOOL, FY3 0EB, ENGLAND)

LOST CHERREES "FREE TO SPEAK ... BUT NOT TO QUESTION". (MOTORHATE)
Old 80's Anarcho band Lost Cherrees reformed in 2003 and I'm not sure if this is their comeback album or whether they've had much activity in between. Lining up alongside Conflict and slat on the same label, Los Cherrees female fronted onslaught brought some harmonious elements to the often-growing nature of the Crust Punk scene of their day. It's Bev who tackles the vocals here and whilst she wasn't part of the original line up, she was in the band prior to their break up in the mid 80's. Her style is along the same lines as Patti Smith, if you can believe it. It's far more bearable than what I was expecting and possibly won't alienate anyone on first listen! Plenty of anti-Bush chanting and general nonconformist politics to be found on here. The running time of just under an hour is stretching it a little, but condensed into a shorter timeframe, this could have more of an impact. Is this the sound of middle-aged Anarchists discovering another route by which to channel their anger? (MOTORHATE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 448, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE20S, ENGLAND.)

LOST CHERREES "IN THE BEGINNING: THE STUDIO & LIVE RECORDINGS, 1982-1985". (MOTORHATE)
Hot on its tail comes this definitive reissue of all Lost Cherrees early to mid 80's output.

Their entire back catalogue is presented here as one package. Spread over two CD's, the first takes us through their complete previously released works, which amounts to twenty-nine tracks. Starting out with 'A Man's Duty, A Woman's Place' EP, Lost Cherries made their mark on the burgeoning Anarcho scene of '82, before going on to record their 'Fight Back' LP – all sixteen tracks featured here. The 'Unwanted Children' 12 inch rounds out the first disc. The second CD is comprised of early demos and rarities, the majority of which are appearing here for the first time. The quality ranges from piss poor to highly listenable, but the point of this is to get any last remaining recordings from the band out there on CD and not left to rot on some soggy basement carpet. Fans of the band should lap this up as it's rare you'll get a band's entire back catalogue in one package. Housed in a foldout digi-pack format with booklet, Motorhate haven't scripped on anything here. It has that definitive early 80's mixing sound off it, which has become almost customary for the Anarcho brigade of today to replicate. (MOTORHATE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 448, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 2QS, ENGLAND.)

LOS FASTIDIOS "REBELS N' REVELS". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)

After last year's momentous live album, Los Fastidios are back and eager to prove that not only do they have a healthy back catalogue to draw from, but they also appreciate the importance of pushing their struggle forward and keeping things prolific in terms of new material. Anyone would think Los Fastidios have an easy life, but that's not the case. Despite having to recruit and break in yet another two new members (guitarists) for this record, Enrico still manages to write, record and release it in less than a year since the live album. This guy has remained loyal to the heavily politicised mainland Europe Street scene, when the odds have consistently been stacked against him. "Rebels n' Revels" sees the band continue their anti-authority message, railing against all forms of oppression, be it at the hands of government or fellow human beings. Their animal rights message is as important to Los Fastidios as ever... Enrico has even gone so far as to have 'Animal Liberation' tattooed down the back of his arm! Of course all of this balances perfectly with the other side of Los Fastidios – the side that celebrates all the good things about life, down to the simplest of pleasures like enjoying a good quality cold beer. Self produced once again and drenched in the spirit of D.I.Y. Naturally a lot of time has gone into the booklet, with lyrical translations in English and French, as well as their native Italian. The complete Punk package as ever. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

MAD SIN "TEACHIN' THE GOODIES ... AND MORE!". (ANAGRAM)

Good news for Mad Sin fans as they strike a deal with the London label for the reissuing of some of their favourite cover tunes. As stated all this stuff has been issued previously, but on some rather obscure labels and on separate releases, so this is a much called for round up. I've always branded Mad Sin as The Dwarves of Psychobilly – sick, demented and with a hunger for all the excesses in life. Maybe not quite as convincing as Blag Dahlia and his band of gormandisers, but not far off. Unsurprisingly they've opted to pay homage to The Dwarves more than once on this CD. Elsewhere there's acceptable Psychobilly versions of songs by the likes of Turbonegro and the Misfits. Most tunes here lend themselves well to the Mad Sin treatment as they tread that line between Horror Rock and old Rock n' Roll. I like Mad Sin, they make me happy! (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

MANHANDLERS "MANHANDLERS". (CRIMINAL IQ)

The Manhandlers bear all the hallmarks of Bikini Kill when they were still tearing it up. Piece that together with Joan Jet's early post Runaways stuff and we've got ourselves a neat little cocktail indeed. Hailing from somewhere around the Chicago basin, The Manhandlers are made up of four fiery women, with a vocalist named Syd Delicious using that screeching distorted technique that can easily be linked with that of Kathleen Hanna on those early K Records LP's. Politically however this band could be worlds apart from Bikini Kill, but can't say for certain as there is no lyric sheet accompaniment. The music is full-throttle untamed Garage Punk, with an odd appearance by the Hammond organ, which really adds to this album. If you like the sound of early R n B ala The Sonics and Pretty Things and are also prone to X Ray Spex and the like, you'll be as taken on this band as I am. (CRIMINAL IQ RECORDS: 3540 NORTH SOUTHPORT AVE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, 60657, U.S.A.)

THE MEMBERS "AT THE CHELSEA NIGHTCLUB". (CAPTAIN OII)

What can I say about The Members? Damn fine band and I love 'em to bits. They have too many good songs to choose highlights from and a bulk of them are contained on this debut LP offering from the group. Avid fans of the Jamaican Reggae sounds that were emerging on the London Punk circuit at the time, The Members openly embraced Dub pioneers such as Augustus Pablo and King Tubby. Difference being, The Members took Dub techniques the Reggae artists produced in the studio and reproduced them live which gave their Punk angle a more interesting edge. The Ruts had a similar pattern of thought, but each band came out sounding individual of one another, reason being Malcolm Owen and Nicky Tesco had a distinctive vocal technique that set both of them apart. This Steve Lillywhite produced gem hit the streets in 1979 on the Virgin label. Stiff Records had earlier released their first 7 inch in 1978, before Virgin got in on it and gave The Members a chart position with the 'Sound Of The Suburbs' single, selling a quarter million copies. Both singles and B-Sides are included here as extras. As previously stated its pointless attempting any stand outs on this CD as all cuts contained are unstoppable blasts of brash, youthful energy from was as politically clued in as they were musically. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE MEMBERS "1980 – THE CHOICE IS YOURS". (CAPTAIN OII)

Second outing for The Members again kicks off with a Jamaican influenced instrumental before heading straight for the jugular with a gnarly rocker, 'Goodbye To The Job'. "1980 – The Choice Is Yours" was recorded by a physically exhausted group in the aftermath of a 125 day tour and lacks a lot of the gusto and aggression of their first LP. It's more of a grower to and takes a while to get your head round the more 80's sounding production they were left with courtesy of Rupert Hine. Tesco had wanted Reggae star Ninety The Observer to twiddle the knobs on this one, but Virgin who were firmly aware of both parties weed-smoking habits, were having none of it. Their sophomore has its moments but just lacks the punch and sassiness of its predecessor. There're no songs on here as good as 'Sally', 'Don't Push', 'Sound Of The Suburbs' or 'Solitary Confinement' and that's always going to be a problem with records like 'At The Chelsea Nightclub' – you'll never top 'em. One good thing is that The Members never attempted to cash in on its success by re-writing the album and instead went for something a little different and more laid back. They had one more album left in them for Virgin before being dropped, but whilst they were around The Members were a vital Punk force to be reckoned with. Typically both these reissues are immaculately handled, with fine artwork and liner notes, detailing the story behind each track individually. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

MENACE "PUNK SINGLES COLLECTION". (CAPTAIN OII)

Menace join the party of 'Punk Singles Collection' releases from Captain OII. Menace are one of the nest and this collection covers the first two incarnations of the group, without which you wouldn't have the full picture as they went on to produce some wonderful records long after most bands had run out of steam. Strangely, latest vocalist Oddy is not featured at all on this CD – I guess they haven't released any singles with him yet! The CD starts it all off way where it began in 1977 with the 'Screwed Up/Inspace Society' single, that was interestingly released on a label by the name of Illegal Records, which was owned by Stewart Copland's brother, Miles. Up next for the band was the much celebrated, 'G.L.C.' 7 inch from '78, which never loses its appeal with me. The first chapter of the band wraps up in 1980 with the single, 'The Young Ones', which was actually recorded two years previous. The band's comeback single came out in 1999 with a new vocalist and guitarist and surprised the hell out of most people by being quite good.

This form was to continue for the band up till John Lacey's departure and featured some great tracks such as 'C&A', '35 Bus' and 'Bad Cards'. In all you've got twenty-five songs here, four of which are bonus cuts from compilations and the like. Plenty of boot-boys anthems to get your teeth into. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE METEORS "STAMPEDE". (ANAGRAM)

Another round of Meteors reissues on digi-pack here, starting with their third album from 1984. "Stampede" saw Paul Fenech take on production duties for the first time, following his disappointment with how the previous Meteors album 'Wreckin' Crew' turned out. "Stampede" was the sound he'd been searching for since The Meteors first began recording and as a result remained the band's producer from here on in. What separated Psychobilly from Punk in my mind were the lyrics – Psychobilly had fuck all to say, where as Punk was always about the complete package. That said, a band like The Meteors always scored high enough in other areas to make up for their lack of message. They took the craftsmanship of The Ramones and twinned it with the attitude of Johnny Burnette and Gene Vincent, which basically gave us Psychobilly and as everyone knows, only The Meteors are pure Psychobilly! Christopher Gee provides the liner notes here and you get the added bonus of all tracks from the 'I'm Just A Dog' 12 inch tacked on here also. This amounts to over an hour's worth of early Meteors music, from one of the band's better periods. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE METEORS "SEWERTIME BLUES". (ANAGRAM)

Next up is 86's 'Sewertime Blues', coming to light at the height of the Psychobilly era in Britain and just as London's Klub Foot was beginning to sell itself to capacity each night. By this stage there were more than a handful of Meteors imitators out there, but with 'Sewertime Blues' climbing to an impressive number 9 in the charts, it was clear in the fans eyes where the authenticity lay. Not long after recording their first album 'In Heaven' The Meteors got shut of the double bass and reverted back to basics, proving, contrary to popular belief, there were no hard and fast rules to what makes good Rockabilly. No line up of this band ever lasted the pace and this time out it's the talents of Spider Cubit on drums and Austin Stones on bass we're listening to. Paul's guitar retains its character reverbed sound and his vocals are as sharp and venomous as ever. Check out the treatment given to Jan & Dean's 'Surf City', the excellent title track and the cracking 'Here's Johnny'. For this one the liner notes go to Simon Nott of Big Cheese magazine and the bonus material is a 12 inch mix of 'The Edge'. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE METEORS "DON'T TOUCH THE BANG BANG FRUIT". (ANAGRAM)

The continued growth of the Psychobilly plague brought 'Don't Touch The Bang Bang Fruit' to us in 1987. At the height of Acid House and Rick Astley, the great stock market crash in England and Thatcher's 'Iron Lady' years, came yet another Meteors masterpiece. Underestimated as ever by world events or the political climate, Paul Fenech persisted to hammer out the old Rock n' Roll – something which has always given this band it's sense of timelessness. It's always been near impossible to put a date on any recordings by The Meteors, which can only be viewed as a good thing. Opening with live favourite 'Go Buddy Go' – a reworking of the early Stranglers song, this cover was also released as a single with an accompanying promo video. Song lengths are kept economical as Fenech bellows out the harsh words with anger in his heart. Speaker shredding, cranked up all the way and I can't get enough of them. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

MILLOY "MORE THAN A MACHINE". (CRACKLE)

In an age when it's practically impossible to get excited about anything that could be called melodic Hardcore, Milloy have come up trumps with a knockout of an album. Oddly this is their debut full length, which surprised me as I've seen their name about for what seems like a long time. Milloy's music contains extracts from bands like Hot Water Music and Avail and possesses those same critical qualities that get everybody so hell-bent on those aforementioned bands. Everything about this record is spot on – the power of the guitars, the unbeatable rhythm section and fine production but most of all, just the great songs. Having the Crackle seal of quality I was kind of hoping for something special and that's what I got. I've previously heard their stuff on some split CD or other, but this sounds like a huge yet logical progression from that. (CRACKLE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 528, HARROGATE, HG1 9AE, ENGLAND.)

THE MOTORS "THE MOTORS 1". (CAPTAIN OII)

The first of the three Motors albums to be reissued by Captain OII. The Motors short-lived career is perhaps best renowned for the tune 'Airport', but there's a whole lot more to this band than one song, as these three CD's demonstrate. Mark Brennan has never made any attempt to conceal his love for old Pub Rock and early Status Quo, which was the direction The Motors were coming from to be sure. 50% of the line up had been playing in Pub Rock outfit Ducks Deluxe as far back as 1972. The Motors formed in and around the 1976 mark from the ashes of the above band and incorporated elements of Punk into their sound to bring us a finished version of what sounds like a bridge between New Wave and Pop Rock. All nine tracks featured on the original Virgin release appear here along with the obligatory extras that no Captain OII release would be complete without – four songs taken from 7 inch singles. Joe Geesin from Record Collector takes on the task of the band's history in the liner notes, which also contain original sleeve artwork. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE MOTORS "APPROVED BY THE MOTORS". (CAPTAIN OII)

Album number two for The Motors and it gets the ball rolling with their biggest hit, 'Airport' which is so cheesy it's actually good. If you don't recognise the name, you'll definitely know the song! 'Approved By The Motors' was launched in April of '78, again through Virgin Records and was a more polished affair than their debut, bringing the key-boards to the fore. The guitars were still there providing back up though and this album is still a Rock n' Roll one. It sold comparatively little in Virgin's terms, so much so in fact they decided to re-release it with a different cover, convinced the band's photo on the original cover was putting people off as they were too ugly! True story! 'Forget About You' is the other big gun here, which you'll also recognise as being the theme tune to some soap opera or other, if I'm not mistaken? They played their last U.K. gig in support of this album at the Reading Festival, appearing second on the line up to headliners Status Quo. Five bonus cuts this time out! (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE MOTORS "TENEMENT STEPS". (CAPTAIN OII)

The third and final album in The Motors short-lived career had a March of '81 release date. 'Tenement Steps' sees the synthesizers elbow their way to the fore, as the guitars take a backseat. By this stage The Motors were trimmed down to only two original members – the founding duo of Andy McMaster and Nick Garvey. The track 'Modern Man' has so many traits of New Wave Of British Heavy Metal bands like Budgie and Diamond Head that you can get a good idea of what the band were turning into and what direction they would have taken had they stuck around. Indeed departed member Peter Bramall went on to write for Saxon of all bands! 'Tenement Steps' was light years away from The Motors original concept as they crept further and further into Top 40-sounding music of the 80's. Ironically The Motors never did set the charts alight with the exception of 'Airport' and 'Forget About You'. This is the least striking of the trio of Motors albums, but serves as the final chapter in their career and therefore remains an integral part of their repertoire. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

MY HERO DIED TODAY "FROM OUR COLD DEAD HANDS". (DANCING IN THE DARK)

Complete bastards! My Hero Died Today should be lynched on the street for merely existing. This band done more damage to good taste in their short existence than bands like Converge could ever hope to in their lifetime. This buggar contains every song the band ever recorded, which amounts to twenty-one tracks. A horrible experience having to sit through this and one I hope to never repeat in this lifetime. (DANCING IN THE DARK RECORDS: C/O RONSBERGER, BRUNNWEIG 6, 93080 PENTLING, GERMANY.)

NAZI DOGS "CHASE THE MAN". (TKO)

Another great record sleeve from TKO – this one features a touched up version of the 'Easy Rider' flick, with George Bush happily riding his Harley alongside Hitler. You gotta hand it to them – even in Alan Hynes's absence, they never lost that touch of humour! Musically the Nazi Dogs are another winner too, splicing the sounds of Turbonegro with The Stitches and coming off the better for it. Nailing that sweet spot between Garage Rock and Hardcore, it's impossible not to take heed of the Nazi Dogs message that only the best Rock n' Roll will do. Drawing from, but not relying on, a vast array of influences that include everything from The Dictators to The Sonics, delivered best on 'Chase The Man' – arguably the best song on here. What I like most about this release is its refusal to run out of steam and even after the twenty-eight minutes of noise has had its say, you're still looking for more. A difficult task to achieve, but the type of CD that will have you shooting back to the beginning for another dose as soon as you're done. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

NOFX "WOLVES IN WOLVES' CLOTHING". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

New album time for NOFX and one could hardly accuse them of resting on their laurels. Granted they may have cut their touring schedule down to three months a year (the summer) but they've been prolific to say the least with the studio recordings. Last year's 7 inch singles club saw them issue a single 5 month, none of which I managed to get my hands on. This album is their first in the aftermath of their failed Punk Voter campaign and sees them return to a subtler style of songwriting. Tracks like 'Seeing Double At The Triple Rock', 'Getting High On The Down Low', and 'Instant Classic' is the sound of NOFX of old, but other moments such as 'The Man I Killed' and 'Leaving Jesus Land' have the expected political undertones. Jason Livermore and Bill Stevenson's Blasting Room studio was where the majority of this record was put together, with oddy no mention of Ryan Greene in the recording credits. There's still a Punk Rock heart there and even if they only appear to play the Warped Tour these days, they've made more sacrifices than any other band I can think of to remain independent and it paid off. Fat Mike pens a drunken bio of the band for this release taking us through NOFX's rise to worldwide Punk acclaim and attempting to put everything into perspective. Their only problem now is 'getting that asshole out of the white house'. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

NONE MORE BLACK "THIS IS SATIRE". (FAT WRECK)

If memory serves me correctly None More Black's last album was a take-it-or-leave-it type deal with me. This sounds leaner and more focused and while the production is still, it's not so clean as to neuter everything. An upbeat sound, but the lyrics tackle the serious concerns of life. None More Black aren't breaking any new ground especially, but the hooks are tough to deny. 'This Is Satire' marries the sounds of early Hardcore ala the Descendents with the polished aesthetic of Fat Wreck Chords. This recording is also down two individuals from their last outing, but the core of Jason Shevchuk and Paul Delaney remain. J Robbins was ushered in to produce and naturally gives the album that modern day DC side at times. The guitars are heavy enough to give it that extra boost and prevent any Emo comparisons being lobbed about. Technically precise, well produced and passionate in delivery, but it still leaves me cold at times. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

NO RESPECT "UNADJUSTED". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)

No Respect's origins date back to Göttingen in 1985, when they started up as straight ahead Punk band. 'Unadjusted' marks their twenty-first year together as a band and has seen them drift into more Ska-Punk territory. It's well played and packs plenty of punch, with good chunky guitars backing up the horn section. Part Bosstones, part Bad Manners and part Stage Bottles, No Respect take their Ska influence seriously and sound accomplished. Lyrically it's from an anti-establishment perspective, but does offer some insightful solutions as opposed to whining about it all the time. An additional live CD, recorded in their hometown in 2004 and proving they can certainly transform this stuff onto the stage, also accompanies this album. No Respect are not unlike a lot of other bands, but what they do, they do it well. (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

NO RESPECT "EXCUSE MY SMILE". (MAD BUTCHER)

A reissue of No Respect's 1997 album, which has remained out of print for some years. At the time they were exploring a far more authentic Ska route than the shades of Punk they incorporated later on. This is undiluted straight up Ska, influenced by the early 80's sound of Bad Manners and later the Bosstones. It's upbeat, pacy and frantic at times, with some superb horn playing. The aggressive side often to be heard on their other recordings is absent here. You get the impression this was recorded on a sunny day in mid June when they'd put the problems of the world behind them for the afternoon. The lyrics can be poignant enough if you read them, but their delivery certainly isn't in your face. Most of the songs hold up well, fuelled by the energetic approach. (MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

THE OBSERVERS "SO WHAT'S LEFT NOW". (YELLOW DOG)

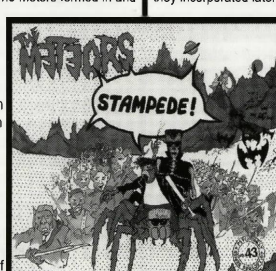
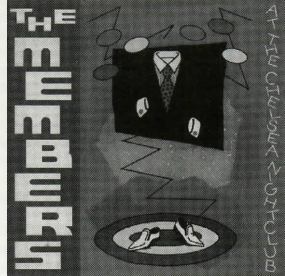
Something of a departure for Yellow Dog here, given that it's not the usual Death Metal banter they tend to busy themselves with. The Observers, from Portland, Oregon specialize in more seasoned Garage Rock flavours, that wouldn't sound out of place to any self-respecting New Bomb Turks fan. This is a re-release on a nice thick slab of vinyl, justifying a big pat on the back to Yellow Dog for being the only label this side willing to send their releases in on the LP format. This was recorded over two years ago and has aged well in the small space of time that has lapsed since. Punk, Garage and Power Pop is what's to be found on 'So What's Left Now', dipping into plenty of obscurities from the 60's for influence. Nothing new or exceedingly original, but it's always down to whether or not the songs hit you in the gut and these guys do the trick. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550208, 10372, BERLIN, GERMANY)

ONE DAY LIFE "FRIENDS IN NAME ONLY". (CORNDOG)

Four song EP from an Ipswich Indie Rock outfit calling themselves One Day Life. This is their second such effort and was recorded in their studio, which they built themselves. Clearly a strong DIY ethos in operation here, which is always positive. Oddly their musical inspiration comes from more mainstream sources such as Foo Fighters and Get Up Kids. I'll commend them on their enthusiasm, but the music just isn't to my liking, which is a pity as they seem to have their heads screwed on right. (CORNDOG PR: 71 RECTORY ROAD, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, IP2 8EQ, ENGLAND.)

ONION FLAVOURED RINGS "TWO MINUTE ENLIGHTENMENT". (NO IDEA)

This is the type of CD that keeps me doing this fanzine. You get a handful of releases each issue that genuinely hit on something another band hasn't done better already and Onion Flavoured Rings are that type of band. The similarities are there right enough, but the album as a whole is unlike anything I've heard previously. The Crucifixes, Buck Owens, Leatherface, B52's and The Beltones all sound to have influenced this band, but in a far more positive way than you can imagine. They don't clone 'em, but work in a likeminded fashion and recognise how various forms of music can sometimes sound just



right when placed together. And if all of this is achieved via a Punk perspective then all the better, it gives it a sense of quirkiness. Surprisingly Onion Flavoured Rings do not come from Gainesville but the East Bay of San Francisco, which may have helped their individuality develop somewhat, who knows! We could sit here all day analysing this band and it wouldn't make a blind bit of difference... this is a fantastic piece of work by a band that proudly represents Punk Rock in its current shape and form. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

P.A.I.N. "OH MY GOD WE'RE DOING IT". (IRON MAN)

This arrived for review two days after P.A.I.N. played Dublin, which was a fitting time. A reissue of their very first and much sought after album from 1995, which was originally issued on the Inner State label. Initial pressings sold out almost immediately and with the collapse of the label shortly afterwards, these recordings pretty much disappeared. For the uninitiated P.A.I.N. twinned the sounds of Punk and Dub long before it was popular to do so and came from a very strong and in your face anti-establishment background. Featuring former members of Radical Dance Faction, P.A.I.N. viewed themselves as an extension of that band and this as the third album in the trilogy of releases by both bands. Anxious to push people into mobilizing themselves and taking direct action against the powers that be, whether through a legal means or not, P.A.I.N. had little faith in any political faction and this album is a call to arms for the abolition of all governments. What they propose to put in its place is another matter, but for now they continue their anarchic struggle. To say P.A.I.N. are solely a vehicle for political awareness would be to sell them short, as they also wrote some belting tunes, most of which are to be found on this CD. "British Justice" and "Oh Nol It's the Pigs" are still firm live favourites today. Iron Man has made well with this reissue, including all lyrics and a brilliant fold out inner booklet, featuring plenty more goodies and food for thought... If you like your Dub and Punk stripped down to its bare essentials, there probably wasn't a better band doing this in the 90's than P.A.I.N. (IRON MAN RECORDS: P.O. BOX 9121, BIRMINGHAM, B13 8AU, ENGLAND.)

PARANOID VISIONS "OUTSIDE IN: THE VINYL YEARS 1986-1989". (TOXIC)

After the years I've spent attempting to accumulate whatever bits n' pieces of vinyl output I could find on Paranoid Visions, Foley goes and reissues the lot on CD! This twenty-track collection, made up of choice cuts from singles, EP's, mini albums and the "Schizophrenia" full length, could not have been better assembled. Paranoid Visions were often looked upon as the antidote to U2 in 80's Dublin and whilst many viewed them as little more than a bunch of irritating upstairs with no talent, they always had their hardcore fan base who believed there was more to the group than that - another dimension which the press and mainstream music fans alike seemed to overlook. Paranoid Visions spoke for the generation of teenagers who were left behind in 80's Dublin, when the majority of their peers had emigrated. Being able to release a D.I.Y. record at the time was a massive achievement in itself and Paranoid Visions existed against all odds, eventually achieving the kind of respect few were willing to grant them in the beginning. The importance of recordings like these being made available again in post Celtic Tiger Ireland cannot be over emphasised. Paranoid Visions went through countless band members in their time but the core duo and visionaries of the group, P.A. and Deko, remained till the bitter end in 1989. A rather informative CD booklet also accompanies this release containing full band history, cover artwork, flyers and press cuttings. The whole thing has also been remastered by Pete Holidai. Nice job. (TOXIC RECORDS: SUITE 2, 3 BLESSINGTON STREET, DUBLIN 7, IRELAND.)

PAUL CARTER "OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW BETTER". (PUNK SHIT)

I'm told Paul Carter is an old Punk veteran from way back, but I've only begun to hear the name recently. I knew he was a singer/songwriter type guy and played acoustic Punk numbers. No big deal, TV Smith has been doing it for years and I expected Paul Carter was something of an inferior version of what the ex-Adverts front man now spends his days doing. As it turns out, that wasn't too far from the truth. The whole concept of this is supposed to be the novelty that a Punk is playing an acoustic guitar. Some of the songs aren't bad, but Carter has a lot more work to do. It's not as simple as writing a song in five minutes and quickly recording it on a boom box, which is what this sounds like to me. Sure, some people have that rare gift to achieve the above, but Paul Carter is not one of those people. (PUNK SHIT RECORDS: 74 BRISTNALLHALL ROAD, OLDBURY, WEST MIDLANDS, B68 9TU, U.K.)

PENETRATION "MOVING TARGETS". (CAPTAIN OII)

A long overdue reissue of Penetration's momentous first album. "Moving Targets" was released by Virgin Records in 1978 following the band's formation two years previous. It took Virgin some time to make up their minds on whether or not they wanted to offer the band a full length album deal, having previously issued their 'Don't Dictate' 7 inch as a one-off single deal (included here as a bonus). Though Penetration were undoubtedly part of the first flush of Punk groups, their sound had a far wider impact on the second wave of Punk Rock and I always tend to slot them in alongside the likes of Wire and Gang Of Four for some reason. The only bands you could feasibly bracket Penetration with from the early days would be the Buzzcocks or Souxixie and The Banshees. Singer Pauline Murray was an art school dropout from Durham in the northeast of England, smitten with Roxy Music and the New York Dolls, whom she proceeded to follow around England to catch live. Together with Gary Chaplin she constructed the first incarnation of Penetration in 1976 and bagged the group support slots to The Adverts, Generation X, The Fall and Warsaw, (who later became Joy Division). "Moving Targets" was recorded after a second guitarist Fred Purser was drafted in on Virgin's recommendation to fill out their sound. Mike Howlett produced and the resulting record gave the band a number-fifteen chart position in November 78. It's a powerful and dramatic record, without becoming overwrought. Penetration are everything that is great about the initial Punk movement. They created a definitive sound of their own, weren't afraid to take influence from outside sources and in the process came up with an individual outlook which still sounds as fresh thirty years on. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

PERIFERIA-SA "PERIFERIA-SA". (DIRTY FACES)

The SA in the band's name stands for South America presumably, given that this band hail from Brazil. As far as I know Periferia SA is basically all the original members of popular Brazilian Hardcore band Ratos Do Porao, getting back together with a new batch of songs and three oldies from the early 80's. Guitarist/vocalist Jao still plays in Ratos Do Porao incidentally, it's the remaining two members who've drifted on to other things. A country as intense as Brazil should be prime breeding ground for a serious Hardcore Punk band and Periferia SA are that band. There's no Americana posturing here, this stuff sounds to be coming straight from the gutter and is easily the most convincing Hardcore record I've heard this year. There's a fantastic groove to it that strangely lends itself well to the almost Los Cruces styled roots of the music. I think there's a strong 77 edge to this stuff also, it's so in your face and from the gut that these guys have gotta be for real. No manufactured anger here!! (DIRTY FACES RECORDS: UNIVERSITATSTR 16, 44789 BOCHUM, GERMANY.)

THE PROFESSIONALS "THE BEST OF THE PROFESSIONALS". (CAPTAIN OII)

The final days of the Pistols resulted in the foundations being laid for Steve Jones' and Paul Cook's follow-on project The Professionals. In the aftermath of the 'Silly Thing' single in 1979, Cook and Jones continued to play together with a host of different musicians, including Jimmy Pursey, before finally settling on a line up that would become The Professionals in 1980. Fachina O'Cealligh who managed the Boomtown Rats, now also spoke for the Cook and Jones coalition, but this alliance was short lived. They made it as far as compiling a full-length album 'Join The Professionals' in August of that year, which was released by Virgin and where the lion's share of this CD is culled. The Professionals harked back to the sound of the early days of the Pistols, where Glam Punk and sleazy Rock n' Roll were the order of the day, stirring up a cocktail of Johnny Thunders, Roxy Music and David Bowie. It's a sweeter sound without Rotter's snarl and

at times you'd believe these recordings pre-dated Punk. The Professionals spent most of their short life in America where they're noticed up quite a few gigs, before a car crash in Minnesota slowed things down. A second U.S. tour in 1982 was to be their last, when Steve Jones decided to remain in the States for good following Cook's return to the U.K. There hasn't been a proper job done of The Professionals' back catalogue on CD before, so this will most definitely become a much sought after item of desire. For the record, they had some cracking songs to boot and much more than just the remnants of what the Pistols left behind. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

PROPAGANDHI "POTEMKIN CITY LIMITS". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

I don't think I'll be the only one surprised at seeing this come out on Fat Wreck Chords, following the band's issues with Fat Mike over their exclusion from the 'Rock Against Bush' compilation series. But here it is, on their home label, the new one from Canada's Propagandhi. It's always difficult to know where to start with Propagandhi; the music or the message? Thankfully they've generally managed to keep a good balance between the two and the same can be said of their latest offering. The band themselves would - most likely chose their politics over their music, but if that were the case for the rest of the world, the band obviously wouldn't exist. Using music as a vehicle for politics as we know can be a double-edged sword and Propagandhi have probably landed themselves in every pitfall imaginable in this regard, but have survived to tell the tale. Their frustration at others who don't feel as strongly about certain issues as they do continues to grow and rather than bring people together with their music, it seems they often have the effect of alienating potential followers with overly militant sentiments. Founding member and singer/guitarist with the band Chris Hannah exited Propagandhi back in 2003, but they overcame his departure with the introduction of Glen Lambert in his place, who by all accounts slots in remarkably well with the overall sound of the group. Musically and lyrically nothing much at all has changed with this band since 'Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes'. I've always been taken back by the sheer commitment and passion of the band, so 'more of the same' is fine by me. Put it this way, if you didn't like Propagandhi before, you're not gonna like 'em now! (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

RADIACS "HELLRAISER". (ANAGRAM)

The Radiacs, from Sheffield, were an often-overlooked band from the Psychobilly explosion of the 80's. This was the only studio album they ever recorded. It was originally released on Mark Brennan's Link label in 1989 and sold miserably. They also recorded a live album for the same label but this is the definitive piece of history on the Radiacs to own, as the vinyl version is long deleted and it has never been released on CD before. The band were deeply indebted to their heroes The Meteors and really only put this band together for the free beer, backstage passes and opportunity to meet their favourite Psychobilly bands. It's almost by default that they ended being a damn good band while they were at it. "Hellraiser" tends to slip back to the 50's a lot more than some of their peers, which is a style I much prefer to a lot of Psychobilly, which tends to shoot more for speed than overall songwriting. Whether you're into the rootier Psychobilly of The Meteors and The Woodies or the vintage Rockabilly of Johnny Burnette, the Radiacs will have something to offer you. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

RAPED "THE COMPLETE RAPED PUNK COLLECTION". (ANAGRAM)

As Alan Hauser duly points out in the liner notes to this release, it was hardly noticed that Raped were reasonably competent and wrote better songs than many more hyped Punk bands. As if their name alone wasn't bad enough, having song titles like "Foreplay Foreground" and "Pretty Paedophiles" was destined to scare away the music press. Gary Bushell ran a mile (thank fuck), Melody Maker commented it had "sewer sentiments throughout" and Sounds remarked it had "monochrome chauvinism by cliché-pitted brats". Not exactly getting off on the right foot there, you could say. Whilst their shock tactics may not have aged so well, their music, by stark contrast sounds even better today than when it was first released. A wide range of influences bled through to the foreground of their music, notably Bowie, Boland, Iggy and New York Dolls. Glammed up to the eyeballs, with the exception of bassist Tony Bagget, Raped set about antagonising the Punk Rock status quo and in one instance gained front-page headlines in national newspapers for giggling in a cinema at a Saturday morning children's show. Looking back you've got to laugh! As you can gather all this carry on garnered Raped more attention than their music did, which is a bit of a shame really, as it pretty much got overlooked. Perhaps they were ahead of their time and looking at bands like Turbonegro today, it's difficult not to draw some parallels. I rate this band very highly and this collection of EP's and live stuff compiled by Mark Brennan will hopefully achieve what it should have done thirty years back. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE REAL MCKENZIES "10,000 SHOTS". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Drop the inhibitions and The Real McKenzies become a fun listen. I've learned to do this with a lot of newer Punk acts. Punk Rock can't always be as deep and meaningful beneath the surface as The Clash or Dead Kennedys, so sometimes you gotta just make the most out of what's there. There're some good times to be had with bands like The Real McKenzies and as silly as the whole concept of them is, a few beers with this stuff in the background will lead to the perfect summer afternoon. They've taken the style of early Dropkick Murphys and built some fine infectious tunes around it. The band themselves would probably like to have you believe they got it from the source, but that's clearly not the case. With or without the kills and gimmickry, they're a good quality Punk outfit with more than a few musical ideas up their sleeves. This is their fifth full length and they continue to tighten as a unit. The press releases claims the band are "a credit to their ancestors"... trying saying that with a straight face!! (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY "TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER". (ANAGRAM)

In the early 80's Leeds was Goth central outside of London and Red Lorry Yellow Lorry were another example of the region's obsession with the dark and mythical world of Punk's foster son. Red Lorry Yellow Lorry came to fruition in 1982, having been influenced more by Joy Division than the burgeoning Goth scene, which they tried to distance themselves from to some degree. "Talk About The Weather" catches the band in 1984 and as far as I'm aware is their debut longplayer. The Lories (as they later became known) liked to believe their lyrics distinguished the band from the 'gargoyles and goblins' antics of their peers. This reissue from Cherry Red, as part of their Goth Collectors Series, features all eight tracks from the initial release, plus a monstrous eleven bonus cuts, made up of singles and 12 inch releases. The band soldiered on well into the 90's, before calling it a day, but have once again reformed, with talk of a comeback album on the cards. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

REDUCERS S.F. "RAISE YOUR HACKLES". (TKO)

The Reducers are steering into new, plush, thicker sounds and whilst other bands are trying their best to sound like The Reducers earlier stuff, these guys are moving forward, adding to, and building upon their sound. Plenty of life, urgency and overall energy. The Reducers aren't genre locked and look to Pub Rock, boot boy Glam and of course British Oi! to come up with their sound. This is the first record the band has turned since "Crabby Clubs And Smelly Pubs" six years back. "Fading Away" sets the pace for the rest of the record, which is packed full of tearaway anthems for the aging Skinheads. If this is the future of American Street Rock n' Roll, then the future looks pretty bright from here. Glen McHenry's voice sounds as passionate as ever and Kevin Doherty's Chelsea-styled guitar playing adds a little something to the boisterous backing music.

There's an uncredited and surprisingly good stab at The Pogues "The Broad Majestic Shannon" here as the closing track. If you like bands like The Beltones and Swingin' Utters, here's another one from the cream of that crop. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

RICKY WARWICK "LOVE MANY TRUST FEW". (TOWNSEND)

Hah! There's me taking the piss out of poor old Ricky in the last issue and a week after the magazine comes out I get a copy of this sent to me for review - Ricky's brand new solo album! Will he be Mike Ness, will he be a spandex Heavy Metalter, will he be a Punk Rocker or maybe even a Country music star? That's just the type of excitement that awaits you when you have a Ricky Warwick CD in your hands. Ricky Warwick, in case you're unaware (shame on you), has reinvented himself as a singer/songwriter and with the help of Joe Elliot and Vivian Campbell's production credentials, has knocked out this album in Joe's Garage Studios, which to my knowledge is located in the Rock n' Roll heartland of ... Stepside!!! Ok, ok, I know, I'm picking on an easy target here ... I'll stop taking the piss ... dammit it's too much fun, I can't! Kieran Goss is his songwriting partner here for jaysus sake!!! Good on ya Ricky, you're playing a blinder ... another stormer! (www.townsend-records.co.uk)

RIFU "BOMBS FOR FOOD, MINES FOR FREEDOM". (GO-KART)

Neo Hardcore, dipping in and out of Screamo and from the deepest bowels of Norway. Drawing from the Heavy Metal of bands like Slayer and flogging it to a Punk audience is an old trick, but surprisingly still seems to work. The labels clearly haven't moved on yet and are eager for more and more and more and more and ... which is where Rifu come in. You get the picture. (GO-KART EUROPE: POSTFACH 12 07 50, 68058 MANNHEIM, GERMANY.)

THE ROBOCOOP KRAUS "YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOUT". (EPITAPH)

Another fine CD single from Germany's answer to early Devo. The Robocop Kraus caught me on the hop last year with a fine example of how challenging Punk Rock can still be in this day and age if you give it a chance. What sets this band apart from other experimental outfits out there who wish to place themselves amidst the Punk elite is the The Robocop Kraus's great songs. Much like their Devo forefathers there's a rhythm and groove to get into here. "You Don't Have To Shout" has an anthem-like quality about it that wouldn't sound out of place on one of the Buzzcocks more experimental records. Second track 'What's The Matter With That Sound' also has mass appeal potential about it and gets inside your head with it's infectious guitar lines and chanting chorus. The final number, 'Warehouse' goes out with a whimper, taking things down a gear or two, but is none less effective and a good change of pace, putting on display another side to this group. Also included here is the rather inventive and entertaining promo video for the title track. (EPITAPH EUROPE: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE RUDE BOYS "SKA FEVER". (STEP 1 MUSIC)

Roddy Moreno's short-lived (12 months) Ska project from 1988. I got the 10-inch vinyl version of this that DSS put out about five years ago and this marks its first appearance on CD. It remains an integral part of Roddy's portfolio and contains some of the best original Reggae music I've heard in years - leagues ahead of the digital crud that was polluting the genre at the time. This stays true to the Skinhead Reggae traditions of the late sixties and Ska from a decade previous. Roddy knows his shit in this region, and along with his two brothers Dom and Adrian and a further four musicians, really nailed it here. In line with the likes of Laurel Aitken (who's "Hey Bartender" gem is covered), Desmond Dekker and The Skatalites, these eight original Rude Boys songs make for cracking party listening. With the exception of 2 Tone, no one has truly captured the essence of Rude Boy culture as good as this since the 60's. Believe it, it's that good and anyone not lucky enough to own a copy of that 10-inch, should immediately rush out and acquire this. (STEP 1 MUSIC: P.O. BOX 21, TENTERDEN, KENT, TN30 7ZZ, ENGLAND.)

RUEFREFX "CAPITAL LETTERS: THE BEST OF RUEFREFX". (CHERRY RED)

One ironic thing nobody seems to point out with the Ruefrefx was how incredibly one-sided the sentiments of "Wild Colonial Boy" were, when they claimed to be speaking from a neutral standpoint. You'd swear the other side's arsenal was/is used for shooting pigeons!!! From the Protestant stronghold of the Shankill came the Ruefrefx (originally formed as the Roofkeepers in 1977) - one of the most challenging and uncompromising bands to ever emulate from this country. Notorious vocalist Alan Clarke joined the ranks in '79 and the band set out on a journey that took them predominantly around the pubs and clubs of this island. Clarke was a menacing looking character and only too keen to prove his worth (one particular incident involves a Dublin appearance when as a response to a heckler in the crowd, Clarke proceeded to take off his studded belt and whip the living shit out of the offending (Black) Catholic). Yes, troublesome times indeed, but it didn't prevent the Ruefrefx from penning some of the most instantly recognisable Punk Rock of its day. There was no blueprint for these guys to work off; they forged their own way and were all the better a band because of it. They lasted around the ten-year mark and "Flowers For All Occasions", their debut, still remains an all-time favourite of mine. This is the first anthology of the group's work and has been immaculately assembled by Cherry Red. To my knowledge the majority of this stuff has never appeared on CD before. The fantastic liner notes contained in the elusive fold out booklet that accompanies "Capital Letters" further compliments the twenty-tracks. Vital listening!! (CHERRY RED RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

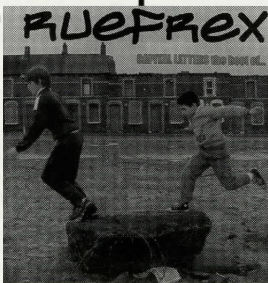
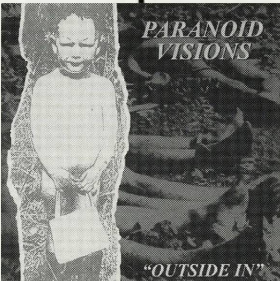
THE RUTS "GRIN & BEAR IT". (CAPTAIN OII)

The classic Ruts album finally appears on Captain Oi! Unquestionably one of the greatest ever bands here, Punk or otherwise, and what more can be said that hasn't been said already about this lot? Malcolm Owen's coupling of hard street sounds with the Reggae he'd been exposed to from London's West Indian immigrants brought together some of the finest musical couplings ever heard in the Punk scene. "Grin & Bear It" was the second longplaying release by The Ruts, following "The Crack", and was a compilation of sorts consisting of rare and original or live versions of some of their best work, making it an essential accompaniment to their first album. Their first single "In A Rut/H-Eyes" from 1978 sounds awesome here in typical razor sharp Ruts fashion, along with the near six-minute full length version of "West One (Shine On Me)" which opens the album up. "S.U.S." "Babylon's Burning" and "Society" are represented in their live form. The real added bonus to this is the extra tracks that close the album, in particular the final three,

which are taken from the "Sleeping Boudge" EP and transpire as the first recording ever made by The Ruts in 1977, but not issued until '81 and have only been available as inferior quality bootlegs ever since. Another must-have release here from the Captain. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE RUTS "THE PUNK SINGLES COLLECTION". (CAPTAIN OII)

Busy days over at the Captain Oi! HQ as another essential one is let out of the bag. Back in the company of The Ruts once again for the release of their singles collection, with many tracks appearing on CD for the first time. This is the first ever Ruts release of its kind and features every A and B side the band released in their short career. Original 7 inch versions of "Babylon's Burning", "Something That I Said" and "Jah War" are contained along with debut Ruts CD single "Different View". This collection pretty much reads as a "greatest hits" of the band, with all the favourites packed onto a single CD. "Staring At The Rude Boys" sounds as mesmerizing as ever, with "Love In Vain" still making the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. Malcolm Owen's death by a heroin overdose in the run up to the release of "Grin & Bear It" had "The West One/The Crack" single released in his honour, making it all the more poignant. Mark Brennan adds his usual informative breakdown of each single and the circumstances surrounding its release, along with original cover artwork, making this one-of-a-kind release the ultimate collection of The Ruts work. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH



THE SAINT CATERINES "DANCING FOR DECADENCE". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Montreal's The Saint Catherines are the latest signings to Fat Wreck Chords, who come to the label complete with a history of two albums, an EP and two split 7 inch's behind them. They've also clocked up over four hundred gigs and played in nine different countries, so clearly a well-oiled machine and not siblings looking to be nurtured under Fat Wreck Chords wing. Alex Newport has been drafted in to produce here and offers his crunching guitar dynamics to the sound, but perhaps the fact that the band has three guitarists in the line up may lend itself to this also. In an almost Melvins-esque manner, The Saint Catherines pile-drive their way through twelve tracks of punchy melodic Hardcore. Yes, this could be said to be slipped into the Leatherface/Avail genre! Whether or not the Punks out there feel they've come in their collections for another band in this category remains to be seen, but their seven-year band history may stand to them in this regard. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

SALVATION "THE COMPLETE COLLECTION 1985-1989". (CHERRY RED)
Cherry Red continues their Goth series with this release by Leeds' Salvation. Formed in 1983 and quickly nurtured by Andrew Eldrich and his Sisters Of Mercy machine. They recorded their earliest of works for his label and also opened for the band on many occasions. Salvation offered a far livelier interpretation of the Psychodelic Goth disease that plagued Britain in the mid to late eighties. They used synths and drum machines, but springing when compared to other bands of their time and most of their songs were simply slowed-down versions of the New Wave music that had come before it. This collection pulls together everything the band recorded prior to signing with Miles Copeland's IRS label, by which time inner relations had reached boiling point and they split the following year. The twenty tracks up for grabs here are made up of their four EP's and "Diamonds Are Forever" mini album. Stylistically Salvation remind me of a more polished early Cult in their earlier writing skills, which is still far better than a lot of other Goth stuff and no doubt why they became an integral part of the movement. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

SATANIC SURFERS "TASTE THE POISON". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)
I crossed paths with the Satanic Surfers back when they were among the Burning Heart roster, but apart from the name I recall little on the band. They've been through the Pop Punk ringer of the mid 90's and have now altered their sound somewhat to fit in with what's been happening on the Punk front of late. Bands like NOFX and Pennywise have, for the most part, been dropped as influences and the likes of Avail and Strike Anywhere have been drafted in, in their place. This CD will not make you want to throw out your Avail and Strike Anywhere records, but will perhaps come in useful when you've worn them out. Satanic Surfers can be fun at times, but considering this label's history is steeped in quality, you may feel a little let down by the unchallenging nature of this particular release. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

THE SCARRED "NO SOLUTION". (PUNK CORE)
Orange County's The Scarred have become veterans of the underground DIY Punk circuit in America, notching up no less than eight full US. tours without any label backing or even a booking agent. Their hard work clearly caught the eye of Punk Core who set about getting this sophomore CD of theirs on the market. They self-released their debut in 2004 and have been touring off the back of it ever since. I'm guessing the schooling of this band lies in the old Orange County stuff such as The Adolescents and Social Distortion, but they've clearly discovered bands like Blitz and The Business along the way. They remind of Boston's Unseen in many ways, but at the same time there's an almost Pennywise feel to them I can't shake off. Doesn't 'Bastards' sound like 'Bro Hymn', or is it just me? Whilst a lot of this is steeped in the days of old, they've managed to give it a good modern going over with the production values to make 'No Solution' a viable source of Punk intake in 2006. (PUNK CORE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 916, MID-DLE ISLAND, NEW YORK, 11953, U.S.A.)

SCOUTS HONOUR "I AM THE DUST". (NO IDEA)
Jared Grabb gradually released the band Scouts Honour around his solo work. Sounds like a similar story to Tom Gabel and Against Me! don't it? Here we see Jared accompanied by Atomic Satterfield on drums and Chris Mackey on bass, cooking up a mean blend of Punk, Folk and Traditional Americana music. Unfortunately the Against Me! comparisons are just too close for comfort and Scouts Honour are destined for the imitators bin, which is kind of a shame as they sound legit and I quite like them, but it's just not possible to get Against Me! out of your head when listening to this. Still, I'd be interested in hearing how this project develops as there's undoubtedly plenty of untapped talent lurking in here. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

SCREECHING WEASEL "WEASEL MANIA". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)
Who would have thought an anthology album of Screeching Weasel could be so much fun? The only problem I've ever had with this band in the past is their songs tend to wear a little thin by the fifth or sixth song in an each album. Choosing the four or so best tracks off each previous record as they've done here I think is the best way to appreciate the band. When Screeching Weasel are good they have the ability to be very good, but with an identical formula since their inception in 1986 lifted from their heroes the Ramones, their albums have a tendency to contain a high volume of filler. Their singles are mostly fantastic and their choice of material for this disc is equally superb. Naturally this collection spans the essential Lookout years before Screeching Weasel made the leap over to Fat and continued to release some pretty strong material, as represented here with 'Dummy Up' and 'Cool Kids'. In the wake of Punk can write these types of songs anymore and keep me interested, so in a few bands Pop Punk overkill a band like this can shine all the more. Their energy, drive and hooks remain impressive, whilst Ben's vocals are just too easy to fall for. Housed in a neat booklet, which contains band commentary and vintage photos, plenty of them unseen, 'Weasel Mania' is everything the title promises. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

SECOND CLASS CITIZEN "CONSPIRACY OF TRUTH". (SELF-RELEASED)
Another one that arrived in the same promo-package from Connecticut, so I think we can safely assume that all bands are connected in some way or other. Second Class Citizen takes a good deal of influence from Discharge along with some of the more recent Hardcore bands you're likely to hear on the Revelation label. Not really my cup of tea, but I can still appreciate the Discharge and Sheer Terror direction they head into at times. This is very much Hardcore of the straightforward kind, with no twists or turns to confuse matters. If you like your musical predictable and to the point then Second Class Citizen get the job done. One thing they won't do is keep you guessing, but I still reckon this band would kick up a riot live. (SECOND CLASS CITIZEN: P.O. BOX 380152, EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, 06138-0152, U.S.A.)

SHAME ACADEMY "PUNK ROCK FOR DUMMIES". (COMBAT ROCK)
The Brian Yano advance homemade version of this was reviewed two issues back, but here we see Combat Rock in France do a professional release job of the songs Shame Academy have recorded together, since initially forming for a one-off show to celebrate the release of 'It Makes You Want To Spit' book. Somewhere along the way they got bundled into a studio to belt out their greatest hits and this is the result. Taking highlights from the back catalogues of The Outcasts, Rudi and Stalag 17 and giving them a modern twist, Shame Academy are for the most part a part-time dross band with some seriously good Punk staple tunes to their credit. This release has been housed in an impressive digi-pack format and features liner notes from both Sean O'Neill and Guy Treflor - authors of 'It Makes You Want To Spit!'. All these songs meant a lot to Irish Punks in their day and it's nice to see a label like Combat Rock sharing them with the outside world. As an added bonus they've included a recording of Shame Academy's four-teen-song live set from the book launch, which may not be the best sounding technically, but does go some way to capturing the buzz of the night. (COMBAT ROCK RECORDS: 7 RUE DU PAQUIS, 57950 MONTIGNY LEST METZ, FRANCE.)

SHARK SOUP "FATLIP SHOWBOX". (KUNG FU)
Knockout Records gave this band a chance a few years back by releasing a mini-CD and the outcome was impressive. Not surprisingly an established stateside label (B.Y.O.) has picked up on 'em, to release the debut full length over there, whilst Kung Fu have taken up the honours for Europe. Chrissi Jany fronts the band on guitars and vocals, who you may recall from his days in Oxyornon. Shark Soup however are a different kettle of fish (har! har!) and stick to a Psychobilly sound with the addition of a stand up, slap bass player. Similar to a lot of the Psycho stuff currently to be found on the Helicat imprint (Tiger Army, Nekromantix etc.), Shark Soup blend those old traditions of Rock n' Roll and Punk Rock, The Clash and Eddie Cochran. It's a good coupling, but there is a lot of it about today and Shark Soup will need to be fairly quick off the mark to make a lasting impression. It's not the most inventive record I've heard of late, but I still like it a lot. There's just something to be said for stripping two essential forms of music down and twinning the results. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE SHOCKER "UP YOUR ASS TRAY - THE FULL LENGTH". (GO-KART)
If you've ever wondered what happened to Jennifer Finch in the after-years of L7, then wonder no more as the answer lies here with The Shocker. She formed The Shocker to play a party in an old storefront in Los Angeles three years ago and has continued making music with them since. In 2004 an EP of the same title was unleashed and two years on we have the full length that comes off the back of several miles on the road in the States as well as Europe. L7's best stuff was arguably released at the hands of Sub Pop and The Shocker have more in common with that era of L7 than the later version which went on to receive some mainstream acclaim. Finch's fuzztone guitar and husky vocals carry the band through the majority of the record whilst hooky gang vocals provided by the remainder of the line up do their best to give a signature to their sound. For the most part, The Shocker work at mid-paced and rely on a rolling groove to create a sense of rhythm which fuels them more than anything else by the sounds of things. What really turned my head with this CD was their excellent treatment of Ice T's 'Body Count' - surely one of the greatest Punk LP's ever to grace this earth! (GO-KART EUROPE: POSTFACH 12 07 50, 68058 MANNHEIM, GERMANY.)

SICK 56/HIGGINS ++ "NEW DAY NEW ENEMY EP". (J.S.N.T.G.M.)
Blackpool compatriots Sick 56 and Andy Higgins team up once again for this split 7 inch. 'The government should be doing time!' scream Sick 56 on their screeching 'Losing The War' track, which speaks for the A-Side of this record. Pie-driving and edgy Hardcore Punk by one of the leading lights in today's game. The flip sees a further rant from Higgins ++ and this time he's brought a band along to back him up, which transpires to be Sick 56 on this occasion. Reminds me a tad of his old band Erase Today crossed with The Adverts. Great split! (J.S.N.T.G.M. RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1025, BLACKPOOL, FY3 0EB, ENGLAND)

THE SKIDS "SCARED TO DANCE". (CAPTAIN OIL)
It's not difficult to get excited about a CD reissue of a piece of vinyl I have played countless times down the years, by a band I still rank as one of Punk's great unsung heroes. 'Scared To Dance' is quite simply another treasured moment from the days when Punk was still fresh, exciting, and had something to say. Richard Jobson assembled The Skids in Dunfermline, Scotland in 1977, and along with guitarist Stuart Adamson became the chief songwriter in the group. Listening to 'Scared To Dance' today you can't help noticing how much bands like Kaiser Chiefs, Franz Ferdinand and U2 owe to the Skids, but that's another story. The immediately recognisable bass rumble of 'Into The Valley' kicks this record into gear, as Jobson's anthemic cries of 'Ahoi! Ahoi!' turn some of their competitors at the time on their backs. This record hit the racks at the butt end of Punk's first outburst in 1979 on the Virgin imprint and was a breath of fresh air, proving you could still be a Punk band and also musically challenging at the same time. Included on this reissue alongside the great album tracks are the essential early EP's marking their first dealings with Mr. Branson. If you're curious as to what Jobson is up to these days check out the magnificent and semi-autobiographical '16 Years Of Alcohol' flick he made a few years back. Never to be overlooked! (CAPTAIN OIL RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

SKUDS & PANIC PEOPLE "HUMAN EXTINCTION". (LEAN ON ME)
Boisterous Ska Punk from France, blending the sound of Discipline with The Selecter. Ska Punk in this day and age isn't normally my cup of sulphur, but there's something ear catching about this band. Listening to them makes me feel energized in the same way Stage Bottles or Los Fastidios do, but Skuds & Panic People don't really sound anything like either of those two bands. There've been quite a few releases coming from the French direction lately and the majority have been good. You're not going to find anything new on this CD, but it's played with such verve, that it's difficult to dislike. Lean On Me is also a label I'm ignorant of, but hearing this makes me optimistic. (www.skudz.free.fr)

THE SKULLS "BEYOND WARPED: LIVE MUSIC SERIES". (IMMERGENT)
Old L.A. Punk band The Skulls reformed a few years back with vocalist Billy Bones as the only original. His new batch of recruits more than proved their worth on the 'Therapy For The Sky' comeback CD issued through Dr. Strange and this CD/DVD catches them out on the Warped Tour in support of it. Suitably rowdy and theatrical, the eight live tracks blast their way through in no time at all with a strong Ramones aesthetic. Plenty of brash catchiness with a full on Rock n' Roll attitude. 'Building Modles', 'Summer Of Hate' and 'You Can't Drag Me Down' are all typically boisterous, proving that old Punks don't have to mellow with age. The DVD side to this disc is equally good, though I always thought The Skulls were more at home in a sweaty club than an outdoor stadium. This theory is further cemented with the added inclusion of some live footage filmed in more intimate venues, which we also get as part of the deal and probably the best part of the package for me. Enjoyable to say the least. (IMMERGENT RECORDS: 2231 S. CARMEINA AVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90064, U.S.A.)

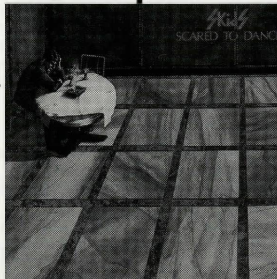
SOFAHEAD "PRE MARITAL PREDICAMENT". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
A reissue from the late 80's here, that combines Sofahead's first two albums on to one CD. Sofahead featured amongst their line up, Ian from Anarchy Punk band Dan and Lainey from Leatherface in another of his many on-the-side bands. Sofahead firmly sound as you'd expect coming out of this era of melodic UK Punk Rock. Twinning the sounds of Leatherface and Husker Du as so many bands are fond of doing today, Sofahead have a touch more credibility to their band, considering the timeframe and it's member make up. There were some great bands around playing this sort of stuff at the time and contrary to what it has turned into today, it was very much heartfelt in the late 80's dark days of underground Punk. Their first album 'Pre Marital Yodelling' came out in 1989 and the follow up 'What A Predicament' in 1990, appearing in reverse order here for some reason. The music has aged comparatively well, especially since half of all new bands appearing on the scene today aim for this sound. Some of the lyrics on the other hand haven't and slip into stereotypical generalisations at times, but on the whole both these albums come recommended, especially if you're a fan of the newer breed that fit into the above category. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

SOMIC BOOM SIX "SOUNDS TO CONSUME: CHAMPION EDITION". (MOON SKA)
I reviewed this band previously but I think they may have been on a different label at the time. This is their big digi-pack release on Moon Ska. First thing I notice is the sample of the Maytals 'Funky Kingston' on the third track. Somic Boom Six blend the sounds of Jamaican music with American Hardcore and sing it in a British accent. They've taken time out to research their stuff, which is one thing I can respect them for. Yes, Ska for long does actually go beyond listening to a thirty-second bridge in a NOFX song. This hour long CD seems to be a collection of past session outtakes, cover tunes and remixes. I don't think I rated the band too highly when we last met, but they appear to have studied their craft a little deeper this time out and have come back with something all the more far

reaching. It's still essentially teenage music and may not appeal to anyone outside that bracket just yet, but they're quickly outgrowing the scene that spawned them and the next couple of records should see them enter some untapped territory interest-wise. (MOON SKA EUROPE: P.O. BOX 184, ASHFORD, KENT, TN24 0ZS, ENGLAND.)

SPACE CRETINS "ROCKET ROLL". (KILLING PIG)
Cyber Punk Rock n' Roll from the underbelly of Seattle. Kiss, the Misfits and the Ramones are their ripple and who can knock that? Space Cretins don't try to impress with technically or indeed originality for that matter, but they know what makes a good Rock n' Roll record and set their sights on achieving just that. This is everything you should want in a band: honesty, sincerity and truckloads of the Rock n' Roll. The tracks on this album flow so well as the Space Cretins emanate easy-to-relate-to lyrics, filthy guitars and singalong choruses. If this record is any indication of how Seattle is beginning to rise again, then good times lay ahead. It's got that nice drunk-punk quality about it, but the delivery is refreshingly laidback and you can bet nothing here is forced. I've not heard anything else on the band so I can't compare, but this is one shit-kicking record that will provide any self respecting Punk or Rock n' Roller with endless hours of entertainment. The type of thing you just can't listen to without cranking the volume. (spacecretins@gmail.com)

SPERMBIRDS "SOMETHING TO PROVE/NOTHING IS EASY". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
Ahh! I give you the great Spermbirds ladies and gentlemen. There were so many copied cassette tapes of this band being circulated in my teenage years that I think just about everyone at the time viewed the Spermbirds as their gateway to Punk Rock. Tracks like 'You're Not A Punk' and 'My God Rides A Skateboard' still shred all these years later. The Spermbirds were arguably the first European band to become so heavily intrigued by the U.S. Hardcore of Black Flag, Circle Jerks and Suicidal Tendencies and actually do something useful with that influence. Ironically they also penned songs about their disgust at the Americanisation of the world (see 'Americans Are Cool'). The 'Something To Prove' LP originally came out on the We Bite label in 1986 and 'Nothing Is Easy' can't have been that far behind it. There was a sense of honesty in the Spermbirds American influence that you just don't get anymore. They meant it and existed in an era when they were with little hope for monetary gain by playing this type of Punk Rock. Along with both these classic albums, you also get their first 7 inch 'My God Rides A Skateboard' and three live tracks. The complete Spermbirds package if you will. Hats off to Boss Tuneage for getting this one out! (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)



STANDARD UNION "THE LONELY VICTORIES". (DIRTY FLAIR)
Keeping Australia's name firmly etched into the Street Punk map, Standard Union are back with another helping of their underdog psalms. The Rancid-isms I experienced on their last record have made way for something a little further in the direction of the U.S. Bombs and Dropkick Murphys. They've developed as songwriters too and veer close towards the league of bands like Bombshell Rocks and Voice of A Generation. It sounds a little choreographed and forced to these ears, but Standard Union sure take their music more seriously than most and the hours they've put in to getting their band this tight pay off here. This four-piece keep it lean and mean, complimenting the guitar jab with foot-tapping rhythms. Recycling, but good recycling! (DIRTY FLAIR RECORDS: 31 FRANCIS STREET, ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 5000.)

THE STITCHES "8 X 12". (VINYL DOG)
The first official CD reissue of the record that kick started it all back in '95, as far as the '77 revival of Southern California goes. This eighteen-minute eight-track EP is bursting at the seams with snot, piss and vinegar. Long before the skinny tie interest got rekindled in the area, The Stitches were belting out this rather unpopular traditional style of Punk in times of NOFX and Pennywise clones. It caught on however and bands like the U.S. Bombs emerged from the same ghetto. Decidedly more sped up than the '77 brigade, bands like The Briefs have more recently adopted a similar stance. There's a weird version of Shane MacGowan's 'That Woman's Got Me Drinking' on here, that doesn't quite slot in as they might have hoped, but the other seven tracks maintains the high standards set with opener 'Nowhere'. Stuffed to the gills with raw rage, harping on about alcohol and a messed up life, The Stitches were a breath of fresh air back in '95 and remain as instantly infectious over ten years later. You gotta love it! (VINYL DOG RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

STOKOE "THE EXPERIMENT HAS BEEN A COMPLETE AND UTTER FAILURE". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
The Boss Tuneage label has undergone something of a revamp this past year. New logo, new image and most clearly a new outlook, concentrating on more 'name' bands than you'd have expected from them in the past. They even deal in reissues too, which is always good news for fans sick of paying extortionate record collector prices when they just wanna hear the bloody songs. Anyway, on to this release, which is the new band from none other than Dickie Hammond. This should please fans who insist Leatherface just isn't Leatherface without Dickie Hammond. So it's the return of Dickie and his Gordon Smith with a female vocalist in his all new band where all the songs are self penned by the man himself. Not surprisingly this holds a strong resemblance to his former band as that trademark sound will always belong to Leatherface, no matter how many bands now shoot for it. It's as if Dickie has been locked up for a few years and been accumulating all these ideas which he now has the chance to showcase as he comes racing out of the traps with stellar opener '9 Stories High' and continues this form for the remainder of the CD. Various avenues are explored, from full throttle Punk nuggets to more melancholic moments like the title track, all of which work on various levels. Granted we've had Dr. Bison, The Jones and HDQ, but this release truly marks the return to form we'd all hoped for. That old style of 'Fill Your Boots' that I loved so much is definitely evident here. You've got your 'Mush' moments as well and the production probably leans heavier in that direction, but overall this is a no holds barred Punk assault on the senses that Mr. Hammond can be proud of. Biggest treat of all is Frankie Stubbs teaming up with Dickie on album closer 'Sweet Suburbia' ... what a tease! (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

SUGAR PUFF DEMONS "FALLING FROM GRACE". (ANAGRAM)
The floodgates have opened with Cherry Red's purchase of the entire Link back catalogue so be prepared for a lot more of this type of stuff in the coming months. Sugar Puff Demons were a one-album band that disappeared as quickly as they had seemingly appeared on the scene. In truth there was a seven years history to what made the Sugar Puff Demons, existing in various guises since 1982. Apparently they couldn't find any other bands in 1982 that shared their appetite for what they called 'Death-a-Billy' and thus called it a day. With the advent of Psychobilly in Britain they reformed and began gigging again under the name Sugar Puff Demons. When local rivals The Batknifs bagged a deal with Link, the Sugar Puff Demons put pen to paper and wrote to Chuck Harvey (who was employed by Mark Brennan as A&R guy for Psychobilly) demanding to know why they weren't offered a deal. Chuck seemingly seen their point and shortly after had them in the studio to record this LP, which has never been issued on CD before. This band were often viewed to be playing too fast to realistically get classified as Psychobilly (fair point) and with influences that included that of Slayer, they were often accused of 'bordering on Thrash Metal' by their peers and thus weren't as successful as they might have been. Their lyrics were sicker than most and covered the patch of ground somewhere along the road of sex, the occult and death. Not long after this LP was issued the band split, which had a drastic effect on its sales figures. For those of you that missed out the first time, here it is, completely restored and sounding as tip top as anyone could have hoped for. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

SUICIDE BID "THIS IS THE GENERATION". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)

Some of the better Punk bands of these past years that managed to fuse a credible Jamaican slant into their music have pooled their assets to come up with a Dub Punk super group. Included amongst Suicide Bid's eleven-person line up are members and ex-members of bands like Ex-Cathedra, P.A.I.N. and The Filaments. All bands handled their Reggae influence well in previous times, but with Suicide Bid they took to further explore this avenue and dig deeper with plenty of bass-heavy Kaiser Dub that executes their anti-establishment outlook probably even more so than Punk Rock did. The trance-like rhythm of Dub drive the message home all the more clearer and focuses our minds more heavily on what is being said. This, as we well know, can often get lost in the wall of noise that can be Punk music at times. There's no need for a lyric sheet to understand what's going on here, though one is provided for your convenience! This eight-track mini CD is the first official release to come out under the Suicide Bid banner and all signs point towards a healthy future for what sounds to me like one of the more interesting bands the Punk scene has spawned in recent times. Only time will tell. (HOUSE-HOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

THE SUICIDE MACHINES "WAR PROFITEERING IS KILLING US ALL". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

I tuned in to The Suicide Machines some years back for a brief moment, having read an interview they done in some fanzine or other, but I'd be lying if I said I can remember much more than that about them. I kinda had them pinned as a Skate Punk band though, for some reason. The opening track on here treads a path closer to bands like Death By Stereo with a sharp biting edge, but before long we slip into an almost Skate Punk frame of mind, with the obligatory Ska bridge thrown in here and there. The best thing I can say about The Suicide Machines is the high energy they inject into each song that at least makes you sit up and listen if nothing else. They've got most of their bases covered when it comes to credibility stakes, but this CD just doesn't do a whole lot for me and reveals little beneath the surface. The lyrics are stereotypically anti-establishment (see album title for example) and give the impression of a band who've only discovered Punk Rock five minutes ago, which sadly as we know, is not the case. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

THE TERMITES "OVERLOAD". (ANAGRAM)

Anagram's Psychobilly Collectors Series keeps 'em coming with this rare late 80's treasure from The Termites. From the Kilmarnock region of Scotland but quickly relocating themselves to Glasgow, The Termites were a rough punch of Psychobilly's, too young for Punk Rock but too angry for the music of their day and so they turned to the burgeoning Psychobilly scene that was spreading itself across the U.K. At first influenced by his father's old Rock n' Roll records, singer Kenny became a fifteen-year-old Teddy Boy and ferreted out some like-minded locals looking to put a band together. They played their local venues, got barred from the majority of them and came close to physically killing each other in the process of their short-lived career as Rock n' Rollers. This was their one and only album recorded for the Link label as part of their "Chuck Flinnstone Presents..." series. They made the six hundred mile journey to Bracknell for the recording. It lasted less than a week and by that time bottle fights, alcohol and arguments had led the band to split on returning to Glasgow. So what you have here is basically their legacy – the full "Overload" album with six bonus tracks tacked on. The original vinyl pressing of this was limited to a thousand copies and has become a somewhat sought after piece of history. This is a fine stroke of work considering the band had no clue what they were doing and should be rated alongside earlier gems from the likes of The Meteors and The Polcats. It's rare you can access one-off goldmines like this CD, but when you do I recommend eagerly snapping 'em up. Fine stuff! (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THREE CORNERED RUG "FUCKIN' DO IT!". (SELF-RELEASED)

The unmistakable 3CR return with another self-released CD and nothing much has changed. This is another run through the sick and twisted world of Manchester's latter day Mac Lads type outfit. Aimed to get the wilies up the PC brigade and perhaps little else, 3CR have been championing the apolitical and fun wing of Punk music for some time now. Ironically they appear to have a far harder working lifestyle than they portray in their songs, as they've raised the profile of the band considerably through vigorous self-promotion. In case you don't get the idea, song titles like "She Bummed Me", "Preacher Punk", "I Fell In Love With A Minger", "Spit Roasted Groupies" and "Graveyard Shaft" should drive home 3CR's message. It's a fun message, but it would be nice if there was something beneath all the Viz humour. (www.3cr.org)

THROW RAG "13 FT. AND RISING". (KUNG FU)

I dismissed this band when I caught them live in a supporting role to Flogging Molly when they last visited these shores, but hearing this CD has brought about a change of heart for me. I had them down as an all-image-no-substance band, but this is a rare case of a group actually sounding a whole lot better if you don't see them performing in the flesh. Maybe I caught them on a bad night, but the music here sounds so much better than their live show. Throw Rag's history traces back to Hillbilly and Country origins, which they've kept to a degree, but this is more or less a Punk n' Roll formula they're working off these days. They carry a solid groove with effective guitar singing from Dino. Traces of the Butthole Surfers can be heard throughout, as well as The Cramps, but I would slot this in with the neo sleaze brigade of The Briefs et al. This is being released via BYO stateside whilst Kung Fu have offered their services over here, meaning Throw Rag have been given all the chances they could hope for to have an impact. They're already quite established in America, but have yet to make their mark in Europe. This is the Californian's third full length which contains a haunting contribution from Lemmy for a run through that old Merle Haggard favourite "Tonight The Bottle Let Me Down". Keith Morris and Jello Biafra also crop up on album closer, "Children Of The Secret State". A faith restorer if ever there was one! (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

TIM BARRY "LAUREL ST. DEMO 2005". (DANCING IN THE DARK)

Tim Barry, Avail's lead man, with his first solo outing. As the title suggests these eight songs were just demos he'd scraped together in the privacy of his own home, but when word got out they took on a life of their own and in this instance ended up being released by a French fan of Avail who also just happens to run Dancing In The Dark Records. Tim wasn't too pushed on the idea at first but with a little bit of arm-twisting we have this official release. Anyone who's paid even the slightest bit of attention to Avail would have seen this coming. Their admiration for old American Folk music is no secret and that's where Tim's style draws from the most here. This is the sound of a young white Punk guy being influenced by Robert Johnson, Woody Guthrie and Bruce Springsteen's "Nebraska" album - making the glaringly obvious connection between Punk, Folk and old Traditional songs. It's not a new concept but it suits Tim Barry's outlook and I think in the back of every Avail fan's mind we were holding out for something like this. It's good folks, it's good! (DANCING IN THE DARK RECORDS: C/O RONSBERGER, BRUNNWEIG 6, 93080 PENTLING, GERMANY.)

TOMMY AND THE TERRORS "UNLEASH THE FURY". (TKO)

I caught an early gig or two by this Boston band, formed back in '98, but can't remember much else about them. Eight years on and they're on their second album for TKO, knocking out the Punk Rock like their lives depended on it. As is almost tradition with any Boston Street Punk band, they have a strong connection towards the Hardcore music the city spawned in the 80's and always make room for a dollop of it in their music. Matt Kelly from Dropkick Murphys produced this album and lends that early Dropkick's feel to it. It was also recorded at The Outpost in Stoughton, where many of the best current Boston Punk records were cut. There's a great balance to this, where you get just the right amount of each influence to come through, without ever swaying too much in either direction. The topical lyrics go above and beyond a lot of what passes for Street Punk today and hone in with an original angle on social issues of the time. Again this is where the balance comes in as they also have stuff about drinking with the boys, which is no harm either. On the whole, a solid Punk release, packing a production that's right on the

mark. (TKO RECORDS: 8941 ATLANTA AVE. #505, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92646, U.S.A.)

TO WHAT END? "CONCEALED BELOW THE SURFACE". (YELLOW DOG)
Ferocious Swedish Hardcore featuring ex-members of Wolf Brigade. Bruising riffs and dual rage-packed vocals dominate this record from start to finish. The emphasis remains on a style originated by two bands – Slayer and Sick Of It All. To What End? piece both together and "Concealed Below The Surface" is the result. It screams on the melody too much for my liking and lacks that essential delivery we would hear on either of the two above bands records. Certain factions of the Punk scene will eat this up, but I'm staying well away. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550208, 10372, BERLIN, GERMANY)

TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT "CROOKED LIFE/STRAIGHT WORLD". (NO IDEA)

LP number three for Sweden's Trapdoor Fucking Exit and it keeps all the rage of their first two albums, whilst infusing it with plenty of new ideas, of particular note the 70's Rock influence which they use quite well. Black Flag drifted down a similar path in the latter years of their career and the results weren't always to everyone's approval, but hey! they kept pushing things forward and remained impossible to predict. Whilst this isn't exactly the type of thing you could hum along to, there is still an undeniable catchiness to Trapdoor Fucking Exit's sound, with has an almost Minutemen and Wire-like artiness about it. Showing little sign of running out of steam anytime soon, this band continues to cook up a mean blend of early 80's Hardcore that's been given a modernising twist. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

TRIBUTE TO NOTHING "HOW MANY TIMES DID WE LIVE?". (DESTINY)

Destiny operates out of the same office as Fat Wreck Europe and tour-book a lot of their bands, but that's where the connection ends as far as I know. My last contact with their record label antics was a few years back when they released a rather fetching CD by a Mod band called The Movement. Since then I haven't heard much, but this release looks to be a fair stride down the line for them and a departure from what I thought they were delving into. I'm more than familiar with the name Tribute To Nothing, but I don't believe I've ever heard them before. They sound like I thought they might, hard enough to define themselves as a Hardcore band, but not completely avoiding the Emo pitfalls either. This is their fifth album. So presumably they've been working on this sound for some time. Parts of it I can tolerate, but a lot of the time it's easy to get lost in their sound and think you're listening to one of many hundreds of bands that appear on the market each year in the hope of being categorised as Punk. At times it's difficult not to feel sorry for a band like Tribute To Nothing when taking into account their lengthy band history, but there's nothing on here that will help them stand out above all the other flight-by-nights. (DESTINY RECORDS: WALDEMARSTR. 33, 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY)

TURN ME ON DEAD MAN "GOD BLESS THE ELECTRIC FREAK". (ALTER-NATIVE TENTACLES)
Who ever thought a label like Alternative Tentacles would release a record like this? A Syd Barrett early Floyd induced 70's Rock album! Biafra did once state that he empathised with Hippy ideals, it was the selling out part he couldn't take, so perhaps that's why he's warmed to this latter day San Franciscan outlet. LARD's "70's Rock Must Die" would be the perfect antidote to "God Bless The Electric Freak". The sitar works overtime here, playing along to crunching guitars riffs and soothing harmonious vocals. The most recent comparison I could derive would be Monster Magnet. The Hawkwind effect's boxes are all over the place and drag on at times, but the overall quality of the songs, minus the self-indulgent excesses, is quite high. If a Punk band chose to shorten these down and keep all the good bits, you'd have something close to interesting, but as it stands I could happily live without it. (ALTER-NATIVE TENTACLES: P.O. BOX 419092, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94141-9092, U.S.A.)

TV SMITH "MISINFORMATION OVERLOAD". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

What a scoop for Boss Tuneage to land the new TV Smith album! I'm pleased to say they've done a great job of it with digi-pack formatting and nice to see TV sticking with a Punk label as an outlet. I'm sure it's by choice rather than necessity, right Tim? This is by far the best TV Smith has sounded in years. He's achieved the right balance of raw, edgy guitars, rasping vocals and a great production job courtesy of TV himself. Racing out of the traps with "Good Times Are Back" sees Tim in fine form with a crunching backing band driving the message home. His single from a few years back "Not In My Name" sounds great and though it was available as a free download from his website for some time, this is my first chance to hear it. He's also at last found a place for his keyboards in all of this, which he's now using with much more appeal than on previous records. Old partner Vito Richie of Die Toten Hosen remains on drums with bass duties handled by Happi Muller. Underdog rebel music with plaintive, straightforward lyrics and catchy arrangements. These past years have seen a rise in TV's popularity once again as his solo stuff expels almost beyond the confines of his Adverts work. You can clearly pick up how this has assisted his confidence in songwriting on this album and things appear more cohesive than before. Renew your vows with the great TV Smith by scoring this one! (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

U.K. SUBS "LIVE: VIOLENT STATE". (COMBAT ROCK)

Good quality live Subs album here on digi-pack format, recorded during a European tour of 2004 – possibly from a range of gigs. Strangely they've opted to overdub the entire thing in the studio, which is a bit out of character for Charlie, considering the Subs always prided themselves on being a war's n' all type band. It does make the sound all the more powerful, but can it still realistically be called a "Live" album? For the record this is the proper Subs line up that includes Nicky Garrett and Alvin Gibbs, which always gives things that more authentic sound. The Subs have outlived practically every other band on the scene and survived the highs and lows of the industry. They've successfully established themselves as a self-sufficient unit and in 2006 they continue to lift the roofs of venues around the world. The Subs always offered an alternative to the mundane, in particular during the darker years of Punk Rock, and came through the other end a better band for it. Charlie Harper never ran out of enthusiasm for what he does and as we can hear on this CD, there's only one U.K. Subs. All the favourites are here along with some more recent stuff like "State Of Alert" and "Mouth On A Stick". As an added bonus you also get the four tracks from "The Revolution's Here" 7 inch tacked on after the live gig. (COMBAT ROCK RECORDS: 7 RUE DU PAQUIS, 57950 MONTIGNY LEST METZ, FRANCE.)

U.S. BOMBS "WE ARE THE PROBLEM". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)

It's difficult keeping tabs on a man like Duane Peters. Last I knew he'd quit the Bombs to focus on Die Huns with his missus fulltime. Seemingly, yes the band did break up, but between the gigs and the reels Peters has found himself back in the driving seat of the latest incarnation of the U.S. Bombs, with at least three new members by the looks of this. Kerry Martinez and Duane look to be the only recognisable old members on this record, whilst L.E.S. Stitches guitarist Curt Stitch offers his services on second guitar, Andy Dahill from The Threads is here on bass and Jamie from Monkey Boy sits in on drums. Either way, there's a new U.S. Bombs album here to sink our teeth into, so let's get down to it. "We Are The Problem" is not radically different to what the Bombs have been at previously and that's good news as far as I'm concerned. This is not the type of band here you want experimenting too much. Sticking to that American blue-collar street drawl, Peters constructs another strong batch of songs that can match up to most other U.S. Bombs records. As previously stated they haven't tampered with their original idea of mid-paced authentic Punk Rock and for that reason alone, this will score highly

amongst the Bombs fraternity of fans. Expectedly there're some neat arrangement tricks here, working a hooky vocal line round caustic guitar chords. Each song seems to be my favourite until the next one comes along to take its place. Easy to sing along to, hard to forget. (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)

VALDEZ "EXCEPTION BECOMES THE RULE". (CIDER CITY)

Two sessions recorded in 2003 and 2005 pieced together to make one full length CD from this assumedly new band from the U.K. Valdez certainly deliver and caught my attention almost instantly having made their way round to their rightful place on the CD changer. The most recent session on this CD, which speaks for the first five tracks, shows serious development and builds marvellously on the anger-fuelled remaining songs from 2003, which follow them up. Valdez have taken various elements of Agnostic Front, GBH and Blitz and merged them into a mean n' nasty collection of fists-in-the-air Street Hardcore. Valdez harnesses all the traits of another DIY band on the prowl that'll rip your head off if given half a chance! (www.valdez.org.uk)

THE VANDALS "SHINGO JAPANESE REMIX ALBUM". (KUNG FU)

Yes, once again this is Jo Escalante looking for any excuse to flush some more of that well-earned Vandals dough down the toilet. I'm not too well up on Japanese Hip Hop, but that's where this Shingo Asari guy comes from and with his allegiance with The Vandals allegedly started when he began hurling remix tapes of Vandals tunes he'd knocked out himself up on the stage at the bands' gigs in Japan. Seemingly impressed they subsequently supplied Shingo with vocal-only mixes of their tracks for him to play around with. Hip Hop enthusiasts not already familiar with The Vandals may be impressed by this, but to me The Vandals were and always will be a guitar Punk Rock band and have recorded all their songs as good as they're gonna get 'em. Don't fix it when it's not broken is the lesson to be learned here. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARSITY DRAG "FOR CRYING OUT LOUD". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

Ex Lemonhead Ben Dilly has been dragged out of semi retirement to front this band. Seemingly Varsity Drag existed prior to Ben getting involved, but followed him around so much, forcing him to come see them play, that he fell in love with the band's sound and agreed to join them. It's not surprising really, as all the same influences are here that we heard on The Lemonheads early Taang! years, with The Replacements of course being the main reference point. Varsity Drag haven't quite recaptured the magic that was "Hate Your Friends" and "Creator", but it's still a fair effort. The melodies are a little subtler and it takes a few spins to stick. Varsity Drag hold back a little much for my liking and you can't help feel that Ben's confidence will need to grow if he's serious about fronting a band, as currently it sounds almost as though he's filling in for the lead singer at a soundcheck. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "ANTI-DISCO LEAGUE VOLUME 1". (TEMPLECOMBE)

Ironical that a compilation with a sub heading of "An anti-political compilation strictly for Oil! Oil! diehards" should start with a song titled "Give Us Back St. George's Day" innit? This is the first compilation from the Templecombe imprint, which in case you're unfamiliar, is a label founded by New York Oil band The Templars and looks to be bankrolled by or at the least distributed through TKO. As you'll know The Templars are a multiracial band who're simply nuts about British Oil and Skinhead culture as a whole. They've practically modelled themselves of everything to come out of Britain from 79 to '82, but have given an American slant to it all and much like the Anti-Heroes and Wretched Ones have had a successful result. This international compilation focuses on the new breed of Oil with bands such as Crashed Out, Deadline, Stomper 88, Counterattack, Urban Riot, On File and Pissed On Arrival. In general all bands favour a raw sound, much akin to the Last Resort, and highlight their Streetwise stance through the lyrics, with titles such as "Take On The World", "Brick And Stone", "Back In The Papers" and "You And Me". Countries represented here include England, America, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, the Basque region and Indonesia. This is hardline brickwall Oil not for the fainthearted. It hasn't been dressed up and spits it out just like it should. For Skins, Herbets and general unsavoury characters the world over. (TEMPLECOMBE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 602, BAYSIDE, NEW YORK, 11706, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "DEATHROW: THE CHRONICLES OF PSYCHOBILLY". (ANAGRAM)

As was the case with the CD companion for the "Burning Britain" book, Cherry Red have offered the same here again for their latest book on the British Psychobilly scene. Containing many of the bands featured in the book, this twenty-five-track CD gives a platform to a lot of the bigger name acts such as Alan Wilson's Sharks, The Frantic Flinnstones, The Meteors, Guana Batz, Frenzy, Long Tall Texans and Restless – many of them doubling up. There's also room to expose some of the lesser-known bands like Dawg House, Legendary Raw Deal and Hyperjax, who provide equally entertaining slices of Psychobilly strumming. Full liner notes by Wilson are also contained, along with imagery from the Deathrow Database fanzine down the years. Those already interested in Psychobilly probably won't feel a need to pick this up, having already been acquainted with most of the stuff, but as a beginner already been acquainted with a need of the stuff, but as a beginner

ners guide to the scene, this contains some of its best moments and along with the book comes highly recommended. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "DIRTY FACES VOL 1 1/2. THE EP'S 2005". (DIRTY FACES)

Thirteen tracks fused together, presumably from a bunch of 7 inch singles Dirty Faces released last year. If you're familiar with this label, you'll know most of their stuff tends to fall into the gritty and sleazy Punk category, which, to their credit, they've always managed remarkably well. Envision the likes of New York Rel-X, Ramones, The Clash and Elvis Costello brewing up a storm together and that will give a small inkling as to what sound most of these bands shoot for. This is the true sound of Punk before it's been prettied up, direct from the rehearsal rooms of the bands who make it. There's nothing to hide behind here, what you see is what you get and I like it very much. (DIRTY FACES RECORDS: UNIVERSITÄTSSTR 16, 44789 BOCHUM, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "DIRTY PUNK RECORDS SAMPLER". (DIRTY PUNK)

French label Dirty Punk has made it as far as its twentieth release and to celebrate it they've put this compilation together, which features one track off each of those releases. As you've probably gathered from the label title, the spirit of U.K. '82 is alive and well in the HQ of Dirty Punk Records, favouring anything with a Mohawk over anything without one as it were. My tips for this CD go to U.K. Subs, who contribute a track from their recently released "Universal" album, Charge 69 with "Ma Musique", Down And Away offering "Punks Inc.", Red Flag 77 giving us "Why Do You Do It?" and finally Italy's Reazione playing us out with "Ribelle". Fifty-one minutes in length and plenty of roughened up Street Punk to get your head round. Also includes liner notes in both French and English on each release the label has put out. (DIRTY PUNK RECORDS: BP 10302, 59666 VILLENEUVE D'ASCO CEDEX, FRANCE.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "THE EASTPAK ANTIDOTE TOUR COMPILATION 2005". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

Budget priced compilation here to promote a tour by the same name. Not an altogether jaw-dropping affair if I were to speak the truth as the shelf life of these sort of things tends to be pretty short – basically the lifespan of the tour. A good product to arm yourself with prior to attending the festival, but kind of redundant after that, unless there're tracks contained which you can't avail of elsewhere – not the case here. Bands that did interest me however are Strike Anywhere, The Unseen, Street Dogs, Randy and Flogging Molly. The rest of the CD is mainly filled with your standard warped type bands. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "HARDCORE FROM THE EARLY DAYS". (COLD SWEAT RECORDS)

An Australian made compilation of old American Hardcore bands. This is a three way split between The Target Cells, White Pigs and Chronic Disorder. Most of this stuff is from around the 1983 mark and has that brash edge sound of American Hardcore at its best. Just the type of stuff you'd expect to see Dr. Strange reissuing in this day and age – i.e. the genuine article. From what I can take out all three bands are from the East Coast of America and shared a likeness for outfits such as The Freeze, The Cheifs and 7 Seconds. Young and extremely pissed off, these bands express a lot of hostility through their music and lyrics. Riveting Hardcore that pulls in a variety of directions. Full on and punishing, these songs are far from the throwaways you might expect, given their relative obscurity prior to this release coming to the fore. An aural steamrolling if you will. (COLDWEAT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 352, MANLY 2095, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "LIFE, LOVE, HARDCORE: A MOO COW RECORDS COMPILATION". (MOO COW)

Professionally orchestrated compilation CD outta Boston here, that goes on sale at a worldwide postage paid price of three measly dollars, which when you think about it, barely covers the postage on its own to Europe. If you know Boston, you'll know what today's Boston Hardcore bands sound like. I liked the early days of Boston Hardcore, but recent times have brought about another full on Metal crossover, where you basically have Heavy Metal guys who've shaven their heads calling their bands Hardcore. It's not really for me to say what is and what isn't Hardcore, but if you're idea of it is Black Flag, D.O.A. Minor Threat, Poison Idea etc. then this compilation is about as far away from that as is humanly possible. If on the other hand you believe labels like Victory and some of Revelation's later work speaks for the Hardcore community of today, then you may well be partial to a slice of this. It's all in the eye of the beholder I guess. To me this sounds like a throwback to bands such as Death, Morbid Angel and Obituary. No thanks. (MOO COW RECORDS: 38 LARCH CIRCLE, BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS, 02478, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "LONG LOST PSYCHOBILLY, VOLUME 1". (ANAGRAM)

This collection pulls together some of the more overlooked recordings that were made by Link records during their short reign as Psychobilly connoisseurs under the watchful gaze of Chuck Harvey from the Frantic Flintstones. Some of the stuff contained has recently been re-released by Anagram in it's full length format, such as the tracks from the Flintstones 'Legendary Mushroom Sessions', The Radiacs 'Hellraiser' and the Sugar Puff Demons 'Falling From Grace', so while it isn't exactly 'long lost' anymore, it still serves as a fine slice of Psychobilly memorabilia. Other bands included are Batfinks, Stage Frite, The Termites, Tailgators, Rantanplan and Scared Stiff. A good overview of the period but not essential if you've already got the albums from these bands. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "LOOK AT ALL THE LOVE WE FOUND: A TRIBUTE TO SUBLIME". (KUNG FU)

Jesus, times are tough when a band like Sublime inspires a tribute album in their name! Strangely enough once you get past the Jack Johnson opener, there's a couple of good bands offering their services on this. Why, in the name of god? Fishbone, Avail, Mike Watt, Pennywise and Los Lobos are all here for reasons best known to themselves. Maybe I missed something, but didn't Sublime have about as much soul as Mariah Carey? (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "OUR SMALL TRIBUTE TO BLONDIE". (TRASH 2001)

Interesting tribute to Blondie here that stretches right across the board, from Oi! bands to Ska and Pop Punk, they all pay a debt to Blondie seemingly. To be honest some of the bands on here murder the songs, but you can tell their heart is in it and this is, as the title suggests, just their way of tipping the hat to one of the forefathers of Punk Rock. I like the Ska version Die Tornados give of 'Heart Of Glass' simply because it doesn't try to replicate the original and adds a broader dimension to it. The Popzillas 'Hanging On The Telephone' is quite good also. There's a contribution by a band calling themselves The Stiff-O-Matic-Fingerdogs – yes that is members of S.L.F. The Stiffs, The Automatics and Slaughter and the Dogs; they cover 'Just Go Away'. My favourites version on here is perhaps Blondie's (a Blondie cover band naturally!) take on 'Rapture'. Possibly the first band I've heard ever who can pull that one off! Good booklet and clearly a labour of love for any Blondie fan up for a giggle! (TRASH 2001 RECORDS: P.O. BOX 101653, 46216 BOTTROP, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "OX COMPILATION #63". (OX FANZINE)

It's that time again as Ox release another issue of their fanzine and to accompany it another free CD, giving us the breakdown and who's who of the latest batch of Punk releases. A remix of The Ruts 'Babylon's Burning' pops the cork on this one and puts a new spin on an old anthem, but I think I'll stick with the original. Followed up later on in the disc with music by The Briefs, JR Ewing, This Aint Vegas and Demented Are Go to name a few. Thirty-one samples in all, most presumably from recent issues and reissues. Always a cheap n' cheerful way to keep your finger on the pulse of current happenings on the Euro Punk market. (OX FANZINE: P.O. BOX 102225, 42766, HAAN, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PROTECT: A BENEFIT FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Another worthy cause being given the Fat backing here. PROTECT operates as a non-partisan organisation with the belief that our first obligation as adults should be the protection of children from harm. Fat's publicist in their American office, Vanessa Burt has been involved with the group for a number of years, setting up benefit gigs and generally, helping them out with their cause. She got together with a member of Verbiode magazine to compile this benefit CD and Fat took it under their wing and decided to release it themselves. Naturally with those connections it's an all-star cast, over half the material being previously unreleased. Of the twenty-six bands that cram this CD the punter interest is likely to lie with NOFX, Anti-Flag, Jawbreaker, Against Me!, MXPX and Matt Skiba from Alkaline Trio amongst others. Musically not all of it would interest me, but its well assembled, direct and unquestionably deserves your support. Todd Taylor from Razorcake and Flipside also provides the liner notes. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PROWADZ MNIE ULICOMI!". (JIMMY JAZZ)

Polish street label Jimmy Jazz is at it again, with another round up of what they've spent the past year or so getting up to and in case you had to guess, that basically means releasing Punk Rock records Polish style. There's quite a high amount of Punk activity going on in Poland these days and has been for some time, most of which the Jimmy Jazz label has chosen to document at some stage or other. The Analogs open the door on this particular disc, taking us through a healthy version of the Rejects 'Oi! Oi! Oi!'. Track number four by Komety is the next thing that stands out for me, along with offerings by the likes of Anti-Dread, The Hunkies and Vespa. There's a large amount of overlapping here with the bands and it's almost as if the CD was split between seven or eight bands. All make a conscious effort to serve up their best material and more than do themselves justice here. (JIMMY JAZZ RECORDS: P.O. BOX 184, 71-507 SZCZECIN 5, POLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNK FOR LIFE: VOLUMES TOO THRU III". (RUN & HIDE)

Tom Disturbance has gone all out for this one; outdoing himself once again with a further forty tracks by just about as many bands from around the world. He puts everything into these compilations of his and you can tell just by the informative liner notes that it's all done in the name of Punk Rock love. Over a year in the making, but worth the wait, both these volumes appear on the one CD, but there're three alternative covers by the looks of things, which should have the collector suck scratching their heads. One of the covers is limited to 100 copies. Stylistically most of these bands share a lot of common ground – no candy-coated nonsense here; all are rougher than a bear's arse, in the best

possible way. Think of the early 80's production the Punks in the states needed to shoot for – be it through lack of budget or otherwise, the intensity found on these records was seldom beat and that's what this comp takes me back to. Ireland gets a look in with Billy Riots Violent Fuckwits and their song 'You Say You Used To Be A Punk'. Nothing from south of the border unfortunately, but our Scottish neighbours also have their say via Distorted Truth's, 'PC's Not For Me'. Other countries outside America who're represented include Holland, Australia and Italy. The remainder thirty plus tracks are pretty much U.S. bred, but also cover a lot of ground, both geographically and musically. Gotta be the best comp this year and the fact its D.I.Y. just adds that extra personal touch to it all. (RUN AND HIDE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 35094, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, 19128, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "SKANNIBAL PARTY 5". (KOB/MAD BUTCHER)

All the joys of the modern day worldwide Ska scene with another in the "Skannibal Party" series from the KOB/Mad Butcher allegiance. It doesn't take much to figure out that both these labels are, and always have been, avid followers of the Ska revival within the Street Punk scene. There're less than a handful of bands here that I'm familiar with, so on that level the CD certainly works. I haven't been the biggest champion when it comes to new age Ska and to be honest I seldom listen to it. My Ska intake is derived almost exclusively from the late 50's, the skinhead Reggae of '68-70 and the Two Tone revival of the early 80's. That's not to say I think Ska today has become a spent force, far from it in fact and this collection of bands here goes a long way to proving there's still plenty of life in groups who choose to use the formula as a basis for their music. Geographically-wise it's the main contenders from countries such as Canada, the U.S. South America and the continent that weigh in the strongest and speak for the majority of this compilation. The Canadians in particular have embraced this music remarkably in the past ten to fifteen years. Plenty of life on this CD! (KOB RECORDS: VIA N. CANTARANE 63/C, I-37129 VERONA, ITALY/MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, D-37073 GOTTINGEN, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "THE UGLY TRUTH ABOUT BLACKPOOL". (J.S.N.T.G.M.)

I guess The Arts Council didn't spot the irony in this label's name when they provided funding for the release of this CD! There's a song in there somewhere, I'm sure of it! Some vintage Skrewdriver kicks this off with the foot stomping 'Anti-Social' from 1977. Didn't John Robb rename this song 'AC/DC'? Cheeky bugger! This twenty-seven track CD traces the history of Blackpool's underground music scene in chronological order from '77 through 2005 with Sick 56, who close the album. The journey takes us through all manner of musical styles, from Punk to New Wave, Indie Rock to Brit Hardcore and right back out the other side again with newer Punk bands playing in the spirit of old. Keep an ear out for The Fits, The Membranes, The Phantom Creeps, Erase Today and Sick 56 with a remix of 'No Accident'. (J.S.N.T.G.M. RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1025, BLACKPOOL, FY3 0EB, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "VANS WARPED TOUR 2006 COMPILATION". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

Once again Side 1 Dummy team up with Vans and the Warped Tour to release an advance taste of what's in store for any of those making their way to one of the Warped gigs this summer. As usual this is a mix of good and bad. On the good side you've got bands like NOFX. Flogging Molly, Joan Jett & The Blackhearts, The Casualties, Riverboat Gamblers, Against Me! and Bouncing Souls strutting their stuff across these two discs. On the bad side you'll also have to contend with Saves The Day, I Am Ghost and Motion City Soundtrack amongst others. You get a lot for your money here though and that's what compilation CD's like this are all about. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "WHERE THE BAD BOYS ROCK. VOL. 3" (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)

I generally get quite excited when something on this label comes through and their samples in particular have been of a consistently high standard. This is their third such label taster and boasts an all-star line up of Punk greats including Roger Miret And The Disasters, Kings Of Nuthin', The Bomes, Mad Sin, The Generators, Deadline, Die Hunns, Demented Are Go, District, U.S. Bombs, The Meteors, and Schleprock. As you've probably guessed, hardly a track you can skip over. The People Like You label hasn't restricted itself to any particular style, but brings us the best of the best, from Oi! to Garage Rock to Psychobilly, they none in on the cream of each scene. The one thing all these bands share in common is they like to have a good time with their Rock n' Roll and turn in what is perhaps the most spirited selection of songs I've heard on one CD this year. (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)

VCR "POWER DESTINY". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

The Electro-Punk trend remains in full flight as Richmond's VCR join the party. There're no guitars whatsoever in VCR and everything is pretty much conceived on a laptop. Uncharacteristically however the music maintains all of the punch and more that you'd expect from a Punk or Rock n' Roll band. I'd nearly put money on it that the drums on this are played by a human being, as they pound their way around this album. This reminds of Epoxies taken one step further... powerful, energetic and carrying all the necessary checklist items to classify it as Punk Rock. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

VERSUS THE WORLD "VERSUS THE WORLD". (KUNG FU)

New band featuring ex-members of The Ataris. I never liked The Ataris and I'll never like Versus The World. Bland, unimaginative Emo shite that I would go so far as to say is even worse than The Ataris... and that's one hard act to beat. Joe Escalante needs to get out more and throw some of that dough in the direction of many decent upcoming bands that could actually put it to good use. Who needs another band like this? I certainly don't! (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VICE SQUAD "THE VERY BEST OF VICE SQUAD". (ANAGRAM)

In what seems to be the year of Vice Squad compilations, here's yet another one to add to the list. I won't complain though as I like Vice Squad, they were there at the very inception of the second wave of Brit Punk and I'll always respect them for that. Typically Becky Bondage has nothing to do with this release and Shane Baldwin looks to be the driving force behind it, as he tends to be whenever these things crop up. Baldwin you will find speaks for the early incarnation of the group and wishes to distance himself from the current set up doing the rounds, which Becky leads as the sole original member. Same great songs, same great band - "Last Rockers", "Latex Love", "Resurrection", "Stand Strong, Stand Proud" and "Rock n' Roll Massacre" are all featured here amidst the twenty-four cuts. I'd nearly put money on it that Anagram or Cherry Red have released this type of Vice Squad compilation before, no? Along with the glory years of the group, this also refers to the post Becky years of '83-'85, when Lia was drafted in as her replacement, which fell on its arse to be honest. Vice Squad will always be best remembered in my book for their first two records, both of which Captain Oi! have already done a fine job on reissuing. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: UNIT 3A, LONG ISLAND HOUSE, WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VOLUMEN "SCIENCE FACTION". (WANTAGE USA)

Heavy New Wave and Nerd Rock from Missoula, Montana is how Volumen wish to be described. An accurate description I feel and better than anything this reviewer could dream up. Volumen occasionally touch on something here, as heard on opening track 'Side Of A Box', but the bulk of this CD slips all too easily into the sea of Emo crud that has been coming from this general direction in the past five years or so. Volumen would like desperately to be put up there with bands like Television and early Talking Heads, but it's not going to happen. To achieve this you need to be able to write songs and not just fuck about for an hour in the hope of hitting on something. Do this in the privacy of your

own home and when you come up with something then put it on CD. We don't need to hear a full album's worth of your attempts at writing anything resembling a tune. This is basically the stuff Man Or Astraman throw away. (WANTAGE USA: P.O. BOX 8681, MISSOULA, MONTANA, 59807-8681, U.S.A.)

WANDA JACKSON "I REMEMBER ELVIS". (GOLDENLANE)

Brand new tribute to the King from the Queen of Rockabilly, Wanda Jackson. It's common knowledge that it was Elvis who encouraged Wanda to take the Rockabilly route with her recordings and this is her way of saying thank you. Whilst these thirteen versions of Elvis songs remain faithful to the original arrangements, they also contain Jackson's unmistakable stamp. She pours her heart into every song and even managed to sneak one original in here, 'I Wore Elvis' Ring'. You couldn't ask for a better band to guide Wanda through this album – we've got Ciem Bourke on drums, Darryl B. Harvey on guitars and Razor X on stand up bass. This album marks Wanda Jackson's fifteenth year in Rock n' Roll and works as a triumphant celebration of that, tipping the hat to that all-important, yet short lived, relationship that got the ball rolling. Most of these songs are from Elvis' Sun days and the very early years of his tenure with RCA. You also get Wanda's spoken remembrances of Elvis, rare photos of the couple and some liner notes by long-time fan Elvis Costello in which he makes the claim to have Wanda inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame. Taking on Elvis material is a tricky business and its no small compliment to say Wanda fares better than anyone. A sincere, respectful and loving tribute to the King! (GOLDENLANE RECORDS: 11041 SANTA MONICA BLVD, PMB 703, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90025, U.S.A.)

THE WARNING "ALL SYSTEMS DEAD". (PUNK CORE)

Jesus Christ, how can a band so blatantly rip off Blitz' 'New Age' and expect to get away with it? At first I thought 'Innocence Gone' was a fun take on the old Blitz number, but on closer inspection there's no mention of the band in the credits. Weird!! The Warning are from Detroit, Michigan and got together in 2001, though two of its members had previously been playing together in a crowd called Flux since '98. This is sped up Hardcore Punk, not unlike The Casualties and hits all the right buttons with me. It's loud and chaotic, but at the same time easy to listen to, if that makes sense. Their guitarist has a knack for peeling off infectious little riffs. 'Detroit Riot City' is the stand out song on here that couples a Blood For Blood sounding back up with a great gang-styled Sick Of It All chorus. 'Senseless Murder' has Motorhead written all over it and again comes a little too close for comfort, but I think I can just about let them off the hook. They're a cheeky bunch, but have a good way with a tune. (PUNK CORE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 916, MIDDLE ISLAND, NEW YORK, 11953, U.S.A.)

WESTERN ADDICTION "COGNICIDE". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Western Addiction put out a fine split CD with New Mexican Disaster on No Idea last year. There was a 7-inch on Fat prior to that and this is their first full length CD. All members of this band work at Fat Wreck Chords in San Francisco I believe, which is almost surprising when you hear the album and note they're not as influenced by the NOFX/Fat sound as you'd expect. Western Addiction have far more Hardcore in their blood and throw glances in the direction of Poison Idea and Anti-Heroes. Yes, it's rough, sharp and doesn't seem to give a fuck, just the way we all like it. The songwriting quality evident on their earlier work hasn't dulled I'm pleased to report and right from the start you can tell this band contains members who know their Punk Rock well. They've taken various elements of Punk and handpicked which their favourite nuances from each, put 'em all together and away we go. Nicely done boys! (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

WHISKEY & CO. "LEAVING THE NIGHTLIFE". (NO IDEA)

I feared another Dropkick Murphys cash in here!! My fears were unwarranted however as Whiskey & Co. are the type of band who, it has to be said, are becoming increasingly popular across the Punk spectrum if you take a look around. It all makes perfect sense of course and arguably Mike Ness was one of the first to actually popularise it, though Jeffrey Lee Pierce had a similar outlook in the early 80's. I am of course referring to the trend of Punk Rockers exploring the roots of outlaw music and discovering the likes of Merle Haggard, Woody Guthrie, and in this case, Emmylou Harris, along the way. Whiskey & Co. are surprisingly proficient in this area. I was expecting a crash-course job, but they're really dug deep here and come up with something rather special. Their asset is in the voice of Kim Helm, who has such an addictively warm drawl it's impossible not to get sucked in by it. The five musicians backing her are no slouches either and the guitar playing in particular on this recording adds the perfect extra dimension to it. Songs of lost love, alcoholism and "... uhhhh! more alcohol!! We wouldn't want it any other way, would we? No idea and the whole scene that surrounds that label is the perfect breeding ground for a band like this and ideal place to catch them live. That's often the problem with music like this these days ... you sometimes gotta go to awful shitty places to see it live! This one, we've kept for ourselves... at least for the time being ... hear it and catch 'em live the way it was meant to be! (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32604, U.S.A.)

WHOLE IN THE HEAD "SELF-TITLED". (SELF-RELEASED)

Six tracks, just short of nine minutes in total, from this heavily Crass-ified outfit from England. They use the same font and similar aesthetics to illustrate their anti-capitalist standpoint. The problem I always had with bands like it's all about the message with them, as they appear to have abandoned all traces of music. I really don't think they give a fuck about music at all, in which case they should stick to the political activity. (WHOLE IN THE HEAD: C/O BOX SABS, OCTOBER BOOKS, 243 PORTSWOOD RD, SOUTHAMPTON, SO17 2NG, ENGLAND.)

WIVES "ERECT THE YOUTH PROBLEM". (SWEET NOTHING)

Sounds to me like Steve Albini sitting in on a session with F-Minus, whilst thumbing their way through the collected works of The Minutemen. Wives have sprung up with the recent new breed of L.A. underground Rock and are a discordant breed of hyper teenagers (assuming they're as young as the press release makes out). Personally I find this stuff a little too hard on the ears. I come from The Ramones aesthetic; Wives come from what Punk branched into when it lost its ear for a decent hook. Wives don't give a fuck about that, they get off on the energy and aggression of Punk, which is all well and good, but I can never seem to find what I'm looking for on records like this. It hints at it, you think you're on the same page, but it just never comes through on its promise. (NO CONTACT ADDRESS)

YELLOWCARD "WHERE WE STAND". (KUNG FU)

It's doubtful Kung Fu will ever win an award for signing a groundbreaking act, but I'm beginning to believe that's not why their followers buy their releases. They wanna hear the same style played over and over again by different bands. Kung Fu play it safe and it's obviously a formula that has proven to work for them in the past. Yellowcard could be any number of also-ran bands from the mid 90's Pop Punk gold rush. Listening to a band like Yellowcard in 2006 just bores the pants of me. There's nothing in the slightest bit challenging to what they do and their existence seems pointless. Why do kids still buy this stuff in year out? It defies all logic. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

YOUTH OF STRENGTH "SHOUTING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW". (X FIST)

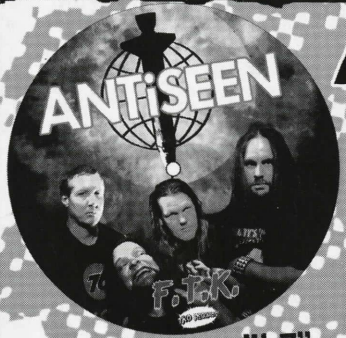
Retarded Straight Edge music from Boston, Lincolnshire, recorded way back in 1985 (where it should have stayed). This 7 inch contains eleven songs with such titles as "Drug Free Stance", "X Marks The Spot" and "Knocking Some Sense Into You" and you're telling me this is for real? Look at the label's name for Christ sake! Seemingly there would be no Hardcore in Boston, Lincolnshire without Youth Of Strength! I guess at least now we have someone to blame, so it's not all bad! (NO ADDRESS)



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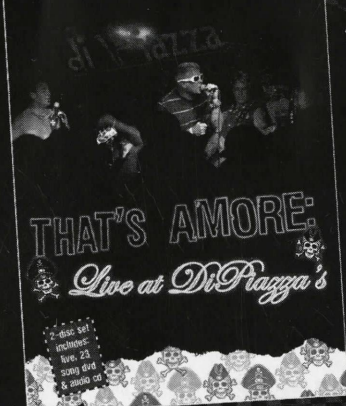
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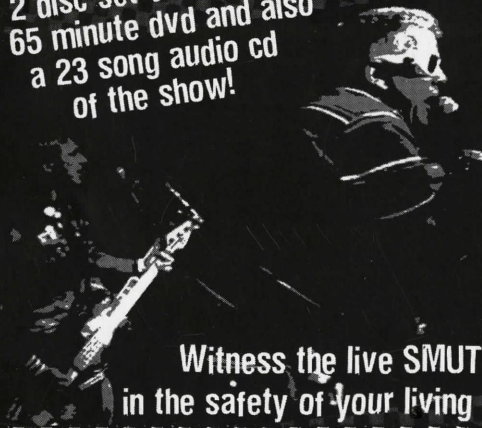
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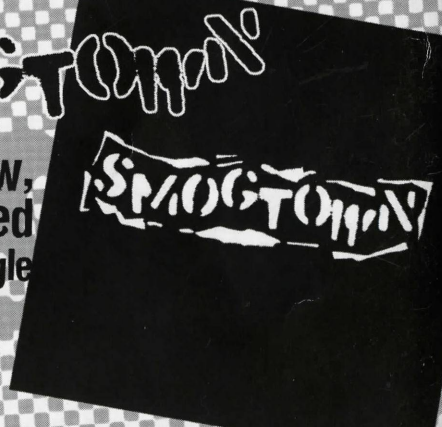


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