

Pooping and Protest

've been reading a ton lately; protest classics, like Upton Sinclair's The Jungle and Steinbeck's In Dubious Battle. One way I like to put all the bad shit in the world into perspective is read a book. See how little the equation of the little guy getting reamed by the government and big business has changed. Read what happens when apple pickers strike in a valley not three hundred miles away from me, in a time not too long ago. These books teach me leagues more than the corporate news, which is akin to watching digital information being thrown up and regurgitated back and forth, like vultures puking up dinner into their children's mouths.

I also like to balance my reading out. In the last year, I've read quite a few biographies of professional wrestlers. "Classy" Freddie Blassie's the guy who came up with the phrase "pencil-necked geek." He was in wrestling for over fifty years, first as a wrestler, then as a manager. One story he told stays with me, shoulder to shoulder in importance with Steinbeck.

Freddie and one of the strongest wrestlers of all time. Bruno Sammartino, went to a carnival. There was a sign. "Stay in the cage with the monkey for five minutes and win a hundred dollars." Bruno was a tough sonofabitch. He looked at Freddie and said, "How hard could that be? It's only a fuckin' monkey." The animal inside the cage wasn't technically a monkey, but an orangutan. Bruno didn't know the difference. He emptied out his pockets and entered the cage. First, the orangutan grabbed Bruno by the neck and began choking him. Second, the orangutan relentlessly began punching Bruno in the balls. Over and over again, pausing only to rip off as much of Bruno's clothes as possible, then going back to hammering his nuts. The

AD SIZES

FOR ISSUE #24 December 1st, 2004 ISSUE #25 Feburary 1st. 2005

AD DEADLINE

Email retodded@razorcake.com for rates and full details

- Full page, 7.5" wide, 10" tall. • Half page, 7.5" wide, 5" tall. · Quarter page, 3.75" wide, 5" tall.
- Sixth page, 2.5" wide, 5" tall.
- · Please make all checks out to Razorcake.
- We now accept electronic ads.
- · All ads are black and white.
- · We don't reserve ad space

orangutan had been trained well, but Bruno prevailed. Bruno lasted the five minutes, battered and severely bruised in a most uncomfortable place. He earned a hundred dollars the hard way.

In no small way, Razorcake—and all of the independent press—is like Bruno and that orangutan, taking regular, brutal poundings to the grapes... except we make less money on a per-beating basis. Putting out a zine isn't easy.

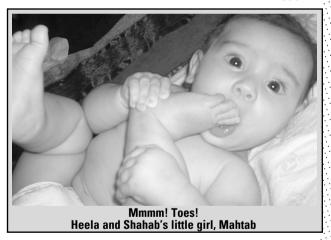
Now, with Bush serving four more years, and the looming possibility that any and all media monopoly regulations will be lifted in the near future, it feels like a second, meaner orangutan has been placed in the cage with us and an anvil has been strapped to our shoulders. I won't deny that. That's no fun.

But I also won't deny that we're up to the fight. This is our nature. We've never been given the easy out. We're used to working hard for little pay. We're used to the beatings. We're used to not getting our way. And that's what a vibrant counter culture is all about. Thriving in places where nothing is supposed to remain.

You've got appreciate the little things. Things that make you laugh. How do I know we're succeeding in our own little way? I got a short note from my friend Danny B. Here it is.

"The other day, I was sitting on my couch reading the new issue of Razorcake. My three-year-old daughter, Makena, comes up to me and asks 'Daddy, why are you pooping on the couch?!' I say, 'What the hell are you talking about? I'm not pooping on the couch!' She says 'Well, you're reading that magazine so you must be pooping!"

So, here's to not giving in. Let's dance around the orangutans the best we can and not forget what means the most, even if it comes in tiny sparks amongst all the darkness and distracting noise. -Todd



Cover designed by Jeff Fox • Cover photos by Megan Pants

Contact Razorcake: Sean <sean@razorcake.com or Todd <retodded@razorcake.com>

Thank you list: Julia Smut's awesome. No two ways about it. Not only does she tuck our cover in tight, she laid out the Modern Machines and Wednesday Night Heroes interviews; Sir, your science is scary-tight and your knowledge and

friendship are invaluable thanks to Jeff Fox for both the cover design and his column on why buying bottled water makes you a bit of a dildo or at least a bourgeois motherfucker; Feet on a headstone thanks to Rob Ruelas for the Johnny Ramone illustration; Hole in the head, crazy dude thanks to Tom Wrenn for his illustration in Seth's column; Rope bouncers are big and scary thanks to Terry Rentzepis for his illustration in Liz's column; Heavy iron and hydraulic thanks to Eddie Morgan for his photo in Sean's column; Eugene Debs, convict #8653, thanks Jonathon Baker for his collage in Maddy's column; continued thanks to Randy Iwata for his digital fastballs in Nardwuar's column; If you flick the light on and off, it doesn't turn off the alarm clock thanks to Megan Pants for her Ergs! interview and pictures; Deep, fast Oregonian pool-style thanks to Wez Lundry for his Loud Pipes interview and pictures; Man, you took a really difficult very first interview, skeleton suit and sushi thanks to Donofthedead for the Balzac interview and thanks to Katz for snapping the pics; Hot dog breath and hockey thanks to Bennett Jones-Phillips for her Wednesday Night Heroes interview and thanks to (fill in the blank, your name here) for the pictures; Record companies, not so happy; readers very happy, occasionally a band's slapped, thanks to our intrepid record reviewers Cuss Baxter, Donofthedead, Megan Pants, Aphid Peewit, Gabe Rock, Eric Rife, Ty Stranglehold, Namella J. Kim, JasonK, and Rich Mackin; Read loud and ripitup, well sometimes, thanks to Brian Mosher, Amy Adoyzie, Gabe Rock, Greg Barbera, Brian Howe, and Jeff Fox for their zine reviews; lonely, end of the list DVD reviewing thanks to Jimmy Alvarado.

· If we need to invoice you, we

won't run your ad until we

have the cash on hand, so make

those arrangements before the

ad deadline

• Albert Camus said something

to the effect that "The only

country I have is the people I

love." Thanks for finding that

quote, Puckett.

DOWNLOADING MP3'S IS ILLEGAL AND PUNISHABLE BY LAW



Rivethead the cheap wine of youth



last exit LP (CD on TKO RECORDS) HOLD THAT SHIT RIGHT CD s/t (2000) LP/CD



PORNO SNAKEHEAD CO

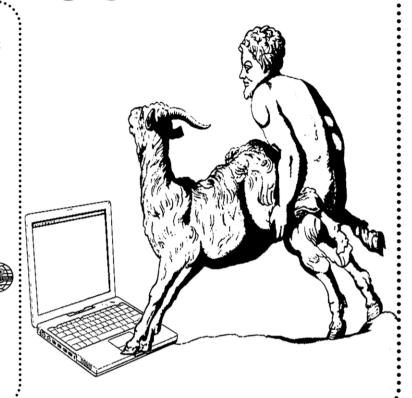
TOYS THAT KILL

CONTROL THE SUN LP (PIC DISC) / CD

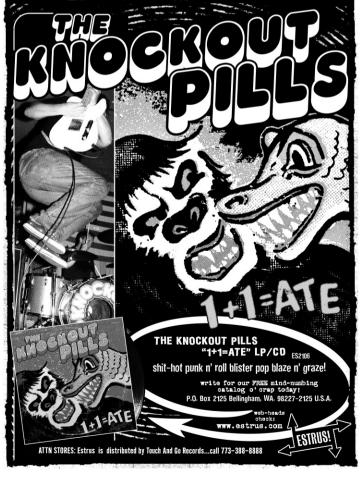
THE CITIZEN ABORTION 🗸 LP/CD

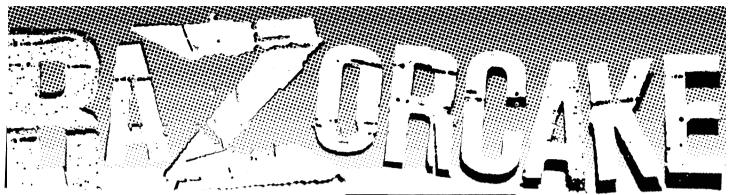
ALL PRICES POSTPAID WITHIN USA
7"=\$3 LP=\$8 CD/2xLP=\$10 book w/cd \$15

RECESS P.O.B 1666 SAN PEDRO,CA 90733 WWW.RECESSRECORDS.COM









Issue #23 Dec. 2004 / Jan. 2005

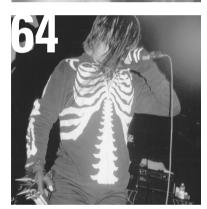
PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042 www.razorcake.com

COLUMNS

- Fuck You, Dale I'm Against It
- Art Fuentes Shizzville
- 8 **Seth Swaaley Swinging Door Conversations**
- Liz O. Guerrilla My Dreams
- Sean Carswell A Monkey to Ride the Dog
- Maddy Tight Pants Shiftless When Idle
- Gary Hornberger Squeeze My Horn
- The Rhythm Chicken The Dinghole Reports 20
- Jim Ruland Lazv Mick
- Rev. Nørb, Love, Nørb
- Nardwuar The Human Serviette Who Are You?
- Jeff Fox. I Hate a Parade
- Ben Snakenit Snakenit
- Chrystaei Branchaw's Photo Page







INTERVIEWS AND FEATURES

- The Ergs! by Megan Pants
- Ken Dirtnap by Todd Taylor
- **Loud Pipes** by Wez Lundry
- **Balzac** by Donofthedead
- 70 **Modern Machines** by Maddy Tight Pants
- **Wednesday Night Heroes** by Bennett Jones-Phillips
- **Dan Monick's Photo Page**

REVIEWS

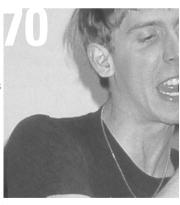
- Record With Ramones dropping like flies these days, we need someone to pick up the Dork Gauntlet and run and trip with it.
- Zines Bug-eyed freak looking for information on how to make money by fucking.
- Videos As exciting as watching The Song Remains the Same stone sober.
- 112 Book Smelling each others odors and giving away deep secrets.

Individual opinions expressed within are not necessarily those of Razorcake/Gorsky, Inc.

Razorcake is distributed by Big Top Newstand Services, 2729 Mission St., Ste.201, SF, CA 94110, info@bigtoppubs.com Razorcake/ Gorsky, Inc. Board of Directors are: Todd Taylor, Sean Carswell, Dan Clarke, Katy Spining, Leo Emil Tober III
Razorcake and www.razorcake.com are put together by Sean Carswell, Todd Taylor, Josh Lane, Skinny Dan, and Julia Smut.

Razorcake is bi-monthly. Issues are \$3.00 ppd. in the US. Yearly subscriptions (six issues) are \$15.00 bulk rate or \$21.00 first class mail. Plus you get some free shit. These prices are only valid for people who live in the US and are not in prison. Issues and subs are more for everyone else (because we have to pay more in postage). Write us and we'll give you a price. Prisoners may receive free single issues of Razorcake solely via Left Bank Books, 92 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101, who have a book-for-prisoners program. Want to distribute Razorcake in the United States? The minimum order is five issues. You have to prepay. For \$10.00, you'll receive five copies of the same issue, sent to you when we do our mailout to all of our distros, big and small. Email <sean@razorcake.com> for all the details.





Life was and continues to be a son of a bitch for the Ramones.

Wednesday, September 15th, 2004 Late afternoon...

Life was and continues to be a son of a bitch for the Ramones. And today, cancer has reared its head again to claim the life of yet another band member from the original line-up: John Cummings, known to rock'n'rollers worldwide as Johnny Ramone. He was only fifty-five, Falling less than a month short of celebrating his fifty-sixth year as the retired, biggest badass who ever **Z** down-strummed a Mosrite Ventures model guitar. And he was all downstrums, for anyone who's ever held reservations concerning his sixstringed savvy. Johnny doled out equal parts self-taught technique with a right wrist that yielded the speed of a crack-induced hummingbird with back-up power to spare, and that pure, unfiltered wall of roar that glued the Ramones sound together flawlessly.

No one else could've played guitar for the Ramones, simply because no one else played a guitar like Johnny. And no one to this day has or will. One-of-a-kind. That's not at all an opinion: it's a fact. And, ironically enough, dozens of bands over the years, as well in today's shit-crammed "markets" of what's "hot," include guitarists that try to incorporate Johnny's way of playing into their sound. Keep trying, guys. Even if imitation's the sincerest form of flattery, the fans will see through you like cellophane (thanks, Joey!). It's the way it's always seemed to be with this band-always imitated, yet constantly underrated.

Besides the constant uphill battles the band endured over their career, Johnny had the unfortunate situation of going knuckle-toknuckle with prostate cancer the last four to five years of his life. He was diagnosed roughly around four RAZORCAKE 4 years after

last time. Some fucking retirement—just like Joey's. To an even weirder extent, it was only three days ago that I was able to catch up with Marky Ramone and his wife at the Ramones' thirtieth anniversary celebration out here in Los Angeles (thanks again, Marc & Marion!). I asked about how Johnny was doing recently with his condition, since he had to go back in for some treatments a coupla months prior, and if there was a possibility of him showing up, even just to greet the audience onstage. I knew he probably wasn't up to playing, but I thought it would've been cool to see him, especially because he had a hand in the event planning. Marky and his wife explained that he wasn't doing so hot the last coupla days, and that every day his condition was up and down, but that he was keeping a strong head even though he knew what was quickly coming down the line concerning his health.

No one could really blame him for not showing, even if he did feel up to it. It may sound mean, but there's only so many times you can listen to the good wishes and intentions from everyone you bump into about your condition. It's a nice gesture, but it gets redundant after a while. And although Johnny always put his fans in his top of priorities, even after the band was done, he always seemed like a guy not looking for sympathy. It wasn't that he didn't care; it was just part of his character. I even found out later on that Johnny had personally scheduled a phone interview for Howard Stern's morning show for Friday, just two days after he passed. Johnny had told the show's producer Gary (Baba Booey) that he wanted "probably one of his last interviews" to be on Howard's show. That would have been an interesting and comical interview, especially because Johnny was such a hardhis ground, as he did with everything he believed in.

During the thirtieth anniversary show, MC Rob Zombie stepped out onstage in between one of the sets to call Johnny up on the phone to let him know how the show was going. It was kind of like a sitcom, watching him have a one-sided conversation with Johnny, and then Rob got the sold-out venue to chant "Hey! Ho! Let's Go!" over the phone, which I'm pretty sure made Johnny's night. To this, Johnny told Rob that he was glad everyone was having a good time and to "Keep it rollin'." Marky Ramone, CJ Ramone, and Daniel Rey rocked some Ramones tunes and were also the backline to guests like Henry Rollins, Steve Jones, Peter Yorn, Dickey Barrett, Brett Gurewitz, and Eddie Vedder (I know, I know-Vedder's a douchebag, but was one of Johnny's close pals over the years. What are ya gonna do?).

The Dickies did a fiery, short set of their tunes, along with a coupla homages to their brothers in crime, the Ramones. The Red Hot Chili Peppers' small set was a large part of the Road to Ruin LP. When would anyone think they'd see Anthony sing "I'm Against It"? Very cool to watch. X was the last band to do a small set, and although I dig the X catalog a whole helluva lot, their performance was pretty disappointing. Even their take on "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker" needed the Heimlich Maneuver. The Gears should've had X's slot. It would've been more fitting and rocked tons harder.

Tommy Ramone, the original drummer, even gave a heartfelt speech to the audience about what the Ramones were about and continue to be. And even if they didn't get to come out and talk, it was cool seeing others that came out to celebrate the event. Amongst some of

Ramones walked off stage for the core Republican and always stood 'em were Rodney Bingenheimer (L.A.'s "Rodney on the Roq"), Seymour Stein (then-Sire Records president signed who Ramones), Danny Fields (original Ramones manager), Melnick (Ramones tour manager from hell, aka, The Fifth Ramone), and Arturo Vega (longtime artist/merch guy and associate for the band). I think I even saw Allan Arkush, the director of Rock 'n' Roll High School, wandering around, too. The glass cases of Ramones memorabilia from over the years were something to see, too. Original pictures, old tour shirts, hand-written lyrics, Joey's famous red-tinted glasses, Johnny's white, battered Mosrite—you name it—it was all on display for people

> I thought that it was such a super neat night of celebrating one of the best bands to ever grace this earth, even if Johnny wasn't there physically. But he was there in all the fans' hearts, including mine and my girlfriend Yvonne's. Yvonne was fortunate enough to work closely with Joey and Johnny during her time over at Rhino Records a few years back, heading all the promotional jaunts for the Ramones Anthology. Although a lot of people liked to dwell on the negative aspects of Johnny and his career with the band, she said Johnny was nothing but cool and professional as he could be with her. Ever the ultimate American, Johnny needled her when they first met about her origin of being a Mexican American. After she broke it down that she was indeed a second generation American, Johnny was impressed how Yvonne's father came to the states when he was eighteen, busted his ass to become an American, served in the Air Force, and got to where he is today. Like I said—Johnny was quite the pro-American.

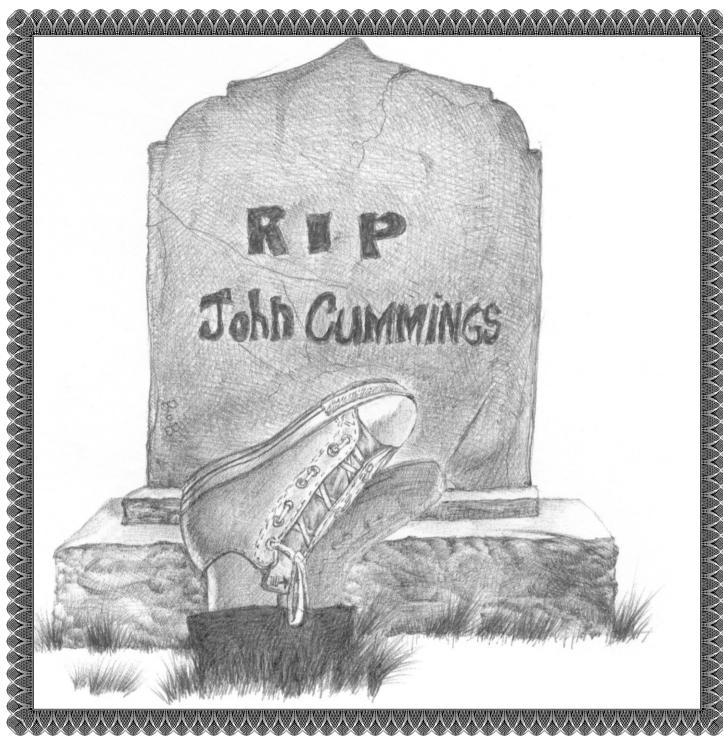


Illustration by Rob Ruelas; s_zamora0727@hotmail.com

After he retired here in L.A., I'd see Johnny from time to time at record shows, but I didn't want to be like the rest of the ridiculous "Comic Book Guy" types there bothering him. Some of these creeps would frantically grab Ramones records and chase after Johnny for him to sign, only to go back and sell them at their tables. But there were sellers and fans alike who simply wanted an autograph and just say hello, too. He'd always give autographs, even if sometimes he looked like he wanted to plant the pen you were holding in your ass.

The only time I met up and talked with Johnny was at a Halloween show with The Cramps, a couple of months following the Ramones' final gig at the Palace just down the street. After we talked a bit about the Yankees and how he liked living in L.A., the next thing out of his mouth was, "So, what did you think of the last show?" I asked him why Eddie Vedder was there insisting that Lemmy had every right to be there, but Vedder had no right whatsoever. Smiling, Johnny turned his head to the side, then looked back and explained that Eddie was a good friend of his, and even though a lot of the Ramones fans felt the same way I did, he wanted him to be there. "Fair enough," I said, as we shook hands, laughing, and went our separate ways.

By now, I'm sure Johnny's joined the big rehearsal space in the sky, alongside Joey and Dee Dee, who've been sitting around writing and waiting for him. Hopefully all three are somewhat happier now, even if Johnny will militantly continue to get on Dee Dee's case, as he did in their early days as Ramones. Here's hoping that Johnny and Joey have finally made

amends, too. Anyone who had the fortunate experience of seeing the Ramones live or get turned on and hopelessly addicted to their LPs can agree that we're all gonna miss Johnny and his brethren in one form or another. The music he had a hand in making with the Ramones will undoubtedly continue to fill hearts and minds for the rest of people's lives and beyond.

Play loud, Johnny.

I'm Against It
-Designated Dale

DesignatedDale@aol.com



AGAINST ME!

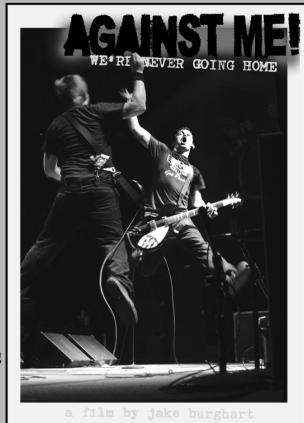
WE'RE NEVER GOING HOME

Ride along with Against Me! for a one-month-long debaucherous tour where they take on everyone from major label A&R slimebags to egotistical screamo bands. We don't want to give away the ending, but you can assume that Against Me! triumphs over evil!

See it for yourself!

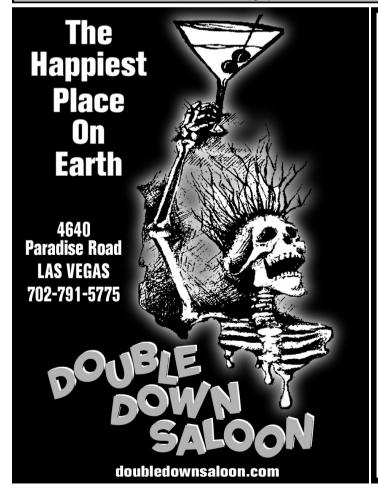
Includes 3 new songs and a drinking game!

DVD IN STORES NOVEMBER 2ND!





Fat Wreck Chords • PO Box 193690 • San Francisco, CA 94119 • www.fatwreck.com • www.againstme.net



Out Now

My So-Called Band return with "Weapons of Mass Distortion"

"This is a great listen, musically and lyrically." A must-have." - Punk-it.net

"If My So-Called Band continues to raucously progress at the frenzied rate they're going, they'll soon surpass several of the bands that inspired them to take up the Punk cause in the first place." - Under the Volcano

"If long-term enthusiasm, a fully tested arsenal of ethics, and living in a town (Charlotte, NC) with little to no appreciation for honest, DIY punk rock could be distilled into songs, My So-Called Band nails it."

- Razorcake

Available Online @ interpunk.com, Smartpunk.com, and DrStrange.com

Download it from itunes.com

Mail order direct for a special offer : order your copy of "Weapons of Mass Distortion" and get a Free copy of "Bomb Threat" (A compilation of 31 NC & SC punk bands)

Both CD's \$6 postage paid US, Canada add \$1, International add \$2

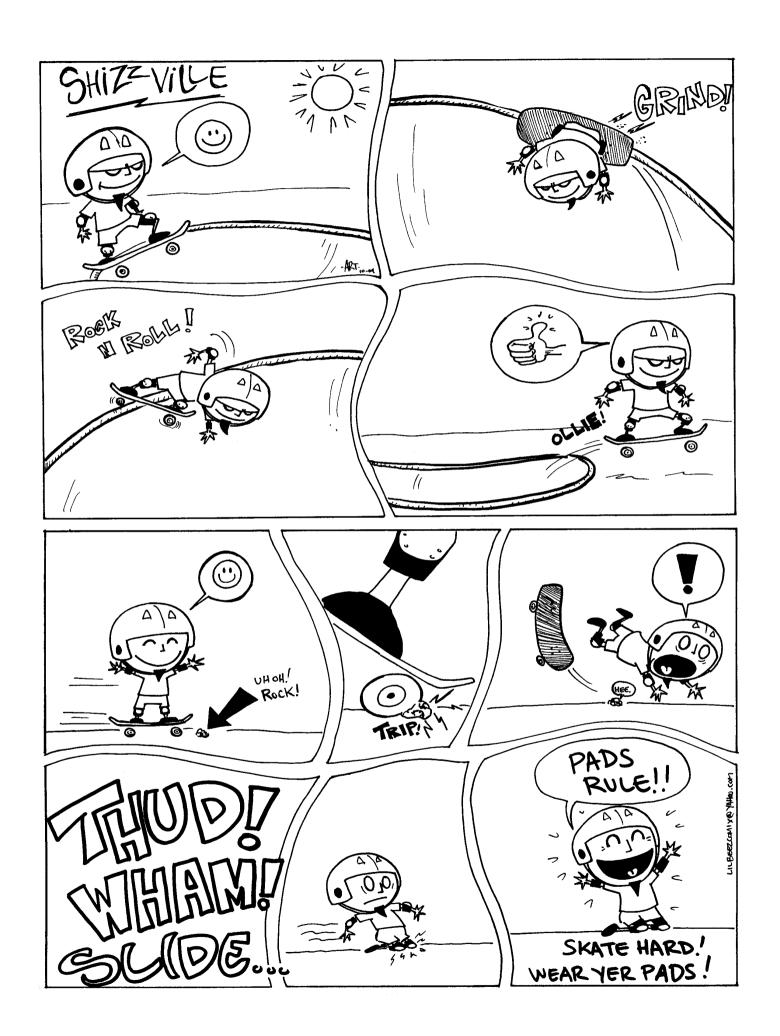
Make check or Money order out to Chris Peigler. Send well concealed cash at your own risk.

P.O.Box 9599 - Charlotte, NC - 28299



ww.suicidewatchrecords.com

www.mysocalledband.com





SITTING AT THE ROUND TABLE

From the outside you'd never know our apartment was any different than the other brownstones that lined the streets of Baltimore's Mt. Vernon neighborhood. Sure, the bricks were a bit weathered, and the front steps were cracked and tilted to the side, but otherwise, the place looked like something you were more likely to come across in the nicer neighborhoods of New York or Boston

What set 822 Monument St. apart from the others wasn't something you could necessarily put your finger on; it was more of a strange vibe, a sense of twisted reality, a feeling that things weren't quite right. The first time I walked into the building I felt it. Maybe the darkly lit hall-

ten hours working at the laundromat a few blocks away.

About a month after I moved in, Arthur and I were sitting out on the front-steps. We were just hanging out, drinking beer, catching the last glimpses of summer and spouting off to one other our own versions of gutter philosophy. As the afternoon wore on I noticed Arthur getting drunker. He made a few trips upstairs and it was obvious by the look in his eyes when he came back, that he wasn't going up there to use the bathroom.

I'm not sure exactly what spurred the change in conversation, but suddenly, with a straight face, Arthur explained to me how he'd lived through five different lives. A lot of the details weren't clear, even to himself, but he was sure of it. He was sort of this immortal spirit that there was the constant use of thus and thou and

ahead of its time. Inside of those journals lay eternal truths, prophecies, the answers to all of man's questions. One day, he would get it published. He was going to make millions off of it.

I was actually kind of looking forward to delving into the literary mind of Arthur. If you were able to catch him in a relatively sober state, which wasn't very often, you'd realize he was a fairly intelligent guy. Someone who just so happened to be an avid reader of the old, classic writers, guys like Montaigne, Socrates, and his favorite, Machiavelli.

I made it as far as thirty pages into Arthur's journal and, to this day, I still have no idea of what those words amounted to. As far as the style of writing, the closest explanation I can come up with is unintelligible biblical verse:

I GUESS SOMETIMES YOU GOT TO HIT ROCK ROTTOM TO LUCK OUT.

way with the flickering lights or the sweating plaster that seemed to always be peeling off of the walls had something to do with it. Maybe it was the strange creaking noises that came from the empty basement or that musty smell that had one thinking they were inside some two-hundred year-old bookstore.

I'm not sure why I decided to live there. I'd like to say it was because it was cheap or because the landlord had been kind enough to overlook my bad credit, but I'd be lying. I supoppose part of me was curious and the other part of me was just plain old out of my mind crazy and didn't give a damn. And now that I look back on it, nearly all of the people who lived in that dingy place were crazed in their own right.

There was Gomez, the big Mexican with the lost look in his eyes who never said anything and would climb up the walls in a panic if you walked past him in the hallway. Old man Pops on the floor above me—his underwear always half way out of his pants-who'd sometimes stand outside of his door pounding on his chest and yelling "You took my beer!" Gary and Lilly down on the first floor, friendly as hell on the street and then arguing and beating each other up every night. But at the epicenter of that madness and that unexplainable year of my life was Arthur.

I had apartment #6 on the third floor and Arthur lived in #5, directly below mine. With the freckles, the enormous brown bug-eyes, and the ring-horn Afro, the man looked like a carni clown that had fallen on bad times. He also happened to be a heavy drinker and nightly cracksmoker. What set him apart from the stereotypical crackhead was the fact that somehow, despite hardly any sleep, every day of the week Arthur would wake up at six and put in

hopped throughout time from body to body. Arthur new it was hard to fathom for the average person, but he swore on his mother's grave; this wasn't no bullshit.

In a nutshell, Arthur experienced what he referred to as Life-Forces. He had the magical ability to see things beyond our control. Basically, the man was blessed with some strange form of telepathy, something that went far beyond the realm of simple, everyday coincidence. Randomly, he received messages from up above. Whether those voices were from God, saints, angels, he didn't know.

I remember staring Arthur directly in the eyes, trying to see if he was messing with me and saying, "Man, you're fucking crazy. You know that?

Arthur put his hand on my shoulder and laughed aloud, dismissing my foolish response. 'No way, Larry. You see, crazy people don't know they're crazy. Like that guy that walks up and down Charles and always knocks three times on the trees and speaks all that gibberish. Now that guy's crazy. And he don't even know it. But see, guys like you and me, well, we already know we're crazy, so we ain't crazy.'

In the following months I had a handful of wild nights with Arthur, but the closest glimpse I actually got into the interior of that man's twisted mind was when he gave me a book of journals that he had been compiling for the past five years. In those wee hours of the night, when the drunks were staggering home from the neighborhood bars, when the drag queens were hustling over on Calvert for a score, Arthur was busy finding his muse.

He'd mentioned the journals to me a few times before. He told me he was creating a modern day masterpiece, a work of art that was well

begot this and begot that. The problem was that none of it made any sense. Large asterisks and all caps denoted what I assumed Arthur considered the more important quotes. Taking up half of page 12 was:

"A MAN IS MAN, BUT ONLY OF A MAN."

On page 17:

"WALK THE CORNER AS SCREAMING WALLS.'

In some of the left-hand margins Arthur had written an entirely different language. It resembled a cross between mathematical symbols and Egyptian hieroglyphics. It was written so meticulously that at one point I almost wondered if these were the words of those voices from above. Maybe there really was some truth to that whole angels and five different lives business. Hell, maybe those religious people had Jesus all wrong. That good-looking tan guy with the longhair and compassion and healing powers and amazing carpentry skills was just a scam for all the suckers to buy into. Maybe the real Jesus was sitting down at his cluttered desk in the middle of Baltimore, burning the midnight oil and putting down the mighty word

Five hours into the journal I had to stop. All I came out of the experience with was a vicious headache.

The next day I gave the journal back to Arthur. He asked me excitedly, "So what did you think man? Pretty deep shit, huh?"

"Uh, yeah, little hard to follow, but it's good," I said. At the time I didn't really have it in my heart to tell him that it was the most insane thing I'd ever tried to read.

RAZORCAKE 8

Well, the weeks passed by and then one day I looked out my window and all the trees were dead and naked, the streets covered in a blanket of white. The ferns that covered the walls of the church across the street had disappeared and the sun was a distant memory. Winter had hit. It was a brutal one, too; the most snow the city had gotten in over a hundred years. Driving around town I noticed a strange look in people's eyes. Everyone seemed on edge. For the most part, I tried to stay away from them. During the day I went to my job delivering mail and at night I kept to myself. My life wasn't very exciting.

Arthur was still up to his crazy antics. He hadn't gone completely overboard, but he was getting there. A couple of times a week he'd come up to my apartment at ridiculous hours of the night. I'd awake from a deep sleep to the sound of his secret knock.

I'd open the door, my eyes barely open, my hair shooting out ten different ways.

'Shit, Larry, didn't wake you, did I?" he'd say, his eyes lit up like a Chinese New Year.

"Uh, no, what's up?" I'd mumble.

"Hey man, got me a lady-friend down there, if you know what I mean. And I got to ask you a favor. I need some milk! Cooking oil! And ten

I wouldn't even try to put together what those things amounted to at that time of night. I'd stumble over to the fridge, shaking my head in disbelief, dig through my wallet, and hand him the goods.

"Damn, thanks Larry! You know I'm good for it. I'll get you on Friday. Say, I can bring her up here after I'm done. You know, she'll suck your dick for five bucks!"

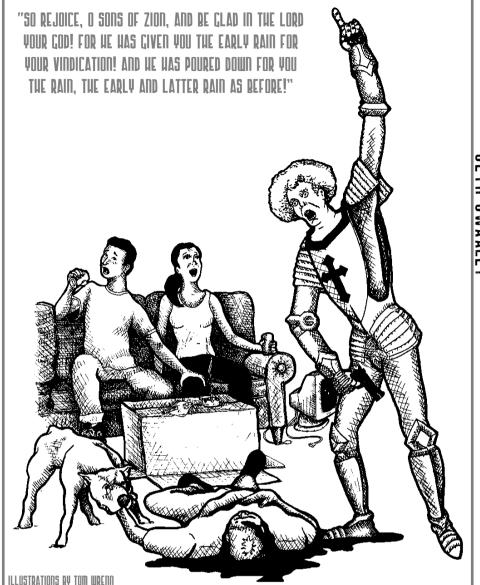
'No, thanks, I'm all right," I'd say.

I'm not really sure why I put up with Arthur's wild ways. It would've been easy for me to leave the door closed. I could've just stuck to my own boring, solitary life and been all right. But when it comes down to it, that way of going about things has never really worked out for me. For some reason, I happen to always find myself in the most unordinary circumstances. I don't go looking for that life; it just has a strange way of falling into my lap.

When I was younger, I'd dabbled here and there with the coke, did some acid and shrooms a few times. I was more of a wild, nutcase back then. I'm sure I probably tormented a few of my neighbors at odd times of the night too. I also knew that at some point the drugs begin to wear on you. Arthur was close to fifty and the ill effects of that lifestyle, compounded with sleepdeprivation, were beginning to show. His sense of reality was quickly evolving into an extreme sense of violent paranoia.

One Sunday morning I woke up to a skirmish going on outside of my apartment. I had no intention of opening my door, but I had a feeling Arthur was involved. Suddenly, a sad yelp echoed against the walls; then a gasping for breath. I could just picture it: someone's little beady, red head doused in sweat, their eyes popping out of their skull. Then came the sound of King Arthur's deep, roaring voice. He sounded like a lion in a dark tunnel.

"Luke 6:31: And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise!'



I didn't want to be involved. I couldn't let him murder someone. I didn't want to have something like that on my conscience. I was just about to open my door when I heard Arthur throw the person down the stairs.

"Now get the fuck out of here! I said get the fuck out! And next time I see ya' I'll kill you! I'll kill you!"

Coughing, heavy breathing, and then scurrying steps followed down the two flights of stairs. Then I heard the front door open and slam shut. Arthur went into his apartment and turned his radio on full blast so that everyone in the building could be blessed with awe-inspiring power of the Gospel. As I laid in bed the rest of the morning for some reason all I could picture was some Southern toothless Baptist granny, nodding her head, and saying over and over, "The Laud sho' doo' work in muh'sters ways."

It strange how things have a way of working out. You know, it's like there's nothing really going on in your life. You exist, physically, mentally, spiritually so to speak, but there's no point to it all. You wake up, go to work, come home, flip on the television, listen to the neigh-Poor Arthur. He'd really lost it. As much as bors bring down the walls and you're thinking,

is this all there is? You keep going over and over it in your head until you drive yourself straight up the doorsteps of the nearest ward or you give up. Sometimes you take long walks around the city. You sit in parks watching the sun go down and try to clear your head. You see the mother's pushing their children around in strollers and then you see the couples, young and old, and they look so damn happy and maybe some of them really aren't but they're sure doing a hell of a job of faking it and you're sitting there chewing on your tongue and going plum out of your mind

I guess sometimes you got to hit rock bottom to luck out.

I met Sophie at a coffee shop downtown. I had twenty minutes to kill between deliveries and I hadn't slept at all the previous night and was in bad need of some kind of upper. Normally, I'd never go into one of those places. Something about those pseudo-intellectuals with their laptops and their Café Lautas, or whatever they call them, trying to look like they're doing something important, but probably playing solitaire or mulling over how they can spend the next five years in



college. Not my crowd is all. I just wanted some coffee.

Once I saw her I knew. I don't know hot to put it; there's just this warm-blooded feeling you get. It'd been a while since I'd had that feel-

Sophie looked completely out of place amongst the heard. She was wearing this bright, shiny blue blouse with tiny nipples pointing out of it. She was skinny as hell, all bones, and her hair was black and choppy and almost looked like someone just put a mop rag on her head. A large scar cut deep into her skin, starting on her forehead and ending down the middle of her nose. Her green eyes were big and crazy and seemed to instantly give this off this sense of unique beauty. A friendly warmth. I can't say exactly what it was, but right away I was nuts about her.

That first day we just made the typical small chat. I could tell I was kind of nervous and fumbling over the words, but I was trying to see if she was giving off anything. I took my double espresso, downed right there in front of her like it was a shot of whiskey and headed towards the door. Almost outside I heard her vell, "Hey, I'll see va tomorrow?" I turned around and saw her standing behind the counter looking like some kind of angel gypsy. I gave her a smile full of wrinkled scars and waved.

It was all so exciting and new in the beginning. Sophie was this wild, wandering spirit. She was an artist, a poet, a spiritual healer. She'd traveled all over the world. Thailand... India... Chile... Scotland. She'd ridden on elephants outside of Bangkok and fed monkeys from hotel balconies. She'd hiked the Himalayas by herself and had slept with Shamans in villages I couldn't pronounce the name of. Somehow her travels had taken her to Baltimore where she was just hanging around until the next adventure came along.

I didn't know what Sophie really saw in me. I was a pretty plain, boring guy who didn't have a lot going on. I'd moved around a bit and had lived in big cities like Chicago and L.A., but I didn't know anything about all those crazy places she'd been to.

I spent a lot of the next couple of months at her place. Her apartment was vibrant, full of color and life. There were blue Picasso prints and framed Chinese poems by guys with short names like Li Po and Tu Fu, and it was all foreign to me, but I felt comfortable there. Sometimes she'd bug me about how she'd never seen where I lived, but I'd always try to change the conversation. Things were getting strange back at the place anyway. There'd been rumors of a gun going off one night and in the past week the cops had been over a couple of times.

RAZORCAKE 10

I was coming back from Sophie's when I ran into Arthur. It was freezing and Arthur was looking batty as hell. He was wearing a Russian fur hat with flaps around the side and a cigar that looked like it'd been dead for over an hour was dangling from his lips. I hadn't seen him for a while and I now I realized why.

'Larry, what the hell you doing out here? It ain't safe around here at night. There's crazy fuckers running all around this neighborhood! Things ain't like they used to be! These are hard times! Thousands people are out of work! They're not in the right mind."

I looked past King Arthur and stared into the lights of the cab cars running up and down Monument. Despite the chill, the queens that always came out after ten were still wearing their glittery bootie shorts and doing their best to make a buck. A couple of Bohemian looking kids sat on a stoop a few buildings down. I wondered if King Arthur realized how ridiculous he looked.

"Hell, you're a nice fella' Larry. I know. Remember last summer when we sat on the steps talking about The Prince? And all those times I knocked on you're door and you gave me that shit. You never asked me for nothing. That means something. But things are changing around here. You know that guy Eddie? He's all fucked up! Been doing stupid shit! Do you know he broke into Dianne's?

Dianne was in her early thirties. I think she was studying to be a lawyer, but she was always nervous as hell, scared when she walked by anyone else in the place. I never quite figured out how she ended up in our building. Eddie on the other hand was sketchy as hell. He was the neighborhood dealer. Sometimes I'd run into him at one of the local bars. Occasionally he'd say "hi" to me, but he was always jittery and running all over the place. I usually kept my dis-

"You remember what I told you when you first moved in the building? How this was our home and how we need to make sure it stays safe? Now look at it. That fucker Eddie's been living in the basement, cutting all his coke down there with some other dudes. Do you know he was sawing up through the ceiling into Dianne's bedroom? I told Eddie the next time I see him around I'm going to kill him! I will! And now we got that damn ho who keeps sneaking in the building. Hanging out with Gomez in #3. Everything's going to shit!"

It was about twenty degrees and my fingers were going numb. At least now I knew who the hell he'd been choking that one Sunday. I wondered if the landlord knew anything about what was going on. I thought about mentioning it, but Arthur was all charged up. He was ready to serve and protect. He was a man of justice; noble, despite the fact that everyone he was

talking about was at one time people he'd been friends with. I guess that was the life. In one minute, out the next.

Arthur would've gone on for another couple hours, but I calmly told him I'd watch my back.

I went back to my room and lay in bed for a couple hours, but I was feeling pretty restless so I went back over to Sophie's. She could tell I was a bit out of sorts. As much as she'd seen, and as many places as she'd been, I didn't really get the feeling she knew anything about the kind of life I surrounded myself with. For the most part, I kept it to myself.

That night Sophie turned off all the lights and lit a bunch of candles. She put on some weird music with sitars and chanting and gave me a Reiki session.

I sat down Indian style and she told me to hold my palms face up and she placed hers a few inches above mine. I was skeptical about the whole business, but it was real important to her, so I went along with it. After a minute, Sophie stopped. She backed away with a frightened look in her eyes.

"What," I said.
"I don't know. That was really weird. I'm getting a real bad energy from you. I've never felt something like that.

"What the hell does that mean?"

"Larry, let's just stop. Forget we ever did

We hardly talked the rest of the night. It was obvious that whatever Sophie had seen wasn't good. I pried her on it for a while, but she wouldn't tell me anything. God, I had crazy spirits floating all around me. Palm-reading angels and psychic junky demons and I was just wondering how the hell I fit it into it all.

The next day at work I was in a daze. I drove around the city in a cloudy fog, my thoughts roaming, unable to form any concrete images. I liked Sophie, but things just seemed easier when I kept to myself. Less complicated. Bad luck had a way of following me around and hurting the people close to me. The girl I lived with in Chicago was now in a mental hospital. The one before her paralyzed from a boating accident. I had a bad feeling is all; call it intuition or whatever you want.

At one point I was listening to one of those crazy Christian stations. Maybe they were right, maybe everything was pre-ordained. All mapped out. All I had to do was confess my sins and I'd be able to take one look up at the cosmos and figure it all out. If only it was really that

I didn't talk to Sophie for a week. She left a bunch of messages on my answering machine, but I wouldn't call her back. I'd go to work, come home, and drink to the point of near retardation. I felt like I had to tune everything out.

If I could do it all over again I would've kissed Sophie the second I saw her standing on the front steps. I would've taken her in my arms and told her I was sorry for being a fool. We would've kept walking up the stairs straight into my apartment. Wrestled under the sheets for hours and then laid in bed listening to the night. Maybe we'd blast the stereo and parade around the room like naked carnival fools. Sometimes I wonder

I was sitting on the couch going dizzy staring at the walls when the buzzer went off. I went down to the front door and Sophie was standing there. We just looked at each other, all silent for a while, and then she said, "So, you going to ask me in?

"Yeah, yeah," I said, still out of it.

On the way to the stairs I noticed Sophie curiously surveying the dilapidated interior and I made some kind of joke. "Well, welcome to my own private dump." We both laughed and I felt a little better.

We were almost up to my apartment when Arthur opened his door and came up to us.

"Hey, Larry. Oh, lookie here. Didn't mean to interrupt. Who's this cute thing?'

'Sophie, this here's Arthur," I said

"Hi," said Sophie. She stuck her little hand out and King Arthur shook it with a little too much force, though I knew it wasn't done pur-

"Well, damn, Larry. That's why I never hear you around. Say, I got a new friend staying with me. I want you two to meet her."

'Huh? Who is it?" I asked, not really feeling up for Arthur's antics.

"Just come on in'

We walked into his apartment. Lamps, tornapart stereos, empty cereal boxes, and dirty clothes were scattered all over the floor. Long sheets of aluminum foil were hanging from the ceiling and computer monitors were positioned in each corner. There was an army banner hung on the wall. The place kind of had an Apocalypse Now thing going on.

"Ruth! Ruth! Come on out!" Arthur yelled. Slowly prancing out of the kitchen came a pit-bull. She was black and white checkered with cherry-veined eyes.

Sophie and I took a step back.

"Don't be scared guys. She's totally harm-

Yeah, totally harmless if she wasn't getting that second-hand action. I figured that shit was bound to make a mouse violent.

T'm just babysitting for the next couple of weeks. Say, y'all want a beer?"

I couldn't tell what was going through Sophie's mind at that minute, but before I could say anything she said, "Sure, thanks."

"Well, all I got is Old E. Think I'll have some, too. Hah hah. Don't mind if I do."

Sophie grabbed my hand and smiled. I guess this was all new for her.

Next to the ashtray on the cardboard box that worked as a coffee table I saw the glass pipe. Beside it, a zip-lock bag filled with little

Arthur came back from the kitchen with three cups of beer and sat across from us on the

"You don't mind, do you?" Arthur said to Sophie.

Sophie shook her head.

Arthur filled the pipe and brought up to his lips. He lit it with a zippo, closed his eyes, and took in the smoke. He held it for a while, then blew it out. The room had the smell of burning plastic

Twenty minutes later, that bag was getting pretty empty and Arthur was talking nonsense. He was walking all around the room, waving his arms around and going at Sophie with all that keeping the neighborhood safe shit. I don't think she knew what to say. Ruth started circling Arthur. She kept her own distance from us, but I

knew how animals were always the first to sense when something strange was about to happen. That dog was making me nervous.

I'm sitting there for no reason thinking, I'm going to grab a hold of Sophie and we're going to get the hell out of here. We're going to get out of before anything happens.

A couple of seconds later, there was a knock at the door. I glanced back and Sketchy Eddie stood there in front of Arthur. He was looking like the Grim Reaper. He had big black bags under his eyes, like he hadn't slept in a month. Arthur let him in. I took a good look at both of them and they were all jittery. A couple of Chihuahuas. I didn't get it. A couple of weeks ago, Arthur was telling me he was going to kill the guy. He'd almost done it that one Sunday. And now these two were hanging out? It didn't

I whispered into Sophie's ear, "Finish your beer.'

same spot, his gun in one hand, the other raised in the air.

It must have been three blocks before we stopped running. Sophie face was pale-white. She wasn't crying or nothing. Just blank-eyed and out of breath and as I stood there looking at her with nothing to say, I knew that all the Reiki, aligning of the stars, moon signs and auras in the world wouldn't have prepared her for something like that. We held each other on that corner for I don't know how long. A couple of blocks away I could hear the sirens.

I didn't go back to the apartment for a couple of days. I didn't want to have anything to do with the place. The day after it all happened there was a blurb in the paper. They mentioned the murder and how the police had shown up with the suspect sitting on his couch with his dog in his lap. The cops came around asking questions, but no one else in the apartment would come forth about hearing anything. I did-



Eddie nervously said "hey" to the two of us and followed Arthur into the kitchen. I didn't hear what started it, but two of them were arguing. "Look man, all I'm saying is to chill man. Chill! I'll get you the shit by tomorrow."

Eddie was walking out of the kitchen when I saw Arthur come up behind him with the gun.

In the movies it always takes forever. There's this build-up and back and forth dialogue and the guy with the gun says something witty and then the other guy says something witty like, "Go ahead and shoot me." It was nothing like that.

It all happened so fast, and yet, at the same time everything felt like it was in slow motion. I wanted to get up and stop it, but there was this uncontrollable force keeping me pinned down. It was like some crazy nightmare, where you want to scream but, no matter how hard you try, no sound will come out of your mouth.

Arthur grabbed a hold of Eddie's shoulder, spun him around, and bashed him across the face with the butt of the gun. Sophie screamed, but in a matter of seconds, she was silenced by two gunshots to Eddie's head. His body was slumped halfway behind a table. I couldn't see his face, but I saw the blood splattered all over the walls. I watched his leg twitch a little and then go still. Ruth leaped from where we were and sunk her teeth into Eddie's puny arm. Arthur stood over him screaming out:

'So rejoice, O sons of Zion, And be glad in the LORD your God! For He has given you the early rain for your vindication! And He has poured down for you the rain, The early and latter rain as before!"

I didn't really have any time to think. I grabbed a hold of Sophie and made for the door. Before we reached the stairs, I quickly glanced back and King Arthur was still standing in the

n't even know if anyone had seen Sophie and I leave. When they talked to me I made up some story about how I'd been gone for the past couple of days and they bought it. That same day I called the landlord and told him I'd be moving

I tried staying with Sophie for the next few days, but things were never the same after that. She never wanted to talk about what happened up in Arthur's apartment. Neither of us did, but I told her I understood if she went to the cops about it. She didn't, though. She ended up moving out to California a couple of weeks later.

For months after, that night went over and over in my head. That whole year. Utter insanity. No one would ever believe me if I tried to tell • that story so I didn't. For a while all that went through my mind was what if this, what if that. These days, though, I try to think about other **€** things. I picked up more hours at work and of all the crazy things, I joined a gym.

I still live in Baltimore, but I stay clear of my old apartment. Every now and then, though, the company has me do a delivery or pick-up at one of those lawyers' offices off of Monument and I have to pass by the building. I look up at what used to be my bedroom window and then I look up at Arthur's wondering what he's thinking about in that jail cell. I see Sketchy Eddie lying there like a piece of meat and that pit with that ridiculous name all lock-jawed and Arthur waving his arms around and speaking a language I don't even think God understands, and it's strange, because part of me goes running out that door, but there's this other part of me that's just standing there, watching the whole thing take place, wanting to see how it all plays out. All the way until the end.

-Seth Swaaley

RAZORCAKE 11

This, dear reader, is an irony far greater than hipsters whose t-shirts boast horrendous commercial rock bands and 1980s teen pop sensations.

Hometown Tourist

"Fifteen dollars!"

I don't mean to sound shrill. My yelp is in disbelief, not anger. I feel an immediate sense of guilt because I know that the parking lot attendant probably is not the person who set the price. Maybe, if he had his way, he wouldn't say:

"Fifteen dollars."

I lower my voice to respond. "I'm sorry. Did you just say fifteen dollars?

'Yes, ma'am."

I am not a cheap person. I grudgingly accept the fact that six dollars will buy me a glass of warm tonic flavored with just a hint of Popov Vodka, that I will have to add an extra two bucks per drink and leave a fat tip if I want to achieve a worthwhile state of intoxication without the hangover. I don't complain to the doorperson if I show up at a club five minutes after 11:00 P.M. and have to pay full price. But, fifteen dollars for a parking spot on Hollywood and Cahuenga is ludicrous.

It took forty-five minutes to travel from the Cahuenga exit on the 101 freeway to the parking lot, a distance of approximately one mile. I drove in a pattern similar to when a small child loses grip of a compass, jagged sloppy circles consistently intersected by the Hummer limos that mobilize throughout Hollywood on Friday nights. At every red light, I gave serious consideration to just turning around and driving back to The Valley. The last thing I wanted to do was hand over every bit of change floating at the bottom of my handbag just to secure a parking spot.

They're charging twenty across the street," he assures, as if comparison shopping is an option now that I am inside the single lane entrance of a parking lot with four cars lined up behind me.

I look over my shoulder. All I can see are the cobalt-tinted headlights of the Escalade in my rear window. Had I been the only person looking for sanctuary, I would have utilized the haggling skills acquired through trips to the Valley Indoor Swap Meet.

"Is this your best offer?"

"I'm sorry, I only have a ten on me."

Given that this is a Friday night in Hollywood, I know that I am about three seconds away from a series of horns playing like a particularly grating sound collage. I dig through my purse and give him nearly everything I have, precisely fifteen dollars in fives, singles and quar-

After parking my car, I scurry across dingy city streets like the White Rabbit, checking my cell phone as if it were a pocket watch.

Î'm late. Almost one hour late.

I jerk my head from side to side trying to figure out which of these clubs is Cinespace, a fairly new, upscale restaurant and bar that features movies and DJs. Having just been dubbed the Cahuenga Corridor, this section of Hollywood is the new Sunset Strip, a former haven for crack dealers recently renovated to cater to the hip. beautiful, and rich. I'm not quite sure what I am doing here, but it has something to do with seeing Z Trip, the hip hop DJ who joined forces with DJ P to reconstruct everything from "Rhinestone Cowboy" to Naked Eyes' "Promises Promises" on turntables for the album Uneasy Listening.

I look around in an attempt to discern which crowd might be here for Z Trip. I surmise that the crowd would consist of hip-hop kids, indies, and post-ravers. Here on the Cahuenga Corridor, this mix describes every line of people wrapped around various corners like children waiting to ride a new rollercoaster. I slide in between the cliques-Burning Man types in Asian-inspired outfits, posh indies dressed in Marc Jacobs, hiphop crews revealing as much skin as possibleand approach a doorman.

"Is this Cinespace?"

I look around for Carlos, my boyfriend, and his friends Mason and Juan. I am an hour late and have still managed to arrive first. I pull out my cell phone like half of the other people standing out on Hollywood Boulevard, and attempt to place a call to Carlos. For some reason, my cell phone always dies on Hollywood Boulevard.

I scan the corners looking for pay phones, which are nearly obsolete in this city. I walk down the block, finally finding a phone, and dig for the last fifty cents in my possession.

You have reached the voicemail box for... I can hardly hear the message over the voices in the background. I compensate for this by shouting, "Hey, where the hell are you?

I hang up and walk back towards the club, stopping in a pizza shop to pull out some more cash from the ATM

I almost walk right into Carlos on my way out of the pizza shop. A conversation ensues between the four of us, comparing the madness that each had to endure to find a parking spot. They found a cheap lot, but had to walk five blocks. You already know my story.

We join a crowd of hoodie-wearing Z Trip fans moving in towards the red velvet rope that may seem mythical to those who have never stayed in Los Angeles. The rope functions like

the gates that enclose many Los Angeles neighborhoods. If you are desirable for whatever reason, you may enter. If you are undesirable, you must stay out on the street. In front of Cinespace, the bouncers keep guard of the rope, attempting to push the crowd further away without actually laving a hand on anyone.

On the sidewalk, though, the herd is ready for a stampede, like Morrissey fans about to rush the stage. For every two steps back commanded by the bouncers, the thick mass of bodies push one step forward. My companions lean against a lamppost, not wanting to deal with any of the madness. As for myself, I didn't fight my way through Hollywood streets and shell out fifteen dollars to get rejected from the door. I squeeze towards the front.

"Hey!" I shout to the bouncer, a thick, bald man of about thirty. "When are you going to let

He looks at me and directs his answer to the rest of the crowd.

"The club is at capacity!" he bellows. "We do not know if or when we will let you in."

Layered groans of disappointment are replaced by groans of disgust when the bouncer lifts the rope for a small group of skinny, blonde, scantily clad girls. I have worked at clubs as a DJ since I was nineteen years old and have come to accept this as a sad way of life in Los Angeles. Even a spot on the guest list does not guarantee one entrance into a hot club. However, good looks and ostentatious wealth will always work in one's favor. I am slightly nerdy, obviously ethnic, and dressed like I am going to see Z Trip, not a bachelorette party. Add to this the fact that I am with three guys who make it their mission to look like figures found floating through a dark alley and there was no hope of gaining entrance. I back up towards the guys.

We stand at the corner for a few minutes, encased in a cloud of defeat. I shift my weight from one Chuck Taylor to the other as a cold, dry wind pierces through my clothes and into my bones. I am not inclined to drive elsewhere, I tell them. Our eyes graze the streets only to deduce that no club here would admit us, nor would we want to be admitted into some swanky establishment where we might be forced to engage in conversation with aspiring actors and producers as Justin Timberlake does his best Michael Jackson impersonation. No, that's okay. We would rather walk aimlessly instead.

All four of us grew up in Los Angeles. My companions live in The South Bay, which is actually pretty similar to my home territory. The San Fernando Valley, except that they have an ocean breeze and we do not. We know this city

like a lover's face. We can tell you that The Parlour in West Hollywood serves the stiffest drinks and that any Zankou Chicken outlet will provide the best cheap meal you can find. We know how to find loft parties and we can tell you the names of the homeless guys who hang out in the Downtown alley behind The Smell. We know a Los Angeles that is excluded from tour books. The city that lay before us at this moment is completely foreign. We had to explore it.

We cross Cahuenga and slowly stroll down Hollywood Boulevard. Soon the glitz of the Cahuenga Corridor is replaced by storefronts sheathed in metal, decorated with murals depicting Hollywood's Golden Era. Obscuring the face of a blonde starlet (Marilyn Monroe or Jean Harlowe? I don't know.) is a group of squatters no more than fifteen or sixteen years old. They are dressed in a punk fashion rarely seen outside of Hollywood Boulevard anymore—worn

customers, the impoverished family rushing from the bus while avoiding eye contact with the rest of the world. Los Angeles is a case study in decadence. It is a city where the powers that be convince themselves that a few paintings and a sidewalk paved in fake gold stars can restore a sense of glamour that may have never existed. It is a city where stars in the making can throw public tantrums for not being on the guest list while remaining oblivious to the hopelessness that exists a few blocks west. I am reminded that everything I despise about Los Angeles exists on this stretch of boulevard. And yet, we continue to walk.

We walk roughly seven city blocks in the biting chill of a winter evening. Seven blocks in fifty-degree weather may not seem like much to our friends in New York City, but we live in a place where anything under seventy degrees in considered nippy and where people can't even as if it began to melt and was quickly packed back together. With the impeccably styled clothing, coiffed hair and waxy complexions, I start to feel like I'm trapped inside a mortuary.

"I'm getting the creeps," Carlos says as we enter the Chamber of Horrors, featuring the likes of Vincent Price and Elvira. I am not sure if he is kidding, but the comment results in the lot of us trying to sneak up on each other.

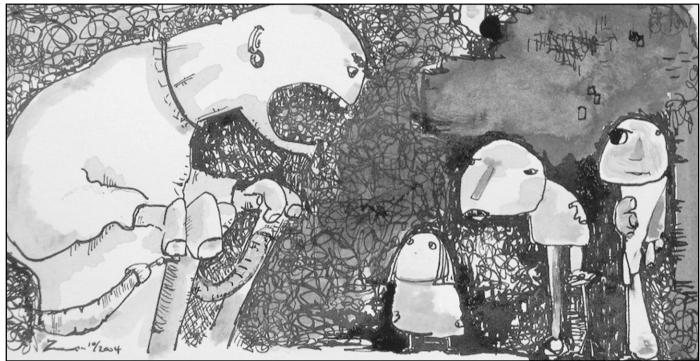
I decide to run ahead of the small group. I whiz around a corner and let out a B-movie scream

"What's that?"

"I almost ran into Whoopi Goldberg."

We laugh and move onward, only to behold the museum's most disturbing display—The Barbarian, The Cyborg, and The Governor. Only in California could this happen.

We leave the wax museum and decide that we have not had our fill of hometown tourism.



llustration by Terry Rentzepis; www.alltenthumbs.com

Exploited t-shirts, ripped tights, scuffed twentyeye Doc Martins, mohawks that stab the sky. I think that if Paris Hilton arrived at one of the events hosted by celebrity party planner Brett Bolthouse back on the Corridor in such an outfit, people would think that it was the ultimate in cutting edge fashion, even if the lines "Let's start a war/Said Maggie one day" meant nothing to Ms. Hilton, even if she responded to comments with "What's a Wattie?" The shirts would be copied and pasted across checkout-line magazines. Renditions would appear in the exclusive boutiques that dot Beverly Hills and Santa Monica with price tags higher than a colored vinyl 7" single limited to one hundred copies. And still, the kids on the street, panhandling for change, would never be allowed past that grand velvet rope. This, dear reader, is an irony far greater than hipsters whose t-shirts boast horrendous commercial rock bands and 1980s teen pop

It takes less than a second to inhale the sights of Hollywood Boulevard—the squatters huddled together, the homeless scrounging through garbage bins, the drug dealers looking us up and down to ascertain whether or not we are potential

bother walking to the corner liquor store. For us, this is a trek. However, it is a trek filled with ridiculous inside jokes, boisterous laughter, and yours truly walking into nearly every inanimate object in our path. By the time we reach the corner of Hollywood and Highland, we are actually excited to visit the Hollywood Wax Museum.

None of us had ever visited the wax museum before. Tourist attractions are amongst the things we take for granted. On a normal night, we probably would have rolled our eyes and continued walking, but after seeing Hollywood at its ugliest, we are in desperate need of illusions.

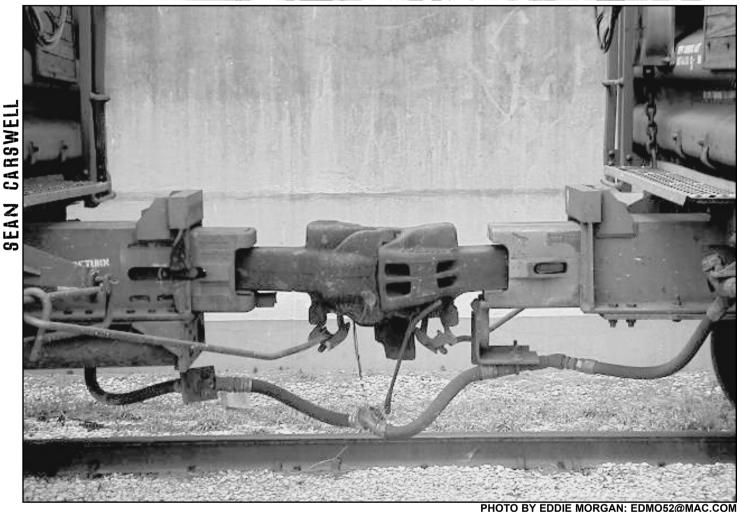
Ours is the only group inside the wax museum as the witching hour approaches. We roam through dimly lit, darkly paneled hallways as a string of figures pop out at us like the hallucinatory apparitions of a Sudafed dream. In some instances, the wax likenesses are so lifelike that I have to rub my eyes. For a moment, I actually think that Hugh Hefner, in his velvet smoking jacket, is looking down my sweater to see if I had the goods for Playboy. In most cases, though, the renditions of various celebrities and historical figures are fairly shoddy. At certain angles, we can see spots where the wax has formed clumps, We cross the street and enter the Guinness World Records Museum. Again, we are the only people inside. We run around like first graders at a children's museum, using the interactive screens to try and impress each other with our vast amounts of useless knowledge (how I manage to define a tidal bore is beyond me), theorizing what kind of relationship the world's smallest woman (24") could have with the world's tallest man (8'11"), had they ever met, and watching films that made us dizzy. We run amok until Security tells us that the museum is closing.

Having explored our only options on Hollywood Boulevard, there was no choice but to walk back to our cars and head home. As we pass police action on nearly every corner, I thought about the strangeness of this night. Our plans had fizzled and we became self-stranded in one of our least favorite parts of the city. We had fun in spite of this and seemed to walk away with a better understanding of our surroundings. Sometimes it is necessary to play hometown tourist.

-Liz Ohanesian

RAZORCAKE 13

REAL STREET A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG



EVERYTHING FOR A DOLLAR AT THE MONTE V

Joel and I were drinking shots of Ouzo long past the point when we should've stopped drinking altogether. We were at the Monte Vista bar and hotel. The bar's ownership was changing hands. The new owner would take over in the morning. The old owner would be left with more booze than he could drink in a lifetime, so on this night, everything was a buck. We got there early enough to get dollar snifters of Grand Marnier and a one-dollar shot of a Jack Daniel's Reserve each. We weathered through the middle shelves, drank all the Ten High in the well, and vowed we'd stay until nothing but fruit Schnapps were left.

The woman to my right kept screaming out, "Look at the head on that cabbage." Every time she said it, she'd cackle herself silly and slap me on the arm. She only yelled it out when big PAZORCAKE 14 haired sorority girls came through

the Monte V. I'd drank enough to make that lady make sense. Yes, I was thinking. Look at the head on that cabbage.

There was a four-and-a-half foot tall gangster in a Raiders jacket who'd been staring at us for the past half hour. Earlier in the night, he'd sat next to Joel and me. He complained about all the Navajos in Flagstaff. He kept calling them "camel jockeys." It was so far wrong that I didn't know how to correct him. Joel didn't say anything for a while, either. We just let him go on and on about the camel jockeys until Joel finally said, "You know, Jim Plunkett was a Navajo. The Raiders haven't been to a Super Bowl since he was quarterback."

This pissed off the gangster so much that he moved down two bar stools and stared at us while we drank Ouzo. I don't think he knew that Joel was lying.

The current circus surrounding us notwithstanding, I liked drinking with Joel. He was the only guy I knew who could start true stories

THOTO BY EDDIE MOROAN, EDMOSE@MAG.GOM

about his life with sentences like, "So I started dating this lady cop, which was a bad idea because I was living in a tent in the national forest, selling speed until I got enough money to get an apartment."

One night, we'd been drinking in the Monte V and drinks were full price, so we were taking pills to augment the whiskey. Joel had a few female friends who would go to the university health center with bogus menstrual pains, then sell their prescriptions to Joel. So we were drinking whiskey and eating Vicodin when Joel told me a story about how one night he'd been walking home from the Monte V and he took a short cut on the train tracks. He'd had way too many whiskeys and way too much Vicodin and decided it was a good idea to lie on the tracks and wait for a train to pass over him. So he did. He laid down right there between the tracks and fell asleep. A little while later, a train woke him up. It flew over him at ninety miles and hour. He lay real still, watching the cars race by.

"It was fucking A cool," Joel told me.

"Weren't you worried that something might be dangling underneath the train," I asked. "One loose chain would've sliced you in half at that speed

"Nah," Joel said. "I figured, as long as I kept still, I'd be fine." Joel kept drinking whiskey and eating Vicodin on the night he told me the story. Later on, he walked home from the bar, taking the shortcut across the train tracks.

So that was Joel. What made his stories so good wasn't that they were fucked up or that

the blue that I didn't know what to say. I said, "What?" again.

Joel laid it out for me. He had everything planned. He'd read the Lonely Planet guide and the Frommer's guide to Guatemala. He'd stashed away two student loan checks amounting to several thousand dollars. He'd sewn a steel plate into the bottom of his backpack so that no one could stick a knife in the back of his pack and steal everything as it fell out. He'd gotten a good pair of hiking boots and whittled everything else down to what would fit in his backpack. He'd read every book by William S.

After the bartender laid them out and collected the last of my money, I raised a toast to Joel in Guatemala. "I hope you find what you're looking for," I said.

The truth of the matter, though, was that I hoped he wouldn't find what he was looking for. See, because the thing with Joel was not that he'd sell speed for a living while he shared a tent with a cop. It wasn't that he would pass out on train tracks and wake up with a train charging over him. It wasn't that he didn't know better than to do these things. It was that he did know better, and he did these things, anyway. And he

IT WASN'T THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW BETTER THAN TO DO THESE THINGS. IT WAS THAT HE DID KNOW BETTER, AND HE DID THESE THINGS, ANYWAY.

he'd really lived through them. What made them so good was that he was still living through them. What made the stories good, too, was that my life was similar enough that I could relate, and that I could feel like I'd get away with the same crazy shit, too.

And, on this night of everything for a dollar at the Monte V. right in the middle of our second shot of Ouzo, six hours before the world's worst hangover would kick in, Joel said to me, "I'm moving to Guatamala."

I looked to the cabbage lady and the fourand-a-half foot tall gangster to see how they'd react. It was a loud, crowded bar, though. The cabbage lady and the gangster hadn't heard Joel. They didn't care. I said, "What?"

'Yeah, man," Joel said. "Guatemala. I got a bus ticket down to Phoenix, and a flight from there. I just got my student loan check this week. I'm going.

This plan seemed to come from so far out of

Burroughs, and now he was on his own quixotic adventure to Central America.

It all sounded weird to me. Especially the William S. Burroughs part. Not that I didn't read and like Burroughs's book Junky, but it seemed like a bad place to steal a blueprint for how to live your life. I even told Joel, "Man, Burroughs is all right, but he's no role model. He tried to shoot an apple off his wife's head and killed her, for God's sake. And now you're gonna follow his dream into Guatemala?"

Joel smiled. "It's where the good drugs are," he said

How could I argue? And, seeing as how all the wheels were in motion and he didn't want me to change his mind, anyway, I didn't try to argue. I ordered four shots of Ouzo: one for the cabbage lady, one for the four-and-a-half foot tall gangster, one for Joel, and one for me. It was the last of the Ouzo. Nothing was left but the fruity Schnapps, now.

got away with them. So he kept upping the ante. He'd go to Guatemala and probably find those drugs that had eluded Burroughs. And then

Two days later, I was mostly recovered from that suicidal mixture of alcohol that I'd put in my belly at everything for a dollar night at Monte V. I was at the Flagstaff bus station. I waved goodbye to Joel when he boarded his bus to Phoenix, which would lead him to a flight to Guatemala and into the unknown. Now ten years have passed and I haven't heard another word

When I think of other friends who I've lost touch with over the years, I wonder where they are and what they're doing. When I think about Joel, though, I just think, I hope he's still alive.

-Sean Carswell



EUGENE DEBS WAS A RIGHTEOUS MOTHERFUCKER.



Attention all Razorcake readers! I know you're eager to read yet another band interview, yet another record review, yet another ad for a record you HAVE TO buy on limited edition clear vinyl with an equally limited-edition insert, but I say HALT! As I write this, we're about a month away from the presidential election. Over fifty Iraqi children were killed yesterday in an explosion. At the women's shelter where I work, schizophrenic women take minimum wage jobs at McDonald's so they can save up money to buy a coat for the winter. And, in a few weeks, I have the privilege of voting for a candidate who supported NAFTA and thinks seven dollars an hour is enough to live on, just because I hate Bush even more. Sometimes, you just wanna explode!

In desperate times like these, our third-party choices include a libertarian (Let's hear it for privatized sidewalks!), a guy endorsed by a right-wing, antimmigrant party who has done very little in the way of actual campaigning (Nader), and the usual conglomeration of Communists, Prohibitionists (seriously!), and even a boxing publicist running under the "Personal Choice Party" (Their website states: "The official emblem of the Personal Choice Party is the smiley face, symbolizing the Pursuit of Happiness. To represent the Personal Choice Party on the ballot, the State shall be provided with a standard smiley face. Party members shall be free to choose from among the countless multitudes of smiley faces, the one that best represents the Personal Choice Party for them.")

When faced with choices like these, there are a number of options: killing yourself, joining a cult, or moving to Siberia to work a chain gang, on the theory that you'll be too tired after a long day chopping wood and drinking low-grade vodka to care whether the whole world goes to hell.

But, by the time you read this, the presidential election will be over, and I'll be drowning my sorrows, regardless of the winner, in discounted red, white, and blue cookies from my local chain grocery store. Ah, America!

However, it wasn't always this way. No, we've never had a president who advocated ending capitalism, providing a living wage for all, and taking away money, yachts and subscriptions to the *Wall Street Journal* from wealthy businessmen—but we did once have a presidential candidate who advocated all of this, and more.

Unlike many of the third-party candidates of today, Eugene Debs wasn't a fringe candidate, and he wasn't advocating for some narrow interest. Debs was a populist, a socialist, a son of immigrant parents who started working at age fourteen, scraping and painting railroad cars in Terre Haute, Indiana for fifty cents a day. Although he didn't become president, his story does provide a glimmer of hope that, perhaps some time in the future, we may once again have a third-party candidate who doesn't associate with Pat Buchanan's former political party or advocate the use of smiley faces as a means of personal redemption.

Debs was a labor organizer, an anti-war activist, and a man who believed in inspiring, instead of preach-

MADDY

ing to the working class. In between helping found the International Workers of the World (IWW), the most radical labor union of the early twentieth century, and giving countless speeches to working-class men and women around the country, he found time to run for president. Not once, not twice, but five times—converting voters by visiting major cities and small towns in his "Red Special" train. At his peak, in 1912, he received six percent of the vote.

In 1918, while giving a speech in Ohio, he denounced the First World War for exploiting poor and working people. His words are every bit as applicable today, but I'm guessing that, if your history classes were anything like mine, you spent more time talking about what explorer "discovered" what lake and whether or not the Civil War could have been prevented than discussing socialist critiques of war. So here are some excerpts from Debs' Ohio speech. At a time when military recruiters hit up Wal-Marts and K-Marts with brochures to lure poor people off to kill other poor people, his words seem, well, more than relevant. Here's Debs:

"They have always taught and trained you to believe it to be your patriotic duty to go to war and to have yourselves slaughtered at their command. But in all the history of the world you, the people, have never had a voice in declaring war, and strange as it certainly appears, no war by any nation in any age has ever been declared by the people.

'And here let me emphasize the fact—and it cannot be repeated too often—that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war and they alone make peace. Yours not to reason why; Yours but to do and die. That is their motto and we object on the part of the awakening workers of this nation. If war is right let it be declared by the people. You who have your lives to lose, you certainly above all others have the right to decide the momentous issue of war or peace.

For this speech, Debs was prosecuted under the Sedition Act for interfering with the draft, received a ten-year prison sentence, and had his US citizenship revoked. (President Harding later commuted his sentence, after Debs served almost three years.)

In 1920, he ran for president for the last time, from his prison cell, and, without being able to campaign (except for printing buttons saying "Debs for President Convict No. 9653"), received one million votes.

At his trial for sedition a few years earlier, Debs gave one of his impassioned speeches. There's no better introduction to Debs than through his words, so read on. I bet you'll start to wish you lived in the early 1900s and could be out campaigning for an end to capitalism instead of throwing beer cans at your TV set during the debates and muttering obscenities about what you'd do to Bush if you only had the chance. (One possibility: forcing him to listen to his daughters' appearance at the RNC over and over.) Anyway, in closing, here's Debs at his best, in excerpted

"Your Honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.

"Standing here this morning, I recall my boyhood. At fourteen I went to work in a railroad shop; at sixteen I was firing a freight engine on a railroad. I remember all the hardships and privations of that earlier day, and from that time until now my heart has been with the working class. I could have been in Congress long ago. I have preferred to go to prison.

"I am thinking this morning of the men in the mills and the factories; of the men in the mines and on the railroads. I am thinking of the women who for a paltry wage are compelled to work out their barren lives; of the little children who in this system are robbed of their childhood and in their tender years are seized in the remorseless grasp of Mammon and forced into the industrial dungeons, there to feed the monster machines while they themselves are being starved and stunted, body and soul. I see them dwarfed and diseased and their little lives broken and blasted because in this high noon of Christian civilization money is still so much more important than the flesh and blood of childhood. In very truth gold is god today and rules with pitiless sway in the affairs of men.

"I am opposing a social order in which it is possible for one man who does absolutely nothing that is useful to amass a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars, while millions of men and women who

work all the days of their lives secure barely enough for a wretched existence.

"Your Honor, I ask no mercy and I plead for no immunity. I realize that finally the right must prevail. I never so clearly comprehended as now the great struggle between the powers of greed and exploitation on the one hand and upon the other the rising hosts of industrial freedom and social justice."

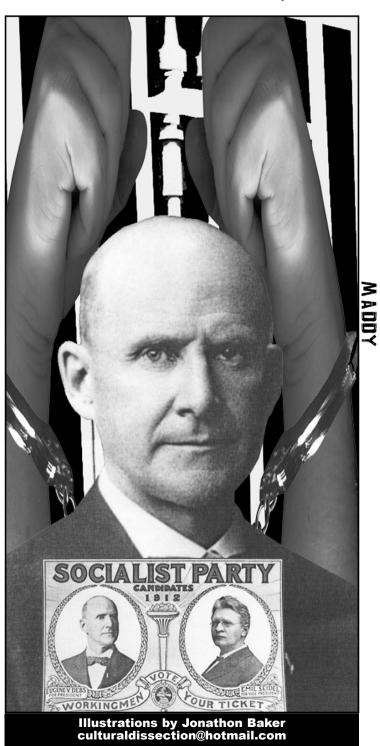
"I can see the dawn of the better day for humanity. The people are awakening. In due time they will and must come to their own."

Where's today's Eugene Debs?

-Maddy PO Box 100882, Milwaukee, WI 53212



WHERE'S TODAY'S EUGENE DEBS?



HORNERBER

sent the entire work force to see a motivational speaker. One of the points he stressed was not to read or watch morning news. Now, as an avid paper reader (when I have the chance), I found this absurd. Even though I missed the bus on this guru, I still was able to pick everything up from my colleagues. I understand his point, though I personally disagree, that

a catch. Granted, the bottle was plastic, it should not have been thrown, and it was thrown at the player who needs anger management classes more than anyone else. Said player charges the fans and is ejected; typical practice in sports, but far from being condoned. My problem is not with any of the idiots involved, but with an editorial in the L.A. Times in which

few months ago, my work one of the home players for missing reality show on television, like if to get rich than Wal-Marting the the player can withstand a barrage of nine volt batteries being thrown at him, he'll pick up a cool five million in cash? As I remember in physics, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Maybe if we pay someone enough, they can curb their testosterone rage. This quote is disturbingly funny, yet as a sport fan, it angers me. Now, on that last thought and going

others out? Teach kids that to be number one, you have to eliminate the others. I know I harp on antitrust a lot, but what the hell kind of move is this to come out in a national paper and basically say, "Hey, you other toy companies, we're gunning for you."

I once read a wonderful book called Snark Inc., where the company owned everything: the city, the



THERE A PRICE TAG ON DIGNITY NOW?

all the bad things that happen will a Bill Plaschke writes, "Fans pay cause you stress during the workday. So, I guess I should only read news on my off days, so that I'm stressed during them? How the hell would I know anything outside the three cities I occupy on a daily basis if I didn't have news? The truth in his statement is that most news is of a depressing nature.

I'll give two mild examples. First from the sports page, where at the Dodgers game the other night, a PAZORCAKE 18 fan threw a bottle at

for the right to be idiots. Players are paid to ignore them." Let me get this straight: the other night I paid six dollars for a ticket. So, for a mere six bucks I can throw bottles, take my clothes off, flip the bird, piss on the guy next to me, get drunk off my ass and get in fights, and yet a ball player being paid millions has to ignore me? "Dar-ryl... Dar-ryl... Dar-ryl."

Is there a price tag on dignity now? Is baseball really the oldest back to the work guru, do I stop reading the sports page? As a sports fan, will I then not know how my teams are doing until my day off? I don't think so.

The second article was in the business section of the same paper. Here's the blurb on the article: "The Culver City company, which has just acquired Neurosmith, intends to compete by buying up little firms." Basically the company, Small World Kids, is in the learning toys business, and what better way

land, and even the people's souls. How does that correlate to the article? To myself, this article would seem devastating to an entity's business—the big fish eating up all the little fish. Is this company putting people out of a job? It seems so to me. Does this anger me? You're damn right it does. Am I going to go into work and take it out on some of my fellow employees? No! This is where the guru is wrong. It is virtually impossible to stay in a fairytale state for nine hours. One needs lows to attain highs, otherwise the constant highs would become the line of medioc-

As a public, we need information, be it good or bad. Otherwise we become ignorant. Sure, some of us opinionated types get on our high horses, but everyone needs to have a stance, be it left or right, vertical or horizontal. It needs to have some educated backing and if one doesn't have current information, they're out of the loop.

BLOOD ORANGE

\$5.95 U.S., \$9.55 Can.

This collection of stories is bizarrely hip. The cover alone is haunting, with the children sitting for the school picture in an orange hue, and the title, Blood Orange, in a shocking chalk white. The first story is pretty tame; it's all about this guy and his infatuation with this girl who's leading him around by his dick. Things get going in the third story; it's all simple visualization. This hiker falls of a cliff and his soul floats above him, still bound by a cord. He is able to see for miles but is then drawn back to his mortal body to see birds pecking at it. The birds are beaten off by some strange beings with sticks that then start beating the lifeless body. The stick creatures are chased off by what seems like two bears, which start chewing on the body. Luckily for the hiker, two men show up and shoot one of the bears and the other runs off. The two men rush the body to emergency and the doctors are able to bring the hiker back to the living. In the final panels, though, we find that the bear is now floating over its body. I like it! There is one last page that seized my eye, and that is of an elf-looking puppet rushing to save a drowning alien creature. For saving the alien's life, the elf guy is granted one wish and he makes the mistake of blurting, "I wish I knew what to wish for." Of course, the alien suggests it and dupes the elf, calling him stupid. Luckily he's an angry elf and he pushes the alien back in the pool. There's plenty of weird in this book, so pick your poison, and go Blood Orange. (www.fantagrapics.com)

SIMPSONS CLASSICS GIANT

\$3.99 U.S., \$4.99 Can.

Who the hell doesn't love The Simpsons, especially when it's giant sized? It's all here: four stories just as hilarious as the show. You almost want to read this aloud to get the feel of the characters' unique qualities. I won't give any of the stories away because it would be like taking a pin to a balloon and letting all that wonderful helium escape. Now let's talk

extras. In the middle of the book is a giant poster of the cover of the first Simpsons comic, and in the following pages are several other retro covers. At the very end, one also gets the Patty and Selma paper dolls. So there it is, for a mere four bucks, one can obtain the hottest American family to be collected. (Bongo Entertainment, Inc., PO Box 1963, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1963)

SHOULDN'T YOU BE WORKING?

\$5.95 U.S. by Johnny Ryan Is any one familiar with Mr. Ryan? Yes, that's right, he does Angry Youth Comics. I must say I really don't care for them. Now, this is a collection of his scribblings at work and it's page after page of endless bathroom humor, only not in story form. Just endless amounts of puss and shit and naked twisted characters. I was able to get through about nine or ten pages before it found the bottom of the trash pile. Unfortunately, I had to dig it out to review it. If you want non-intellectual bathroom humor (lots of farting and shitting), then maybe you should dig in my trash, otherwise skip to the next review. (www.fantagraphics.com)

LOVE AND ROCKETS #11

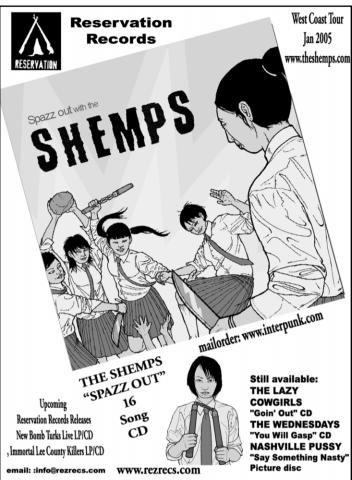
\$4.50 U.S., \$7.20 Can.

Last copy I loved. This copy is kinda weak. I always like the stories with Fritz the lisp-speaking brunette with big... well, you know. The rest of the stories herein just seem to lack punch. There's a slight political statement in the story "Who is Rena Titanon?", but it's not sharp and piercing. On the whole, one might want to dance around #11 and wait for #12. (www.fantagraphics.com)

LUBA #8

\$3.50 U.S., \$5.25 Can., by Gilbert Hernandez

What a fucking soap opera this one is! Now I find out that Fritz from Love & Rockets has an older sister and she has her own title. I don't even know if I can put this in to perspective. Luba is this heavychested hottie who carries around a hammer and is married to some burnt dude, yet digs this Fortunato guy, but then again, all the girls do. Fritz and this Pipo chick are doing the bisexual thing, while Pipo's son Sergio has the hots for Luba's daughter Guadalupe, who parades around in a genie costume. Let me catch my breath... See what I mean? If you like to see how the other half live, find a copy of *Luba*. When you figure it out, let me know. (betomess@gateway.net)



EVIL EYE #12

\$3.95 U.S., \$5.95 Can., by Richard Sala

Just in time for Halloween, a story with a mad scientist, a Frankenstein type monster, some vampires, and all the murder and mayhem associated with said monsters. I've read one of the earlier issues and these two seem similar. I actually had to leap forward a few pages to find some differences. Don't know if that is bad or not. The stories take place in dark castles, which are always appropriate for monster stories, and there's always an attractive heroine. For the most part, Evil Eve is the typical classic horror story. I grew up on Universal monsters and every weekend watched Elvira's Movie Macabre, so I'll read these things by the boatload. It won't give me nightmares but it will entertain me. (www.fantagraphics.com)

TOP SHELF TALES

Free comic book day publication Another collection of unique stories designed to entertain and torture. One of my favorites was "Bighead vs. the Pugilistic Punishment of the Puncher." The Puncher is just this big knucklehead that punches people. When vou think of it, it's funny. The other story that got me going was "Monkey vs. Robot vs. the

Butterfly." It's a weird adventure and there are strange backdrops that occupy the story. Awhile back, I received a comic by Brian Ralph called *Cave In*, and to this day, it stands out as my favorite book. "Monkey vs. Robot vs. the Butterfly," although much shorter, is very much like Cave In. On the adventure there is wandering, beauty, and terror, and we, the readers, get to witness it all. Luckily for me, these two titles have books all to themselves, but some of the other stories in here also have merit. Maybe something in here will pop onto your all-time fave list. (Top Shelf Productions, PO Box 1282, Murietta, GA 30061-1282)

PANCAKE JOE #1 & #2 \$.50 U.S.

by Mark Plaid & Ryan Parrey These are two really short comics, so I'll keep it short. Joe is a punker who is named Pancake because he can flatten himself down and slip under doorways and attempt to steal things. Joe meets Drop-pants Murphy who is named so for obvious reasons. That's all! Really, that's all you get out of these tiny comics. (Ghoulstomper, 4728, Monac/Toledo, OH 43623)

-Gary Hornberger

RAZORCAKE 19

The Dinghole Reports By the Rhythm Chicken (Commentary by Francis Funyuns) [Edited by Dr. Sicnarf]

(Wow, Rhythm Chicken! It sure is great to be sitting here in your woodshed drinking Blatz with you and Sicnarf! I can't believe we're all here together, and we're all getting along! -

[Yes, Mr. Chicken, this is a grand evening, indeed! The three of us all here Blatzing and glowing in the aftermath of a good three-hour "roadsit"! Wisconsinism has truly reached a new highpoint! Hey, wait. Chicken, do your readers even know what a "roadsit" is? Dr. S.1

My faithful readers have been dutifully informed of Wisconsinism in its many forms. They know what makes us such fun-loving, ruckus-raising, beerbellied, and bratwurst-inhaling kooks. Well, now it's time to let them know of one of our new pioneering efforts, the "roadsit." This joyous event was invented about five years ago by my good friends Ruckus Thomas and Captain Foolhardy. I was driving home from work one day to this very woodshed. While nearing the estate of our rural northwoods home, I noticed my two buddies sitting out next to the road on an old couch drinking beer. I was so blown away at the sheer brilliance of this whole scene that I almost ended up in the ditch! Feeling inspired, I drove back and forth in front of our home doing driving "tricks" (of which I cannot give extensive details... to protect the guilty). They were entertained. I finally pulled in and joined them on the couch. We sat there next to the road drinking beer and watching traffic. In

our neck of the woods, traffic means one or two cars every ten minutes. This ain't no drinking game; this is a ROADSIT!

So, this event has become a ritual with my riends and me. Why sit and drink in front of the TV when you can sit and drink by the road and watch traffic? Whenever a vehicle passes, we all hoist our beers in the air. If they wave or honk, then we "win." Sometimes the driver will hoist a beer back at us from the driver's seat! (Remember, this is Wisconsin.)
Sometimes, after they pass, the break lights
will come on and they'll back up to ask us what exactly we are doing. We always invite them to join our roadsit, and some do. Sometimes, when the local police officer is RAZORCAKE 20

doing his rural rounds, he'll pass our roadsit. When we hoist our beers to him, he usually just waves, but sometimes he'll honk. One time, he even put on his bubbles for us! Even the cops dig our roadsits! We've had many newcomers join us at roadside. Some even return later with their friends. This summer we had a girl named Megan stop by on her bike, stay for four or five beers, and then swerve away on her bike. She's become a regular and doesn't keep her water bottle full of water anymore! Many locals have

Blue Ribbon

gotten used to seeing us out there drinking at least one or two afternoons a week. More and more of them have been stopping to join us, and our roadsit numbers have been growing. We get more and more lawn chairs. Sometimes a pick-up truck's tailgate becomes a bench. These days, we even have a coffee table for which to hold our beers.

We are always looking for ways to make the roadsit exciting and new. There have been times when we brought the cordless phone out with us to call out for pizza. When they ask for our address, we say, "Just look for the guys drinking beer on Old Stage Road," to which they reply, "Oh, YOU guys! It'll be there in 30 minutes." We couldn't stop with just pizza. We

called the nearest tavern, JJ's La Puerta, and tried ordering shots of tequila (known as "Bernies," JJ's "house shot"). On many occasions, JJ himself will drive over and deliver the shots in person. Yes, we've had shots delivered to our home from a nearby tavern, but only to the roadsit, and only in Wisconsin! Sometimes, I'll bring out the remote from the TV and point it at cars as they pass. Sometimes, the roadsit is in the morning with bloody marys. Sometimes, it is at 3 A.M. with a half case of Schlitz.

Sometimes, the roadsit will postpone dinner and include Romanian moonshine (never again). Every year, the roadsit mutates a little, yet it always revolves around a buncha Wisconsin dorks drinking beer out by the road. Ain't we cute?!

-The Rhythm Chicken passes out new cans of Blatz to his guests and they all relax.-

Well, Mr. Chicken, what have you been up to all summer? We hardly heard from you at all. – Dr. S.]

(Yeah, Chicken! Are you like a northwoods hermit now or what? – F.F.)

My summer has been an odd one. Until August 10th, I was working sixty to seventy hours a week and saving every friggin' dime. Then, on that day, I experienced a new first in my life. I got fired! I could get into that whole story, but let's just say I got fucked. At first I was in shock and disbelief, but that lasted a whole five minutes. Then I realized I had the rest of the day off! I had the rest of the week off! I could have easily taken the rest of the summer off! Being the nonstop busy chicken that I am, I found a new job within a few hours, but still gave myself a week off before

starting. I NEVER HAVE TO FLIP ONE GODDAMN SWEDISH PANCAKE EVER AGAIN! This is a good thing. Now I'm preparing whitefish and perch a thousand different ways in Gills Rock, right next to the phone booth that hosted the Rhythm Chicken's first nation-wide telephone tour! When I'm not working, I walk the dog and sit by the road drinking Blatz.

(What's with you and Blatz lately? What about the Pabst? – F.F.)

Well, I still love Pabst, and enjoy it on tap whenever possible, but I'm afraid the unthinkable has happened. Pabst has somehow become somewhat recognized by those

deemed "cool" as a cool hipster beer. I've read articles stating that it has become the beer of choice for enthusiasts of cutting edge counterculture, extreme sports guys, and bike messengers. I am finding it difficult to continue getting super-hyped up over what I used to see as the ultra-cool hunter beer, ice fisherman beer, beer of my grandfathers, beer of every inbred northwoods festival, when now it seems as if Blink-182 and Hot Topic are deeming it cool and, dare I cluck, trendy. I still drink it because

sport. Once again, Milwaukee's Rushmor caust around every turn in the road. I love Records sponsored my Rhythm Chicken float in the South Shore Frolics parade. Of course, it was super sunny and about ninety degrees. This being my fourth appearance in this parade, I was quite familiar with the route and routine. At the last minute, I pulled a stolen, rolled-up fried chicken banner out of my bass drum and made a new banner on its backside It said "Impeach the Rally Rabbit" and hung off the back end of my float. With a sizable

parades!

Dinghole Report #60: Body-pass That Bird, Baby!

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #317)

Somehow, I survived yet another South Shore Frolics parade. As usual, the parade route ends down on the shore of Lake Michigan where I pull off my sweat-drenched head and begin my well-deserved libation. My

Whenever a vehicle passes, we all hoist our beers in the air. If they wave or honk, then we "win." Sometimes the driver will hoist a beer back at us from the driver's seat! (Remember, this is Wisconsin.)

it's Pabst and it is the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. However, I find myself appreciating a more regional brew (well, I know you can't get it in New York or Los Angeles, anyway) that's a few pennies cheaper, Blatz. In the early Laverne & Shirley episodes, the Shotz Brewery they worked in was actually Milwaukee's Blatz Brewery. Anyways, I don't think you'll find many skydiving, bungee-jumping bike messengers drinking Blatz outside of the Linkin Park show. In a strange way, I guess you could say that Pabst has become the Green Day of beers, while Blatz is still the Green BAY of beers. Budweiser is still just GAY with a capital "AY!"

[Okay, Mr. Chicken, Blatz is the new Pabst. Fine. Now, if I can change the subject, how much ruckus has there been lately? Are you back on a regular schedule of rhythmic chaos and mayhem? - Dr. S.]

After my devastatingly victorious Spring Chicken Tour 2004, I took a little time to settle back into this woodshed and sit by the road drinking beer. After about one month, I played at the wedding of veteran Chicken roadie, Mr. Moose. It was more of a private affair, and the paparazzi were kept at bay. Then on the next Saturday afternoon, Ruckus Thomas assisted me on a return-to-Door-County tour. Eleven smash-bash gigs across the county in just under two hours! These were all in preparation for my most anticipated gig all summer. It was time to visit my old friend, the parade.

Dinghole Report #59: Ruckus on Wheels, a Parade Assault Mechanism!

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #316)

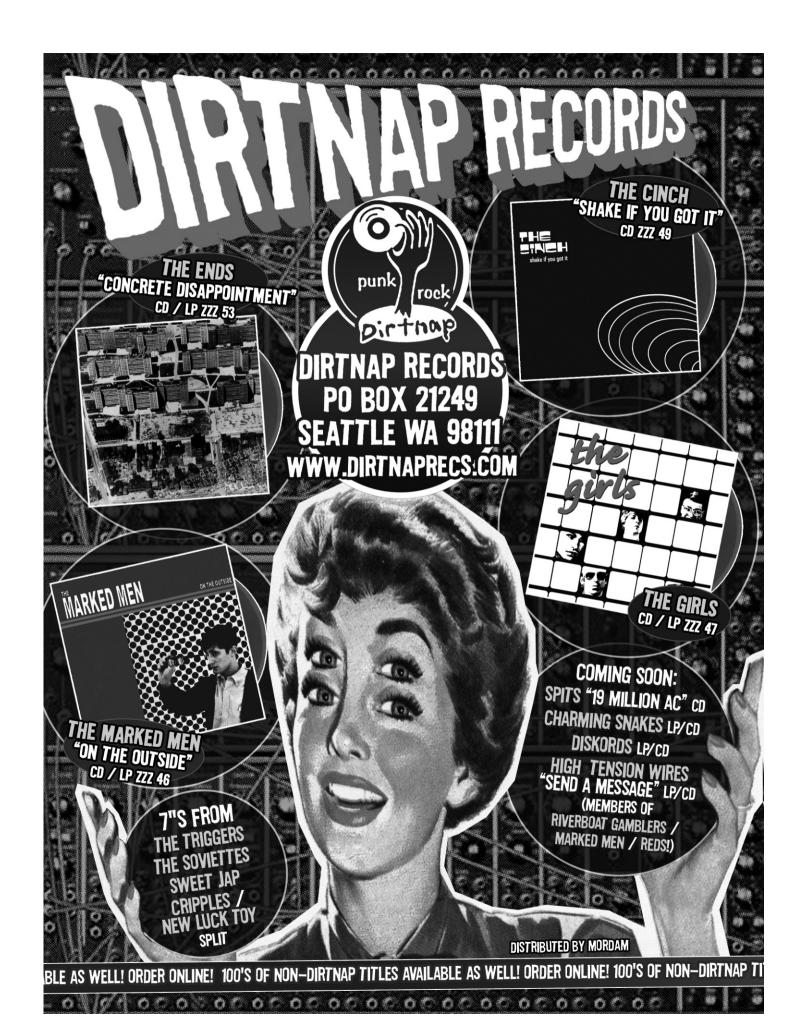
As you may or may not know, the traditional parade has been one of my favorite modes of dispensing ruckus in the past. However, it had been about two years since my last parade appearance. Rocking out thunderstyle in the hot sun through a ninety-minute parade should be an Olympic event, but, then again, I'd hate to see commercialism ruin the



hangover from the previous night's homecoming tea party, I pulled on the stinky old head. As my float pulled into the parade and my rhythms started to echo up and down Kinnickinnic Avenue, the people lining the parade route welcomed me back with joyous hoots, cheers, and beers. Here and there, people would run up and set an unopened beer on my float. That's right, appease the beast! When we inched past the intersection at Rushmor Records, the crazed and drunken crowd screamed and throbbed. When my float was directly in front of the store, I halted my rhythms and raised my drumsticks to the sky. I looked out over a sea of clenched fists. The roar of the crowd was deafening. Suddenly, their screams toned down a little when I put my sticks down and felt around for my secret weapon. They looked on and wondered what their hero was up to. Just then, my paws found the instruments of mass ruckus, my almighty ruckus logs! I valiantly raised up the heavy artillery as a manic gasp swept over the crowds. They erupted in riotous approval as I began pounding out my larger-than-life monster rock! I've come home to roost! I felt like a double warhead missile launcher in a Moscow May Day parade, and someone pushed The Button! KABOOM! KERBLAMY! And my ground zero rolled on, bringing audio-holo-

drums are set aside as Ruckus Thomas, Kveldulfr, and I make our way back to Rushmor to drink beers out on their sidewalk. That afternoon we staggered from bar to bar and took in the great majesty of the Midwestern festival. Beer, beer, bratwurst. Beer, beer, bratwurst. The final stop was the usual end of the road, the Cactus Club. We walk in and find the place to be absolutely packed, and I PACKED! mean Mistreaters were playing with the Reverse that night to a crowd not unfamiliar with my ruckus-laden ways. It was difficult enough just pushing your way through the crowd, but damn near impossible to do it while carrying a Chickenkit! People were really uptight and

yelling at me to load the drums in the back. Finally, all the drum components made it to my usual stage, the area in front of the men's room. The crowd around me pissed and moaned as I pushed my drumset against their legs and asses. The pressure was quite intense! A stage barricade would've been nice! I sat behind my crowd-clenched kit and pulled on my stinky Chickenhead. It was time to boil this pressure cooker! I started my opening drumroll. The sardined audience began to expand and heat up. I halted and jumped up on top of my bass drum, raising my wings to the ceiling. The place exploded and beer filled the air. They were mine! I jumped back onto my trusty Chickenkit and gave them dose after dose of terminal rhythm rock. I worked the crowd like a pro. The club's inner pressure grew and I'm sure something had to give. There must have been a few bodies getting squished out the front and back doors. Once again, I jumped atop my bass drum and struck a chivalrous pose. The pressure grew again as the crowd closed in around my drumset and soon forced me to go the only direction possible, up! Jiffy-Pop Rock! There I was on top of the crowd in a very packed henhouse! They passed me around for a short while as the bartenders looked on in disbelief. Soon, there was a beer in my wing and my drums were PAZORCAKE 21



neatly folded in the corner. At this very highpressure jam-packed moment, I dreamt of the wide-open spaciousness of a roadsit. Life is like a Vonnegut book, if you let it be.

(Hey, Chicken! It's almost time to go over to the trailer and watch the first presidential debate! – F.F.) tion updates! We'll have two grills out there for the all day bratwurst bar-b-q-ing. We'll have Blatz on tap all day! Our Election Day Roadsit will be open to anyone who votes. We'll have signs reading "Free Beer if you vote!," "Non-voters non-welcome!," and "I'm the Rhythm Chicken and I approve of this roadsit!" Not only will this be our first-ever Election Day Roadsit, but it will also be the

We're fusing Wisconsinism with democracy! We'll be making history! As the poll's closing time nears, Ruckus Thomas and I will stagger up the road to vote. We might even get a VWI! PUNK! And speaking of punk, I just got email confirmation from Brian at punkvoter.com of their support for our Election Day Roadsit! C'mon! How cool is it that they're sponsoring our little inbred punk rock road-

Pabst has become the Green Day of beers, while Blatz is still the Green BAY of beers.

[Yes, Mr. Chicken, and you've got your first-ever all-day roadsit! We're turning electrythm chili simmering over there, right? – tion day into a little holiday festival, a twisted northwoods roadside celebration. I. the

We've got a few minutes yet, you mediahungry slick-slacks! Besides, that reminds me. Ruckus Thomas and I were enjoying an exceptional roadsit a few weeks back when the clouds parted and a bright light shone down on us. That's when it came to us, the assignment, the prophecy. Our duty as Americans is not just to vote, but to throw the first ever ELECTION DAY ROADSIT! You see, we live a half-mile south from the Liberty Grove Town Hall, the polling place for the entire northern tip of Door County. Everyone in our area who votes will have to drive past our roadsit! Our roadsit will open with the polls at 7 A.M. We'll have a camping stove out there for eggs and bacon to go with our bloody marys! We'll have our TV out there for elec-

first-ever all-day roadsit! We're turning election day into a little holiday festival, a twisted northwoods roadside celebration. I, the Rhythm Chicken, will be providing election day concerts every hour on the hour at roadside! We'll be lubing the gears of democracy! It's the NEW PATRIOTISM!

[So, basically, you're spending election day getting drunk? – Dr. S.]

It's so much more important than that! We're getting our neighbors to vote, and then we're getting them drunk! Who knows? Maybe if the wrong guy wins we can go on a drunken rampage around the county smashing all in our path!

(I'm going out to the road right now to reserve my spot! – F.F.)

side shindig?! Three clucks for punkvoter.com! CLUCK! CLUCK! CLUCK! I'm still working on that Blatz sponsorship. I tell ya, this election day Old Stage Road will be rockin'!

—Ruckus Thomas yells from the trailer next door.—

{Rhythm Chili is being served! – R. T.}

[It's chili time, Chicken! Let's wrap this us! – Dr. S.]

When elected, I promise to have Indiana removed from the map! A vote for my opponent is a vote for hoosh-wash! I am American Hot-Snot #1! Rhythm Nation, indeed!

-The Rhythm Chicken Rhythmchicken@hotmail.com







HIBERNIAN HELLRIDE

If you're thinking about taking your mother on a trip to Ireland, whatever you do, don't let her drive. My sister and I have made this mistake not once, but twice. I can explain.

A few years ago I went with my mother and sister to Belfast in Northern Ireland to look up some old friends who'd stayed with our family during The Troubles. Eighteen years had passed since we'd seen the "kids" who'd visited us in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., and now they were adults with families of their own. We had

some serious catching up to do. So when my mother rented the biggest SUV at the airport car hire, the alarm bells failed to sound, in fact it seemed like a good idea. Between the three of us and all of our luggage the choice felt sensible, essential even. We had a long list of friends we wanted to visit during our stay in Belfast, and it would hardly do to treat our kind and generous hosts like a taxi service. My mother, bless her heart, was probably thinking the bigger the vehicle, the more souls she could accommodate. My sister, who had never been to Dublin, and I were eyeing a trip to the Bushmills Distillery. Also, since my mother probably wouldn't be sucking down Guinness and vodka-Red Bulls like hooligans on a holiday in Mallorca, that is, like the rest of us, we had ourselves a

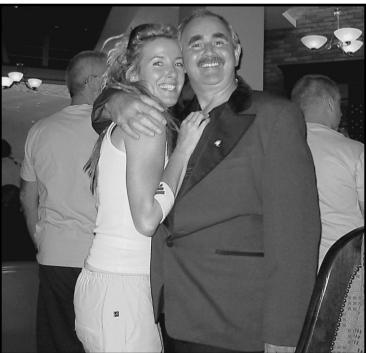
The second my mother attempted to operate the vehicle Francis, our West Belfast host, insisted on calling a "space wagon," our folly was made plain. In Ireland and the everyone not named Jim's mom knows, the steering column is

designated driver. Brilliant!

located on the right hand side of the vehicle, so when my mother tried to enter the car on the passenger side, we all laughed nervously and started jockeying for the back seats. When my mother climbed into the right side of the vehicle and immediately started cooing, "Oh this is so weird!" Francis and I reluctantly offered to drive. She refused the offer, stating that she was the only driver on the rental agreement. At the time, we didn't recognize this niggling oversight for what it was: a pre-emptive power-grab for complete control of the rental car. Not-so brilliant, but we would have plenty of time to lament our lapses of judgment later.

Ireland's countryside, as you have undoubtedly heard, is picturesque and quaint, unless PAZORCAKE 24 you're trapped in a rolling death

wagon with your maniacal mother behind the wheel. My mother compensated for the whole wrong side of the road thing by giving the oncoming traffic plenty of room to operate. Unfortunately, this approach gave whoever was sitting in the passenger seat a great view of the cliffs, gulleys, gorges, and ravines we were always in danger of sliding down. Where other tourists saw country scenes and luminous landscapes, I saw only hairpin curves and slick motorways. Most mornings I was usually still drunk enough from the night before to catch a nap and dream about attending my own funeral;



United Kingdom, as virtually Photos: Jim's sister (above); Jim's sanity (facing page, upper right); Jim's breakfast (facing page, bottom left)

but by mid-day I was so frazzled that all I could think about were the pints waiting for me at the next pit stop. It was a vicious cycle of near-death experiences and drinking myself insensate. I have seen the light at the end of the tunnel and it is black and flecked with white foam

Whenever possible, we asked Francis to drive us around the country, and the three of crammed into his tiny coupe, which was so small, it wouldn't look out of place on a Hot Wheels track. Crushed in the back seat, I lost all feeling in my legs, but if that's what it took to stay alive, so be it. Sore legs were a small price to pay to keep the American menace off the streets of Ireland.

One morning after we'd spent the night in the town of Waterfoot on the Antrim Coast, I

noticed a strange dent on the space wagon. When I confronted my mother about it over lunch, she came up with a curious story about how she was pretty sure someone had hit her while she was out taking photographs. Pretty sure? Either someone hits you or they don't, there's not a whole lot of room for uncertainty. Naturally, being a stubborn second-generation Irish woman, she stuck to her incredible and completely fantastic story. She claimed to have been at a narrow spot in the road between two stone walls when someone came along and "gently sideswiped her." The other driver sup-

posedly even made eye contact with her as he motored past. I called bullshit. She stuck to her story. I examined the rental car. The dent was on the passenger side and looked like it could have been caused by one of the innumerable low stone walls that criss-crossed the countryside. There was no paint from another vehicle. In an effort to mend the rapidly dissolving spirit of family unity, I let the matter drop, because being right is never a good enough reason for making your mother cry, but one can only look death in the face so many times before the psychological strain starts to take its toll and impair your mental faculties. Holidays are supposed to be relax-

Our next stop was Dublin. Francis had obligations in Belfast that prevented him from traveling with us, and my sister, the conniving little schemer, had taken the train the night before to meet up with friends. This meant that not only did I have to ride with my mother in the suicide seat by myself. I was also responsible for navigating.

I don't believe in God, but I chalk the fact that we arrived in one piece to a miracle. The three hours my mother and I spent together on that rainy November afternoon were the most stressful of my adult life. I have blocked out the name of the motorway that links Belfast and Dublin because it is seared into my brain as Nightmare O'Alley. My mother executed spontaneous u-turns, missed turns on the roundabouts, drove on sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, and very nearly struck a small dog. When we finally reached Dublin, she parked a mile away from our destination because she insisted on parking where she always parks when she drives in Dublin. There wasn't enough stout in all the vats at St. James Gate to quell my nerves, but I didn't complain. As we walked to Temple

So this summer, while I was planning another family holiday in Hibernia, I made my sister promise to help me prevent my mother from renting a car by any means necessary. We did this by booking in advance the apartment in Dublin and the house in Cushendall that would serve as our bases of operations, and we enlisted Francis to help arrange transportation for us and our gear. We covered every base, allowed for every contingency, but somehow we still managed to underestimate my mother's iron will, her inflexible resolve, her tyrannical need for power.

We'd arranged for my mother to accompany Francis up to Belfast. As there wasn't enough for all of us, I was going to take the train. When I went to check out of the apartment Francis was there with some bad news: my mother had taken a bus to the airport. She was going to rent a car, drive all the way back into Dublin's city center, pick him up and then drive to Belfast: an all-day evolution in the best of circumstances. With my



I NEEDED WHISKEY. I NEEDED GUINNESS. I NEEDED SOMETHING TO CONVINCE ME MY WORST NIGHTMARE WASN'T COMING TRUE.

mother behind the wheel, who knows? I wished him luck, urged him to make his peace with his maker, and took a cab to the train station.

When I met up with Francis in Belfast later that evening, he was shaken man, a vestige of his former self. We were at a decidedly non-neutral watering hole in West Belfast when Francis rattled off one perilous experience after the next. "I love your mother," he said, "but I'm never fecking going through that again." A feeling of dread overtook me, and I knew how poor Frodo must've felt when those bloody Ring Wraiths finally caught up with him, just as he'd feared and dreaded all along. How could I have let this happen? Where the hell was my sister? Why hadn't she done something to stop her? Francis's father kept hectoring me to give him the shirt off my back. He clearly didn't understand how serious this was, all of our lives hung in the balance.

The glens of Antrim, Francis reminded me,

are a series of coastal bluffs and Cushendall sits ing ball of fire, or suffering a massive coronary. right in the middle of them. Getting there meant climbing mountain passes, navigating narrow roadways, and maneuvering along knife-edge cliffs. I needed whiskey. I needed Guinness. I needed something to convince me my worst nightmare wasn't coming true.

Everyone in the Republican bar was drinking and watching football. My sister was drunk. Francis was drunk. Francis's parents and sisters were drunk. I tried to talk strategy with my sister. Francis's friend Tommy, who worked for the Royal Mail and had a big space wagon of his own, was coming to pick us up and drive us back to Francis's house where my mother was waiting with her rental car. It was time to decide who would ride with Tommy and who would ride with my mother. I refused. I love Ireland, but I had no intention of dying there and could easily envision either plummeting off a cliff in a burn-

Francis wasn't going either. That left my sister, and she knew it. She was the one.

She went to the bar and started drinking with men who'd been political prisoners, which is a nice way of saying they were ex-IRA. They fortified her with shots of whiskey and in a matter of minutes she was making the rounds, hugging our friends and exchanging tearful farewells. I think all of us knew that we might not ever see her again.

We climbed into the space wagon and went to Francis's parents house in Andersontown to meet my mother. We loaded up our gear and got ready to go. My mother seemed miffed that no one wanted to ride with her, nor could she understand why this was so. She seemed to have blocked the experiences from our previous trip from her memory. (If only I could do the same.)

We set out for Cushendall, but something was wrong. After just a few minutes my mother had pulled off to the side of the road and my sister came running up to the space wagon. "She kicked me out." We made the ninety-minute trip to Cushendall with seven of us packed in the space wagon and my mother following behind in the rental car alone.

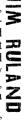
I still don't know if my mother ever really came to terms with the fact that her children were afraid to drive with her. It must be difficult to accept that you can no longer do the things as well or ably as you used to be able to do them, and I started to feel bad about the way we'd handled the whole thing. On her last day in Ireland she'd taken the rental car into Belfast but got lost and never actually made it into the city and pretty much wasted the whole day. So while my sister took a day trip to Scotland I stayed behind, went to the market, and cooked my mother a nice lamb dinner with roasted potatoes.

"Maybe after dinner we can go into town," she suggested.

"Sure," I said, "but only if we walk."

-Jim Ruland





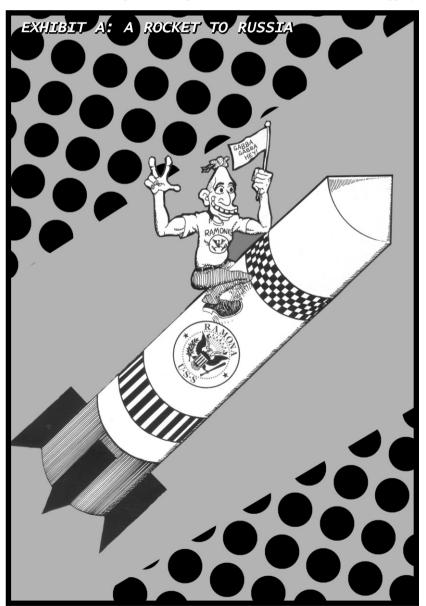
THAT'S RIGHT, FOLKS—I WALKED, PRONG-FIRST, INTO A VIRTUALLY FULL BOOKSHELF.

KING SZOOT, WE HARDLY KNEW YE

NOW THAT I'VE BROKEN MY PENIS, I CAN ONLY MUSE ALOUD AS TO WHY I HAD NOT DONE SO **PREVIOUSLY**

...following the doting re-tile-ization of my kitchen so lovingly annotated last issue, i capitulated to my inner desire for an encore by ripping up my gross beige living room carpet and pad (finding what? The floor, perhaps? Hail, no! More carpad (finding what: The Hoot, perhaps: Hatt, no: Hoot earpet!), then ripped up the gross green kangabackTM carpet underneath that (1. "Pale Green Carpeting is real"— Boy Elroy, "Pale Green Carpeting," 1983) (Oh Christ, let's not start THAT shit again!), only to find (what? The floor, perhaps? Hail, no!) more ancient vinyl tile circa 1949, then ripped THAT shit up at great cost of life and limb, and, eventually striking concrete (2. "Concrete Shoes,"—Plasmatics, 1981), had the whole dang floor done up with relatively cheap-ass (but yet still expensive-ass from any other standpoint) right swell dark purple plush carpet, just bluish enough to offset the magentaishness of the kitchen tiles. BUT THIS IS NOT IMPORTANT. However, for greatest success in ripping up and installing flooring, it is highly desirable to first move all the existing crap out of the room you're ripping up (if you can do the magic trick where you yank the carpet off the floor without disturbing the furniture, i'd like to see it), and, in the course of my furniture-moving duties, i had occasion to temporarily move a fairly sturdy and heavily laden bookcase into the bathroom. After a few days of having the bookcase in the john, i came to find that that was actually a really good place for it—sure, it didn't make much sense from a spatial standpoint, all crammed into the bathroom like that, but it really wasn't hurting anything there, and, quite frankly, that's where the bulk of my reading (as well as the vast majority of my inhouse defecation!) gets done—so i decided to leave it in there permanently. BUT THIS IS NOT IMPORTANT, EITHER. A few days later, i awoke in the middle of the night, ensconced in the condition that one might refer to as a "piss boner" (Okay, LISTEN UP: Years ago, Mykel Board provoked a virtual typhoon of armchair urologist debate and argument when he made reference to a "piss boner" in one of his MRR columns. I mean, people were going off about the existence/non-existence of piss boners in the MRR letters pages for months. I DON'T CARE WHETHER A "PISS BONER" IS A VALID CONDITION OR NOT. Immaterial! Don't care! [3. "Don't Care"—Circle Jerks, 1980] Let us just say that i 1. had a hard-on, and 2. had to pee, and let us neither infer nor deny [4. "Deny"—The Clash, 1977] [see? I start that shit i can't stop doing it! LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO!] a connection between the two. Fair enough?) And, as i had done so many times before without incident, i rose, nekkid, as bachelors living alone tend to be, and headed my hard-on and bladder to the loo-without, of course, the seemingly unnecessary distraction of lighting. It was shortly thereafter when i was reminded, quite forcefully, of my decision to move the bookcase into the bathroom. That's right, folks—i walked, prong-first, into a virtually full bookshelf. I can describe the resultant sensation as "quite unique." It was as if-well, okay,

you know how if you got a pound of hamburger in the freezer, and you take it out to thaw, and you think maybe it's thawed out by now, so you put it on a cutting board and try to chop it in half with a butcher knife, and most of it is thawed out, but there's still that core that's kinda frozen, but not quite frozen solid? So you really start leanin' on the knife, thinkin' yeah, i cut can through this fucker, we'll be all right here, and you put all your weight on the knife, and you can feel the little frozen molecules in the center sort of wheezing and squeaking and giving way and then CHOP!—you're through the frozen part and immediately through the remainder of the thawed out part, all the way to the cutting board? Well THAT was what it felt like, but in fast-motion. Oh, plus it also felt like someone punched my penis in the nose, concurrent with the chopping.



As i said, "quite unique." And, the funny part is that the first thought that popped into my mind after impact (other than the thoughts wholly composed of non-alphanumeric characters, like "%\$#@!" and "&#*\$\$!!!!!") was "wow, i can't believe i've never done that before!" I mean, think of all the various Male Ailments we various males suffer throughout our lifetimes: Can't get it up? Yup, i had that one before. Can't get it down? Yup, that one too. Leakin'radiator fluid at inopportune moments? Uh huh, who hasn't? Penis gets up of its own accord in the middle of the night and starts dancing around the room singing "La Vida Loca" and wearing a

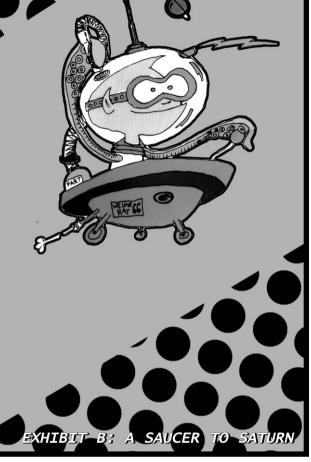
small Napoleon hat formerly used to store jellybeans in? Hey, just a part of growing up! But yet, with all the ludicrous mishaps a penis is certain to bequeath to its owner, i have NEVER, in my 39 years of penis ownership, walked boner-first head-on into a relatively immovable object. Huh. Later in the day, i find out that Johnny Ramone has died. Boo (okay, i think we can all agree that Johnny Ramone was lame for being a Republican, however, Blitzkrieg GOP or no, Johnny Ramone was also kind of the coolest Ramone, simply by virtue of having invented punk rock guitar. He also had the best haircut and best tshirts, including one with a Captain AmericaTM iron-on transfer identical to the one i purchased, at age seven, from RoachTM T-Shirts, ca. 1971 [i think it was the first thing i ever mail-ordered with my own money, 99¢ plus 25¢ postage. I also can attribute a goodly hunk of my long-standing intolerance for the Rock Culture of the late '60s/early '70s to the repulsion i got looking over some of other the iron-ons available: I'd be like "Led Zeppelin? The Doors? Jimi Hendrix? The Grateful Dead? A big plant leaf of some sort? Who would wear such amazingly gross things on a t-shirt when they could have a cool Jack Kirby Captain America for the selfsame 99¢?" Surely this iron-on is the bedrock upon which all other punk rock is erected! Ouch, don't talk about erections right now). Still later that day, me and my buddy Time Bomb Tom (who, tragically, would lose his father barely a week later [Condolences, Tom!

Chin up and all that other jive]) drive down to Milwaukee to see the Vibrators, who are okay, we guess. Being the nerdish type, i haul along my "Baby" sleeve for whatever remaining original members there are to sign. The drummer is identified, and his Eddie Hancock is secured. I watch the band. I decide he is the only remaining original member. I mean, the bass player is some young kid with a Social Distortion be-hatted-skull-drinking-booze patch (Tom later remarks: "I call that the 'Poseur Pennant'") on his jacket. He can't be the original dude. The guitar player/vocalist can't be the original dude either: not only does he have long hair and a baseball cap instead of white aviator shades, but the original vocalist, Knox, AL-WAYS-IN-TRO-DUCED-THE-SONGS-IN-A-RI-DIC-U-LOUS-MON-O-TONE!!! WHICH-I-LOVED!!! This guy not only does not IN-TRO-DUCE-THE-SONGS-IN-A-RI-DIC-U-LOUS-MON-O-TONE-WHICH-I-LOVE, but it doesn't seem like he really knows how the vocals are supposed to go. I mean, he knows the words, but his phrasing and delivery are way off. It's like he knows the songs, but isn't yet comfortable singing 'em. I figure he was just some guitar player who joined the band after 1978's V2 album (more or less a pretty effective jumping off point for the band IMO), had been with the band a while, and now hasta sing while he plays because the original dude, Knox, musta quit. Anyway, band plays. Their set is surprisingly low on Pure Mania material. ERROR! ERROR! We bring them out for an encore anyway, 'cause, i mean, what the fuck, they're the Vibrators—i guess—and i've owned their records since i was fourteen. So fuck it, play more! Dance, monkey, dance! Afterwards, i make chit chat with the band. I ask the bass player kid how long he's been in the band. About a year. Yep, that checks out. I ask the guitar player/singer dude how long he's been in the band.

"Since '76." WHOA. ERROR! ERROR! I figure, wow, holy shit, he must have been that other guitar player dude, who now has had to assume vocal duties in the absence of Knox. Attempting to clarify my position, i ask him how long he's had to sing and play guitar simultaneously—'cause, i mean, shit, it was *obvious* to a Rock Genius™ like myself he wasn't really comfortable with it. "Since '76." In a word: ULK! I procure my "Baby Baby" sleeve. "You're on this record, then?" He nods in the affirmative. "Might i trouble you for an autograph?" He signs, dutifully. I thank him and depart. I attempt to decipher his flourishy signature, trying to figure out

which fuckin' long-lost Vibrator whose name i can't think of this guy is. As best i can tell, this guy's name is "King Szoot." Now, since the advent of SparksTM 6.0% Alcohol By Volume Energy Drink, my memory certainly isn't what it used to be (and, honestly, would YOU wanna remember that you walked cock-first into a huge bookcase?), but i can say with a fair amount of authority that i don't remember any goddamn "King Szoot" in the Vibrators. I am troubled by this ever-deepening mystery all the way home. "King Szoot? King Szoot? Who the hell is he, King Usniewicz's second cousin or something?" Playing my Pure Mania album full tilt at four a.m. in the throes of scholarly contemplation, i eventually decipher King Szoot's signature: It is actually the word "KNOX," followed by a Vibrators "V" in a circle (note to the ladies: The Vibrators were selling cool vinyl skirts with the huge Vibrators "V" across the front. You should buy one immediately, then come over. Oddly enough, they weren't selling Vibrators vibrators. ERROR! ERROR!), then "2004." Um... DUH. So, yeah: On the day Johnny Ramone died, i fatally bashed my cock into a bookshelf, then asked Knox, the head Vibrator dude, if he had been in the band long (well, it was his own god damn fault for dropping the robotic voice schtick! Dude, once you start a goofy voice, you gotta stick with it for keeps! You're out of the guild!). Kudos all around! In memory of this unholy confluence of events, i have renamed my crushed and destroyed

penis "King Szoot," and, on behalf of the Szootster and myself, we present unto you:



THE TOP 100 RAMONES SONGS OF ALL TIME, AND HOW THEY RELATE TO MY PENIS

HOW MANY TITLES IS THIS COLUMN ALLOWED TO HAVE, ANYHOW?

(NOTE: I broke down all the songs by album—therefore "#3, *Leave Home*" means that it's the third-best song on the *Leave Home* record. Bonus tracks, b-sides, and any other stragglers are lumped under the category of "Miscellaneous." Covers are eligible; live recordings are not. These rankings are official as of 9:58 AM CDT 10.1.04 and not subject to debate nor change. The Ramones were the best band of all time and everybody knows it. Thank you for playing.)

100. I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING (#13, Rocket To Russia, 1977) This one barely edged out "Got Alot to Say" from Adios Amigos (?!), which, given that's it's from the sacred mystic high holy Rocket to Russia album, bespeaks volumes about the disturbing unsanctity of having a more or less unnecessary acoustic guitar figure so prominently in the mix of a Ramones song. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: The line "You think I'm kinda cute, but who's gonna bring home the loot?" is pretty much right on, except it shoulda been "You think i'm kinda cute, but who's gonna bring home the Szoot?"

99. SMASH YOU (#10, Miscellaneous, 1985) This is either the Great Lost Ramones Track or The Stupid Lame Ramones Track That Record Collector Twits Keep Insisting Is The Great Lost Ramones Track Simply To Bolster Their Own Inflated Self-Worth Because It Used To Be Difficult To Obtain, depending on your personal perspective on things. The unfairly-maligned Richie Ramone (hey, i LIKED the guy's drumming. He actually approached things like "hey, fuck it, i'm not gonna try to drum like Tommy [and fail miserably, like Marky], i'm just gonna drum like i'm some guy who plays the drums, which, indeed, I am"—which, to me, worked pretty well. I like his drumming better than Marky's, i'll put it that way. Then again, i think i like MY drumming better than Marky's) wrote the type of song one would suppose one would write were one in the Ramones, which, were you he, would indeed have been the case. The line

"don't you call me on the phone, I don't want your dial tone" is inexplicably great. Joev denied all knowledge of ever having recorded this song, which sounds about right. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: "Smash You"? Been there, done that.

98. CENSORSHIT (#3, Mondo Bizarro, 1992) This song wasn't as inane as it might sound today, given that, at that point in our nation's glorious history, bands were getting thrown in jail for playing 2 Live Crew covers (Too Much Joy, look it up yourself). Joey's attempts at valid social commentary are fairly inept ("Freedom of Choice, needs a stronger stronger voice?" Doesn't he mean "Freedom of Speech?" And, if so, what would that line be? "Freedom of Speech, needs a stronger stronger beach?" He also makes mention of an "S&L deficit"-confusing the Republican-emitted budget deficit [say, maybe this song isn't quite as dated as originally assumed!] with the Savings & Loan scandal [the Fed lent money to Savings & Loans they knew were going bankrupt, blah blah blah]), and the line "Ask Ozzy, Zappa or me, we'll show you what it's like to be free" repulses me to my marrow, but this is partially offset by Joey having the good sense to steal the chord changes from the Roy Orbison-penned Everly Brothers song "Claudette." AND HOW THIS RELATES TO MY PENIS: I can assure you, King Szoot has been duly censored from coast to coast and border to border!

97. BOP TIL YOU DROP (#5, Halfway to

Sanity, 1987) I think this is the only Ramones song i'm aware of where HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot seconds all lyrics, and they detune the guitars to a lower key (if i'm not mistaken, which i almost always am); this particular frequency does indeed sound appropriately subhuman. The line "no time to cop, do the Cretin Hop" marks the second time a Ramones song makes mention of someone dancing to another Ramones song, "the kids were dancing to the Blitzkrieg Bop" from "7-11" was the first. AND HOW THIS RELATES TO MY PENIS: After King Szoot's encounter with the bookcase, this cretin was doing a bit of hopping himself.

96. WHY IS IT ALWAYS THIS WAY? (#12, Rocket to Russia, 1977) "Now she's lying in a bottle of formaldehyde." What is she, a pig fetus? Oh well, to each his own. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: The Szootster does not seem long for the friendly confines of the formaldehyde jar himself.

95. I REMEMBER YOU (#14. Leave Home, 1977) I think perhaps the very first time my first band ever got together, we played this song and followed up the "I remember you, OO-oo-OO-oo" parts with backing vocals that went "He remembers her, UR-ur-UR-ur!" which, at age fourteen or fifteen or whatever, we thought was fucking riotously hilarious. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: As King Szoot prepares himself for the formaldehyde jar, he reminds me that, in fact, things don't last forever, and sometimes, baby, they never really do, they never really do.

94. ENDLESS VACATION (#9, Too Tough to Die, 1984) The Ramones attempt a slow-fast-slow hardcore number. It masterfully evokes the feel of a barbiturate-laden sot who isn't sure whether he wants to vomit, rant, or dry heave. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot wishes to have the phrase "Deadly Spitten Cobra" tattooed upon his supple flesh, in black outlined letters shaded with red, before he is put down

93. KICKS TO TRY (#9, Miscellaneous, 1981) This was a demo song that's now included as a bonus track on the *Pleasant Dreams* CD. I dunno what the fuck they were thinkin', this song is better than two-thirds of the songs that actually made it onto the album. I tried to get my band to cover this song once, but they were operating with a flowchart that went 1. What should we do? 2. If answer is not "nothing," go to 1. End program. AND
HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King

Szoot rejects this song utterly, as he can think of many new kicks to try, but cautions interested consumers not to bestow a literal meaning upon the term "kick."

BUMMING ALONG Miscellaneous, 1982) As with "Kicks to Try," this was a demo song that's actually better than at least a couple of the songs that made it to the album it wasn't on (in this case, those being "Highest Trails Above," "Somebody Like Me," and "Subterranean Jungle," in that order). As also with "Kicks to Try" i tried to get my band to cover it, with the same results. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot and i share complete and utter befuddlement as regards the lyrical content. I think i heard something about a Spider Queen, an Alley Cat, and a Rocket. King Szoot says send them up to the room; if we like them, we'll pay.

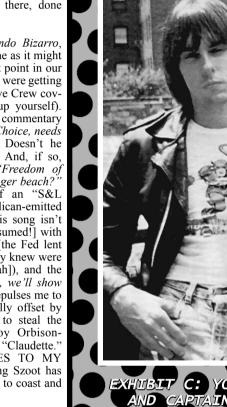
91. WHAT'S YOUR GAME (#13, Leave Home, 1977) He knows her name! He knows her game! Sweet Mary Jane! She's quite insane! But if he knows her game, why does he wish to know what her game is? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: I dunno, but King Szoot says "if you hafta ask, you can't afford it.

90. I LOST MY MIND (#4, Halfway to Sanity, 1987) The entire lyrical content of the song: Gimme some skin, Gimme some gin, I want some wine, I lost my mind. In an album rife with utter crud, it's about time somebody started talking sense. AND

recommends these demands are catered to in that exact order, lest performance be compromised by dint of strong drink.

89. REAL COOL TIME (#3, Halfway to Sanity, 1987) Joey rips off the chorus from "Saturday's Kids" by the Jam, then rips off the "You don't ever have to be lonely" part from "So Good to See You" by Cheap Trick, which is a pretty lame fucking Cheap Trick song to be cannibalizing. However, i will point out that once, when i was about fourteen, i added up all the song times on my records (why? I don't know. I guess i wasn't aware you could huff Glade™ back then) and found that the Cheap Trick album that song is on, "In Color," has a running time of 29:32—EXACT-LY that of "Rocket to Russia" as well. Don't try it with CDs, it won't work. "Figures don't lie, but liars figure" and all that. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot wishes to know more about this "Cat Club." He punctuates this with a sultry "meow."

88. SOMEBODY PUT SOMETHING IN MY DRINK (#6, Animal Boy, 1986) As opposed to "Smash You," this Richie-penned number does not sound Ramonely enough for my hard-bitten tastes, but, in its defense, it's a better song than the album-openers the "real" Ramones wrote for the records immediately preceding and following it. And fuck you, i like drinking pink stuff (though for MD 20/20TM i go for the "Orange Jubilee" flavor over the pink). AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King



Szoot says he is deathly afeared of this song because it reminds him of the time i had to take him to the VD clinic. I hastened to point out that he was confusing it with "Somebody Put Something in My Dink."

87. IN THE PARK (#7, Subterranean Jungle, 1982) I always thought this song was kinda trying too hard. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot also likes to "hang out" in the dark.

86. HAIR OF THE DOG (#5, Animal Boy, 1986) Joey lays off stealing song parts for once, and decides to go the upright route of just making off with old Nazareth song titles. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot informs all who care to listen that now they are messing with a son of a bitch. Please take note.

85. I WANNA BE WELL (#11, Rocket to Russia, 1977) What are the odds that either of the dead-of-cancer Ramones sang this song at any point during their illness? Probably slim to none in Joey's case, and negative-none in Johnny's. Be that as it may, i once taught this song to the kids i babysat for in ninth grade. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot wanna be well too. His future's bleak. Ain't

84. I WANT YOU AROUND (#9, Miscellaneous, 1979) Jeans-creaming teenage Riff Randell wannabe bedroom fantasy Numero Uno is for Joey to appear in a puff of reefer smoke and lovingly croak this song at her whilst a dampened but cheerful Dee Dee plunks along in the shower. Me, i was just happy i got to see Johnny's other guitar. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot thinks that if we smoke enough marijuana, we can actually reverse this effect, and wind up in the bedrooms of teenage Riff Randell wannabes, singing this song at them. Well, no harm in tryin'.

83. SHE'S A SENSATION (#6. Pleasant Dreams, 1981) Generic hit attempt. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: "Good enough to eat" indeed.

82. FREAK OF NATURE (#4, Animal Boy, 1984) "Got a ten-inch erection/Pimply complexion." What's not to like? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot is a bit metaphorically up in arms about the crack about the pimples.

81. COME ON NOW (#5, Pleasant Dreams, 1981) Aging Pun Krock Scenester Fart bedroom fantasy Numero Uno is that somebody will actually find the fact that we are Comic Book Boys and Junkfood Guys even remotely interesting. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot reminds me that we got no skirts to chase. I'm ON it, Szoot, i'm ON

80. I DON'T WANNA BE LEARNED / I DON'T WANNA BE **TAMED** (#7, Miscellaneous, 1975) Fuck, i think the title is longer than the song is. I knew "real" Ramones fans who thought this song and its companion, "I Can't Be," pretty much sucked when they were first unearthed in 1990, to which i can only remark "BOSH and TWADDLE!" This squalid crunch is even more primal and primitive than the first album, and if you didn't get this, i take that as meaning that you somehow retroactively didn't get any of it. PAY MORE ATTENTION IN YOUR NEXT LIFE, FOO! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot wishes to know if the opposite of "learned" is "forgotten" before he releases his statement.

79. SLUG (#6, Miscellaneous, 1978) I am of the understanding that there are test pressings of Road to Ruin with "Slug" in lieu of "Its a Long Way Back." Neither song makes a goddamn lick of horse sense at the end of

side two, so i guess it's a demi-wash. Kind of a cute song, but all the pseudo-Phil Spector trappings should've been a goddamn red flag a mile wide. Maybe that's why Joey pulled the song off the album; he didn't wanna tip his hand. Crafty dead tall punk rock bastard! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot often enjoys the tactile stimulation that only repeated entry and egress into a mason jar full of copulating banana slugs can bring.

78. HUMANKIND (#8, Too Tough to Die, 1984) Oof, i just thought about how ironic that album title is. Anyway, another Richie song. Kinda trite punk rock lyrics, but one thing about the drummer writin' songs is that at least they know how the drums go. Actually, since we're dealing with drummers, not even that is certain. AND HOW IT RELATES TO

MY PENIS: King Szoot reminds the peons to keep their hands off his CadillacTM

77. I CAN'T BE (#5, Miscellaneous, 1975) It still galls me that people thought • these songs sucked back in 1990. The inability to move one unit of primitivism to the left of the first album on the rock-rockrock-rock-rock-and-roll number line (or, alternately, one level of knuckle-draggingness to the right on the Darwinian 'Evolution of Ramone" chart) and groove on the sheer unfettered bliss of a guy singing "I can't be, dahOOO whatchoo want from me" permanently brands the culprit with the Mark O' The Square, as far i'm concerned. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot actually DOES want a girl to do his launda-ree, thank you.

76. MY BRAIN IS HANGING UPSIDE **DOWN (BONZO GOES TO BITBURG)** (#3, Animal Boy, 1986) I dunno, when it came out on the 12" it was "Bonzo Goes to Bitburg" and we all thought he was singing

"Reagan's hanging upside down," then it comes out on the album and it's "My Brain Is Hanging Upside Down" and, cripes, whattabout all the choo-choo noises and dinging and shit? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot reminds me that he is my brain and is, in fact, hanging upside down, so somebody obviously knows their shit.

75. GO LIL' CAMARO GO (#2, Halfway to Sanity, 1987) This could've been a great song in a Nikki & The Corvettes motif had

whatever lunkheads involved remembered to actually write verses for it. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot feels the line "Come on baby move" is of the utmost benefit. King Szoot also wants to know if anyone else besides him experienced that Paris Hilton DVD. Geez, the last time i saw anybody lie on their back that long without moving, it was when Mark Madsen fouled TJ Ford and they hadda cart him off the court in a gurney.

74. QUESTIONINGLY (#7, Road to Ruin, 1978) Fuck you, i like "Questioningly!" It mangles the Queen's English ("yes I said, you're a girl who I once may have knew") like no other country-tinged George-Harrison-lick-thieving punk ballad before or since! It's also the answer to the trivia question in Rock'n' Roll High School. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: "Questioningly" is how King Szoot feels about his abilities to perform his assigned tasks right now.

73. LOVE KILLS (#2, Animal Boy, 1986) Hmm... let's see... write songs to try to get them on movie soundtracks, and, when they don't get selected, release them on albums. What the fuck is this, a Dickies album? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot agrees, but cautions that urine can be a pretty brutal mistress as well.

72. WEASEL FACE (#1, Halfway to Sanity, 1987) When this record came out, it was fun to point at your friends when they



walked in the bar and yell "WEEEZUL FAAYYYYCE!!! "WEEEZUL FAAYYYYCE!!! "WEEEZUL FAAAAAAAAAAAYYYYCE!!!" Um... to a certain extent. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: "Weasel Face" is his CB handle

71. TOURING (#2, Mondo Bizarro, 1992) This song rules, thus the fact that they had this song since the Pleasant Dreams era and it didn't see vinyl for eleven years seems to uncontestedly indicate that the Ramones are a bunch of fucking pinheads themselves. I mean, think about it: "Touring" wasn't worthy of inclusion on Halfway to Sanity? Unworthy of Animal Boy? UNWORTHY OF FRICKING BRAIN DRAIN FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD??? Boy, some people wouldn't know a tune if the bucket they were carrying it in became possessed by Magneto and started buffeting them viciously about the head and shoulders. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot has done some pretty fucked-up shit at Holiday InnTMs himself.

autistic kid i babysit for, Alex, who likes it because Joey's eatin' chicken the car when they sing it in Rock'n'Roll High School. This absolutely, positively, pozarootly, absnosnivny should NOT have been the first song on Road to Ruin. That was grossly fuckin' inappropriate, lame, gay, and stupid, all in the same gulp. Really, this song kinda began a highly unwelcome tradition of starting Ramones albums off with midtempo, downbeat, mopey numbers ("We Want the Airwaves," PUKE! "Mama's Boy," PUKE! "I Wanna Live," PUKE! Whatever they started Brain Drain off with, PUKE!). Phooey on it and the Ramone-mobile it rode in on. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot does, in fact, just want something to do—apart from furthering his failed career as a battering ram that is

62. TIME BOMB (#5, Subterranean Jungle, 1982) Everybody loves Time Bombs! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: Detonation is imminent, my darling!

THE VIBRATORS WERE SELLING COOL VINYL SKIRTS WITH THE HUGE VIBRATORS "V" ACROSS THE FRONT... ODDLY ENOUGH, THEY WEREN'T SELLING VIBRATORS VIBRATORS. ERROR! ERROR!

70. DANGERZONE (#7, Too Tough to Die, 1984) Much as i'd like to deny it, the virtues of having a drummer who is actually drumming like a drummer would drum were he that drummer drumming are clearly in evidence here. Contains the immortal line "The Soviets really make me mad." AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot refuses to give statements on the bit about "spreading like a rash."

69. RAMONA (#10, Rocket to Russia, 1977) "I let her in if you're wondering why / 'cause she's a spy for the BBI / I let her in and I started to cry / And then I knew I wanted to die." Further commentary would be superfluous. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot say: RÂMONA? I FUCKED HER! HEYYYY-00000!!!

68. CHASIN' THE NIGHT (#5, Too Tough to Die, 1984) It's gay, but i dig it. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot approves of any song co-written by someone named Busta "Cherry" Jones.

67. DAYTIME DILEMMA (THE DANGERS OF LOVE) (#5, Too Tough to Die, 1984) Joey's grandiose pop pieces actually paid off once in a while. Who knew? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot likes the part about the guy schtupping the chick's mom.

66. DANNY SAYS (#6, 1980, End of the Century, 1980) "Well, boys, I got some good news and some bad news. The good is that we're bringing in Phil Spector to produce 'Danny Says,' an endearing ballad that starts off all tinkly and music boxy, then builds to a tailor-made Spectoresque wall of sound." "What's the bad news?" "The bad news is that he's producing the other eleven songs on the album as well. Oh, and you're all going to get cancer and die." "Oh." AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: It's a little on the long side.

65. NO GO (#4, *Too Tough to Die*, 1984) This song is cool because it's rockabilly. It's also cool because the title anagrams to "Goon." AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot likes it because his name anagrams to "Sot Zing OK."

64. I NEED YOUR LOVE (#6, Subterranean Jungle, 1982) The Boyfriends' "I Don't Want Nobody (I Want You)" 45 on Bomp! circa → 1980 is one of my more treasured artifacts of that era—skinny ties and poppy-punky-fifties-rocky-snappy-pop-and-roll and all like that—but that's the only thing i've ever been able to scrounge up by 'em, other than this song, which is either a straight cover or merely written by a Boyfriend (i forget which). AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot reminds you that, yes, he needs your love—but not as much as you need his.

63. I JUST WANNA HAVE SOMETHING TO DO (#6, Road to Ruin, 1978) MOST OVERRATED RAMONES SONG EVER! I am convinced that the only reason people like this song is because they can play it on guitar (even me. In point of fact, the first time i ever played out, this song was one of two Ramones numbers on the setlist ["Blitzkrieg Bop" being PAZORCAKE 30 the other] [i know, how original]), except for the mildly

61. DO YOU REMEMBER ROCK 'N' ROLL RADIO? (#5, End of the Century, 1980) Kind of a neat song, it'd be nice if we could hear some actual Ramones playing on it though. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot particularly enjoys performing his assigned tasks to T. Rex's The Slider.

60. I CAN'T MAKE IT ON TIME (#4, End of the Century, 1980) Having had to sing this song at one point in time, i ask you, gentle reader: what is the word, phrase, sound or utterance that Joey says right after "trying?" As far as i can tell, it's "I keep on trying, tryaauoIUOIRLkwaoiouuoghgguughhh!" Well, at least that's how i used to sing it. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot knows that when the ladies make such a sound in his presence, there is no mystery as to its genesis.

59. I WANNA BE YOUR BOYFRIEND (#14, Ramones, 1976) I've always thought of this song as the great betrayer; the first shatterization of the perfection that the three songs which preceded it on the first album delivered. I mean, when the stylus was still hovering in the no-man's land between "Judy Is a Punk" and "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend," the potential for Ramones #1 to be THE ULTIMATE ALL-TIME UNIMPEACH-ABLY PERFECT RECORD was still in effect. After this inexplicable (well, merely plicable i suppose) swerve into pussywhiptification, the album went crashing down from Olympus, and back into the realms of Mortal Man, where all the albums are beset with at least measurable imperfections. I mean, "Blitzkrieg Bop," "Beat on the Brat," "Judy Is a Punk"—those are the best three songs in a row on any album, ever, AND EVERYBODY KNOWS IT (which sort of calls into question why i would need to capitalize that last phrase then. Oh well, a little public show of piety never hurt nothin')—and it was "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" that fucked it all up and got us kicked out of the garden. As Proof Of Sin, i quote myself, from MRR #166: In 1979, my grandma once [to my great horror] put on a pair of headphones fruitfully connected to a stereo which was playing "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" at reasonably teenage volume and DID NOT EXPLODE!!! [i couldn't stop her. It all happened so quickly! One second i'm setting down the headphones and getting up to turn the stereo off, next second Grandma's got the headphones on and all rational indicators point to her imminent explosion a la the Rock-O-Metered white mice in Rock'n'Roll High School! As i stood, frozen in mute grandma horror, i watched her not only defy incineration, but to actually do some kind of a grandma dance to the Ramones!!! {freaked as i was, i originally thought the dance step My Unexploded Grandma exhibited to be a modified Hubboon Stomp. After coming to the conclusion that i do not know what a Hubboon Stomp is, i decided it was maybe The Freddie}]. Your witness. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot wants to be your boyfriend, obviously, but he also thinks i would get more chicks if i wrote better, like i used to.

58. YOU SOUND LIKE YOU'RE SICK (#4, *Pleasant Dreams*, 1981) This was the most punk song on Pleasant Dreams—arguably the Ramones most underrated album (i'm placing the onus [!] of the blame on Graham Gouldman's vague, empty production... i mean, you'd

THINK somebody who was in 10-fricking-cc [not to mention writing "Bus Stop" for the Hollies and "No Milk Today" for Herman's Hermits] would know how to get good sounds in the studio, but this is definitely not the case. I guess the guy just couldn't wrap his brain around the fact that, yeah, we want minimalism, but we also want our minimalism maximized, if that makes any sense, which it likely doesn't), and also one of the catchiest and funnest. They actually sounded quite well on this one. They're getting better! They think they'll go for a walk! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot has already cautioned you about inquiring about the trip to the VD clinic!

57. LITTLE BIT O'SOUL (#4, Subterranean Jungle, 1982) Starting your album with a cover: sign of weakness or show of mercy? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: It must be weakness, as King Szoot shows no mercy.

56. HEIDI IS A HEADCASE (#1, Mondo Bizarro, 1992) Probably the last truly great Ramones song ("Whatcha doin' now, on the escalator Snortin'up some speed off a picture of Stiv Bators?"), but what the heck kind of a punk rock name is "Heidi?" Wasn't that the goat farming chick who got the AFL Championship Game kicked off the air? AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot reminds all mentally ill women of or near legal age: KEEP THE "HEAD" IN HEADCASE!

55. I DON'T CARE (#9, Rocket to Russia, 1977) The second most overrated Ramones song of all time. See, if you weren't so damnably apathetic, you'd be higher up the list! AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot doesn't care either.

54. HOWLING AT THE MOON (SHA-LA-LA) (#3, Too Tough to Die, 1984) Produced by the guy from the Eurythmics, who used to be the guy from the Tourists whose first album is definitely worth owning. I'm demiagog for "Blind among the Flowers." AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot, like Stuart before him, says "I'M BLIND! I'M BLIND! I CAN'T SEE! I DON'T HAVE ANY EYES! I'M BLIND!

53. DURANGO 95 (#2, Too Tough to Die, 1984) Keen fifty-five-second

instrumental which effectively transmits the urge for you to barrel your purloined wheels over small creatures just as in Clockwork Orange, from whose wheels of purloinment the title is taken. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot don't do NOTHIN' in fifty-five seconds, bay-

52. ALL THE WAY (#3, End of the Century, 1980) I dunno, i always liked this one. When Boris covered *End of the Century*, this was the song we chose to keep as part of our set (we later yielded to public demand and switched to "Rock'n'Roll High School," possibly because that was the name of a venue we were playing at the time). It's just cool, plus it's got the name you can customize *a la* "Chinese Rocks"—you know when you get to the line about "Monte's making me crazy" you switch it to "Elmo's making me crazy" or whomever is present that night that you feel particularly crazy-worthy. "Doomsday's comin' 1981?" Well, i guess that was the year i got my driver's license... AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: A crack this self-evident is not worthy of mention by King Szoot. Let's just say that the Szootster is "down with" the general concept of the

51. TIME HAS COME TODAY (#3, Subterranean Jungle, 1982) Kickass Chambers Brothers cover. Joey sounds like the Technicolor™ Yawn made flesh. Subterranean Jungle gets a lot of undue shit owing to the production, but i think the heavy metal bubblegum + overload of Walter Lure guitar parts is pretty f'n keen. The fake kick and snare sounds stand the test of time about as well as 7-Up GoldTM, but, at this point in time, it's a little late to petition for redress of grievances. AND HOW IT RELATES TO MY PENIS: King Szoot says that if anything comes today, it'll be a friggin' miracle.

(Because this column, like King Szoot, was too long, we cut it in half [the column, not the penis]. Tune in next issue to read about the top 50 Ramones songs of all time and how they relate to Rev. Nørb's penis. -eds.)

Løve, -Nørb







Alleged Gunmen "Return To Zero" LP/CD

Killer Dreamer "Killer Dreamer" LP/CD

Two 14 Song Debut Full Length Albums Now Available

Still New: The Leeches "Integratron" 7", Central City Transmission "Incommunicado" CDEP Killer Dreamer "Survival Guns" 7", Lipstick Pickups "Better Than You" 7"

Upcoming: The Dirthombs "Merit" 7" & Thee Make Out Party 7"

Distribution Provided By: Revolver, Disgruntled, Morphius, Interpunk, and Revelation. On The Web: www.kapowrecords.com





To mark the ten year anniversary of Kurt Cobain's death, here's an interview with him I will never forget

Nardwuar the Human Serviette vs. Nirvana Tuesday January 4, 1994 PNE Forum, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Nardwuar: So, Kurt, um, I waited outside. How was the Toronto show, how did that go, 'cause I was in Toronto at that time, when you played at Maple Leaf Gardens.

Krist Novoselic: [with dressing room towel babushka'd over his head] Don't say that I'm making any kind of ethnic stereotypes. I am not making any stereotypes because they're not P.C

Nardwuar: Do you remember that show at all Kurt?

Kurt Cobain: No.

Nardwuar: Maple Leaf Gardens in

Kurt: Umm... that was ummm...

Courtney Love: I remember that, with the little back stage.

Kurt: It was a nice temperature 'cause I think it was an ice hockey rink

Nardwuar: Yeah, it was Maple Leaf Gardens and I waited outside for a couple of hours afterwards... waiting for you guys to leave. How did you eventually leave?

Kurt: By limousine and cop escort. Nardwuar: Did you leave pretty early? 'Cause like they brought out, you know, the prop, the prop out. And you know, I kept—I kept on waiting and waiting and then I saw a little minivan pull out and I thought a guy hopped over the back seat. Was that you? Like did you wait two hours or did I wait for nothing 'cause you'd already left?

Courtney: We left right away.

Bam-bam. We did.

Z Kurt: I just remember leaving... pretty much right after the show.

Within about twenty minutes or so. I met one of the guys from *The Kids* in the Hall, Scott. He's a nice per-

Krist: That's right! We were mingling with famous people. They'd never talk to hacks like you. Fuck no! They're on TV every night.

Kurt: Unless you, of course, push your way in.

Krist: On Comedy Central, and on the Canadian TV, they know Lorne Michaels. We—I got to meet Lorne Michaels and Don Pardo and everybody. Because we're famous peo-

Nardwuar: During the 1960s Kurt, there was a big punk scene, as you realize, in the Northwest. You know, the Sonics, the Wailers, the..

Kurt: I hate the Sonics. They're stupid.

Courtney: No they're not.

Nardwuar: The... the Bootmen.

Kurt: Um-hmm.

Nardwuar: The Wailers and all those other bands. And I was reading, that umm... your good friend, Jesse Reed, his dad played in a surf band that released a surf record?

Kurt: That's true.

Courtney: [laughs] Isn't that weird that he-how do you know that? Where did you read that?

Kurt: What were they called? It was called "The Bagpiper."

Nardwuar: What was the name of

Nardwuar: Uhh... "Come As You Are "

Kurt: What was the name of their

Krist: The Beachcombers.

Kurt: The Beachcombers, yeah. Courtney: "Come As You Are?"

What do you mean? Come As You Are, the book?

Nardwuar: Yeah.

Courtney: Oh, Michael Azerrad. Kurt: Ummm

Courtney: He's obsessed with Jesse Reed

Nardwuar: 'Cause The Beachcombers... were they pretty cool? I thought, like I love those 60s wailing frat garage bands of the Northwest.

Kurt: No, they didn't have much

Courtney: Wasn't he a born again? Kurt: It was pretty generic. He's a born again now.

Courtney: Didn't he kick you out of the house?

Kurt: Yes, he did. He tried to revive me for a while.

Nardwuar: He also said in that book that your Uncle Chuck was in a garage band too, and he released records... or did he release anything?

Kurt: No.

Courtney: His Aunt Mary put out records.

Nardwuar: Really?

Kurt: She put out a single. She financed it herself. She's a country and western born again Christian. And my Uncle Chuck was in a, uh, couple of bar bands, you know. They just played covers, like Creedence Clearwater. He had a Lucite drum set and he was left handed, and he wasn't very good.

Courtney: Was that Chuck with the red hair?

Kurt: Um-hmm.

Courtney: Was that the Chuck

that's gay? Kurt: No.

Courtney: Oh. Is that the one that we go... went to Christmas? That one, Chuck? The nice one.

Kurt: Right.

Courtney: With the son that hasyour cousin who has the other band. Kurt: Although he went to jail one time for, um, exposing himself.

That's his cousin's band.

Nardwuar: Did you first meet Courtney, and this is Courtney Love, did you... I've heard, because we're here in Canada. Vancouver, B.C., Canada. I heard a rumor. I think I might have read it in Interview Magazine, that Kurt and Courtney met at a D...

Kurt: [coughing]

Courtney: Stop! That's rude.

Nardwuar: Aaa.. Did you first meet at a D.O.A. gig? In Portland, Oregon?

Kurt: Um-hmm. [Kurt slyly flips off Nardwuar while holding pizza slice]

Courtney: [laughs]

Nardwuar: So there is really a Canadian connection then.

Kurt: Wasn't it Nomeansno? It was one of our shows!

Courtney: D.O.A.

Kurt: It was our show... It was my show. I played with D.O.A. a couple of times. I don't remember where.

Nardwuar: But was that... was... a Canadian connection, a Canadian band has something to do with Kurt and Courtney?

Kurt: Like, yes. I don't-honestly—I don't remember which show it was

Courtney: I was too drunk.

Kurt: Me too.

Nardwuar: Do you remember your first time in Canada at all, Kurt?

Kurt: No. I might have been a small child. I visited some gardens. We went across on a ferry, in Vancouver.

Nardwuar: Butchart Gardens?

Kurt: Right. I was a small child. Nardwuar: That's actually where

Nomeansno are from. Kurt: Umm.

Courtney: Victoria.

Nardwuar: And the Neos, a legendary speed band.

Kurt: Um-hmm.

Nardwuar: And if it wasn't for the Neos.

Courtney: Our nanny's from Victoria.

Nardwuar: Yeah, that's what I was going to say. You have a Canadian nanny, another Canadian connection.

Courtney: We like Canada, B.C. We don't like the rest of it so much. Nardwuar: What is her name? What is your nanny's name? Courtney: His name 's, uhh, Mike.

Nardwuar: And his, uh, does he have a girlfriend?

Courtney: Jessica, yeah.

Nardwuar: I think she might have been, she might be from Vancouver too, right?

Courtney: No, she's from Minneapolis. She has that fanzine, uhh, you know that fanzine that's called Hit It or Quit It. She's a riot grrl person. She's like fifteen.

Nardwuar: Now Krist here, Krist, come over here for a minute. This is Chris of the rock and roll band, Nirvana.

Krist: Hi

Nardwuar: Now, Krist, you worked earlier on in your life at Taco Bell.

Krist: Um-hmm.

Nardwuar: Do you realize there are no Taco Bells in Canada?

Krist: Good for you.

Nardwuar: Actually, at least in

Krist: 'Cause there's no Mexicans in Canada.

Nardwuar: Actually, there's one in Alberta, there's some in Alberta. Krist: That's right.

Nardwuar: So, do you think that's contributed at all to the growth of bands in B.C. that we do not have a Taco Bell? Is this a good or a bad

Krist: I don't know, man. Canada can be ethnically diverse, which is beautiful, part of the... thing 'n stuff, but judging, uh...

Nardwuar: Actually, you look like a Doukhobor when you put that thing on. [referring to towel on Krist's head]

Krist: Doukhobor are awesome, man. They're awesome!

Nardwuar: They're anarchists. **Krist:** Are there still Doukhobor

Nardwuar: Yeah, there are.

Krist: Yeah, um, I'm really into the Doukhobor... They used to run around naked and, um, they were from Russia, right?

Nardwuar: Yup.

Krist: And they had their anarchist colony. How did they go under? I forgot.

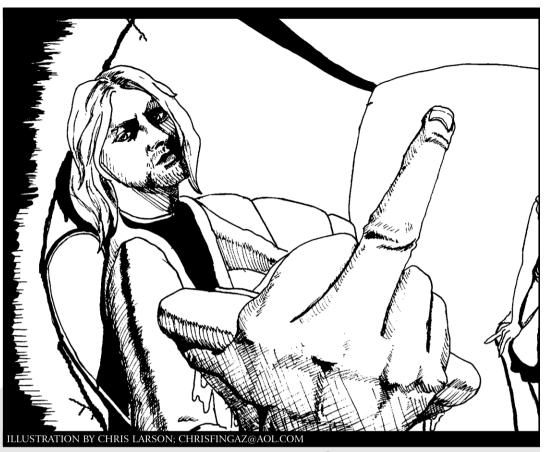
Nardwuar: I think there was some riots and stuff. They're still going strong. And they, they were.

Krist: I am the next Doukhobor messiah. See, you can tell by the way I spit food out and by the way it's caught in my... mouth.

Nardwuar: And they're from Canada, too. Another Canadian connection. On umm, page 226, of Come As You Are, Michael Azerrad quotes Canadian rockers, Sloan.

Kurt: I don't know who they are. Krist: If I was your dad, I'd..

Courtney: Jackie's boyfriend. Jackie Ferry, remember.



I took a Polaroid picture of a Mustang and a picture of a Jaguar and then cut them in half and glued them together and told them to build that. So that's what it is. It's the Jag-Stang. -Kurt Cobain

Krist: If I was your dad, I'd whoop vour ass!

Courtney: Remember the guy, the Sloan band. They were on our label. They're called the Sloan band.

Kurt: Oh yeah.

Courtney: They're from, umm,

Nardwuar: And they're quoted in your book. Are there any mistakes in, the Come As You Are book?

Kurt: I don't know.

Nardwuar: Cause I noticed on page 226, in reference to the Deep Six comp, "Except for the art-rock, U-Men, all mix varying amounts of punk, '70s style hard rock, and proletarian and heavy metal into a crude but effective musical mongrel." The U-Men, art rock?

Kurt: I'd say so, yeah

Nardwuar: I thought they were cool punk rock, sort of cool '60s sort of garage Sonic-y.

Courtney: Birthday Party.

Kurt: Punk, all art punk. Birthday Party, Scratch Acid...

Courtney: Birthday Party was art rock.

Kurt: Did you ever see them (The U-Men) live?

Nardwuar: No I didn't. I did buy the Step on a Bug... No, the, single with "Dig It a Hole."

Kurt: That was after the fact. That was years after they'd been a band and playing around Seattle for a really long time. I would classify them as art rock, classic art rock.

Nardwuar: I knew they were cool—actually, when I saw Tom Price, a picture of him when he played at the Commodore. When he backed up the Cramps, he had tape over one of his guitar knobs.

Courtney: Yeah, I thought they were cool when I saw one of them walking down an alley and I thought he was cute.

Nardwuar: And also.

Kurt: He played a Mustang. He was one of the first people I ever saw play a Mustang.

Courtney: They were wearing trench coats. There were two of them. Me and Kat (Bielland, of Babes In Toyland) were like, "We should move here. That guy's cute.'

Kurt: They were cute.

cute guys. And... kinda cool. That's

good for a scene. I think you're desperately trying to start a scene. Is that the deal?

Nardwuar: No, I just...

Courtney: You want a scene so bad, you're going to make one. You're just going to close your eyes 'till you get one. Is that it?

Nardwuar: On page 190.

Courtney: You have an inferiority complex about this scene here. I don't think you should.

Nardwuar: No! I'm not! I'm just saying, on page 190... On page 190, the Teen Spirit, in brackets, video, shot for a modest \$33,000?

Courtney: I don't believe that.

Kurt: I don't know.

Nardwuar: That's what it says in the book. Just trying to find errors here with Kurt and Courtney.

Kurt: I haven't read the book. I... I've skimmed through it a few > times but I've never read it from front to back.

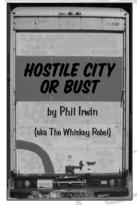
Nardwuar: And on page 154, the last of our analyzation, thank you Kurt and Courtney. On page 154, the book says, "the heavy, Courtney: Yeah, they were like Bonhamesque drumming that Nirvana requires"?



THE GREATEST ADVANCE IN RECORDED MUSIC SINCE THE INVENTION OF THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD



ALSO AVAILABLE NOW FROM STEEL CAGE BOOKS:



Hostile City Or Bust by Phil Irwin (aka the Whiskey Rebel)

108 pages * \$14 ppd (US)

Antiseen Destructo Maximus

Antiseen ANTISEEN

DESTRUCTO MAXIMUS

268 pages * \$30 ppd. (US)

FOR MORE INFO ON THESE AND OTHER GEMS FROM OUR CATALOG, INCLUDING RELEASES FROM:

THE 4405 * ADZ * ANTISEEN * THE BAD VIBES * BORN BAVARIAN * THE BULEMICS * THE BUMP-N-UGLIES THE CHICKENHAWKS * COCKNOOSE * CRETIN 66 * JEFF DAKL * THE EARACHES * EDISON ROCKET TRAIN

HAMMERLOCK * HELLSTOMPER * HOOKERS * THE LEAVING TRAINS * LIMECELL * THEE MINKS

NOTHING BUT PUKE * RANCID VAT * THE RESISTOLEROS * SICKIDZ & STUNTMEN

WRITE TO US C/O: PO BOX 29247, PHILADEL PHIA, PA 19125 OR VISIT US ONLINE: WWW.STEELCAGERECORDS.COM

Nardwuar: You know the drummer (actually bassist Chris Freeman) from Pansy Division is from Aberdeen, Kurt?

Kurt: No... I didn't know that. Nardwuar: You know, "Smells Like Queer Spirit"?

Kurt: Yeah... I had no idea.

Nardwuar: Have any other bands come from Aberdeen?

Kurt: The Melvins and Metal Church

Nardwuar: What are the thrift shops there like?

Kurt: Um, they're not that great. People didn't have very good taste in the '60s and '70s. You know, usually, that's the kind of stuff I that I look for. No lava lamps, no cool patterned shirts or anything.

Nardwuar: Did you ever see any Farfisa mini-compact organs... with that quivering vibrato? I'm really desperately looking for one of those.

Kurt: I don't know. Maybe not in Aberdeen.

Nardwuar: Wasn't there also surfing in Aberdeen, like at Westport? Kurt: Hmm... I don't know. I've

never gone in the ocean. Nardwuar: Because apparently it

has some. Kurt: I don't even want to go in the

ocean there. Courtney: Didn't you dig for

clams? Kurt: I dug for clams a few times,

Courtney: That's going in the ocean. That's the same thing.

Nardwuar: I know you're going to like this, Courtney, but I also read in Mix Magazine.

Courtney: Wow! You get around! He reads more magazines than me. Nardwuar: Well, not really. We get a free subscription at CiTR radio. And this is for CiTR radio.

Courtney: Well, I buy most of the magazines I read.

Nardwuar: Okay, \$5.95 for Mix Magazine, and it said Butch Vig was talking about the Nirvana Nevermind album, and he said he sampled some guitar riffs. Is this true? I couldn't believe it.

Kurt: Sampled? Guitar riffs?

Courtney: Yeah, Andy Wallace does that. He has like a little Macintosh and he's got a couple snare sounds and guitar sounds.

Kurt: Sampling guitar riffs? I don't think so.

Courtney: No, not riffs, sounds. Kurt: He... I think Andy Wallace sampled a few different sounds for the drums. To make them sound

better, according to him.

Nardwuar: What's the idea behind putting a lot of mics on a drum? I know you say you don't really like the Sonics totally, but I really love that sort of like one guitar...

Kurt: I, I have to admit their-

yeah, the Sonics recorded very, very cheaply on a two track, you know, and they just used one microphone over the drum, and they got the most amazing drum sound I've ever heard. Still to this day, it's still my favorite drum sound. It sounds like he's hitting harder than anyone I've ever known.

Nardwuar: And I have some good news.

Kurt: Don't you agree?

Nardwuar: It's amazing. I have some good news for you Kurt. Do you know that where the Sonics recorded, Audio Recording in Seattle with Kearney Barton, is still around and you can actually still record there?

Kurt: Really. Wow. Nardwuar: The Young Fresh Fellows, pioneers in that sound. you know, going into Egg Studios and stuff. They recorded a new track off their CD there, 99 Girls, right at that studio. Kearney Barton Audio. You can check it out. The same guy is there that recorded The Sonics.

Krist: Who was born in, uh, 1842. Nardwuar: No, he wasn't born in 1842. But I think that band Teengenerate from Japan, did that. And in Japan, they don't seem to have too much vinyl, do they?

Courtney: Aren't they into vinyl in Japan? They're into anything classic American aren't they? I don't know. I don't go there often.

Nardwuar: Kurt, what is Geffen's position on vinyl? Like is it easy to release seven inches? Can you release them domestically?

Kurt: Not usually domestically. Only in England, and Europe especially. We always—they've always offered to print vinyl for us because they know we're-we like that kind of thing. So, it's been no problem. I don't think it ever will be as long as there's at least one place somewhere that'll print vinyl, they'll still do it.

Courtney: The Breeders sold 150 copies of their vinyl in the States. 150 copies. Isn't that weird?

Kurt: Ûmm.

Nardwuar: How much did Spencer Elden receive from the did Nirvana camp?

Courtney: A lot. A lo-lot. You know why?

Nardwuar: And Spencer Elden is

Courtney: The guy from Nirvana, right?

Nardwuar: The little baby on the cover.

Courtney: Oh, Spencer! Nardwuar: Yeah.

Courtney: Oh, that's the guy we're going to have at dinner... when he grows up. I thought you meant the Nirva—the guys from Nirvana.

Kurt: I don't know. It was a lot

cheaper than the picture that we wanted to use.

Nardwuar: What's PA equipment like in South America? Tonight I noticed you had quite an extensive PA and it sounded, I thought, really good. What's PA..

Krist: P.A. is for pathetic asshole! Nardwuar: What are—what is the PA like, in South America? What are they like? What are the tech crews there like?

Courtney: Peavey.

Kurt: Univox.

Nardwuar: Has your tech, does your tech crew, has it improved Nardwuar: Have any other melodic punk bands played there?

Kurt: I do not know. We played with the Chili Peppers that night.

Nardwuar: Ever heard of the Canadian band, Saga, before?

Kurt: Yeah, I think so. Are they a pop metal band?

Nardwuar: I think they played in Argentina. Kurt, what did you think of the last Flipper LP (American Grafishy)?

Kurt: [gestures with hand] Ehh, okay

Nardwuar: What were Bjorn Again like from Europe?



your sound? Do you think like in South America, were they freaking out? What was it like there?

Kurt: I don't remember.

Nardwuar: 'Cause I once heard... **Kurt:** I shot coke with Alice in Chains all night. That's all I remember.

Courtney: Ohh! [laughs]

Nardwuar: Kurt, did you really custom design a guitar? Your own special little model?

Kurt: Yeah.

Nardwuar: How many models are there? And can I buy one?

Kurt: I don't know. I don't know if it's gone into production yet. I don't know if it will be available for the public. It's up to them to decide. But what I basically, well, what I did is I took a picture of a Mustang, a Polaroid picture of a Mustang and a picture of a Jaguar and then cut them in half and glued them together and told them to build that. So that's what it is. It's the Jag-Stang.

Nardwuar: What other bands, Kurt, have played in Argentina? You played there. What was it like? Were you one of the first bands to play there, d'ya know?

Kurt: I don't think so. I've heard that Skid Row played there.

Wonderful Uncanny Kurt: Amazing. They looked exactly and sounded exactly like Abba.

Nardwuar: Are they better than Rain, a tribute to the Beatles?

Kurt: I've never seen them.

Nardwuar: They had a big center spread in The Rocket (a Seattle music newspaper).

Kurt: Umm

Nardwuar: Are you ever going to get Screamin' Jay Hawkins to try and back you up again?

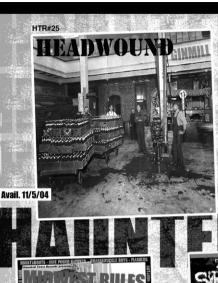
Kurt: We tried, but it fell through. would like to try again.

Nardwuar: Anybody else cool that you think you would bring up with you and back you up? Like I was thinking the Sweet, maybe, and get Kurt Bloch to guest on guitar.

Kurt: That wouldn't be too hard, would it?

Nardwuar: No, or maybe Village < People would be no problem.

Kurt: Well, those are two that just ran through my mind. Um... no, not really. Buzzcocks... Buzzcocks... We've had some amazing bands play with us on this tour. We had, um, the Boredoms, the Meat Puppets, and, um, gee who else, Jawbreaker. RAZORCAKE 35



HEADWOUND

"Ginmill" CD
New Jersey kings of beer brand new album!
Just when you thought they didn't make em like this anymore...
13 years on and their best stuff yet.
A real swift kick in the rear, of which punk rock could use about a thousand. The holy trinity of NJ punk; WRETCHED ONES.
NIBLICK HENBANE and HEADWOUND.
Nuff' said.



THE STAGGERS
"The Sights, The Sounds,
The Fear and The Pain" CD
Finally! Their 1st album
back in print w/ a new
unreleased track, Joe Blow
lo-fi bonus songs and
3 video's. (1 Staggers
and 2 old Riot Squad)
Fans of punk, oi,
rock n roll, 'billy,
country and even
odd spaghetti western
music afficionado will
love this one.
Covers of Lloyd Price and
MOTO that will knock
both your socks and
your pants off!!!

MIDWEST RULES

"You're Weak-We're Strong" viet 2 B BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS, NINE POUND HAMMER PHENOMS, BUMP N UGLES, ROUSTABOUTS, SOUTHPAW MANNERSHOW, TANKA RAY, FORGOTTEN FOUR, MASHERS and more. 22 LOUD unreleased/erre tracks, 16 pg booklet.



THE STAGGERS HTR#23

"One Heartheat Away From Hell" CB
Praise the Lord! Once again
the boys from Dallas deliver a real killer.
Picks up right where the first one
left off. Darker and heavier this time around,
a one of a kind album that will not
leave your stereo or your head.



DEADLINE Brassknuckle Boys

"Can't Be Beaten" Spill IP (tot. 1000)
The best female fronted punk band in period. And more of the genuine punk bur noggin courtersy of the BKB. 13 charl A record that will make you track down.



BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS

"American Bastard" CD/LP and to 1000.
The definitive street rock n roll record.
Penned in prison, on the road
and up the river; this skullcrusher of an
album finally gets the vinyl treatment.

at will make you track down
THING by these bands.

Secure online cc ordering - CDs LPs 7"s T-Shirts

CD/LP \$12 ppd US - International add \$2.50 per item (Air) HAUNTED TOWN RECORDS 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169 Chicago, IL 60647 USA

WWW.HAUNTEDTOWNRECORDS.COM

WWW.STREETANTHEMRECORDS.COM STREET ANTHEM RECORDS 620115th Ave. NW B#306 Seattle, WA 98107 Secure online cc ordering - CDs LPs 7"s T-Shirts CD \$12 ppd US - MCD \$10 ppd US - International add \$2.50 per item (Air)

BROKEN HEROES
WEEKEND WARRIORS
eer Guts And Drunk Stuts" Split CD
New Jersey Oll Vets vs.
New Jersey Oll Vets vs.



DRUNK SLUTS

JOE COFFEE



SWEET POISON



AMERICAN STATIC

Avail. 11/15/04

ROADTORUIND

SOUNDTRACK OF THE STRUGGLE

CONTEMPTUOUS







Avail 11/15/04 The Bethering Story

Nardwuar: But no Bonham or Quiet Riot or anything?

Kurt: Not yet.

Nardwuar: Courtney said: "Kurt At the Riviera Steak House" in a couple of years. Courtney said that Geffen, Kurt, made fifty-five million dollars off you and you guys only...

Courtney: I was quoting the *Wall Street Journal*.

Nardwuar: And you guys only got a million. Where did the money go?

Kurt: [laughing] To Geffen!

Courtney: That's the way it's always been. I explained that to you. It's like a white guy giving a black guy a Cadillac.

Kurt: I walked into David's room one day and I said, "Listen man, I feel like I'm gettin' ripped off." And he said, "Look outside. There's a Cadillac for ya'." And I took it. Then I just, you know, I just forgot about tryin' to get my royalties from him. And it turns out, the fucking Cadillac was rented. Can you believe it?

Nardwuar: If Nirvana has total control, Kurt, I was wondering, slightly, about ticket prices for gigs. Is there any way to make tickets and t-shirts universally the same, i.e., ten dollars to get into the gig and ten dollars for a shirt? **Kurt:** No, unless you're Fugazi.

Krist: You Canadian communist motherfucker, you!

Nardwuar: Has any band ever tried that before? I mean, on a major label, because you have, perhaps, more control over what's going on. You could maybe, because you guys were playing at a cool place tonight. It's small. It's not a big coliseum.

Kurt: Mm-hmm. I don't know. I don't know, really.

Courtney: Nardwuar, it's really expensive. You can't break even. **Kurt:** It's really expensive to bring your own PA system and lights and stuff. You barely break even.

Nardwuar: Do you know what? You and Axl (Rose) have something in common, Kurt.

Kurt: [sarcastically] Yeah, a lot. Nardwuar: You both sing in, uh, faked English accents, as he does on *The Spaghetti Incident?* On the new UK Subs track. Did you check that out?

Kurt: No, I haven't.

Nardwuar: Actually, he sort of kicks ass. That Guns 'n' Roses recording of the UK Subs. 'Cause you mentioned in your book that you actually record, or the book about you, *Come As You Are*, you sing with a fake English accent.

Kurt: Mm-hmm. What can I say, I'm a death rocker.

Nardwuar: Have you ever thought of partying with Bill Gates at all? Finally winding up here, Kurt.

Kurt: Who's that?

Nardwuar: Bill Gates, from Microsoft. Partying with Bill Gates.

Kurt: Oh ...

Nardwuar: 'Cause, you know, who are the two newest members of the Seattle scene, Kurt? Here's a trick question for ya.

Courtney: [Laughing] Bill Gates. Nardwuar: Microsoft and Nintendo! And finally, Kurt... Courtney: Is Nintendo in Niry—

in, uh, Seattle now, Nardwuar? Nardwuar: It is! It's based out of Seattle. And finally, Kurt Cobain of the rock and roll band, Nirvana, if Frances Farmer will have her revenge on Seattle, who will have their revenge on Vancouver?

Kurt: Pete Reno.

Courtney: Wasn't Lindsay Wagner from here?

Kurt: I dunno.

Nardwuar: Who, Courtney? Eddie Munster. Eddie Munster. He's from Vancouver, right?

Nardwuar: Uh, Kurt? Kurt: Pete Reno, I said it. Nardwuar: Who's Pete Reno? Kurt: You know.

Courtney: Oh, Loverboy! Right.

Nardwuar: Oh, Mike Reno. That—that's Mike Rynowski actually.

Kurt: Oh, Pete Reno is this half-retarded person that went to my high school. Sorry.

Nardwuar: And he is going to be on Exploitation Records?

Kurt: Um-hmm.

Nardwuar: Ah Kurt? Doot doola doot doo

Courtney: [laughs] You know too much!

Nardwuar: Kurt! Doot doola doot doo... Doot doola doot doo

Kurt: [laughs] Doot doo.

-Nardwuar

To hear this interview check out http://www.nardwuar.com

Mardurar,
Thank you
for everything!!
Wroselice





The American public acts bent out of shape when the price for a gallon of gasoline goes over \$2, yet they voluntarily pay many times that per gallon—a price that is marked up anywhere from 240% to 10,000%—for water.

Bottled water consumption in the U.S. has almost tripled in the last decade. In 1986, the average person in the U.S. consumed only 4.5 gallons of bottled water per year. Today, the average is 18.3 gallons. Reportedly, 54% Americans drink bottled water.

Sales have taken off in recent vears and bottled water is now a multi-billion dollar industry. The increase in consumption and sales is largely due the public perception that bottled water is healthy and pure, especially when compared to tap water. Bottled water marketing regularly includes imagery of mountains, glaciers and bubbling streams, fostering the notion that bottled water is clean and the product of good old mother nature. Nothing could be further from the

In a four-year study of bottled water quality, the Natural Resources Defense Council found that bottled water is simply not necessarily cleaner or safer than big city tap water. The NRDC study included the testing of over 1,000 bottles of 103 brands of bottled water. About one third of the brands tested contained contamination in at least one sample. This contamination included synthetic organic chemicals, bacteria, and arsenic.

The FDA is in charge of testing and enforcing standards for purity in bottled water. Their standards are actually less rigorous than that of the EPA's standards for city tap water.

For example, the FDA's bottled water testing guidelines allows for some contamination of e. coli or fecal coliform (which are signs of possible fecal contamination), while tap water regulations do not allow any confirmed contamination with these bacteria.

There are no requirements

disinfected or tested for parasites like cryptosporidium or giardia, unlike regulations for big city tap water that uses surface water sources. This means that bottled water could represent a health threat to people with compromised immune systems, such as the elderly or transplant patients.

The EPA also requires city tap water to be tested for more than a dozen chemicals that are not currently subject to EPA standards but which, if present, may pose a health concern. Bottled water producers are not required to monitor for any unregulated contaminants.

Furthermore, water that is sold in the same state in which it is bottled is wholly exempt from even meeting the FDA's standards at all. That's between 60 and 70% of all bottled water sold. (Carbonated and seltzer water are not regulated by the FDA under any circumstances. If the product's ingredient label calls it "water," "carbonated water," "disinfected water," "filtered water." "seltzer water." 'sparkling water," or "soda water," it is not considered "bottled water" by the FDA, and is therefore not subject to regulation.)

According to the NRDC, the FDA has stated that bottled water regulation carries a low priority. Because of this, water bottlers will likely be inspected by the FDA only about every four to five years.

"This is far too infrequent to detect certain possible problems," says the NRDC, "such as periodic contamination caused by occasional substandard plant operations or maintenance, bacteria from sewage overflows or leaks, pest infestations, or occasional spikes of pollution due to short-lived phenomena. In addition, bottlers are not required to keep records of their operations and testing for more whatsoever for bottled water to be than two years, making effective

inspections difficult or impossible, since evidence of periodic or past problems can simply be discarded before it is ever reviewed by inspectors."

So, are individual states monitoring the quality of the bottled water sold in their jurisdiction? Not really. About one in five states does not regulate bottled water at all. Less than 50% of all states require carbonated and seltzer water to meet their bottled water standards. if they even have such standards.

And here's another fun fact. Although much of bottled water marketing stems from capitalizing on fears about tap water purity, about 25% of bottled water literally is tap water. (Some estimates place this number as high as 40%.)

PepsiCo's popular "Aquafina" brand features images of mountains on its label. Of course, nowhere on the label does it mention that it is tap water from municipal water supplies. A PepsiCo spokesperson defended the depictions of mountains on the bottled tap water in a 1997 article in the Boston Globe, saying that Pepsi wasn't hiding anything, since anyone can find out the source of Aquafina by calling the toll-free number on the bottle cap. Call 1-800-433-2652 and ask them for yourself.

According to the NRDC report. a brand called "Everest" has mountains on its label, yet it is reportedly tap water from Corpus Christi, Texas.

The brand "Spring Water" featured a picture of a lake surrounded by mountains on its label. The source for this water was in fact a well in the middle of an industrial parking lot next to a hazardous waste site. The FDA actually ruled that this brand's label was not misleading, saying, "There is no claim to the effect that the location pictured in the vignette is the actual

spring, we would not consider the label vignette to be in violation of our requirements."

The brand "Alasika" [sic] claimed it was "Alaska Premium Glacier Drinking Water: Pure Glacier Water from the Last Unpolluted Frontier, Bacteria Free." This water apparently came from the public water supply of Juneau. (Hey, at least it was from Alaska!) The FDA ultimately forced them to change the label, but only because they felt the claims about a lack of bacteria implied that the water was sterile, which it was not.

The brand "Vals Water" said it was "Known to Generations in France for its Purity and Agreeable Contribution to Health... Reputed to Help Restore Energy, Vitality and Combat Fatigue." Although the International Bottled Association's voluntary code prohibits health claims, some companies still make these claims either directly or through implication.

The FDA actually allows water to be called "spring water" even if it is pumped from a well and treated with chemicals. FDA rules now require that untreated water from a municipal water source be clearly labeled as such. But if the water is simply filtered (using systems that do not necessarily filter out certain contaminants), the labeling requirement is waived entirely, as in the case of Aquafina.

The use of descriptions and nomenclature that implies the exceedingly pure nature of bottled water was found by the NRDC to be "widespread." Their review of the advertising and promotions for 50 IBWA members found the following words commonly used: "pure," "purest," "purity," "pristine," "natural," "prepared by nature," "mountain water" and "healthy."

These broad marketing claims about the purity of bottled water are nothing more than platitudes. In the NRDC's study, about 25% of the brands tested had at least one sample whose contents violated California's strict health standards or warning levels. About one fifth of the brands had at least one sample that exceeded state or industry bacteria guidelines

"In all," the NRDC report states, "at least one sample of one third of the waters we tested (34 of 103, or 33 percent) exceeded a state enforceable standard for bacterial or chemical contamination, a nonenforceable microbiological-purity guideline, or both"

Also, it's simply untrue to state that just because water comes from a well or a spring that it is immune from cryptosporidium or other microbial contaminants. Several outbreaks of cryptosporidium and other illnesses have been caused by water taken from wells or springs.

The exorbitant price of this supposedly pure and safe water just adds insult to injury. The average cost of tap water in California is \$1.60 for 1000 gallons, while the average cost of an equivalent amount of bottled water is \$900! Bottled water is about 240 times more expensive than tap water. Pricier, imported water in fancy little bottles can cost up to 10,000 times as much as tap water.

The actual cost of bottling water for the manufacturer is not more than a few cents per bottle, and may be as low as a fraction of a cent per bottle. So, for every \$1.50 of your hard-earned dollars you spend on a bottle of water, about 1/3 of that is pure profit for the bottler. About 90% of the purchase price is going not for the water, but for bottling, packaging, shipping, marketing, retailing, other expenses, and profit.

In an issue of *Financial Times*, Gustave Leven (chairman of the board of the Perrier Corporation at the time) was quoted as saying, "It struck me . . .that all you had to do is take the water out of the ground and then sell it for more than the price of wine, milk, or, for that matter, oil."

The NRDC's ultimate conclusion was that most bottled water apparently was of good quality, although some contained contamination. But it should not automatically be assumed that bottled water is purer or safer than most tap water.

The problem here is that although pictures of mountains on the label are not a direct claim by the manufacturer of genuine spring water mountain goodness, it is at least the expectation of the consumer. In a technical and legal sense, the manufacturer is not liable for misrepresenting their product, but they are certainly operating in the dubious sort of vacuum where malarkey flourishes and we eat (or drink) it up.

But all of this is a moot point because we shouldn't be turning to bottled water anyway. The solution is for us to be confident about the quality and safety of our tap water.

Get informed about the true safety of public tap water systems rather than believing what is being fed to you by bottled water advertising and bottled water manufacturer's trade associations. Call your state's drinking water program or the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.



PepsiCo's popular Aquafina brand features images of mountains on its label. Of course, nowhere on the label does it mention that it is tap water from municipal water supplies...

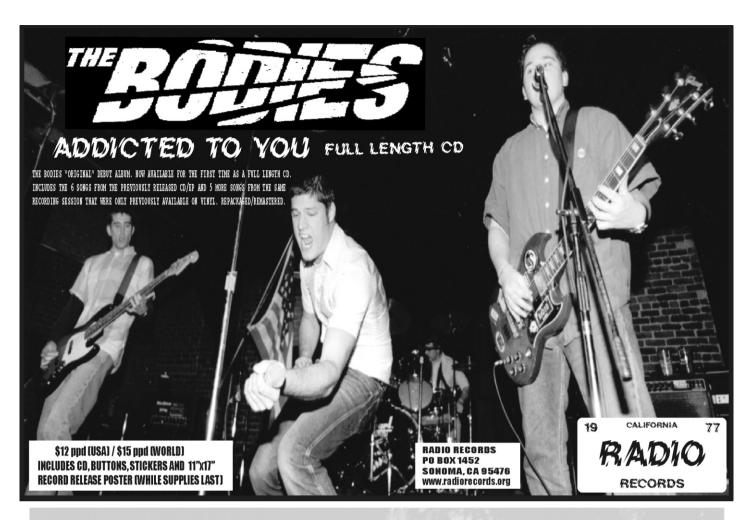
If there is a problem with tap water, the solution shouldn't be for us to fork our money over to bottlers, anyway. We should demand safe tap water. We are living in the 21st century in the United States, for God's sake. It isn't too much to ask.

In addition to being a waste of your money, bottled water generates literally tons of waste. Twenty years ago, people drank water out of a glass, which was washed and reused. Today, Americans go through 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour, and a large percentage of those are from bottled water. And remember, just because the bottles are made of plastic and end up in the recycling bin does not mean that recycling is a waste-free process. It can be said that recycling the bottle is better than it winding up

in a landfill, but think of all the petroleum products that are used to manufacture, distribute, collect, and recycle all those millions of little bottles.

Why is all of this an issue? Because the American public gets bent out of shape when the price for a gallon of gasoline goes over \$2, yet they voluntarily pay many times that per gallon—a price that is marked up anywhere from 240% to 10,000%—for *water*. And that's water that is not inherently any safer than what you can get out of your tap for a fraction of the cost.

–Jeff Fox





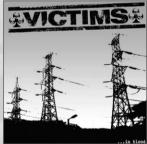
Caustic Christ "Government Job" 7"



Vitamin X "Bad Trip" LP/CD



Wolfbrigade "D-Beat Odyssey" 12"EP





7" RECORDS:

CAUSTIC CHRIST Government Job **DESTROY** Burn This Racist System Down CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE In a Few Hours... DAMAGE DEPOSIT Do Damage **DAMAGE DEPOSIT** Straight to the Bottom **AUS ROTTEN** Fuck Nazi Sympathy ANY LAST WORDS S/T ep AMDI PETERSENS ARME RIod Ser-Mere... **BRISTLE** System **CODE 13 Doomed Society CODE 13 A Part of America Died Today** CODE 13 They Made a Wasteland.. MASSKONTROL Warpath H 100s Texas Death Match MURDERERS S/T NOTA/BROTHER INFERIOR Split KAAOS Nukke **CLUSTER BOMB UNIT Dirty...Weapons** NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror DS 13/CODE 13 13 Song Split **DS 13 Aborted Teen Generation** TEAR IT UP S/T CAUSTIC CHRIST S/T TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopatti TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa PROTESTI S/T RIISTETYT Tervetuola Kuolema VITAMIN X People That Bleed ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission SPAZM 151 Power Songs SPITTING TEETH Don't Believe the Hype PATH OF DESTRUCTION 1 AM **UNITED SUPER VILLAINS Escapist**

LPs, 12"s, CDs: SKITSYSTEM Allt E Skit LP CAUSTIC CHRIST Can't Relate LP/CD CODE 13 Discography CD DS 13 Killed by the Kids LP/CD HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP/CD KAAOS Riistinaulittu Kaaos LP MISERY The Early Years CD NINE SHOCKS TERROR Zen... LP/CD RESTARTS System Error LP/CD TEAR IT UP Taking you Down With Me 12"/CD WOLFBRIGADE Progression... LP/CD VITAMIN X Down the Drain LP/CD DESTROY Discography CD V/A NO HOLD BACK ALL ATTACK Twin City Punk/HC compilation Triple LP/Double CD FROM ASHES RISE/VICTIMS LP/CD POISON IDEA Feel the Darkness LP* V/A HANGOVER HEARTATTACK Tribute to Poison Idea LP/CD*

To read complete descriptions, listen to mp3s, view our t-shirt seletions, or to order online, visit www.havocrex.com.
TO ORDER: send cash or monery orders payable to Havoc Records (no checks!) Orders are sent via media mail in the US. Epect 2-3 weeks for delivery. Overseas will take longer (especially surface)

POSTPAID PRICES:

POSTPAID PRICES:
"RECORDS: \$4 USA, \$5 air Can/Mex, \$6 air world. LPs: \$9 USA, \$13 air Can/Mex, \$13 surface world, \$17 air world. CDs: \$9 USA, \$12 air world. BULLET BELTS are available in the US. You will need approx. 2 links for each inch of hip measurement. Brass: \$0.30 Chrome: \$0.60

P.O. Box 8585 Minneapolis, MN 55408 | WWW.HAVOCREX.COM







WE HAVE MORE GREAT MUSIC AVAILABLE:

ANTISEEN "ONE LIVE SONOFABITCH" LP (DESTRUCTO ROCK RECORDED LIVE IN MIAMI, FL! RAW BUT POWERFUL SOUND. WHITE VINYL)

THE BADNADS "JAPANESE BLOODBATH" 7" (GREAT DEBUT CONFEDERACY OF SCUM INSPIRED WRESTLING BARBED WIRE PUNK FROM THE UK)

BIBLE OF THE DEVIL/THE LAST VEGAS SPLIT 7" (THE HOTTEST HARD ROCK METAL OUT OF CHICAGO TODAY. 4 SONGS)

THE BORN LOSERS "FOR CHICAGO GIRLS" 7" (BEST UNSIGNED SNOTTY GARAGE-PUNK INSPIRED BAND OUTTA PORTLAND, OR...GREAT!)

BULEMICS W/ TEXAS TERRI 7" (AUSTIN PERVERT ROCKERS TEAM UP WITH THE QUEEN OF ROCK TO BURN THE HOUSE TO THE GROUND BLUE VINYL)

CHUCK NORRIS EXPERIMENT LP (SUPER BAND WITH MEMBERS OF RICKSHAW AND TIAMAT. HARD ROCK AS IT SHOULD BE: DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE 70'S, BIG SOUNDING, GREASY, AND GROOVY AS HELL. TED NUGENT MEETS THE STOOGES)

KILLER KLOWN "EVILUTION" CD (WILD AND SLEAZEY GARAGE ROCK, THIS GOESSTRAIGHT IN YOUR BRAIN JUST LIKE A BULLET. 13 SONGS)

FILTHY JIM/LONG DONG SILVER SPLIT 7" (KANSAS VS ITALY, STONER DRUNK-COCK ROCK LIKE THE SUPERSUCKERS INBREEDING WITH KYUSS)

FRANKENSTEIN DRAG QUEENS/THE NERDS SPLIT 7" EP (TERRIFIC HORROR PUNK HYMNS FOR DEAD CHILDREN FEATURING WEDNESDAY 13 OF THE MURDERDOLLS. A MUST FOR FANS OF ALICE COOPER AND ANTISEEN)

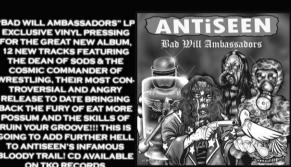
THE NERDS "A BLACK STAR BURNING TRAILS TO NOWHERE" CD (SECOND FULL LENGHT FOR THE GREAT DESTRUCTO ROCK INFERNO BAND... SABBATH MEETS MOTORHEAD MEETS THE MURDER JUNKIES)



WRITE US TO GET A FREE MAILORDER LIST WITH TONS OF GREAT STUFF AT CHEAP PRICES AND TO PURCHASE DIRECTLY FROM US OR TO KNOW THE NEAREST SCAREY RECORDS RETAILERS IN YOUR AREA.

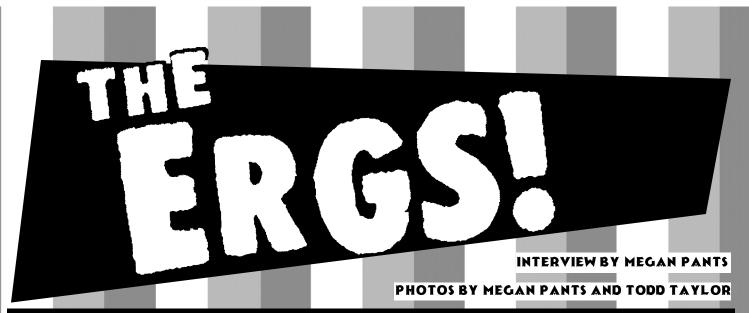
WWW.SCAREYRECORDS.COM

BRAND NEW STUDIO LP AND 4 SONG EP AVAILABLE NOW ON SCAREY RECORDS









It takes more than three licks to get to the middle of the Ergs! Tootsie pop. They have an addictive sugar-pop sound that'll hook you like a carob-fed kid's first taste of chocolate. It's undeniable catchy, and with lyrics about liking girls, hating girls, and a few more about girls somewhere in between, it's hard not to reference the soundtrack to junior high. But there's something more to them. As the layers of sweetness melt away, the driving force of the Ergs! makes itself known. Under the guise of simple pop punk the Ergs! lay an extremely technical, and even experimental, groundwork for subtle intricacies that could easily be overlooked. It's punk meets jazz meets hardcore meets pop, and somehow it never comes off as arty or contrived.

I was lucky enough to see them play twice in the same day. By the second show, Mikey had already played three sets in less than eight hours—he was in all three bands playing that night—and was about to start his fourth. No hesitation. No short sets. No compromises. Live, the songs that bop on the album rip and cut like a candy-coated razor.

Is "serious" punk ready to accept their punk counterparts? Who cares when the Ergs! seem ready to break all the rules. Put on your glasses and grab a soda, 'cause this ain't your momma's pop punk.

The Ergs! are:
Joey—bass
Jeff—guitar/vocals
Mikey—drums/vocals

Megan: Do you know anything about the Six Handymen Lake in Sayerville, NJ?

Mike: Son of a bitch, no.

Joe: Is that the corporate chemical lake?

Megan: I don't know. I saw it mentioned on the *Weird NJ* website, but I couldn't find out anything about it.

Jeff: I'd like to know about that, but we only travel about ten feet outside of my house.

Mike: But I live in Sayerville. I know there's a RAZORCAKE 44 chemical plant.

Jeff: Green Tree Chemical?

Joe: Near the chemical plant there's the Raritan River and as you come up over the bridge, you can see that they have a... I don't know if it's a reservoir, or if it was originally a lake, but it's unnaturally neon green.

Megan: Joe, do you refuse to play basketball? Joe: Where did you get that question from? Yeah I do, because I used to play basketball and I whenever I would play I would try to rebound the ball and jam my finger really bad. This finger (his left ring finger) I jammed really badly and I couldn't play bass for three months and I started playing bass before I healed, so now it's not right.

Mike: I played a mean game of basketball in Ohio when we played there.

Joe: Oh yeah, we invented a new sport, called Erg Ball.

Megan: How do you play?

Joe: There are these weird hoops and we're playing in Olmstead Falls, near this elementary school. There are these hoops that were like a big basin—it was like a funnel on the inside—and there were these four outlets the ball could come out of and there were drawn white circles around each. We created this basketball-like game where you had two teams and they would each go to each basket. After you scored a basket, the other team could catch the ball that came out of one of the four holes in the bottom, then one of your teammates is out. So, it was kind of like dodgeball mixed with basketball.

Mike: Spoken, this game sounds pretty lame. It was fun to play.

Megan: I've heard that you think that *Dorkcorkrockrod* is a response to XTC's *Skylarking*.

Mike: That's sick. You do your research. I only said that to one person.

Joe: We're going to have to find out who this

Mike: I just know I only told Mike Faloon. (editor of the awesome *Go Metric!* and *Zisk* fanzines.)

Megan: Mike's the one who told me.

Mike: Yeah, I can explain.

Megan: Mike also says you're full of shit about

the whole thing, but he says that you're definitely convinced of it anyway.

Joe: He's just mad that Mike replaced him in the Kung-Fu Monkeys.

Mike: Or he's just mad that he didn't put out the punk *Skylarking*. We did. But if you look at the track listing, *Skylarking* starts out with two songs that are connected, as does our record. Then you go a little further into the record and songs four and five? Connected. Much like *Skylarking*. I'm just a huge XTC fan.

Jeff: Except for the Crimony cover towards the

Mike: I was just listening to *Skylarking* a lot when we were sequencing the record and I was like, "I'm gonna put song one and two together as connected songs and..." I'm full of shit.

Megan: I was also thinking that a lot of people say that *Skylarking* is a response to *Sgt. Pepper's*. So, do you think that there'll be a response to your response to their response?

Jeff: I don't want any *Sgt. Pepper's* references to the record.

Mike: Um, yeah this is our *Sgt. Pepper's*, but we've changed everything.

Jeff: Yeah, Sgt. Pepper's, but good.

Mike: Ooh, personal. That Jeff is the non-Beatles fan of the Ergs.

Megan: Did you actually hope to get sued by Ben Kweller for using his cover art on you *Ben Kweller* EP?

Jeff: Yes.

Mike: Yeah, we did.

Jeff: We wanted the publicity.

Mike: I just wanted to get closer to him.

Megan: Did anything happen?

Jeff: Apparently, several people have told him about it, but he either doesn't ...

Mike: Doesn't care or... doesn't care.

Joe: I'm waiting for somebody in Ben Kweller's camp to eventually say, "We can still sue those kids that did the *Ben Kweller EP* thing," and then they show up at my house and I'll be, "Ha ha! I only have twenty-five left!"

Mike: "Have them!"

Megan: Is there any flack you get from being from New Jersey rather than New York?

Joe: People from New York who we hang out

with generally are snobby about it.

Mike: Whenever we play shows in New Jersey no one from New York will show up because it's an hour drive. Whereas, we go to the city just because it's New York City. There's actually a goal.

Joe: And they also think that New Jersey is filthier than New York, which is a crock of shit because there's a little borough named Staten Island that they want to never want to remember exists.

Mike: New York City has two of largest landfills in all of America. In all of the world.

Megan: I found out weird food issues you all have.

Jeff: Is mine raw potatoes?

Megan: No.

Jeff: That's another one.

Megan: You eat raw potatoes? In slices or...?

Jeff: Like an apple.

Megan: My question is actually about apples.

Do you eat them whole?

Jeff: Yeah.

Megan: Stem and everything?

Jeff: If I can't find a garbage can to put the stem in, yeah.

Megan: Have you done that your whole life?

Jeff: Yeah, most of it.

Joe: He's trying to develop a tolerance to

cyanide. So when he's inevitably poisoned, he can deal with it.

Mike: I eat nothing.

Megan: I had just heard that you don't like

tomato sauce.

Mike: Oh yeah, tomato sauce, cheese, anything dairy. I don't eat anything. I eat McDonalds and that's about it.

Megan: And you don't eat eggs?

Joe: No eggs. I don't like the smell of sulfur.

Megan: Did you originally all play in lab coats?

Jeff: We played two or three shows with lab coats.

Mike: Then we realized we looked like fucking morons

Jeff: We looked like idiots and they're really uncomfortable.

Joe: And we were not Servotron, so...

Mike: And we didn't want to go the whole science route.

Jeff: We didn't want to get attached to a gimmick.

Megan: Why do you think you have so many—I don't know if it's necessarily an homage—but references to different elements of music? There's covers, there's the song "Rod Argent," there's "When You're Squeeze."

Mike: We want people to think we're cool.

That we like cool bands. It's like you were saying before about if someone's wearing an obscure band t-shirt, you might like them more. If our song's called "Rod Argent," a Zombies fan might be like, "I'll check these guys out."

Jeff: In the doorway of our practice space we have a sign that says, "Get Esoteric."

Mike: I was going to go somewhere with that, but that just threw me off.

Megan: Well, where did the name for "Rod Argent" come from? Where's the connection? Mike: When I wrote the song... I go through these phases where, XTC was one of them, where for six months straight, I'd only listen to XTC. And there was a period of about two or three months when I'd only listen to the Zombies. It was taking over my life, and I wrote out the song and it never had a title. When we recorded it I wrote "Ron Argent" on the tape box. We generally like to reference stuff in song titles and in songs because we think they're funny or if people see a *Simpson*'s reference in a song title, they might look at it a little more.

Megan: Joe, what's the Fingerpoke of Doom? **Mike:** During your monologue.

Joe: Fingerpoke of Doom? It originally refers to a WCW wrestling match between Kevin Nash and, I believe, Hollywood Hogan. Hogan just poked the other guy and Nash just fell over





and Hogan pinned him. I don't know if I got it from there. I just started pointing at people when I was talking on stage and I just felt that it lent an air of authority.

Megan: How many bands have you been in together?

Mike: Basically one. Well, I guess two, really. We were all, at one point, in a band called the Flatliners together. Then people left, then there was a time when three of us were in with this other drummer. Then we started another band called 75% Off, which is the exact same lineup as the Ergs except Jeff sang instead of me. Then we just stopped doing those songs. I started writing more songs. He still sings, but I started singing a little more because I was writing a little more of the songs. So, basically, it's just been that band. Joe: Same shit, different label.

RAZORCAKE 46 Jeff: A lot less ska punk.

Mike: Right. We were more ska punk in 75% Off.

Joe: As seventeen-year-olds we were much more into ska punk.

Mike: We did do a Minutemen cover on our demo tape, so some things don't change.

Megan: When was the last time you felt completely out of place?

Mike: San Francisco.

Joe: In San Francisco—it's my fault for wearing the shirt (the same Frank Zappa shirt he's wearing during the interview)—but people kept coming up to me saying stuff like, "Frank, man. Frank." Some dude's like, "You know Frank's dead, right?" and yesterday some woman asked, "Does that picture of Frank Zappa on the toilet make you horny?"

Megan: Does it?

Mike: She should've asked me. I have that picture hanging over my bed. So, obviously,

ves for me.

Megan: How did you end up at a Ludacris concert? **Mike:** Stupidly paid sixty dollars for tickets.

Joe: Our buddy who we hang out with at home a lot, his name's Scruff. He works with these two characters, and he's huge into Ludacris. He was like, "Yo, do you guys want to go to Ludacris?" We've never been to a rap concert before, so we're all scared that we're gonna get our asses kicked. Then we go to the show and it's seriously all fifteen-year-old girls. That's it.

Mike: And they all had their cell phones up.

Joe: Our friend Scruff is big... he's our age, maybe a little younger. He's this big dude, he's dark, and he has this huge beard—he's never shaved it, that's why we call him Scruff. Girls thought he was a pedophile. He was rubbing up against girls at the show by accident and they gave him shit. It was scarv.

Mike: We actually wanted to go, but it wasn't worth sixty dollars.

Joe: No, that will be the last rap show in a while.

Mike: He did all his hits, but he did a verse of them and then went on to the next song. We'd never been to a rap show before, I guess that's what they're all like, but I want to hear... do five songs, but do the whole thing.

Joe: The best part was that Chingy couldn't do his hit song that has Ludacris in it in his set.

Mike: He had to wait until Ludacris got on.

Joe: ... to come out and do his hit.

Mike: But we did get to see David Banner, who is probably one of the greatest performers I've ever seen

Joe: These questions are hard.

Megan: I'm sorry, I'll try to make them easier. [sar-castic voice] "What are your influences? How's this tour going?" Where does the controversy of stick vs. rod on your cover fall these days? (The cover of the album has pictures of 3-D glasses, a hunk of granite, a cork, and a pretzel. The controversy was whether the pretzel was a rod, or merely a stick.)

Mike: Rev. Nørb confirmed that it was, in fact, a pretzel stick.

Jeff: It is a stick. It's clearly a stick.

Joe: For a while he had this Rod-Stick Duality Theory that was supposed to parallel the duality of light where it could be both a rod at some times and a stick at other times.

Jeff: If you look at the salt grains, it is clearly a stick.

Megan: You can tell at the ends, too.

Jeff: Yeah, they're pinched.

Mike: The first stop of the show, this couple showed up in matching t-shirts that both had the album cover on it. One said, "I know a rod when I see one." The other one said, "It's a stick, dammit." It was pretty cute.

Megan: Tell me about the beatnik jazz aliens that you have to save the world from.

Mike: It's an unrecorded album.

Joe: We did this thing a couple of years ago. We had all of these really short songs that we made a demo CD-R. We recorded thirteen songs, but the total length of those thirteen songs was maybe four

or five minutes. We couldn't just put these songs on a CD. It's such a waste of space. So, we wrote this *War of the Worlds* type radio drama around the songs where we had to save the world from these aliens by rockin' out. People really like it, thought it was funny, so we were going to write a sequel to it. At the end of the first one everybody dies. So, in the second one, we were saved by these beatnik jazz aliens. We had to save them from some other set of aliens, but we never did that because we had other things on our plate.

Mike: Plus, we lost the ability to record ourselves because I'd been working at the studio and now I don't work there anymore.

Megan: Was that going to be a jazz album?

Joe: I don't think anyone's going to want to sell us drugs. I think if we tried to buy them...

Mike: "You guys are crazy enough as it is."

Megan: "Narcs!"

Jeff: "Umm, we need these drugs for a thing we're doing."

Mike: "For a concept album."

Jeff: "Yeah, it's a secret."

Megan: Then you have the Ramones/Bruce Springsteen one. What's that one about?

Mike: Bruce Springsteen apparently wrote "Hungry Heart" for the Ramones to do, but then Bruce Sprinsteen's manager was like, "Don't give that to the Ramones. It's a great song. What are you doing?" We decided to do many Bruce Springsteen songs as they would've been

like, "We're not gonna pay you, but it'll be shown on TV." Don't bother explaining it to us, we're there already. They ended up paying us anyway. We love *Adult Swim*, so why not do it anyway?

Megan: What do you do for work? Two of you work together, right?

Mike: Yeah, Jeff and I both work at a supermarket

Jeff: I work in the deli section of the supermarket

Mike: And I work outside with the collectingthe-shopping-carts-people. I'm too lazy to get another job, basically.

Joe: I just graduated college, I was a T.A. (teacher's assistant), and I'm looking for a job

YESTERDAY SOME WOMAN ASKED, "DOES THAT PICTURE OF FRANK ZAPPA ON THE TOILET MAKE YOU HORNY?"

Jeff: We were going to do the main riffs of jazz songs really fast.

Joe: We were going to do hardcore...

Mike: ...thrash versions of them. Because we were getting into jazz and we were like, "Let's make thrash versions of jazz songs." Because we'd been doing a John Coltrane song for awhile as a thrash song.

Megan: Which song?

Mike: "Mr. PC." So, we were just going to each pick out three or four jazz songs and do thrash versions of them. Just an excuse to do that, basically.

Megan: Well, you have the country 7", so are there other genres that you think you're going to play with?

Mike: Probably. We listen to everything, but country just seemed... it just so happened that Jeff had written a country song and we'd been doing it for a while. Then I'd written one, then Joe'd written one, so we just said we'd do a 7" with the three songs on it. We recorded it and then someone actually wanted to put it out, because we'd just recorded it to record it. Thinking maybe someday it'll come out.

Jeff: I'm sure we'll do a noise record at some point

Mike: We've talked about doing a noise record and doing a free jazz kind of thing. We have so many ideas.

Megan: About the concept albums that you're planning—you have the multi-sided ones.

Jeff: We have a couple of multi-sided ones.

Megan: How do you plan on doing that?

Mike: We plan on getting someone as crazy as we are to want to put out a triple record. Which won't happen, so.... None of us are actually drug users, so the one where we each take a different drug on each different side, we know that's not going to happen because no one's gonna want to put it out anyway.

Jeff: And no one's gonna want to put out a record that's five, four-minute songs.

done by the Ramones.

Joe: Like the '80s comedian that's like, "Wouldn't it be crazy if the Ramones had actually done that Bruce Springsteen song? I think it would go a little like this."

Jeff: We'll probably do that.
Megan: What's it called?
Mike: Born to Ru-Mone.
Megan: Is that a working title?

Mike: Yeah, but I think that should be the title.

Megan: What about *Beat on the Boss?*Miles Well the second in the series is a

Mike: Well, the second in the series is actually going to be *Beatle on the Brat*.

Joe: We could do ICBM to Asbury Park.

Megan: How many Pearl Jam t-shirts do you own?

Mike: Eight or nine I think.

Joe: My favorite is the one with the pig. It has food going in and poop coming out.

Mike: Yeah, I like the *Versus* t-shirt and a *No Code* one. I stopped buying after that.

Joe: Their t-shirts just got lame.

Mike: As did their music. I mean, some would say that their music was always lame. I did grow up in the '80s and '90s. Pearl Jam was at their best at that point in time.

Megan: How did you get the promo on Cartoon Network?

Mike: I was in Dirt Bike Annie, so I'm friends with MC Chris, who did a lot of their art...

Jeff: A college buddy of theirs.

Mike: He lived with them and became friends with them through Dirt Bike Annie. He went off to work for Cartoon Network. He doodled our name on a wall in an episode. Then he called me up one day and he's like, "Okay, we want to do this commercial and we want it to be kind of like 'Der Weinerschnitzel' by the Descendents where you just yell out Cartoon Network TV shows as a thrash song." I was like, "We can do that in five seconds." So, we just recorded it, sent it out, and they started airing it. He just asked us to do it, and of course we did. He was

when I get back.

Megan: How do you think your job impacts, if at all, the music?

Mike: Our job, for some reason, understands when we have to get off for two months to go on tour. They don't give us a problem. That was the other main reason I was staying. I know this job is cool with it. It's a shitty job, but what else?

Jeff: Have fun.

Mike: Why not just stay? Plus I walk around all day doing nothing, so it gives me time to think up songs.

Joe: I used to work at this robotics company in Manhattan.

Megan: Didn't you end up working on the Mars Rover or something?

Joe: Yeah, well I worked on this drill that they want to send to Mars in twenty years. They sent me to Arizona for that, but then I went on tour last summer with a different band. They were cool with it when I left, but then when I came back they were like, "Yeah... you can't work here anymore."

Megan: What did you do when you were in Arizona?

Mike: Sat in the desert.

Joe: I was basically the team bitch. They had a Winnebago and they basically made me stay out there and guard this drill prototype because there was another competing team out there from another company that they didn't want seeing the drill. I was just living in the middle of Wile E. Coyote nothing desert in Arizona.

Megan: Have you ever stomped cockroaches dead with your bass pedal?

Mike: According to Lew (Houston, of *Vinyl-a-Go-Go* zine) I have, I think.

Jeff: I think that was more of a metaphor than any actual extermination.

Mike: I'm planning on starting a business.

Megan: Joe, did you learn the crane kick that we all tried to learn from *Karate Kid*?

PAZORCAKE 47



SMUT PEDDLERS



since 1993







t-shirts, cds, records, stickers, buttons, posters and more... www.smutpeddlers.net













Joe: I learned it from the actual guy who created the move. I used to do martial arts and the school that I trained at, the head instructor was buddy-buddy with the guy and he came in and showed us how to do the real way. The one you see in the movie? That's Hollywood's version of the crane kick.

Megan: Can you still do it?

Joe: Yeah, but if I show you then you'll understand why they didn't do it. It's like... [Stands un]

Mike: I'm getting the fuck out of the way.

Joe: You go back on your leg like this and then you go like that! Which is not nearly as dramatic.

Mike: This is an informative interview. I didn't even know that.

Joe: Did you know where the Eyepoke of Doom came from?!

Megan: Did the singer of the Used make fun of you at an Andrew W.K. show?

Jeff: Yes, yes he did. I was walking outside the club after the show. He was with some girl—I don't know, I assumed his girlfriend or whatever—and I walked past and he's like, "Oh, yo, yo, this girl wants to make out with you."

Joe: Didn't they just start laughing at you?

Mike: That's like what we got in sixth grade.

Jeff: Yeah, don't start all that bullshit when you're singing in a band that sucks.

Mike: Apparently one of our friends saw him at the Warped Tour, walking around, and yelled very loudly at his friend, "Hey, it's that guy that fucked that fat girl." So, we showed him! Well, not really.

Jeff: I would like to say that we declare war on that band.

Mike: We're throwing the gauntlet down.

Megan: You've got the crane kick on your side.

Mike: We've got Sharon Osborne on our side. **Megan:** Mike, did you ever sell your dad's band's records as merch at your own shows?

Mike: I did, I don't know why. We had boxes and boxes of them so I thought it'd be fun to sell

Jeff: For like fifty cents.

Mike: No, the sign said, "Free or best offer."

Megan: Did anyone take them?

Mike: I think one or two people took it.

Megan: And it's a cover record?

Mike: Yeah, he was in a cover band for years and years.

Megan: Didn't you think about covering their cover record?

Mike: We were going to cover that and put it out as a CD-R. A double CD-R with a CD-R with the original album.

Megan: When you were a kid did you ever think that you and your dad might have a fatherson musical project?

Mike: He always tried to get me... I'd go see his band all the time and I guess he had faith in my drumming ability. So, he was always trying to get me to do a set with his band because he just wanted to get drinks or something, relax for a while. I was always too nervous to do it.

Megan: What was the last thing that you've broken?

Joe: Your discman.

Mike: My discman was skipping in the van and I just threw it across the van and broke it. The CD fell out, but it was on its way out anyway.

Jeff: My guitar cables keep breaking. In the middle of sets, too, which is convenient for me

because then it makes my guitar not work anymore during a song.

Joe: I broke the volume knob on my bass amp. **Megan:** What keeps you as entrenched in music as you are?

Mike: Because, music is the only thing I have that makes me happy. No. Yeah, basically.

Joe: Stock answer.

Mike: I don't have any other interests. I'm not into sports. I'm not into anything, except for music. It's all I really know how to do.

Joe: Plus, there's so much great music out there. I hate it when people say, "Aw man, rock-'n'roll's dead," or anything like that, because every time we go on tour we see a ton of amazing bands. They're not regarded as the heroes of today right now, but I'm sure in ten or fifteen years somebody will write something that's like Our Band Could Be Your Life. "Oh man, these bands did it themselves."

Jeff: I basically feel like... I mean I love music, obviously. I've loved it all of my life and I enjoy playing it, but I love how it's something for me to do as a young person. Not just sit at home and watch TV all day.

Mike: Plus it's really cool. Lately, we've been getting a little more recognition as the Ergs. When someone comes up to you and says that you record's really great—that's another stock answer, but it's just really cool to hear.

Jeff: On that note, showing up in a town that we've never been to and there's a row of people we've never met before singing along.

Joe: That answer was so fucking stock.

Mike: We wholeheartedly endorse Metallica's documentary *Some Kind of Monster*.







BY TODD TAYLOR PICTURES BY CHRYSTAEI BRANCHAW EXCEPT KEN PICTURES BY TODD

ood record labels have distinct identities, personalities, and styles. They stand out-from the bands that are signed to them, to the quality of the artwork, to how well the bands are recorded. Very good labels learn how to listen for emerging, talented bands that fall under the umbrella of what the label's interested in. They do this while walking a balance beam of not signing bands that sound virtually the same to the first one that meets any sort of success. Think of a label like a hot air balloon. There's a load of room inside that balloon, but when it's flying around, you easily can see how it's different than the rest of the vast sky. Great labels juggle immaculate taste, organization, and drive so none of them are dropped. The best punk labels add something that no major label can claim with a straight face: ethics. Money may be tight, but it's distributed as fairly as possible. Hard work actually can see its reward. No one gets fucked—from the band, the studio, or the label folks.

You probably don't have to be told any of that. You already know. Being a discerning rocker who's concerned about buying music that still comes in packaging, the thing you automatically do when introduced with a new band is look at their name, look at the artwork on the front, and then flip over the LP to see what label it's on. There are over 10,000 punk albums to chose from. A good chunk of them suck something fierce. Great labels do some of the hard work for you and weed out the poo before it touches your ears.

Ken Cheppaikode, the unassuming, nobullshit, excited guy behind Dirtnap, was in the right place at the right time: the musically fertile Pacific Northwest in the late nineties. He scored two direct hits. Among his first releases were the Epoxies and the

Briefs. Fortuitous? Perhaps. But it wasn't handed to him on a plate. At the time of releasing the Epoxies 7", he was homeless. His previous dwelling had literally filled with other people's shit from a ruptured sewer main. As he sat on the corner of a mattress in a hotel room and folded 7" sleeves so the Epoxies would have them on time for tour, cops were splintering a door within earshot. Addicted to music, compulsively seeing bands live, driven by a seemingly supernatural sense of bands who can write great songs, Ken quickly made Dirtnap into one of the most vital, exciting, and trustworthy labels in the world today. It's part of the antidote to all the goon squad indiesemploying-major-label-tactics that are so popular today. No street teams. No publicist boasting units. No blowjobby hype. No market research dickheadery. Just great music, time and time again.

Todd: Have you been given any nicknames that've stuck?

Ken: Thankfully, no, but people, to this day, call me Ken Wisconsin just because I sang backup vocals on the first Blatz 7" and when they put that out, they couldn't remember how to spell my last name so they put me on as Ken Wisconsin. I can kind of see that catching on while I was living in Berkeley, but then I moved back to Wisconsin and people there still called me Ken Wisconsin. I also have a Wisconsin tattoo, so that adds to it.

Todd: That's the *Cheaper Than the Beer* record, right?

Ken: Yeah.

Todd: Is it true that you had a huge mohawk when you were ten?

Ken: No, unfortunately that's an exaggeration. I did have a huge mohawk when I was like thirteen or fourteen, though.

Todd: How did you fix it up?

Ken: I used Knox gelatin. You boil it and let it cool and then put it in your hair. It's pretty cool because you can sleep on it and get up and it springs right back into place. It looks really bad, too, like you have big goops of stuff falling out of your hair.

Todd: Did your mom help you with that?

Ken: She didn't help me out, but she was pretty supportive considering that I was coming home with mohawks and tattoos at age fourteen. She probably could have taken it a lot harder than she did.

Todd: Is your mother's name Barbara?

Ken: Yes, it is, actually.

Todd: Is she a scream therapist?

Ken: She used to be, yeah. She was a primal therapist but she gave it up.

Todd: Why's that?

Ken: I think because she's just getting older and

it's kind of hard on her.

Todd: Did you learn anything from scream therapy as a kid?

Ken: Not really. I mean, she was always inviting me to come in but I never really checked it out. I'd just hear these piercing screams coming from the bedroom.

Todd: Was she also a contra dancer?

Ken: Yeah, she was.

Todd: What is a contra dancer?

Ken: I don't know. [laughter] She was into salsa dancing and all kinds of dancing. She took me to see the Clash when I was twelve or something. She was more into "The Magnificent Seven" and the more dub kind of stuff that they did.

Todd: Was your dad in the picture at all?

Ken: No, my dad lived in India all his life. I haven't seen him since we moved here when I was three.

Todd: I was going to ask you the nationality of your last name, Cheppaikode.

Ken: It's Indian. My mom was a college student in the '60s and went over to India on some kind of exchange program and ended up staying for a while.

■ THE GIRLS



Todd: Another type of exchange.

Ken: Exactly.

Todd: Do you have any memories of India? **Ken:** No, my memories pretty much start when we moved to America. I remember when my mother came home from the hospital with my brother. Both me and my brother were conceived in India and wound up being born in the States.

Todd: What do most people mistake you as? **Ken:** Oh, geez, I get everything. Greek, Jewish, any kind of Eastern European nationality, Mexican, you name it.

Todd: Have you gotten a lot of support for what you do from your mother?

Ken: Not really. Until recently, I don't think she had any idea what I was doing with this. When the local paper did an article about me, she took a bunch of copies and sent them out to relatives, though.

Todd: You have a brother?

Ken: I do. I have a brother named Kris in New York City.

Todd: Does he work at a library?

Ken: Well, he worked at the New York Public Library for years in the map division. It's kind of cool because he ran away from home when he was sixteen and went to New York City, and he just turned thirty and he's still there. Obviously, he has a pretty good job and he's made a life for himself. Now he's a project manager for some design company or something. It's kind of funny, because when he first got that job, I was like, "I didn't know you knew anything about design." And he goes, "I don't." He's really good at talking his way into weird jobs.

My brother's been pretty supportive of it. He always comes to see Dirtnap bands when they come through New York. RAZORCAKE 51



He's not like a super punk rock guy, but Dirt Bike Annie, the Spits, and the Exploding Hearts are three of his favorite bands.

Fodd: Speaking of design, did you design the Epoxies first album?

Ken: Actually, no, the first thing I ever designed was the Diskords 7" which just came out last year. I'm really not much on the artistic end of things at all, so I usually just leave it up to the band, and I have this guy Jason Willis from the Knockout Pills in Tucson do a lot of my ads.

Todd: What other bands were you in?

Ken: Just some random Wisconsin noise rock and hardcore bands. I was never really into being in a band. I think I realized pretty quickly that my interests lay in the behind-the-scenes

Fodd: Why is that?

Ken: I don't know. I mean, music's obviously a

really important part of my life, but I've never really had much desire to actually make music. I think I just need to be around it. I sang in a couple of bands and it was always kind of, "Well, I don't play any instruments, so I guess I'm the singer. Well, I'm the singer, so I guess I better write some lyrics." I never really had anything to say, lyric-wise, and I was mostly just doing it so I could be part of the scene and hang out with the bands. I think around the time I moved to Seattle, I realized that my energies were better spent elsewhere.

Todd: What is a chinchilla commando?

Ken: I had one the other day after playing miniature golf, almost right across the street from here (Confounded Books in Seattle) at this bar called the Cha-Cha, which is kind of a horrible place but they make good chinchilla com-

Ken: Pina Colada mix with vanilla Stoli and a shot of Bailey's. I'm totally losing masculinity points every time I drink one.

Todd: You worked for both Rhetoric Records and Bovine Records, is that correct?

Ken: Well, I never actually worked at Bovine, but I kind of did volunteer work. Sean, the guy who did Bovine, was my roommate at the time. Todd: What did you learn from working at other places before you started creating Dirtnap?

Were there any business factors that you really enjoyed, picked up on, or things that you would never do?

Ken: I like to think that I learned a lot, especially from working at Rhetoric, just because I did a little bit of everything there. For a long time, I was the only employee there. It was Brad and Jen (the two owners) and then me. I did everything from answering the phones to doing sales to writing crap for the catalog to sweeping up at night. I think I got a pretty good, well-rounded education about how to do things from there. Also, it's worth bearing in mind that that's also a really small label, so as far as like "real business practices," I didn't really pick up much. I think I realized that more after I started doing Dirtnap. In a lot of ways, I still didn't know what the hell I was doing, but it definitely gave me some background in it.

Maybe I'm getting a little ahead of myself here, but I think I learned a lot about that kind of stuff from doing Dirtnap as a radio show and actually running an internet radio station before there was a label. I was trying to do that and I had a full-time job at the time, and I learned a lot about how to budget my time and how to get shit done because I was on such a constant time crunch all the time. I guess that kind of organizational skill came into play a little bit later.

0

Todd: You worked at O'Cayz Corral in Madison, too?

Ken: I was a janitor there. I'd come in early in the morning and mop up puke from the night before, and I worked the door there on Thursdays, and that was really weird 'cause I'm a small guy. It was really strange getting shit from all these drunk people all the time

Todd: Do you have any stories from that? Any fights?

Ken: Nothing super horrific, but I guess a couple of times, drunk people thought that when I said, "Hey, that'll be five bucks," that I was just some guy trying to scam them, and I'd have to follow them all through the club trying to get the money. One time, this big biker dude came in and asked to use the bathroom without paying the six bucks, and I was like, "Yeah, but you've gotta leave right away." About half an hour later, I saw him and so I went back by the pool table and said, "Hey, you've got to go." And he just looked at me and said, "What are you going to do about it?" I thought about it for a minute and said, "Uh, I don't know." [laughter] I think I told the bartender to make him leave. The bartender was a little bigger than me.

Todd: O'Cayz burned down?

Ken: Yeah, it burned down on New Year's Day of 2000. It was pretty heartbreaking. There was this really scummy bar next door called the Comic Strip where we'd go do shots between bands at O'Cayz shows. I guess one of the waitresses dumped an ashtray in the trash and one of the cigarettes was still burning. One thing led to another and the next thing you know, the whole thing was a pile of smoking rubble. My friend Cathy, who owned the place, worked really hard for years and years and years to open up a new club, and she just had all kinds of setbacks. Any other sane person would have probably given up years before. A couple of months ago, she finally got a new club open and it's called the High Noon Saloon. It's actually in the same building that Rhetoric used to have their offices in.

Todd: What does Dirtnap mean?

Ken: It's an old '50s slang term for death. I just

wanted to call something Dirtnap.

Todd: Did it come from a specific movie?

I'M PROUD TO SAY THAT I WAS WORKING ON THE EPOXIES 7" WHILE I WAS HOMELESS AND IT DID COME OUT ON TIME FOR THEIR TOUR.

Ken: I can't even remember the first time I heard it. It's kind of one of those things that was surprising when I started the label, because I kind of felt that everybody knew what it was, and I continue to be surprised at how many people ask what it means.

Todd: I remember it from gangster movies, like, "We're gonna give you the dirt sleep."

Ken: Exactly.

Todd: So how did you start the internet radio station?

Ken: I dropped everything in Seattle and moved back to Madison to work for Rhetoric in '96.

Todd: So let me get this straight. You lived in Madison as a kid, and then you moved out to Seattle?

Ken: Actually, two days after I graduated from high school, I got on a Greyhound and moved to Berkeley, and that's how I wound up hanging out on the Gilman scene in '89 and '90. After that, I moved to Minneapolis, then back to Madison for a few years. I had been hanging out in the music scene for a long time at that point, but I wasn't really doing anything. That's where I first started getting into bands and volunteering at Bovine and Rhetoric. I moved to Seattle in '94, and then in '96, I was in a really shitty

living situation here. I had gone to Ireland to hang out with this girlfriend and it was pretty fun, except that we broke up in a pub in Belfast halfway through the trip. That in itself wouldn't have been so bad except that we had just signed a lease together back here in Seattle because she was going to move back to America. When we got back, we put up a curtain in the living room and decided that that was going to be her room. When we initially called it quits, it was actually under friendly circumstances, but once we tried living together as friends, it went downhill really quick and I was really hating it here in Seattle. Just out of the blue, my friend Brad from Rhetoric called, and we had always joked around when I volunteered there that it ever got big enough, I'd be the first person that he'd hire. And he said, "Hey, do you want to drop everything and move back to Madison and work for me?" That was just perfect timing, because I

was just totally miserable in my living situation, so I said, "Yeah, sure, what the hell." I think I did the whole thing on about a week's notice.

Todd: So where does Dirtnap Radio come in? **Ken:** After a little less than two years of working at Rhetoric, I realized that I still didn't really like living in Wisconsin even though I had a pretty cool job. I pretty much just moved back to Seattle, crawled on my hands and knees back to my old job at University Bookstore, at the book warehouse there. I'd lug boxes of books around and put stickers on them and stuff. That was actually the third time that I had quit that job, so I kind of have a history of crawling back on my hands and knees. [laughs] They always take me back, though. I'll probably wind up there again at some point in my life.

So anyways, I was talking to one of my coworkers and she said that she and her boyfriend were starting an internet radio sta-



tion and were looking for people who wanted to do DJ'ing and stuff. At the time, I was totally computerless—I had never been to a website, I never had email, I think I only had a vague idea of what email was at the time. So I didn't really know what she was talking about; I thought her boyfriend was starting a radio station with a website, because I didn't know there was such a thing as internet radio until I signed up to do it

I did that for about six months, and Phil and Christy, the people who started it, said that they were already burned out on it and they wanted to give it up, so I offered to take it over. At the time, I didn't even have a computer, much less know how to run an internet radio station, so I just bought a computer and they gave me a super high-focus crash course that took about a week, and I ended up owning an internet radio station. Not only would I do my own show every week, but I would coordinate seven or eight others. After a while, we got it all automated to the point where people could just record their shit at home and upload it to the servers, but in the beginning, I used to have to have all those people come to my house and record those records onto my hard drive, and I was working a full-time job at the time.

Todd: It was ranked #2 by *Details*, wasn't it? **Ken:** Yeah, something like that. We never made

Rhetoric, I sent them a link to my resume that I posted online. Blake and Megan from Empty sent glowing letters of recommendation within fifteen minutes. They distribute through Mordam and they're real good friends with Ruth (the owner of Mordam), so that probably had a lot to do with it. I was hired as part of an experiment—since Mordam's company is based in California and I'm up here—and I think they were trying to see if they could have people working from home in other places.

Todd: Not to blow smoke up your ass, but I hold Dirtnap in extremely high esteem. I put you on a level with labels like Hostage, Recess, Dr. Strange, Estrus, and No Idea: not only do you put out great music, but I can pick up a record by a band I've never heard and there's a really good chance that it's going to be good. What kind of aesthetic did you start out with, and has that aesthetic changed at all?

Ken: It's actually the complete opposite of what I've envisioned it as, because when I first started doing the label, I was still doing the radio show, playing obscure stuff from all over and talking to people from all over the world. Originally, I kind of envisioned the label as a side thing to the radio show, and because I was playing obscure international stuff, that's what I thought I was going to do with the label. After a couple of releases, I made a conscious effort to

Todd: With that kind of thinking, of all the old new wave records, maybe a handful of them were good all the way through, like the Vapors record, *New Clear Days*. The Epoxies record is fabulous all the way through, and the same thing with the Briefs. Even if you want to peg it as revival, it's a lot better than the original stuff.

Ken: I think with bands like the Briefs and the Epoxies, something to keep in mind is that they're not straight-up new wave. They're more punk-influenced, and with all of the bands that I've put out, they're mostly punk-influenced. A lot of people, when they think of new wave, they think of Depeche Mode and shit like that. The Epoxies definitely have nothing to do with that.

Todd: Have you ever done any market research?

Ken: Market research?

Todd: Yeah. Ken: No. [laughs]

Todd: Like, have you ever gone to a mall and

see what the kids are checking out?

Ken: Nope. [laughs]

Todd: How do you have such an informed idea of what bands are going to sell? It seems like, a lot of times, you're a little ahead of the curve. How does that happen?

I LITERALLY WATCHED MY HOUSE GET FLOODED WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S SHIT.

a nickel off of it, but we got some pretty good press.

Todd: What brought its demise?

Ken: I was getting increasingly busy. I started the radio show in '98, and in 2000, I started the label. I was kind of getting to the point where a lot of stuff was happening with the label. We did our first full-length, the Briefs' album (*Hit After Hit*), and it started to do really good. It just seemed like there was a lot going on with the label and there wasn't a lot going on with the radio station, so I kinda felt like I had to sort of pick one to focus on.

Todd: What's the number one record that you're still looking for? You strike me as someone who looks for records pretty constantly.

Ken: I have absolutely no idea. I like to think that I've already found a lot of them. Stuff like the Epoxies and the Exploding Hearts and the Briefs, that stuff is just so perfect, like that's what I was looking for at the time. I can't really think of anything.

Todd: How did you get a job working for Mordam Distribution?

Ken: One day, my friend Blake, who does Empty Records, forwarded me an email saying that they were hiring for a sales position, and since I had some experience working at

go in the opposite direction. Instead of having this big, worldwide scope, I narrowed it down to local stuff, and I've been following that ever

Todd: What made you decide that?

Ken: A lot of it was that it seemed kind of silly that I was scanning the world for bands when there were so many good ones around here starting up around the same time in my backyard. Except for Empty, there were pretty much no labels documenting it at the time. There was a pretty big pool to draw from that it almost seemed to make practical sense, as well as to give an identity to the label.

Todd: To somebody who has never heard a Dirtnap release, how would you explain what you're looking for?

Ken: Geez, I don't know. I think a lot of it is real colorful, like there's a really big visual aspect to a lot of it. Some people could call it retro or whatever, and I just think of it all as catchy rock and roll with a big Northwest focus to it. I definitely don't think of it as a new wave revival label, and I kind of hate it when I read press that thinks this is some new wave revival thing, because except for the Epoxies and maybe a couple of other bands, I don't think of most of the bands as new wave at all.



Ken: I guess I just have good taste. [laughs] **Todd:** Joking aside, you seem so passionate and you seem to go out and watch a lot of music.

Ken: I guess I find out about bands from going out a lot and going to shows and listening to bands that other bands on the label are talking about. Also, when I'm thinking about putting something out, aside from whether I like it or not, I try to see where it's going to fit in the big picture of the label. There have been some records that I really wanted to put out but it just wouldn't fit, even though I really liked them or whatever. Then again, there's been a couple of bands that didn't fit and I just said, "Fuck it, I'm going to do it anyway."

Todd: Do you think that by going out so much, being in the thick of it, and listening to a good amount of really shitty bands that you've got an advantage over somebody at a bigger label who only listens to demos or has somebody listen to them for him?

Ken: I think it's pretty hard to get a feel for bands from just demos. I've signed up a couple of bands from stuff they've sent me, but for the most part, it's been mostly bands that I've already been familiar with. A lot of that just

comes from going out a lot and knowing a lot of people in the music scene whose opinions I trust. For example, I've bought more than one record because of a good review that you've given it.

Todd: Have you ever employed anybody for Dirtnap? Is it a one-man operation?

Ken: I have a lot of people who help me. There's a guy named Dave Eck, who's also from Wisconsin. He helped me out a lot in the beginning, and to a lesser extent, still does today. He lined up a lot of the split 7" series for me, so he's almost like an A&R guy. He brought me the Briefs album and kind of finalized that. Jason Willis does my ad design. I just hired Kelly Cox, who used to work at Initial Records. He's doing retail marketing and stuff for me. My publicist friend Frank has been helping out this summer with the Girls and the Cinch and the Marked Men and stuff. But as far as day-to-day stuff, I'm the only person.

Todd: What's the most desperate or incomprehensible call you've gotten from one of your bands on the road?

Ken: The Hollowpoints got kicked out of Fargo, North Dakota.

Todd: The entire town?

Ken: Yeah, they got kicked out because they were apparently getting from town to town by siphoning gas out of people's cars. They got caught siphoning gas out of the car of this girl who was dating the guy they were staying with. He told them they could leave peacefully, but if they ever came back, he said he'd kill them or something.

Todd: Explain the literal shittiest day of your life

Ken: Oh, that was terrible. I was working for Mordam out of the home office, and my girlfriend at the time and I were living in a basement apartment below a cat clinic. They used to give us free rent in exchange for going up and feeding the cats a couple of times a day and changing the litter pans and stuff. It was really weird. I was sitting there one day and I heard this weird gurgling noise coming from my bathroom. I walked in and I noticed that my toilet was about to overflow, which was odd because I was the only person there and I hadn't gone to the bathroom in a while. I remember I had an issue of Hit List on the floor and I grabbed it and flung it out into the hall, like, "Whew! Saved that issue of Hit List! That could have been really bad." And then ten minutes later, sewage was erupting out of the toilet and the drain in the shower and the sink, and it was coming up through the storm drains of the storeroom on the other side of the wall. I literally watched my house get flooded with other people's shit.

Todd: Did you have your record label stuff there?

Ken: Not too much. Everything that was not within a few inches of the ground was fine. My computer was fine. I lost a couple hundred copies of the Dontcares 7" (the first Dirtnap

release) which I would have had until the dawn of time anyway. It was mostly like personal effects and stuff. Worst of all, we had to move out on zero notice during one of the worst thunderstorms of the year.

Todd: Didn't you have a rodent problem, too? **Ken:** Oh, that was our apartment in Chinatown. That was the next apartment. First of all, my girlfriend at the time was working as a waitress at this club called Gibson's, which closed the same week, so she was out of a job. Since my home office was basically destroyed, I was out of a job, too, so we were both homeless and unemployed, living in this seedy junkie hotel. I'm proud to say that I was working on the Epoxies 7" while I was homeless and it did come out on time for their tour. I was folding the inserts in the hotel room while the cops were kicking down the door next to us. The following week, we moved to Chinatown, and we probably should have been a little bit more picky about where we moved, but we both really wanted to have an apartment. We moved into walk everywhere, so that was cool. Our only windows looked out on a brick wall three feet away and there would be people selling crack in the foyer. One time, I came home late at night and there was all this blood in the elevator. We had roaches from day one, and that wasn't too bad. I can deal with roaches. They don't freak me out too much. We moved in at the end of the summer, and then once the weather got warm again the next spring, our apartment was completely infested with mice. They weren't even afraid of us. I could scoop up the baby ones in my hand.

Todd: Do you feel lucky that the Briefs and the Epoxies were your first two full-lengths?

Ken: Oh, yeah. Both of those albums sold insanely well and put us on the map. I couldn't possibly imagine two better releases to start with. I usually have about one record a year that actually sells. In 2001 it was the Briefs, in 2002 it was the Epoxies, and in 2003 it was the Exploding Hearts.

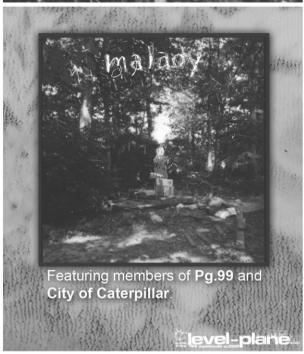
Todd: What's for 2004? **Ken:** The Girls, I think.

The state of the s



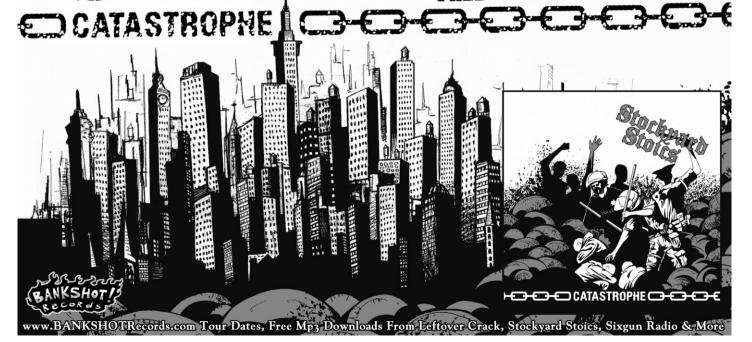






Stockpard Stockpard

CATCH THEM ON TOUR THIS FALL WITH LEFTOVER CRACK!



Todd: Is it true that the Briefs have an entire major-label record that's unreleased, and Off the *Charts* is really their third record? Ken: Yes, it is. They got the rights to it back and then they decided to shelve it because they weren't happy with it and they were just going to use it for singles and comp tracks and stuff. So you've actually heard a lot of the songs, because a lot of the songs were also just re-recordings of Hit After Hit material. It was probably about half new material.

Todd: Since you're getting pretty well-known, have any bands offered you anything to be on your label, like money or influence or sexual favors or anything? **Ken:** I'm not going to mention the names of any of the bands, but a couple of the projects that I've put out, the bands have paid for it themselves just to be on the label and take advantage of the fact the distribution through Mordam, but for whatever reason, I couldn't pay for it at the time. They would say, "Well, how about we pay for everything, and you can pay us back through sales?" I've done that on two and a half projects so

far, because one band paid for the vinyl when I didn't want to it. I've managed to pay them all back, more or less.

Todd: Explain the following cryptic comment you made: "Dude, usually, I have to pay people in clown outfits to shower me in Faygo, so at Juggalo Fest, I... oh, never mind."

Ken: I think that's something I was saying to Jason Willis. When I went to register dirtnaprecords.com, it was already registered, and that's why you'll notice that my website is dirtnaprecs.com. That's because these Insane Clown Posse fans registered it before I did, and it was pretty much just an Insane Clown Posse fansite from Kalmazoo Michigan for years and they didn't even have any records out. I was kind of bummed. I guess they just put out their first release, some local rap metal bands. I'm just hoping that people who are into Dirtnap stuff are smart enough to figure out that I'm not putting out regional rap metal comps. I still wouldn't mind getting showered with Faygo, though.

Todd: What's the status of the final Exploding Hearts 7"?

Ken: I don't know. At the time of the accident, there were plans to release a 7" and I've had the tracks for over a year and a half now, but it's kind of hard to say. There are a lot of people involved now whereas before there weren't as many—a lot of people whose feelings and opinions you've got to respect.

Todd: Is Dirtnap making a little bit of money? Ken: Yeah. I'm hardly getting rich or anything, but it's more or less a full-time job at this point. I do have a day job, but I'm down to twelve hours a week and I could probably just barely not do it.

Todd: Do you think you just enjoy the human interaction? Why do you still have another job? Ken: The money definitely helps. Like I said, if I did it solely full time, I'd really be scraping by. I live pretty frugally for a guy in my thirties except for the fact that I travel. I mean, I still live in a one bedroom apartment in what most people consider a bad part of town. I don't have any money saved in the bank. I don't have any insurance. I don't own a car. I live pretty modestly for a guy my age. One cool thing about my day job, I work at a record store called Sonic Boom and it forces me to get out of the apartment a little bit. I like to say that now I only spend most of my time in my dingy apartment staring at my computer instead of spending all my time in my dingy apartment staring at my computer. There's a lot of fringe benefits, too, like I set aside probably twenty records that came in used today.

Todd: What advice would you give to someone who's thinking about starting a punk rock label today?

Ken: It sounds like a cliché, but don't do it unless you really love it and are really dedicated to it. There's just so little money to be made in it that I always say if I was looking at it the label from a businessman's point of view. the first thing I would do is quit and start another kind of business. The other thing would be to be prepared for the long haul, because you're definitely going to lose a shitload of money in the beginning. If you keep going and establish yourself, it is possible to get to the point where you're breaking even, but it usually is gonna take awhile.

Todd: Ten years ago, would you have had any idea that you would be doing this?

Ken: No way. Not at all. This is, quite literally, a dream come true. When I was in my early twenties, I always wanted to do something like this, but I was always broke and I didn't have my shit together at all. It took me getting a little bit older before I could realistically do this. When I was a kid, I dreamed of moving somewhere and making my mark in the world and the local newspaper would have an article about me. Actually, last week the local paper did have an article about me. The sub-headline was "Local Boy Makes Good," and I really, literally have dreamed about that.

Todd: Did you ever find out who stole your Naked Raygun T-shirt

from the laundromat?

Ken: No. It was some homeless guy. There was this laundromat in Madison where I always used to hang out outside and smoke cigarettes while my laundry was going. I had some friends who lived right across the street from it and they would see me standing outside and say, "Hey, how come you always hang out outside? Why don't you come over and drink some beer with us?" And I'd say, "No, no," and they be like, "Why? Nobody's going to steal your laundry." And so the one time that I actually went over there, somebody stole all my laundry. My friend Matt worked at a liquor store and one day he actually called me in a panic, like, "Ken, get down here right away. There's some bum in here wearing your Naked Raygun shirt," but by the time I got down there, he was already gone.

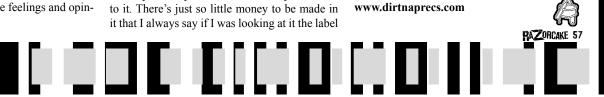
Todd: Why didn't you ever give up?

Ken: It's actually never occurred to me to give up. I think there will probably come a time when I feel like I've emotionally gotten everything out of it that I'm going to, and that's kind of the point that I reached with the radio show, like there's nowhere else to go. I don't feel like I've even gotten close to that with the label. That's honestly never even occurred to me, not even when I found out that I owe \$4,500 in federal taxes this year.

www.dirtnaprecs.com









The Loud Pipes are one of the ballsiest, loudest, and rockinest bands that I have seen in a long time. Two guitars up front without a bunch of wanky soloing, a singer who goes nuts, and a rhythm section that holds it all down. These guys are high energy and low maintenance. They've toured a little, but there's more on the way, and these four dicks and one chick are definitely up and coming. They've got a kick ass website worth checking out for merch and to hear their songs.

Jesse: Guitar Pit: Guitar Roxie: Bass Tony: Vocals

Gilbert: Drums (formerly)



Interview and pictures by Wez Lundry

pirate illustration by Jeff Gaither

Wez: How did the band get together? You guys are from all different places.

Jesse: *Hustler* classified ad section. We all read it. We all met up through there. Me and Roxie started playing together, we formed a band, fired a bunch of people, and these are the guys who replaced them.

Roxie: These are the guys who put up with the abuse

Wez: What was the original name for the band? **Roxie:** The Loud Pipes.

Wez: Tell me again the origin of the name The Loud Pipes.

Jesse: Because I'm into cars and motorcycles. Wez: It's got nothing to do with farting?

Pit: It does now.

Jesse: It has to do with loud cars and motorcy-

Wez: Who's got the loudest pipe?

Jesse: Me!

Wez: We've talked about this already: farting, shitting.

Pit: That is all we talk about.

Jesse: Pit brought that into the equation,

Pit: I didn't say it... this time.

Jesse: Pit is that kid in school who would stick a dog turd on the end of a stick and be like, "Look! Poo poo! It's caca," and chase people.

PAZORCAKE 58 Tony: And chase girls with it!

Roxie: We've all been lowered to that level. We all have fecal humor now.

Wez: How about your tour? What was the best part about it?

Gilbert: Uh, free booze and drugs was probably the best part.

Roxie: Absolutely.

Wez: Where did you get the free booze and drugs? Everywhere?

Roxie: Everywhere.

Wez: Is that the best part about being in a band?

All: No.

Pit: But it is definitely a perk.

Tony: It's a side bonus.

Jesse: But the worst? There really wasn't anything that bad. It was fun.

Pit: There weren't any shows where we thought, "Oh, my God, this sucks."

Gilbert: We always got money, we got fed, we drank, everyone was cool, we weren't trying to strangle each other at the end of the tour.

Wez: Van never broke down?

Roxie: No, it was nice.

Pit: No blowouts. We hit a skinhead, though. That was fun.

Jesse: I accidentally ran over a skinhead in Portland, Oregon.

Roxie: Dude, don't incriminate yourself.

Jesse: It wasn't illegal! The guy left! If any-

thing, it was hit and run on his part. He bailed.

Wez: How did that happen?

Jesse: I looked out this window. I may have been intoxicated. I don't remember.

Roxie: May have?

Jesse: May have. That's for the legal department to decide. They didn't breathalize me. I looked out the window and saw him standing on the corner smoking a cigarette, so I looked this way to see if we are clear to turn. I started to go, then I heard "Jesse!" Right when I heard that, there was a thud, and then I see this skinhead dude rolling out into the intersection. He gets up and he's all, "What the fuck, man?!" And I said "Dude, I'm sorry," and I felt bad because I hit the guy. Then he acted like he wanted to fight, but he grabbed the door handle and the light came on and there were nine people in the van, and a ten speed, and I think at that point he probably just thought it was a bad idea. Gilbert was like, "I'm gonna feel real bad. After we run this guy over, we're gonna have to beat the shit outta him." But I look at it this way: he was a skinhead, and either way, either side of being a skinhead, he probably was an asshole to someone else earlier in the night, and I was karma checkin' in with him. He was a skinhead and he just looked mad when he was lighting the cigarette, so he had probably just been in a fight anyway.

Pit: Or on the way to the strip club.

Tony: It's not even so much that he was a skinhead

Jesse: Naw, he was a skinhead. He had skinhead tattoos all over his arms. He had a crucified skinhead on his forearm.

Wez: Portland's got problems with skinheads. Or has in the past. Portland's a great town, though. Pretty much every bar you go to there is a strip bar. Like, it's just a neighborhood bar, but there is a naked girl dancing on the corner over there. And you can have booze and full nudity and whatever, but it's just like a reflection of Portland in general: everybody's laid back, and it's kind of seedy.

Roxie: Instead of giving you normal size Pabst, they give you tall boys at the bar.

Pit: We drank sixteen ouncers all night!

Wez: Where did you guys play? **Tony:** Johnny B's in Medford.

Jesse: Johnny B's was hilarious. It was like a '50s diner-slash-hangout in Medford, and Johnny B., the owner, looked like a miniature Reverend Horton Heat, down to the glasses. He owned the place, and it was just a blast. We pulled into town thinking it wouldn't be that cool. But people showed up, and they went completely fucking nuts. It was a blast.

Pit: And my crusty friends from the woods

Wez: Did you make it to Canada?

Roxie: No. We're frightened.

Jesse: We're scared we might not come back. **Wez:** The border is a lot tighter, especially with bands and stuff.

Roxie: On the next tour, we are driving alongside the border but not going across.

Wez: Which is interesting, because as I understand it you are making a detour across the southern border today.

Roxie: You know what? I have reached a point in my life where people are actually going across the southern border to get my pharmaceuticals for me, and delivering them to us at the show. Some kind folks from Phoenix.

Gilbert: It's a rock star band kinda thing.

Wez: What's the pharmaceutical of choice down Mexico way?

Tony: The free kind.

Roxie: The Mexican morphine is our choice, but those get you in trouble and they're hard to get, so we stick with the low key little blue pills. Or Somas are good. I like Ultrams because they don't make you sleepy and they are painkillers and that's nice.

Tony: A message to anyone out there: if you want to meet the Loud Pipes, drugs are a great icebreaker.

all move to Las Vegas?

Pit: I was fourteen and I had no choice.

Wez: You moved with your parents? From where?

Pit: Philly.

Roxie: I got kicked out of a resort in Death Valley and Vegas was closer than Southern California. I was living there, and got kicked out, had to leave in a couple hours, and I had been to Vegas before on vacation and thought it was the coolest place on earth. After I moved there I realized that not everything is like living in a suite at Circus Circus. Damn it. Jesse: I have a nutty ass brother and my family thought it would be best if we moved there to be closer to him, because we didn't think he was going to be around for a while. Nobody in my family thought that he would still be alive at this point. It's not drugs or anything; it's just wrecking motorcycles and crashing cars, getting shot at. No fear is part of the problem.

Tony: I had been in California for the last ten years, being in bands, and doing bad stuff, and it sucked, and I decided that if you can't be happy in Vegas you can't be happy. So I wanted to move and not be in a band and just get a regular job, but within a month I'm in this band. And I don't have much of a job.

Gilbert: I don't know, really. I was just bored

"I'm gonna feel reat bad. After we run this guy over, we're gonna have to beat the shit outta him."

showed up. They lived in a town like ten miles away, Ashland, and there is this chick with Sanskrit tattoos all over her body—she's insane—and then rockabillies. It was like two different types of people made up the majority of the crowd.

Jesse: They poured beer all over us.

Tony: I was soaked in beer from head to toe.

Wez: That whole southern Oregon is crazy, because it's pretty much the sticks, you know? But all of the little towns around there, like as an example, they all have amazing skateboard parks. There are towns with 15,000 people with an amazing world class skatepark. Only in Oregon. What else was good?

Roxie: I think the best show was the Basement in Reno.

Jesse: There was a bunch of mohawk punk rock kids there, and they went fucking nuts. It was fun.

Gilbert: They only came out because they heard there was a punk rock band playing.

Pit: It was a tiny little basement room.

Tony: Maybe twenty feet by twenty feet. **Roxie:** The kids just went off. It's like they

were starved for it. **Tony:** They lost their minds.

Jesse: They picked Tony up on their shoulders. Pit: And started slamming him into the ceiling! It was awesome!

Roxie: We are no longer an all-ages band. Parents, better lock your kids up. The important part is that we are not drug pushers.

Tony: We don't condone anyone doing drugs. That's why they should give them all to us.

Wez: Tony, earlier they called you a pussy because of your story about shooting up and playing guitar naked with dudes. Was that in public or in private?

Tony: Private, I guess.

Wez: You said it was public before, because there were hookers there.

Tony: Well, yeah, public to them.

Wez: So you had an audience.

Jesse: It was in a house, not out in the street.

Tony: That was a long, long time ago, and I don't condone anyone shooting heroin with hookers.

Wez: What made you guys







above the bead store and all I have to do is walk across the street to the liquor store!"

Wez: What about living in Las Vegas? Do you guys ever go to the Strip? Do you ever go to casinos? Do you ever gamble? Roxie: We go to the Wild Wild West. That's our spot.

Jesse: Yeah, buck-ninety-nine hamburgers, buck-ninety nine breakfast.

Pit: One dollar beers. It's walking distance from our studio, the clubhouse.

Wez: What is the clubhouse? Roxie: The clubhouse is fun! Gilbert: It's like the happiest place on earth.

Roxie: The second happiest. We only go to the happiest place on earth on my birthday. And you can find pictures of it

Jesse: It's Roxie...

Wez: Roxie, you do all of that? It's very good. **Roxie:** Thank you. It's www.theloudpipes.com. I can make yours too!

Wez: How do you see that helping the band, or what does it do for the band?

Roxie: It makes it easier to book shows. People can just go to the website and listen to songs. And they don't have to wait three days for me to go mail them a promo kit. The internet makes everything easier, and it seems that everyone is connected somehow, so having a well-thoughtout website seems to make everything simpler.

Tony: I think the coolest thing about the website is that Vegas as a local scene, the real local scene, all ages, doesn't have anywhere to go to meet up, and people are starting to use the site and the message board for parties and shows and stuff. It's cool.

Wez: Last time I talked to you, you said something really cool: anything that anyone sees with the Loud Pipes on it, you guys did yourselves. Stickers, t-shirts, CDs.

Roxie: I was a Carmen Miranda impersonator, and a bunch of nuns had their picture taken with me. And they were all tossed, drinking foot long margaritas.

with being on the reservation, and just moved to Vegas. Twenty-four hour drinking, and I'm there

Wez: Did you all know each other before you all moved there? Or did everything come together there?

Roxie: Yeah.

Wez: Why is Las Vegas the fastest growing city in the US, since it is out in the middle of the fucking desert?

Gilbert: Twenty-four hour drinking.

Jesse: There's something to do twenty-four hours a day, for tweakers.

Wez: So everyone who's moving there is a tweaker?

Jesse: No, no, but it's pretty bad. It is turning into another Los Angeles. There's suburbs. It's a very strange town. Everybody's either from L.A. or New York. And lately, Arizona. I think it's because there's a lot of work. It's pretty easy to get a job.

Wez: Who does what for a job?

Jesse: I play guitar!
Roxie: I don't do shit!
Gilbert: I own a casino!
Wez: How's that?

Gilbert: I have a casino on my reservation, and it makes lots and lots of money from crazy white people, and I reap the benefits of it.

Pit: The whole tour, me and Gilbert kept seeing bead stores. Like, in little markets and stuff.

Jesse: All Gilbert ever sees is bead stores! You're hanging out with an Indian! All he notices are bead stores. "Hey look, there's a bead store!" "All right Gilbert..." "There's a liquor store across the street! I can rent an apartment right here and be happy as hell! I can live

at our website!

Wez: What is the clubhouse?

Gilbert: It's our bunker! **Tony:** It's our compound.

Jesse: Recording studio, printing, hanging out,

kitchen, web designing. **Tony:** It's just a compound in the industrial sec-

tion of town where we hang out.

Jesse: Everything that we do is centered on the clubhouse.

Tony: The clubhouse is to the Loud Pipes what Waco was to the Branch Davidians.

Wez: Is that the old part of town?

Jesse: It's old, but it's close to the Excalibur, the MGM, and Mandalay Bay.

Wez: It seems like in Vegas there's so much shit going on with giveaways and freebies that if you lived there and played your cards right you could get by pretty well.

Jesse: Anybody who's in poverty in Las Vegas has got some serious problems because you can eat anywhere in that town for two fucking bucks.

Wez: What's the best deal?

Jesse: Arizona Charlie's seventy-seven cent breakfast.

Pit: It's not very good though. What about the Anchor?

Roxie: The ninety-nine cent chocolate cake at the Wild Wild West. At the Wild Wild West you can have chocolate cake and a beer for two bucks. A dollar ninety-eight.

Wez: What about the website? You guys have a really well organized and updated website. How does that fit into the whole scheme of things?

Pit: Except for the Asian boys who make some of our shirts.

Wez: You don't actually sheer the sheep or spin the cotton.

Pit: We tried that. It was really hard!

Wez: So you're not so DIY.

Pit: I started screen printing on garbage, but that didn't go over so well. It's kind of like a shirt!

Wez: What is the strangest thing you've ever seen in Las Vegas?

Jesse: Are we counting dead bodies found in hallways?... It wasn't really strange per se, it was a little weird.

Wez: How many dead bodies?

Jesse: It was just one, in a hallway, at the Imperial Palace. I just turned around and left, and thought, "It's got nothing to do with me!"

Tony: The strangest thing I've seen in Vegas, I see every day. That's the tourists. They are fucking weird.

Jesse: One of the funniest I have ever seen, is in the mall, and it's fight weekend, and there is this huge, huge ghetto fabulous black chick, I mean big, wearing a gold lamé bikini top, with gold teeth and a hair weave all huge, a gigantic Gucci bag, and sunglasses on, big fingernails, but wearing a bikini in the mall. That sticks out in my mind.

Tony: I want to kick it with her!

Roxie: I was a Carmen Miranda impersonator, and a bunch of nuns had their picture taken with me. And they were all tossed, drinking foot long margaritas. That was pretty cool.

Wez: You were a Carmen Miranda imperson-

RAZORCAKE 61



Roxie: Yeah. I even have pictures to prove it. The only picture I have from that whole experience is the picture of me with the nuns. And the nuns have foot long drinks in their hands. That was the coolest.

Wez: How did you get a gig as a Carmen Miranda impersonator?

Roxie: Because I had no talent as anything else. I was at the right place at the right time.

Jesse: She looks good with fruit on her head. **Wez:** What about you, Pit?

Pit: I think the dude running down the freeway naked, opposite direction, at four in the morning, with a cop car following him, that would be

the best thing.

Jesse: Another crazy thing was when the Rodney King riots broke out in L.A., I had a studio that I practiced in, in the old band I was in, that was right across from this place called Nucleus Plaza, built in the '50s, really weird. I sat there behind a padlocked gate, watching them burn that down and riot. And the North Las Vegas Police Department hosed us all. I hoped they didn't burn the building down

beaten down.

Gilbert: Anytime you see that dude with the pink 4x4 that says 666 on it, with Penn and Teller. He's got this pink monster truck raised on fifty-inch tires, and the license plate spells out "Six 6 Six." And he's always blasting punk rock, Bad Religion, Dead Kennedys, rolling down the street.

because if I went outside I would have gotten

Jesse: We see him at Albertson's, getting his truck washed.

need to get an upgrade to take care of the sagginess and go one size bigger.

Jesse: They have to lift them and do multiple surgeries.

Pit: They need to make ones with pumps, like those Reebok shoes they had in the early '90s. It'll probably happen. I need to patent that idea now.

Wez: Last time I talked to you guys, you said you were surprised because you didn't get to mention anything about politics.

Gilbert: I am so tired of politics. Whenever these guys have a political discussion, I leave the room

Roxie: I'm with Gilbert.

Tony: We're not a political band.

Roxie: But we're very political personally.

Jesse: I don't believe you can change anybody's mind by singing a song. That's just my opinion.

Gilbert: No matter who you vote for, the government wins.

Tony: Our songs do have messages, but they are generally about being true to yourself.

Gilbert: Our songs are about drugs!

Roxie: Really. They are about getting fucked up and having fun, and that is the freedom we are trying to preserve.

Pit: If we were in a South American country, we'd all be in jail or dead.

Wez: Or running the place!

All: Yeah!

Gilbert: Some bands do have a message, and that's okay. You go see them and you are preached to from the pulpit. But

"How much money can you make off that?" and I told him, and he said, "Shit, list me!" And he came back the next day and I was like, "Check it out!"

Wez: What do you sell on eBay?

Tony: Singers. That's why I am #5.

Jesse: We also have MySpace.com. But I don't understand the whole meeting people on the internet thing. People put their picture up but you never see them or meet them.

Roxie: It's like high school on a bigger level.

Tony: People send me friend requests and I'll add them, and then I will go to shows and I'll look out in the crowd and see them. I've never met them, I am their friend, supposedly, on MySpace, but they won't come up to me and say hello. It's weird.

Jesse: We played a show at Jillian's and it was exactly as he described. I was looking at this chick, and she kinda looked familiar, but I was playing and not really paying attention, and I get home and check on Myspace and she wrote to me and told me how great the show was and stuff, and I wrote back and said, "Why didn't you come up and say hello then?"

Pit: Some people need to talk through an interface. I should do that when we get to Philadelphia with my internet girlfriend. We'll show up to Philadelphia and I will ignore her, and then be like, "Hold on, I need to get to a computer. We need to go to Kinko's." Or I could just get a keyboard. I can still talk to you, but I need to be typing. It's a little weird.

<www.theloudpipes.com>

Tony: We don't condone anyone doing drugs. That's why they should give them all to us.

Pit: I've seen that dude on planes before, and he's just annoying, like "Argh, argh, argh..." [drunk noise], gurgling around.

Jesse: It's just a Vegas thing, you look over and he's there. A lot of the girls in Vegas have fake boobs. That's kind of fun.

Roxie: All the girls have fake boobs?

Jesse: Yeah, it's way worse than L.A. It's like mad girls wearing fake Prada stuff and fake books

Gilbert: It's just like DVD players. At first they were expensive but now they are so cheap everybody's got one.

Roxie: Have you seen those bad Mexican boob jobs?

Jesse: Yeah, exactly like they are sticking hard up from their belly. "Uh, those should have been put in a little higher."

Wez: I was just talking to my wife about bad fake boob jobs. I've got a friend whose girlfriend is a stripper and she's got a bad boob job. It looks like there's a softball in a gym sock. It's weird

Roxie: And the one's with a gap...

Wez: Yeah. I wonder if every couple years you

I think a band like us, especially with the kids, is about the energy, and they just come to see it to just to fucking lose their minds for half an hour, and then go home and deal with whatever it is they have to deal with. It makes it easier for them. We serve that purpose.

Wez: What else would we talk about?

Jesse: We put Tony on eBay one time but we didn't get anything for him.

Tony: You guys put me up there for eight grand! Next time put me up there for eight dollars.

Roxie: I'm doing it when we get back.

Gilbert: It was like "Win a Date with Tony" or something like that

Roxie: No, it was straight win him. He was mad. I was listing stuff on eBay, and he said,





gerner different and amazing thing. Balzac are no able to pull off in a million years. –Ben Snakepit Cheers to following people for their help. I would have never finished this interview without the additional questions I got from Chris George/ Horrowood and Ryan Moldenhauer/ Isolation 13. Salutations to Jun Kato who had the patience of translating this interview from Japanese to English and for handling all the logistics of setting up this interview for me. -Donofthedead

Misfits. A lot. As a rule, when the Japanese get a hold

of a western cultural concept, they tend to refine it

and perfect it to the point where it becomes an alto-

Donofthedead: What do you feel is the essence or soul of Balzac?

Hirosuke: The meaning of Balzac differs among each of us as band members, as well as for each listener. I have been a member of Balzac for the past ten years and its essence had been evolving continuously. alwavs Donofthedead: Was the NYC show on Halloween 2002 your first show in America?

Hirosuke: It was really the first time to play outside of Japan itself.

Donofthedead: What is your perception of American audiences?

Hirosuke: Great! The shows were excellent. PAZORCAKE 64 The audiences seemed to really enjoy our shows. They came up to us after the shows to chat and take pictures. They were friendly and it made us happy.

Donofthedead: In the last couple of years the venues have become larger and your fan base has also grown. Do you feel that the band has changed in any way due to this? Do you prefer playing larger places or in smaller clubs?

Hirosuke: In Japan, we play at both large and small gigs. Both are cool and each has its pros. Even though I prefer the small gigs, both have their own benefits. So, both are fine. The primary importance here is the actual space itself created as a result of us being there and the audience being there; importance lies in the shared space and that particular moment between us and everyone in the audience.

Donofthedead: What size of a crowd do you draw in Japan?

Hirosuke: Depends on the area. In a city like Tokyo we often play at a gig with over 1,000 fans. As we move into the country, the gigs tend to be smaller. Every gig gets real exciting though

Donofthedead: What are your audiences like?

Hirosuke: In Japan, diving and body surfing are real popular but they are still far from being able to do a circle pit. If you see our live videos, you can see what it's like. They become frantic. **Donofthedead:** What is the furthest a fan has traveled to come to one show?

that much like the Misfits. There's a lot more going

on. Slick production, multi-layered guitar sounds, and

technically proficient solos that Doyle would never be

Hirosuke: In Japan, people gather from all over. Especially on the initial day of the tour and the final tour date, they gather from every locality and get really excited. At a Halloween show in New York, we had a fan coming to see our show all the way from Germany. That touched my heart.

Donofthedead: In the *America's Most Wanted*, DVD the band members, from what I could understand, were quite surprised by the slam dancing going on during the show. What was that reaction?

Hirosuke: Absolutely amazing. I got real excited. First of all, my wish to do a live show in the States became a reality, and further, I got to witness the audience having a great time with my own eyes. This feeling was mutual among the other Balzac members as well as our staff.

Donofthedead: I read in the early '80s, the

shows in Japan were very violent. I heard in Japan, either the crowd is either passive or nuts. Which is your audience?

Hirosuke: Everyone has their own way of enjoying Balzac shows. It's not only the guys going crazy at the front barricade, but there are girls, too, and they are all having a great time. And there are others who are really into just listening.

Donofthedead: Are these shows in the US bigger than what you normally play in Japan?

Hirosuke: Most of the gigs on Fiend Fest were probably larger than those we play in Japan. It is just hard to compare the gigs in Japan and the US. They differ so much in shape. Most of the gigs we play in Japan have no seats.

Donofthedead: How does it feel to be an opening act when you are so popular in Japan?

Hirosuke: I'm not bothered at all. In fact, I am just so overwhelmed to be able to play with such great bands on tour: the Misfits, The Damned, The Dickies, Agnostic Front and D.I. They are all so kind and cool.

Donofthedead: What are your goals of achievement in success in America? I'm bringing this up because there was limited popularity of Japanese bands here in the US. Loudness, Shonen Knife, The Boredoms, and to certain degree, Melt Banana. These are bands that left the underground and gained some popularity here in the states.

some popularity here in the states. **Hirosuke:** What do you mean by "success"? It makes it more interesting to aim at an unknown goal rather than to aim at a result that I already know. I'm sure there have been a number of Japanese bands who got popular in the States, but that is simply their outcome. We move towards our goal not as "a Japanese band." Instead, we are aiming at it as the band "Balzac." I am sincerely content when there are people supporting the band, whether in the U.S., Japan, or Europe.

Donofthedead: Are you learning to speak English so you can connect to the audience better here and abroad?

Hirosuke: I strongly feel the pain of that. I hate the feeling that I can't communicate with the audience. Obviously, I want to become fluent in the English language. I want to talk and communicate with many people. We are now searching for someone who could teach us English in Japan.

Donofthedead: What challenges are you faced with when writing a song with English lyrics?

Hirosuke: The image differs when writing the lyrics in Japanese and English. When it can only be expressed in Japanese, I then sing in Japanese.

Donofthedead: What is the reason behind creating songs with English lyrics?

Hirosuke: The reason for writing in English is because it flows better with the melody. Personally, I like mixing both languages together.

Donofthedead: Balzac has recorded various versions of the same songs over time—all of which are great. Are you never satisfied with how a song ends up, or do you see them as never completely finished? Hirosuke: A song is never completed. No matter how many times a song is played, the ability to

change is always hidden in itself. Once in awhile I do become satisfied with a song, but most times it is left uncompleted. I feel that my own songs are my eternal theme to overcome.

Donofthedead: You modeled yourself on the Misfits image, including devil locks, skulls, and merchandising. Do you want to continue to be associated as a Misfits band?

Hirosuke: I am strongly influenced by Misfits. It is quite natural to be influenced by a band you like, to digest it in your own way, and to turn it in to something new. For

example, it is natural for someone influenced by the '80s hardcore punk to dress in that style today. It is natural to get a mohawk or to make it all spiky after they see an incredibly cool band performing on stage with those particular haircuts. I was deeply affected by the devil lock and am still influenced by the Misfits music today.

Donofthedead: A lot of fans have been drawn to the diverse influences in Balzac's music. Is it hard to combine so many different styles into the song writing process?

Hirosuke: This is a natural thing. Balzac is influenced by many in music. It really is difficult to actualize what we want to do to express it as a Balzac sound.

Donofthedead: Why choose to release your US release with Misfits Records?

Hirosuke: I really believe Misfits Records deeply understands Balzac. Same goes for Jerry from Misfits as well as John Cafiero of Misfits Records. They are both have the greatest knowledge of Balzac.

Donofthedead: Did other labels that were bigger, with bigger distribution, come to you to possibly release your music here in the states?

Hirosuke: I've heard a couple of

rumors that there was interest in Balzac, but the Misfits were the only one who actually approached us. The Misfits and Misfits Records brought Balzac twice to the States and even released the "best of" album for us. Additionally, they fully supported us for the Fiend Fest Tour to provide a comfortable environment for us. I am ever thankful to both the Misfits and to Misfits Records.

Donofthedead: Are you guys considering putting out any re-releases of your early demos or other hard-to-find songs?

Hirosuke: Works done with the past members will not be released again.

Donofthedead: Are you still putting out releases by any other bands on your Evilegend-13 label? Hirosuke: No plans for any other bands. As for now, we are only focusing on releasing the works of Balzac. Every year, we are releasing a number of works from Evilegend-13. We often avoid the mainstream market. Instead, they are sold at gigs and mail orders.

Donofthedead: You perform in skull suits, skull gloves, and skull face bandanas. Are those available to the public?

Hirosuke: Most of them can be purchased through the Japanese fan club, Fiendish Club. For those in



If they have negative feeling towards Balzac, they do not have to force themselves to listen to us.

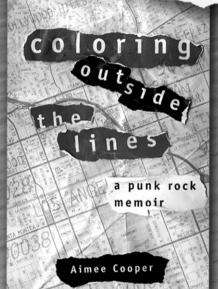
"Oftentimes when an author is compiling a story about either the 1970's or 1980's punk explosion, it comes across in a punker-than-you, I -was-there-and-you-weren't fashion. perhaps the most refreshing thing about Coloring Outside the Lines is that you never get that feeling. A great read." -- Fat City Magazine

"Stories told from the worm's-eye perspective of what it was like to hang out at Oki Dog, go to shows, ride your skateboard (with Tony Alva), and throw eggs at Adam Ant."

-- Skratch Magazine

"This book is a gift to those of us who care about how bunk rock started and strive to maintain the underground alive and well ...it's a must on every bunk and hardcore kid's bookshelf."

- Quebec Hardcore News



"Damn hard to put down." - Shredding Paper Magazine

Available online at: Interpunk, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Razorcake

www.punkrockmemoir.com

SIGNAL LOST
"Children Of The Wasteland" LP/CD



SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS "KANGNAVE" LP/CD



SIGNAL LOST **U.S.TOUR**

> OCT / NOV 2004 CHECK

WEBSITE FOR FULL DETAILS

AUG-SEPT

HECK WEBSITE FOR **FULL DETAILS**

CURRENT RELEASES:

KYLESA CD EP /7" - Prank 065

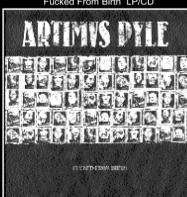
ARTIMUS PYLE 'Fucked From Birth' LP/CD - Prank 069
SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS "Kangnave"
LP/CD - Prank 068

PAINTBOX "Cry of the Sheeps" 7" - Prank 071
AVSKUM "punkista!" LP/CD - Prank 064
BORN/DEAD-"Our Darkest fears" LP/CD
SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS
"Svensk Mangel" 7" EP
SCROTUM GRINDER"Worst Sonic" LP/CD
INTIAL STATE "Abort the soul" LP/CD
DEAD AND GONE"TV BABY" LP/CD
DAMAD "Burning Cold" picture disc
[\$10 US • \$12 CAN/MEX • \$16 WORLD]

SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS TOUR EP \$5 PPD /\$6 CAN/\$7 WORLD



ARTIMUS PYLE
Fucked From Birth LP/CD



PRANK RECORDS P.O. Box 410892 San Francisco, CA 94141-0892 www.prankrecords.com

WRITE FOR A COMPLETE CATALOG

LPS = \$8 US / \$10 CANADA/MEXICO / \$16 WORLD POSTPAID * CDS = \$10 US / \$11 CANADA/MEXICO / \$14 WORLD POSTPAID * 7 S = \$3.50 US / \$5 CANADA/MEXICO / \$6 WORLD POSTPAID

the U.S. or elsewhere outside of Japan, some of the items could be purchased from the official US website, the fan club Fiendish Club USA at www.balzac308.com, and/or from the official website in Europe, www.balzac.eu.com

Donofthedead: Have you discussed with the band to produce similar product for the Fiendish Club USA?

Hirosuke: Yes we have. Chris George, the manager of Fiendish

Donofthedead: What do you think of the collectability of Balzac releases? It seems that every toy, doll, and limited LP are instantly placed on auction sites and sell for a lot of money.

Hirosuke: We always each feel that that particular moment is precious. That's why some of the items are brought out at that time only. In other words, there were too many limited Balzac items.

Donofthedead: Where do your

Harrison items. I've been collecting George Harrison items since I was a teen. The Beatles are what lead me into rock music. I especially like George Harrison. Currently, I am collecting his 7 inch singles released in each country with its own editions. Not limited to records, I collect anything in relation to George, such as posters, etc. Sometimes, our fans send me George's items when they find out that I am a big fan of George,

Hirosuke: Don't get me wrong. I believe everyone had their own special feelings towards the Misfits back when Glenn was involved and I am one of them. Whatever influenced us in our teens continues to be precious today. The Misfits sung by Michel Graves, as well as the Misfits sang by Jerry himself, are both great. In '95, The Beatles released "Free As a Bird" without John Lennon being there. They released "Real Love" as well. Both



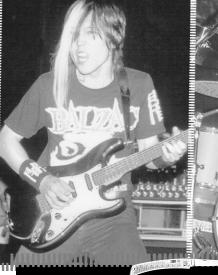
Club USA, has been working for us as the Balzac USA crew. I would want to find out from him what items the American fans are requesting, and hopefully we'll respond to that.

Donofthedead: Now you also have the dolls that Medicom Tovs produce. Are they really popular in Japan? I have heard that a company in Hong Kong has bootlegged them and there is a lawsuit.

Hirosuke: My buddy works at Medicom Toy. He is a great friend and also a great fan of Balzac. In Japan, many toys are really popular. Some of them are dealt at a high price while others are bootlegged in Hong Kong. Each of the toy companies who made them has the right for all Balzac toys produced so far. That lawsuit is a business issue for Medicom Toy. It is not a direct issue related to us.

Donofthedead: Who came up with the ideas for the toy characters like Bomberkid, Atomic Rage Vampire, and the Black and Red Skull?

Hirosuke: Ideas for most of these toys come from my friend. I'm actually always anxiously waiting for these toys to be made up!



It makes it more interesting to aim at an unknown goal... ... rather than to aim at a result that I already know.

punk rock roots come from? I heard you are friends with Gastunk and The Willard.

Hirosuke: We don't personally know Gastunk members, however we have participated in a Gastunk tribute album. I was highly influenced by Gastunk in my teens. Willard also was a band I liked for a long time. My wish to play with Willard was finally granted. It is a great band and I am still a big fan of them.

Donofthedead: I also learned you are a big collector of Beatles memorabilia, especially focused on George Harrison. Did that start in early childhood?

Hirosuke: I actually have a habit of collecting things, which lead me to collect a variety of stuff. I don't really collect the easy ones to find. This isn't something collectable, but I love the Beatles and have been a collector of George

which is very sweet of them to do. It's a lot of work to collect his records, as they were all released with a different cover in each country, but at the same time I find it very enjoyable. On this U.S. tour, I have searched for George Harrison records in every town we went. I was so envious that there's so much George Harrison stuff in the U.S. Let me know if any of you are aware of a record shop that carries records of George precious Harrison.

Donofthedead: I read in an interview that you did with Eat Magazine back in 1996. The question was, "How do you feel about the Misfits reforming?" You answered, "The Misfits without Glenn Danzig is kinda like the Beatles getting back together now." Since you are being supported by them now, do you feel the same way?

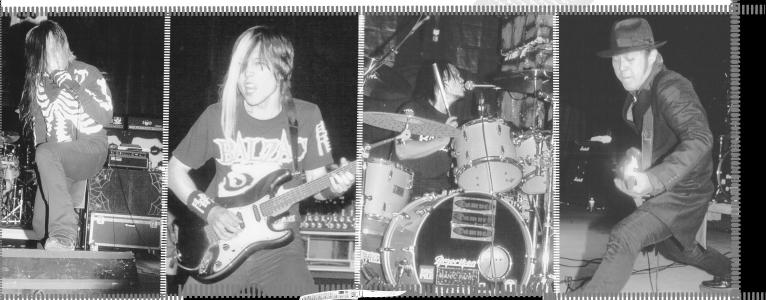
are so great. Great things are simply great. The Beatles in the '60s is simply The Beatles in the '60s, meanwhile The Beatles released in the '90s is still The Beatles for me. Those who are solely fond of their works from the past should only listen to their works from the past. Others who like both the old and the new should listen to works from both ages. Judgment is left for the listeners to decide. It is not my business. I am not a critic.

Donofthedead: Does Danzig like Balzac? I heard that you guys opened for him when he was in

Hirosuke: We were invited to play at a release party for a new album in Japan and we played together with Glenn. Glenn is a very kind and is a remarkable man.

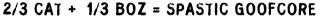
Donofthedead: In Japan, is the band the featured act or do you still opening for many bands?

Hirosuke: Most Balzac shows in Japan are solo shows. At events, we sometimes play first on the bill and other times we close the show. Either is fine. What matters is not the billing order, the issue is whether Balzac live RAZORCAKE 67









\$6 Debut CD OUT on NO LABEL RECORDS PO BOX 1946 VENICE.CA 90294

notabetrecords@comcast.net

apocalypsewow.iuma.com





SCAREDYCAT (r.i.p.) on NO LABEL

SCAREDYCAT (r.i.p.) on NO LABEL

SPLIT 7" /w APATHETIC YOUTH -\$6

"SCAREDYCAT are a genius of a band, with fast, pacemakerblowing HC punk parts, stop and start time changes and funny
vocalsapproaching 80's-metal-style waits at times. Total
buffoonery and must be heard to be believed!! What a solid
record... find now!" -SHORT, FAST & LOUD #10

SELF-TITLED DEBUT CD -\$6

"You read it right kids: 17 songs but clocking in at only a bit over
16 minutes. This is the kind of hardcore-era rock that is somewhat
missing in this age of nu-metal bombastics. SCAREDYCAT is three
guys playing loud and fast hardcore for about a minute or so, the
type of early DRI and inception of grindcore which pumps out
quick chords and nuttiness...Scaredycat is fine and dandy!"
-SHREDDING PAPER #13 SHREDDING PAPER #13

T-SHIRTS, girls to XL - \$6

EURO SPLIT CD with RIOTGUN. -\$9
The Cat's S/T debut and 12 unreleaased tracks from the mighty riotgun. on Madskull Records, Amsterdam.

atso @ interpunk.com & iTunes - scaredycat.iuma.com

called the Fiendish Club. Is it true for the Japanese fan club, you can only join if you get an application in one of your releases and they are only in random copies? Only 308 new members a year?

Hirosuke: That's not true. In support of our album releases we book a full Japan tour. There we register

for the fan club at the gigs. The very first year we had the Fiendish Club, coincidentally, there were 308 registrations. It was not purposely limited to 308. It was simply an outcome of the situation.

Donofthedead: Did you ever feel that Balzac would become big anywhere else other than Japan?

Hirosuke: It sure is exciting to receive support from many. I appreciate that. However, I am not conscious about us becoming big. It would be nice when there is a gradual increase in the number of Balzac lovers. In this world, there are many who are much more elevated and others who should be much more elevated.

Donofthedead: The Japanese have a different

style of food than what Americans eat. Did you find the food you eat on tour edible? I'm asking this because my mother is Japanese and after thirty years, she still doesn't like a lot of stuff that is available on the road, like Mexican food.

Hirosuke: Yeah, I actually did miss the Japanese food. I do like the American cuisine as well, though. I drink a lot of juices as I do not drink alcoholic beverages. In comparison to Japan, there are so many varieties of juices in the U.S., which is fantastic.

Donofthedead: How does the general Japanese population react to you as you walk down the street? My mother hated when we dressed up for shows and told us that would never happen in Japan. My brother and I found records and videos from Japan and proved her wrong.

Hirosuke: It varies. We cannot do what we want to do if we are preoccupied with the surroundings. No doubt, we should not cause trouble for others, but we should be able to decide at least what we want to wear. If one stops wearing it just because they were pointed out not to do so by others, then one should never have worn it in the first place.

Donofthedead: Why choose the author Balzac for the name of the band?

We cannot do if we are preroundings. No cause trouble buld be able to twe want to wearing it just binted out not if we are preroundings. No ago but I cannot remember the title. Only the room number, 308, left a strong impression on me.

Donofthedead: What is "Atomic Age Vampire is the band deals with?

Hirosuke: Atom Age Vampire is the

title of a horror film I like.

Donofthedead: Do you enjoy horror movies?

Hirosuke: I bought nearly forty horror movie DVDs on the U.S.

tour.

Donofthedead: I have read comments by people that certain riffs are copies of riffs from Mistfits and Samhain songs. How do you feel about that?

Hirosuke: We are influenced by the Misfits and Samhain. Is there anything wrong with being influenced by such great bands? If they have negative feeling towards Balzac, they do not have to force themselves to listen to us.

Donofthedead: From the raw beginnings to now, what is the greatest achievement the band has accomplished?

Hirosuke: There are so many things we have achieved as Balzac. Goals exist at any particular time and moment in any given condition. We have achieved so much so far,

but there is still so much more to be achieved.

Donofthedead: If I was able to book your band at a Misfits convention, would you be willing to play in pink jumpsuits and wigs and perform your songs?

Hirosuke: What would be the reason to dress like that at our show? I simply want to do the show and do it with the outfit I like. For what purpose do you think we are doing Balzac? If you are into punk rock, then you most likely have seen many punk bands playing with whatever they like to wear. One should play with whatever they like to wear. We are not a Misfits copy band. We are Balzac!

Donofthedead: I know Akio has switched his wardrobe to a `77 forward to seeing yo Clash punk look. Would the others consider following suit or just play

relaxed in a pair of shorts, t-shirt, baseball hat, and skateboard shoes? Hirosuke: One should play with whatever they want to wear. I myself have worn blue jeans or overalls on stage in the past, like in our video released in Japan. Sometimes Atsushi wears a gauze (cheese cloth) shirt. Akio likes Clash and their style. That's all there is to it. I myself own a skull suit, which I wear at shows whenever I want to.

Donofthedead: I read that you are a big fan of Winnie the Pooh. Why is that a favorite?

Hirosuke: It's cute. Winnie the Pooh stories give me peace of mind. I like him very much.

Donofthedead: For the *Out of the Blue* CD, Pushead was the artist.

Hirosuke: Pushead created an amazing artwork.

Donofthedead: Is he a fan? Did you contact him?

Hirosuke: He says he likes Balzac. We, too, are big fans of his works. He created fantastic artwork for Balzac.

Donofthedead: Do you stay in contact with any of the former members of Balzac?

Hirosuke: Close to none. Once in a while I coincidentally see some of them in town. There are very few of them former members who are still playing in a band. I believe most of them quit.

Donofthedead: Have you thought of what you would like to do after Balzac?

Hirosuke: I'm not looking that far yet. There are still so many things I would like to accomplish as Balzac.

Donofthedead: Being away from home and on the road—did that give the band creative energy?

Hirosuke: I was actually feeling anxious about trying things in a different environment outside of Japan. That tension in myself helped me concentrate.

Donofthedead: I hope to experience the band again. Thank you for being patient with the time that it took to complete this interview and my inexperience of doing one.

Hirosuke: Thank you so much. I hope the fans will get the meaning (nuance) of my answers after it's translated from Japanese to English. I'm really looking forward to seeing you guys in the U.S. again.



Hirosuke: I like the works of Balzac.

Donofthedead: Do you pull inspiration from an author that is so dark?

Hirosuke: Besides using his name for the band, the band wasn't directly inspired by his works, musically or lyrically. I got a lot of inspiration from his works. Since I write all the songs and lyrics for Balzac, there are parts of us that were somehow inspired without even realizing it though.

Donofthedead: Where does the Balzac skull logo come from?

Hirosuke: A long time ago I found a tiny skull drawn in a book. I rearranged and drew it from there.

Donofthedead: What is the symbolism for the number 308?

Hirosuke: It was a room number from a horror novel I read long time

PAZORCAKE 69

MODERNI

Interview by Maddy Tight Pants

Pictures courtesy of the band

What band goes on tour without booking almost any shows, exists almost entirely on pizza and burritos, covers everything from the Replacements to the Hollies, lives in a series of punk houses with names like the Robot House and the Shipyard, stays out until 5 AM every night, and, by the way, plays Hüsker Dü-influenced melodic punk? Why, the Modern Machines, of course! They come from the hallowed ground of Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood—an area that one hundred years ago was a vacation spot for working-class families and now houses a mix of punks, low-income families, artists, and the occasional guy with a gun who tries to steal your bike!

Milwaukee is the kind of punk scene you've always dreamt of. Everyone lives within a few blocks of each other, crammed into attics and basements, paying almost no rent. Everyone is in at least three or four bands—everything from totally amazing punk rock like Fury of a Thousand Zeuses (one of the best bands in the world right now!) and silly, gamer-influenced joke bands like Rüne Sword (featuring a wizard and an elf, amongst others).

On any given night, you could find yourself hosting a Marked Men dance party in an abandoned house (like I did a few weeks ago!), drinking down by the disgusting yet oddly appealing Milwaukee River a few blocks away, or biking around miles and miles of industrial wasteland, which once made Milwaukee a prosperous city, but now explains much of the city's economic downturn

Or, you could go to one of countless basement shows, where you'd see the Modern Machines surrounded by friends rockin' out and goin' crazy, singing along, jumping around, and passing around cans of Sparks!

The Modern Machines are one of those bands that, at their best, verge on total insane greatness—amazing, melodic punk songs (and some faster hardcore-influenced stuff, too!), great lyrics, and, perhaps most importantly, an understanding of the need to ROCK! Not in a pretentious, garage rock, fashion-punk kind of way, not in a metal, "dude, let's rock and pick up some chicks" way, but in a way that is often sloppy (despite their best efforts), always cool, and just fun! They'll play anywhere—a BART station in the Bay Area, a punk rock basement, or some bizarre hard rock bar where the only people listening are forty-year-old alcoholics. It doesn't matter the location. The Modern Machines will rock!



With a record (*Thwap!*) on New Disorder, a handful of amazing demo tapes, and a record on Recess (*Taco Blessing*) in the works, the Modern Machines are plotting to take over the world!

I recently sat down with Nate (guitar, vocals), Ben (guitar, vocals), Dan (bass, vocals) and Hanson (drums, vocals) on my porch to talk about Milwaukee, punk rock, and sandwiches made out of mozzarella sticks. They all work punk rock jobs (Nate and Ben deliver pizzas. Hanson works at a print shop, and Dan works in a dishroom), but had taken time off to go on yet another tour, this time with genius pop stars The Ergs.

They all talk over each other, make jokes every other sentence, and can't stay on one topic for more than thirty seconds. So, be warned! What follows is well ridiculous!

Maddy: So, let's get to the hard questions right away. How often do people

get drunk in Milwaukee?

Hanson: How many hours are there in a day? **Ben:** How many days are there in a week?

Nate: Well, let's do a sample. How many days do you get drunk a week?

Ben: On tour or in Milwaukee? Hanson: There's not a difference. Ben: Seven if I'm not working. Hanson: Seven if I am working.

Nate: Five or six, if I'm not nude parasailing.

Maddy: Why is everyone in Milwaukee in five bands?

Dan: Because it's so cheap to live there that people spend less time working

and more time rocking.

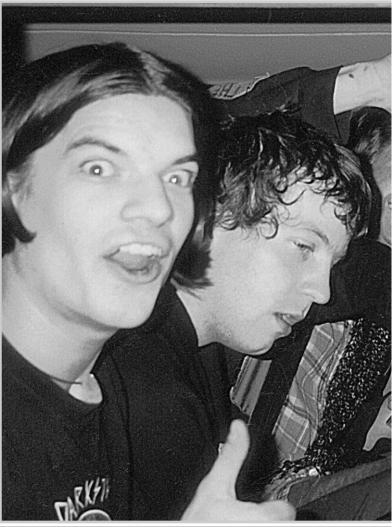
Hanson: [in mock serious voice] We have a more eclectic array of musical tastes that cannot be conveyed with just one musical outlet. I'm in four bands, like my stoner rock band, Sludgy McStoner Pants and the Bong Riders. The songs I write for that, they wouldn't work as Modern Machines' songs.

Maddy: Do you think people will ever start moving to Milwaukee?

Hanson: They already have.

Maddy: Besides from rural Wisconsin.

Dan: Well, that was the start of it because a few years ago everyone wanted to live in Green Bay because that's where all the good music came and now we know thirty people who lived in Green Bay who all moved to Milwaukee.



But I think, slowly, as we tour more, we meet more people from other parts of the country. They come to Milwaukee and see that it's cheap and there's awesome bands and great people. There have been people moving to

Maddy: What's the worst thing about the Milwaukee punk scene?

Nate: Definitely the lack of grease trucks like they have in New Brunswick, New Jersey. (The "grease trucks" sit in a parking lot and serve sandwiches loaded down with every possible fried food. Yum!)

Dan: I had a sandwich the other day that was jalepeño poppers, mozzarella

sticks, falafel and french fries. **Hanson:** The sandwich I just ate was ketchup, mustard, and Pringles.

Nate: But that did not come from a giant grease truck.

Hanson: It went into grease trap.

Dan: Actually, one of the worst things about Milwaukee is that

up until now there hasn't really been a label putting out stuff by all our friends' bands and we're all doing some great things. We're trying to change that. We have a label called Dingus Records that's putting out a Fury of a Thousand Zeuses 7" and a Modern Machines/Ergs 7" and a couple of other projects in the near future.

Nate: I think the Milwaukee scene gets to be a little too apathetic and donothing in terms of looking out at the neighborhood and the world—and how you could possibly make it better just in your own little contribution. I think people in Milwaukee litter their beer bottles too much, for example. They don't even think to consider that they shouldn't litter. I'm sort of being facetious when I say that, but what I'm trying to get across to the kids reading this magazine is that if you move to Milwaukee, you should definitely not expect it to have some sort of brilliant bookmobile like in Bloomington, Indiana or

Maddy: Why do you think the Milwaukee punk scene isn't more political? Nate: I think that the Ten Commandments on the two stone tablets as handed down by the Moses of our scene, AKA the joint venture of Rev. Nørb and Timebomb Tom didn't really bring much overt politics to the scene. A lot of us old guys, we actually do sorta pay attention to the progressive causes in and around the state, but some of us don't, and that's a direct result of the... Ben: Alcohol poisoning?

Nate: Yeah, the alcohol poisoning, and the fact that I have Joe McCarthy's corpse hanging from my ceiling by its toes. But on the other hand, well, I'm only saving him to eat. [Everyone groans.]

Hanson: Give me a dollar.

Nate: I'll give you a dollar of foot meat from Joe. Are you into it?

Ben: I don't think there's a going rate for.

IF MILWAUKEE PUNKS WERE IN A BATTLE AGAINST SAY, PC PORTLAND PUNKS, WHO WOULD WIND NATE: WE'D TAKE OFF THEIR WHITE

Nate: McCarthy burg-

Ben: For human meat. Hanson: It's free.

Nate: There's another thing. The fact that I talk so callously about eating meat. There are a lot vegetarians

Milwaukee than other cities.

Maddy: So, if Milwaukee punks were in a battle against say, PC Portland punks, who would win?

Nate: We'd take off their white belts and whip 'em until they die.

Hanson: That is the lowest belt in the martial arts tier system.

Nate: I don't understand it. If you live in Portland and you own a white belt, it's like walking around the streets of Milwaukee with a cheesehead on. So, we'd win.

Hanson: Especially in a game of baseball.

Maddy: Why are people in Milwaukee such music nerds?

Dan: It's too cold to go outside most of the year, so we just listen to records and talk about whether or not Keith Moon would have been better in the Beatles than Ringo. That's actually a pretty obvious no.

Maddy: How many of you have made a Top One Hundred Albums of All Time List?

Nate: I have made a top fifty albums of the 1990s and I put in on the wall of my old house, but I had to change it all the time. This whole listing, and talking about records and bands again comes from the Green Bay mentality of people like Rev. Nørb and Timebomb Tom who brought in music first. And, for them, punk rock is punk rock. It's entirely self-contained. It's not a progressive political movement.

Dan: It's not fashion.

Nate: It's just literally the music. I don't agree with everything that would be implied by that statement, but I do feel that if you put the music first, it's going to result in a lot better bands in the punk scene.

Maddy: What do you think, Dan? What's the most important thing in punk? Is it the music?

Dan: Oh, for sure the music. We were actually talking about this yesterday. Our friends Drew and Catherine, the people they were staying with, none of them were going to the show. They're punks, but they're in this traveling punk circle. We travel too, but we rock first. We're punk rockers.

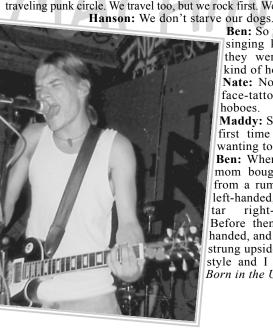
Ben: So they weren't the singing kind of hoboes, they were the stabbing kind of hoboes?

Nate: No, they were the face-tattooing kind of hoboes.

Maddy: So, when was the first time you remember wanting to be in a band?

Ben: When I was six, my mom bought me a guitar from a rummage sale. I'm left-handed, but I play guiright-handed Before then I played lefthanded, and the strings were strung upside-down Hendrix style and I just listened to Born in the USA all the time.





PAZORCAKE 71

Hanson: I finally mastered that drumbeat.

[Everyone laughs.]

Maddy: Nate, would you care to talk about your bands when you were lit-

Dan: Nathan and the Futuristics!

Nate: The Fab Florescent Four. That's the best band name I've ever thought of

Maddy: What did the Fab Florescent Four sound like?

Nate: The Fab Florescent Four were a hip young dance group featuring me on keyboard and vocals, my sister on tambourine and dancing, and two of my friends whose names were, and I am not making this up, Aero and Bo. They were cousins.

[Everyone laughs hysterically.]

Hanson: Did they have another relative named Quiver?

Nate: Later we changed our name to In Tone and then I

moved to England in 1991 when I was eleven. When we came back from England, that's when the greatest band I've ever been in, Apotheosis, began to form: a bunch of high school idiots farting around on keyboard and one of those Paul McCartney bass-

..WE JUST LISTEN TO RECORDS AND TALK ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT KEITH MOON WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IN THE BEATLES THAN RINGO.

es. I played guitar very badly and sang. I will have to kill Ben someday because he saw Apotheosis, who later changed their name to Planer. Let the record show that at the last Planer show, "Ice Cold Ice" by Hüsker Dü was covered.

Maddy: And what happened in the parking lot after the last show? [Everyone laughs.]

Nate: Our bassist was a big theater guy, and I told him the band was breaking up. I think there might have been a girl who was on his mind, and she left. So he says, "It's over! The dream is broken!" Then, about five minutes later, I see him across the parking lot and he's yelling and wailing about something, and he tears his shirt off, and goes running after a car that I believe contained the girl that his mind was upon. And that was actually one of the last times I've seen him.

Maddy: So how long have you all known each other?

Ben: Too long.

Dan: Well, I've known Hanson for nine years and these other two for six years.

Nate: Me and Ben probably had classes together freshman, sophomore year in high school, and it's been a productive friendship ever since.

Maddy: Describe the Modern Machines.

Dan: We sound like all your favorite pop bands with some abrasive guitars and it's kinda catchy.

Nate: If I'm describing them to someone's mom, I'm going to say we sound like Donovan, but if I'm describing them to the editorial staff of *Razorcake*, I'm going to say we sound exactly like Bruce Springsteen.

Maddy: What about the lyrics?

Hanson: Written for the sole purpose of clever rhymes.

Nate: That's why *he* writes his lyrics. **Dan:** I think we have heart-felt lyrics that take on some personal issues and touch on politics a little bit.

Nate: I don't even know anymore when I try to tell people what are lyrics are about. *Thwap!* doesn't even have a single overtly political or alternately girl-related song on it. I guess we sing songs about rockin' out.

Ben: I used to write songs about girls. Now I pretty much only write songs about quantum physics.

Nate: Yeah, very much so. [In a mock serious voice] I'm trying to write these Dylanesque

surrealist literature lyrics, so we have a song about red wine called "Ayy Paisano." I take these flashes of noun, as I call them. Like "four-dollar-nine-ty, 6.88, tortilla flatulence, put you in a state." What does it mean? You can get whatever you want from those lyrics.

Maddy: Dan, what about your song "Go for It, Girls," encouraging more girls to start bands. Is that a problem in the Milwaukee punk scene?

Dan: It's a problem in every scene, to varying degrees. Just for whatever reason, girls when they're younger, are discouraged from taking up an instrument.

Nate: Well, taking up guitar. They're encouraged to pick up instruments.

Dan: Well, violin or piano. But how many girls play the drums, you know? For that reason, there's just a total lack of girls in bands. There are girls in the scene, but they don't feel the need to be in a band. I want more girls to be in

bands, and I encourage anyone to take up an instrument and start a band.

Maddy: What's the most ridiculous thing that's happened to you on tour?

Nate: Our tours are very mundane. Once I saw a guy, uh, look at me funny.

Hanson: One time I farted

without saying, "Excuse me."

Dan: We met a guy on this tour in Montreal who has three hearses and one of them's a hot-rod hearse.

Hanson: Yay!

Maddy: What happened when you went up into the mountains of Chattanooga while on tour a few months ago?

Ben: We went up the mountain to get a view of the city. Somehow, through this twisted chain of events, we were accosted and dragged to this guy Bobby Joe's house. We sat there for awhile. We smoked a bunch of weed with Bobby Joe and a fifty-year-old guy. Bobby Joe's kind of crazy and he was on a bunch of pills. He was really drunk and everyone alluded to the fact that he was totally crazy. The house was filled with guns and after awhile we got kind of wierded out, so the friend that took us up there took us on a tour of the woods. While he was getting us lost in the woods, Bobby Joe and the fifty-year-old guy proceeded to shoot guns in the direction we were in.

Maddy: What do the Modern Machines do when they're confronted with people shooting at

them? **Ben:** We duck!

Hanson: I hold up a mirror and then it bounces off.

Nate: I don't think Chattanooga was adequately explained. In Chattanooga, that's just how the punks





Josh Mayfield (member of the band Queerwülf) will be telling some story and he'll go, "Well, I can't go into Georgia 'cause I'm on parole there. I got a warrant for my arrest, too, because this one time we were in Dalton, you know, D-Town, and uh, I was blacked out so I don't remember this, but I guess there's some law about shooting guns when you're naked in Main Street, because I woke up in jail. They told me what I done, and I was like, "Shit, I did that?"

Hanson: "They asked me for my gun permit, and I said, 'It's called the Second Amendment."

Ben: Apparently, there's some law about discharging your firearm in a city

Maddy: In Chattanooga, are the punks even crazier than in Milwaukee? Nate: Yes.

Ben: Chattanooga beats us in insanity and probably decadence.

Maddy: What's the difference between decadence and insanity?

Nate: Well, you can't spell decadence without dance.

Ben: Decadence is Dionysus, drinking a lot of alcohol.

Maddy: And insanity?

Ben: Insanity is discharging your firearm into a wooded lot.

Nate: If we're looking at famous writers, you can look at Milwaukee as the Lester Bangs. You can look at Chattanooga as the Hunter S. Thompson, and you can look at Tulsa as, I don't know, D.H. Lawrence or some porno writer for *Penthouse*. The person who ghost writes the letters in *Penthouse*, that would be Tulsa.

Maddy: Do you think that you're all gonna still be in bands in ten years?

Hanson: Um, if I have all my limbs.

Dan: I definitely will need some creative outlet. I don't know if it'll be a band. Hopefully, I mean, I love music.

Nate: I'm really just looking for that special woman. Once I meet her, I'm done. [Everyone laughs.] It would be impossible for me not to make music. I write way too many songs. Somebody needs to give me a lobotomy.

Maddy: How many songs have you written that you haven't done anything with?

Nate: Something around thirty right now that are newer than the Modern Machines, and they're all different styles, of course. I'm really proposing that our next album be a double album, gatefold.

Maddy: What's coming up for the Modern Machines?

Hanson: *Taco Blessing*. 12" 45. The best format.

Nate: It's definitely the best recording we've ever done. It's crazier, and yet it still sounds like us. Not to rag on *Thwap!*—I love how that sounds—but we got something on *Taco Blessing* that sounds like we sound live, which, actually, might be a bad thing.

Maddy: Describe what you sound like live. [Someone makes a loud swooshing sound.]

Nate: We sound like that.

Ben: Drunk people with the guitars too loud.

Nate: It's also got better songs on it. I've been trying to write not just I-think-this, I-feel-this, blah, blah, blah songs. I really have been trying to write songs that people can get something out of, like "Ayy Paisano." Songs that you can take and that maybe you can use in day-to-day life. Finally, a song about drinking red wine that isn't called "Red, Red Wine."

Maddy: So are you going to start writing singalong folk songs?

Nate: Basically, yeah. I think a song Dan and me co-wrote for the album called "Tail-lights." It's one of the best things we've ever recorded. It's lyrically along the lines of "Losers of the Year" by Pinhead Gunpowder, or "Surrender" by Cheap Trick. Yeah, figure that one out. I finally got a good, sad bastard song on the album. And then there's "Go for It, Girls," which is like a call to arms

Dan: If you like rockin' punk that's melodic, and maybe it's catchy, and it's smart, and if that's what you like, maybe you'll like *Taco Blessing*.



[Hanson starts scratching at his legs, which are covered with gross red spots.] Hanson's got leprosy.

Maddy: What's going on?

Hanson: That's poison ivy. I got it the first day of tour.

Maddy: How'd you get that?

Hanson: By stepping in it.

Maddy: Finally, the big question. If you could live in any time period, what would it be?

Hanson: The time of the dinosaurs. I would be a pterodactyl.

Dan: There's all sorts of interesting periods of history, but really that's just for the upper classes. Living right now, just being your normal average guy, you have a pretty high standard of living, at least in this country. I like all the luxuries that this life affords me.

Nate: Part of me says that if I could have had upper-class privileges, I would have wanted to live during the Carthage Wars. I would have loved to be a Roman consul or

tribune, and you better believe I'm representin' for the plebes!

Ben: I have this ridiculous affinity for trees and forests so...

Nate: He took acid when he was younger, and I'm not making this up, he had a conversation with a tree that lasted for how long?

Ben: I don't remember. [Everyone laughs.]

Maddy: So, what time period would you pick, Ben?

Ben: Pre-Colombian upper Midwest. I would assume that I would want to live in some sort of Native American civilization. Let's say the 1400s, before Europe had their filthy hands on this continent. There was a really big fire that swept across the Midwest around the year 1000 and awhile after that, the forest was at its absolute peak in regards to emerging white pines, sugar maples. I would have liked to have seen that.

Dan: Plus hunter-gatherer societies often have more leisure time.

Nate: Yes, although not as much as we do.

Dan: No, they would have more than us.

Nate: I only have fifteen hours of non-leisure time a week.

Dan: Okay, we don't count because we don't work!

Nate: Yes, people read *Razorcake* for history lessons on Rome and the primeval forests of North America.

Maddy: Punk rock!

To contact the Modern Machines, write to: 2407 N. Pierce St., Milwaukee, WI 53212, or email: mail@modernmachines.org







Groes

The Wednesday Night Heroes are one of Canada's hardest working street punk acts to come out in the last couple of years. With constant touring and their new album *Superiority Complex* (available from Longshot Music), the Wednesday Night Heroes, hailing from Edmonton, Alberta (Canada's most northern metropolis), have taken it upon themselves to free the masses of any kind of punk stagnation. Drawing influences from bands like GBH and the Ejected to Cock Sparrer and the Clash, the WNH have developed a style of their own that have kept audiences entertained. With their fusion of UK' 82 and old American hardcore, the WNH have managed to translate their Toy Dollish sense of humor in their fun-filled performances. This morning when I awoke, I was pleasantly surprised to find the Heroes' four gently dozing in their makeshift sleeping bags sprawled out in my living room. Accompanied by my new month-old dog, equipped with his plastic satellite dish (from his recent surgery), the fearless four awoke screaming in terror as my dog playfully jumped and licked them. Just in time, I thought, to answer a few questions...

Interview by Bennett Jones-Phillips • Pictures provided by the band

Bennett: Describe your band for those who don't know you **Graeme:** Well, the Wednesday Night Heroes started in '97 doing a style of street punk that incorporated many different styles of punk music from U.K. '82 to some old American hard-

Luke: Liberace.

Graeme: ...to pogo punk. It's punk, but to us, it's all about fun. **Bennett:** What was the most fucked up or weird thing to happen on tour?

Jay: Probably this show in Des Moines. We were supposed to play in this community hall but it got cancelled... well, not cancelled. The people who ran the hall just didn't want a punk show there, so everybody loaded up and went to this kid's house out in the middle of nowhere and we played this basement show and it just got totally out of hand.

Graeme: Kids got weird, man.

Jay: Yeah, there were kids rip-roarin' drunk all over the place by, like, 8:30. They bought us ninety beers, so we got pretty weird as well.

Luke: Yeah, they bought us ninety beers and I ate about ninety hot dogs. Oh yeah, that was another thing that night: we had the fucking daredevil here [points to Jay] eating full hot dogs in the convenience store.

Konrad: Speaking of daredevils, in Kansas City, Luke pulled one of the most daring stunts on

this tour at the crack

stop.

Luke: Oh yeah. I was with these guys from Kansas, a band Tanka Ray, and we were singing Guns N Roses on the way down to the convenience store and when we got in there, I was like, "Oh, my God, I can't believe they've actually got a bottle of Night Train!" I was totally showing off for these dudes, so I went in the cooler and opened a bottle up and started drinking, knowing full well that the guy at the crack stop has a twelve gauge under his counter.

Konrad: The crack stop is in the worst intersection in Kansas City. Two years ago, Graeme was sleeping in the van down the street from it and there was a drive-by right next to it.

Graeme: The Riffs also got their van shot up there.

Konrad: A bullet went right through their van window. It's the worst fucking neighborhood at night. You don't even want to go there and this fucking guy [points at Luke] goes in and swills some Night Train right in front of the guy.

Graeme: Choke slammed it.

Bennett: Did you get away with it?

Luke: Yeah, I did. [laughs]

Graeme: Another cool thing was when we played in Cleveland and one of the guys from Warrant phoned our buddy and asked us to play a couple of covers at his bar. However, prior to the phone call, we played in this little dive somewhere in Cleveland and the kids went fuckin' apeshit. There were tables being broken, beer flying everywhere, fat kids in giant Slayer shirts crashing into the fucking Street Fighter arcade game. We finished playing and began to load up the van when all of a sudden these deranged chicks got up on the bar and were like, "Whooo, Cleveland girls gone wild! Cleveland 2004! Hi Dad!" They were quickly topless and we were like, "Oh, fuck."

Luke: All these little punk girls started going bananas on them. Graeme: They were whipping beer bottles at them and shit, so we were like, "Let's get out of here," and sure enough, one of the guys from Warrant phoned our buddy and asked if "the Canadians" would come down and play a few songs in his bar. So we showed up and they had gear already loaded up.

Konrad: Guest stage or whatever.

Graeme: We went up and played a few covers and it was really fun and sold some merch and stuff. But then afterwards the guy from Warrant had his cover band set up and started playing covers and Jay got up and sang "Down Boys" and "Heaven" and it was fucking hilarious.

Luke: The thing is the cover band was so enthusiastic 'cause Jay was actually belting out the songs with pure passion.

Konrad: It was rock'n'roll karaoke, where you'd pick the song and they'd actually play it and you'd sing along. Jay knew all the lyrics on his own and this other guy was singing Helix or something.

Jay: No, Ratt!

Graeme: Wasn't it "Round and Round"?

Konrad: The guy starts singing this Ratt tune and Jay fucking snatches the lyrics from the guy and yelled, "If you don't know the fuck-

ing words, you don't deserve to fucking be here!" The guy didn't know the words so Jay pushed him off the stage and took

Graeme: I was booing Jay 'cause he was the karaoke bully and didn't look like Meat Loaf.

Bennett: How important are all-ages shows to you?

Graeme: I think all-ages shows for us are pretty much our bread and butter. The all-ages kids know what time it is and they know what it takes to help out bands

know what it takes to help out bands. **Luke:** It's not even just with merch. It has a lot to do with the way the shows go.

Konrad: Attitude.

Luke: The way that kids get in to it. When you've been on tour for a long time, a lot of energy





I even love the kids who eat hundreds of hot dogs before the show and reek like motherfuckers. I love it, but sometimes their breath just Peels your skin right back.



comes from feeding off of the audience. It's that extra boost of energy at the all-ages shows that makes it much more positive and fun.

Konrad: They're more fun, they're more successful, and all around we prefer all ages. When it's licensed, it's fun; however, half the time we can't even afford to drink in the bar so at the show is not really a factor, so it might as well be all ages.

Graeme: At all-ages shows, the kids are much more enthusiastic and I love it when kids freak out up front, jump on the mic, and scream the wrong words. I even love the kids who eat hundreds of hot dogs before the show and reek like motherfuckers. I love it, but sometimes their breath just peels your skin right back.

Konrad: We've played some stinky clubs, too.

Graeme: The one thing you can always rely on about a good punk show is that someone's drank some rancid beer and eaten like forty-five wieners. [laughs]

Luke: Someone stopped at a Flying J's.

Graeme: Sucked back a tacquito.

Luke: Sucked back a few truckers and then made it to the show.

Bennett: What was the best new band you heard about or saw on tour?

Konrad: I liked this one band that we played with in Kansas City. They were a skate band called Alert! Alert! I really liked them. I saw them the day before at this outdoor festival in Lawrence and then we played with them the next day.

Graeme: The Krays were awesome and the N.Y. Rel-x were really fun. **Jay:** We kinda knew them, though.

Konrad: I loved The Escaped. The coolest part about touring with them is I got to watch them every night. I really like that kind of hardcore double vocals thing.

Luke: They're a band I had never heard and when I saw them it was so amazing. They totally blew my mind. It was great to have someone push you every night to equal their energy. It was really cool touring with the Escaped

Konrad: I don't know about new bands. From Jersey, there was this band called Void Control. They were like a Clash-style punk band. They were really good.

Graeme: Live, they kinda reminded me of the Adolescents or the Circle Jerks.

Bennett: What effect does being on the road for long periods of time have on each of you?

Graeme: We've all become a little more degenerate. We piss anywhere now, and if we take a shit against a wall, it's not a big deal.

Luke: Yes. Here's a secret to pissing while driving in the van: never look at your cock.

Konrad: If you look up, you should be all right. Actually, the best way to take a piss on the street is to pull out a cell phone while you're pissing. If you're just standing there, people are like, "Why is this guy just standing there? Oh, he's on his cell phone." Little do they know you have your cock between your fingers and you're pissing on a wall.

Graeme: See, I don't know how that applies when I'm pissing on a kid and talking on a cell phone.

Konrad: And we're all relatively stable guys.

Jay: We've just drank a lot of moose juice. Our fights last, like, two minutes.

Konrad: And they're fun.

Jay: And they're usually about tapes [laughs] or seats in the van or cigarettes.

Bennett: How would you describe a typical WNH fan? What type of kids do you draw?

Graeme: They're usually about seven feet tall, four thousand pounds.

Luke: Nordic gods.

Graeme: They wear Viking helmets and have long braids.

Konrad: I don't know. Fourteen to seventeen years old.

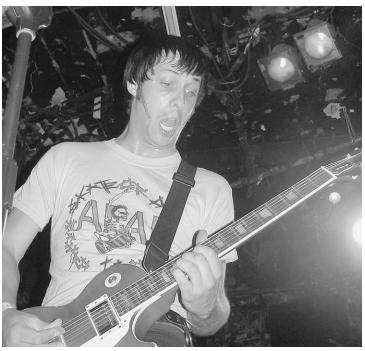


Graeme: I think fourteen to twenty-one or twentytwo, usually. It's a lot of kids that are just getting into music and aren't old enough to know any better. I mean, we do covers of stuff, too. For the kids, we might unsheath a John Tesh ditty, and for the older crowd, we usually get 'em going by playing all of Bat Out of Hell by Meat Loaf [laughs].

Luke: The best thing is that we used to just primarily have lots of dudes at the show, but now it's like I saw this video of us that Bennett shot and it's like...

Graeme: Who's Bennett? [laughs]

RAZORCAKE 75



Luke: ...and it showed all these girls up at the front of the stage. There were guys getting thrown on the stage and there were girls actually picking dudes up. It's good to see that we are losing the whole sausage party theme. I think it makes for much better shows as well.

Bennett: You guys come from the street punk scene but you're not a typical "street punk" band in that I find your lyrics are more positive and urgent. Graeme, you have more of the presence of a hardcore vocalist than a street punk vocalist. Being straight edge and liking a lot of

time. The whole thing for me is about having a good sense of humor but still liking great music.

Bennett: What are the differences between Canadian and American scenes?

Luke: I think the American scenes are a lot more political. There is a lot more division in terms of dealing with Nazis and that kind of thing. I think the Canadian music, in terms of the punk scene or the skinhead scene, is based more around the music and the fashion then it is around politics or crews or anything like that. I'm not being judgmental, but they have a lot more to deal with than the Canadian scene does.

Konrad: It's way more laid back here, and that's one of the consequences. The results of that are that it's less political, there are less crews, less groupings. Gangs are almost unheard of in the Canadian punk scene, whereas in some bigger American cities, it's way more divided, way more intense. It's more potentially intimidating.

Graeme: I think at the same time though, in both countries, there are still fights at shows, you know what I mean? It's just inevitable. If you're going to be going to a show and you hit the wrong guy or something, there's always that kind of bullshit. But the thing about the scene in Canada is that if there is a fight at a show, unless it's a specific city, it usually dies out and that's that. In the States, if there is a fight at a show, there seems to be a lot more carryover, a lot more retaliation. Revenge is really huge in the States, which is just one aspect of their culture and society.

Konrad: A good example would be that movie *The Edge of Quarrel*, the documentary. [laughs]

Luke: One thing you do notice in both Canadian and American scenes is just how much passion the kids and everyone involved has. I mean, the dedication that you have to have to be a punk or a skinhead in America is that much more challenging then it is for us in Canada. They definitely have more obstacles to go through than Albertan rednecks

Bennett: How do you see the current state of street punk?

Luke: I think it's kind of in a low point right now. The scene seems to be going the way of...

I think you can be positive and sober without being a preachy asshole. I think that everyone has the right to do what they want even if it isn't what is expected of you.

straight edge hardcore, how do you find that has influenced you as the front person?

Graeme: I think that there is a weird stigma thing attached to the whole straight edge thing. When I first got into it, it was because it was a way for punks to be sober and stay positive while others chose to do their own thing. I liked the energy that I could draw from seeing sober bands and I thought that it was pretty cool that I could remember all the details from a rad show while others couldn't. I think you can be positive and sober without being a preachy asshole. I think that everyone has the right to do what they want even if it isn't what is expected of you. It was that kind of empowerment that drew me to it but nowadays I see some straight edge bands and they are wearing track pants and Fubu and doing kung fu in the pit with hammers and meat cleavers. For me, straight edge feels very removed from the punk vibe that drew me into it in the first place. So I guess with my lyrics, I just try to mix it up and kinda just make people more aware of their surroundings and to not give a fuck or take themselves so seriously. Just let people have a really good

Graeme: Swedish hardcore stuff.

Luke: Or the Hanoi Rocks kinda style

Konrad: I think last year it was the whole Swedish hardcore stuff, and now it's more for the Hanoi Rocks kind of glamor. I think that's the big thing now in a lot of the bigger cities.

Bennett: Like which bands?

Konrad: There are like a whole bunch of new bands popping up in Portland that consist of ex-members of the Riffs, Exploding Hearts, and a couple other bands and they are all doing really well and everyone is really excited for them and they can't wait for them to release their shit. I think you know those are the kind of bands that are probably going to get big or will be big. There are a lot of people who are into that kind of music now.

Graeme: I just think that when you see kids around nowadays, you don't see brightly spiked up hair or bright bondage pants any more. It's all black and Anti Cimex stuff and Moderat Likvidation, and those are all great bands and I like them too, but it is interesting to see how punk



shifts from trend to trend. That's not a bad thing, just a kind of reinvention.

Bennett: All right, the final game of the Stanley Cup is tomorrow. Are

you supporting Calgary or is the rivalry still in affect? **Luke:** Jay would probably like to throw in his two cents.

Jay: Go, Calgary, go. Keep the cup in Canada.

Luke: As far as I'm concerned, whatever happens, happens

Jay: They lose, they lose.

Graeme: The Oilers didn't make the playoffs so my level of passion for

these playoffs has been

pretty fucked.

like cats and dogs walking in unity.

Luke: But at the same time, they are a small-market Canadian team.

Graeme: They've earned it. They've played like hell.

Konrad: Bring the cup home to Canada.

Luke: But at the same time, fuck Calgary.

Konrad: Yeah.

Graeme: They've been playing their balls off.

Bennett: Is there part of you that has been rooting for them in some

Konrad: We'll never hear the end of it if they get the cup.

Bennett: Will they riot?

Graeme: That would have been last night 'cause that was their last

game at home.

Konrad: As soon as they're done, everyone should take off there jerseys, and fold them up

Graeme: Fair-weather fucks!

Konrad: ...until the next time they make the playoffs. That's pretty

much the way I see it.

Luke: Although, I am for the friends of ours that do support Calgary. Hey, I guess they have had eight years of them not doing jack shit, so good for them for once in their lives, backing a losing horse for a

Bennett: All right, last comments.

Konrad: I need a shower.

www.wnheroes.com



Bennett: You don't have province pride?

Graeme: Hell no.

Luke and Konrad: Fuck no.

Konrad: Oh, yeah, "We're from Alberta, woo

Luke: All I have to say is, how can I go from hating Calgary for the whole regular season to rooting for them? They beat us every time practically.

Graeme: We tied twice.

Luke: We tied once. Now they go into the playoffs and they're achieving this awesome success. Good for them but for me it's just a slap in the face.

Graeme: I think it's fucked up that people in Edmonton are supporting the Flames. That's fucked up because if it was us, I wouldn't give a shit if Calgary had anything to do with us. If we were in the playoffs playing Calgary, we'd be down there throwing molotov cocktails at people. It's just all fucked up,





vight eroe



New from



More dirty music

coming soon from the

dírtíest place on earth

Smut Records POB 47 Colton, Ca 92324 www.smutrecords.com info@smutrecords,com

SMUTER RECORDS The BBQ Kings

"Swimming Pools, Movie Stars"

13 song CD \$8ppd produced by Bob Venum from The Bell Rays

"Demented and trashy rockabilly from Riverside, Ca. This duo bring you music that is more suited for the deep south than Southern California, and the great song writing will keep the tunes humming in your head"

www.rivercide.com

Also Available

Johnny Cheapo "Rock N Roll Sinner"

10 Song CD \$8ppd
"Perverse and Catchy Punk Rock N Roll from this
great, punk hope from San Bernardino
www.johnnycheapo.com



Please note: Full album art is required for review. Pre releases go into the trash.

ACTION: Self-titled: CD

Average punk that reminded me of Final Conflict meets the Battalion of Saints. These guys from Toronto. Canada seem more in tune with fans of the Casualties, Total Chaos, or the Unseen than the original UK bands that they emulate. -Donofthedead (Punk Core)

ALBATROSS, AN: Eat Lightning, Shit Thunder: CD

So an albatross and a locust were sitting somewhere plastic, yelling loony sex words at each other and then flying loopy and fast all over each other, above the plastic thing. I was standing over by the soda machine, and I could barely tell the difference. –Cuss Baxter (Bloodlink)

ALLEGED GUNMEN: Return to Zero: LP

I have the same problems with this full length that I did with the 7". It's a little worse, actually. Instead of sounding like outtakes to the Clash's London Calling, Return to Zero sounds more like out-takes to a mix between Combat Rock and Big Audio Dynamite. Hey, I like the Clash. That's why I already own their records and don't need to hear more stuff that seems to be merely picking the crud out of the Clash's fingernals. The vocalist sounds creepily close to Mick Jones. Let's be specific. What they do, on occasion, isn't an homage, but a direct chord-for-chord rip-off from the Clash. The band even does the "koo koo koo" vocal thingie. Add some reverb and delay and in almost every song, mention guns or the old west, and you've got Return to Zero. It's incrediby derivative, and this time they're not poaching the A-material of a great band. The two instrumentals are pretty, though. The cover art—stencils of a man getting shot-is top notch, too. Summation: its chances of going up on a wall instead of the turntable are about a hundred to one. -Todd (Kapow)

ALTARBOYS. THE:

Volume 1: 2-song CDEP demo Straight-ahead, Confederacy of Scumesque (if they're not members, they should be) punk rock. "Serenity Now" is a little too repetitive in chanting a bit of AA-speak, but "Dead @ 20" buzzes along quite effectively. In a better world, this'd come inside most twelve packs of beer. The Cliff's Notes gist of it is that Lemmy would approve. -Todd (www.thealtarboys.com)

AMPLIFIED HEART: In for Sin: CD

I wanna lump them in with the trash rock crowd, but the Texas blues swagger that literally drips off this band keeps me from doing so. Think of your favorite bar rock heroes getting Lemmy to contribute some vocals to their Lightnin' Hopkins tribute and you wouldn't be too far off the mark. Not bad at all. -Jimmy Alvarado (Arclight)



Inoffensive! -Maddy

APOCALYPSE WOW: Self-titled: CD

I can hear a little Dillinger Four in there somewhere, and I really liked the running gag of what sounds like samples from "Atomic Café" interspersed throughout the album, but ultimately this really didn't do much for me.

–Jimmy Alvarado (No Label)

ASTROGLIDES, THE: Channel Surfing with the Astroglides: CD

Joe Meek-styled instrumental music inspired in large part by Israeli television, which i can only assume entitles this record to its own genre name and section at record stores. What do you section at record stores, what do you think they should change their name to, though: "Glides... or Astroglides?" or "Mensch... or Astromensch?" BEST SONG: "The Man with the Golden Reverb" BEST SONG TITLE: "Crusin" Down Menahem Begin Blvd" FAN-TASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The cover art features three television sets, three images of Saturn, and a topless cheerleader-which, quite frankly, should be prerequisite ingredients for all album cover art from this day forward. -Rev. Nørb (Fast Music)

ASUNDER: A Clarion Call: CD

Three tracks is all you get here. I'm not even counting the bonus track that clocks in at close to twelve minutes. Purely slow, at a snail's pace, metal sludge that is painful for this hyperactive person to take. The vocals sound like a Buddhist monk's chant. If this is your thing, here are the positives. The distorted bass sounds strong and forceful. The drums bang with intensity but is at a tempo that only a person who has tried qualudes could appreciate. The guitar is downtuned to enforce this bottom end experience. The bonus track is just the bass guitar droning like the amplifier is turned up to maximum level and the guitar is placed right in front of

it. If you love hearing Black Sabbath on the turntable while you are dragging your finger across the record to slow it down, this will make you one giddy metal freak. –Donofthedead (Life Is Abuse)

BASEBALL FURIES, THE: Let It Be: CD

Finally! After waiting and waiting, the second Baseball Furies album is available to the public. Their first LP, Greater Than Ever, is one of the best punk rock albums of the past decade (making it, by extension, one of the best albums of the past decade, period) and if you don't have it, then you, sir, are missing out on a band that sounds like they're going to crash through the wall at any moment. With this new album, there's been a shift. It's a little darker, with fewer blatant pop hooks but with a more rounded-out catchiness. The breakneck pace of the first album has been slowed, and it sounds a little less spiteful. The vocals are less slurred. I'm sure that description makes this sound like a letdown, but it isn't. You see, they do this thing, I think it's called taking risks instead of treading over the same ground, which is something that most punk bands don't do, especially bands that play this kind of trashy garage rock. They still sound distinctly like the Baseball Furies but it's an expansion on that sound. It's a great album by a great band, a band that could never be accused of making the same record over and over again. –Josh (Big Neck)

BIG IN JAPAN: Who Really Needs a Heart Anyway?: CD Total pop, produced by famed pop punk

sounds-man Mass Giorgini. Super clean production, super clean vocals, super clean lyrics (with the exception of one suicide-themed tune)... I could play this for my mom! (And, in this case, that's a bad thing.) If this were a cereal, it'd be corn flakes. Inoffensive! -Maddy (Insubordination)

BILLION STARS: Pleads the Fifth: CD

You know what this band needs? More cowbells! LA-based glam rock band with a unique but addictive sound. Lots of surprises around every corner. This doesn't sound much like anything else you've probably ever heard. -JasonK (Energyincorporated)

BLOOD SOAKED HANDS:

Churchfolk and Sinners: CD
Pretty decent punk rock from San
Clemente, California! The singer is
clearly influenced by Exene Cervenka (singer for X, dudes!), and this whole CD has a sorta Avengers/X/LA feel, mixed with the tiniest bit of crusty punk. It could be a lot more catchy, for my tastes, but if they rock live, they'd win me over. If this were a cereal, it'd be Raisin Bran. The bran is your standard punk rock and the raisins are the crust punk! I am really dumb. –Maddy (Volume Disk)

BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS:

Complete: CD Crusty hardcore sportin' a very heavy Euro/Scandi influence. Both the metal and Discharge influences are kept in check. Not bad. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.hardcoreholocaust.com)

BLOWBACK: Lies: CD

Political punk/hardcore that seems to have its heart in the right place, even if the music ain't all that interesting. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.blowback.org)

BLOWN CASKET: Self-titled: CDEP

It's not always easy for rockabilly bands to make a name for themselves, especially if they're prone to aping the tried-and-true formula of the zillion other similar bands that went before them. So here's a word of advice—when in doubt, keep all your songs brief, preferably under two minutes. Lyrically, there's not a whole lot that distinguishes Blown Casket from other quasi-roots rockers. Their eight-minute debut treads the usual ground (Mama-tried-but-1'ma-hellbound-rebel-whose-cheatin'-girlfriend-is-gonna-pay-as-soon-as-I-fin-ish-this-drag-race) but their selfimposed brevity keeps things moving along at a good pace. It's a damn nice piece of work that bodes well as long as they don't stretch things out too much. Did I mention this was burned on someone's computer? It makes for a pretty ugly addition to your CD collection.

–Eric Rife (Self-released)

BODIES, THE: Addicted to You: CD

It seems appropriate to mention, while reviewing a recording by a band called "The Bodies," just how much the act of reviewing music is like conducting an autopsy—an autopsy on something that's not dead yet. As the philosopher Christmas Humphrey once said (and I'm going purely on memory here, so I'm paraphrasing) "once something has been successfully defined, it has been successfully killed." That being the saccessfully kinds. That being the case, I'm going to gallantly serve up a review of this re-packaging of the Bodies' first record (plus bonus tracks) which will be rife with utterly inade-quate descriptions of the music contained therein. All so you—the punk music epicureans—can enjoy the lively melodic pop punk sounds of this record-ing without the unsightly scar tissue of my having poked and prodded around getting in the way. So here goes: edgy, fun, neurotic, happy music played with guitars to a punk rock beat. There. Now forget I said any of that and go buy the disc. –Aphid Peewit (Radio)

BREATHER RESIST: Charmer: CD

Tough hardcore from the bluegrass state that will leave your head spinning. I felt like I was in the fucking boat with Willy Wonka on an out-of-control tour of the Jack Daniel's distillery when I heard this great new release on a label willing to take some chances. Everything from allout hardcore to grunge-influenced head-bang sessions. A much different take on the same old shit. -JasonK (Jade Tree)

BROADZILLA: Lady Luck: CD

So many wonderful sounds have emanated from the Motor City—the MC5, Parliament/Funkadelic, the Dirthombs, the Von Bondies and oh yes, the 455 SD, the 1971 king of muscle cars immortalized in song by Radio Birdman. The latest Detroit export, Broadzilla, doesn't quite follow in the same tradition as any of the aforementioned, but instead looks to the vamped attitude of the tough-as-nails girl groups. No disrespect intended, but it's hard to escape the feeling that this is a band better experienced live than on disc. Guitarist/vocalist Rachel May, bassist Kim Essiambre, and drummer Angie Manly cut impressive figures in their matching, low-cut, patent leather outfits. The music isn't a far cry from the over-the-top earnestness of L7, the Lunachicks and more recently, the Gore Gore Girls. Songs like "On the Run," "Diamond Sex Goddess" and "Stargazer" recalls the youthful, "are-they-or-aren't-they-really-hot-lesbians?" appeal of the band that started it all, the Runaways. Although wildly popular on their home turf, a little bit of Broadzilla goes a long way everywhere else. -Eric Rife (Diamond Star)

CAREER SUICIDE: Anthology of Releases: 2001-2003: CD

For your approval, a forty-four song Exhibit A in the Refutation That All Good Hardcore Ended Pre-1989. This one little, shiny almost-sixty minute blast furnace of hardcore glory makes Steve Blush, author of *American Hardcore*, even more of a dope, revisionist, and liar. In blind listening tests, these Torontonians stand on the shoulder of giants—along with Amdi Petersen's Armé, Black Flag, DS-13, Negative Approach, and Minor Threat. A good chunk of their recorded output is here: demo cassettes, 7"s, and LP, with a handy little timeline that threads the booklet together. Irrepressible energy, melodies that seem to be played on the tips of discharged bullets, jaws-of-life power that keeps them away from being consumed in wreckage of rear-ending their idols as they speed on by, and hit after hit of uncompromising, blood- and fist-pumping music. To be sure, Career Suicide is one of the top ten no-modifierneeded hardcore bands on the planet right now. Wow. –Todd (Deranged / Kangaroo)

CATALYST, THE: A Hospital Visit: CD

It's that good hair hardcore that gave white belts their claim to fame. But now it's the same old thing. The choruses pre-dictably chant before the piercing screams bring the noise. The first song wants to "shake shit up in this ghost town" and it's catchy. It even has a bitchin' song title called "Just Like the Last Scene in Karate Kid." However, the first song is by far the best and the rest of this album falls flat on its ass. –Gabe Rock (McCarthyism)

CAUSTIC CHRIST: Government Job: 7

What I wasn't expecting was such clear enunciation by the lead singer, Generic Christ. You can actually understand everything he says. Elocution's a pretty much forgotten element in hardcore and thrash. (Which is weird because most of these bands tend to have "a message These Pittsburghians got reassembled from the pieces of Aus Rotten and the Pist, if I'm not mistaken. Imagine super early Corrosion of Conformity (highly political, pretty well informed and wellintentioned, if a little blunt) mixed in with lots-of-studs-in-jacket Swedish thrash along the lines of Skitsystem (especially the galloping drums and bass kegcharge) and mix in that take-it-asfast-as-you-can-but-don't-lose-themelody talent of Vitamin X, and you're on the right path. While I'm not completely agog, they're definitely tight, teeth baring, and leave a nice bruise mark. One question: is that an otter being hung on the ceiling fan on the cover? Looks like it. –Todd (Havoc)

CHINA WHITE: Addiction.2: CD

A reissue of this band's second album, originally released in the late '90s when they were in "reunion" mode. Despite a nearly twenty year gap in recordings, they managed to maintain the song quality between records, with the re-recordings of songs from the first record kept to a minimum, and Frank's guitar playing still managing to raise a few eyebrows. Also included are some unreleased tracks and a set from one of their more recent live performances. –Jimmy Alvarado (Malt Soda)

CHRONICS: Suggested for Mature Audiences: LP

Jpon initial contact, i was a bit bewildered as to whether it's Punk "Chronic" as in "Chronic Disorder" and "Chronor if it's more at stoner "Chronic" like "Bluntman & Chronic." After moderate inspection, the jury's still out on that. Adding to the enormity of the enigma, had you placed this record upon my turntable without allowing me sufficient time to peruse the liner notes, then gave me three guesses to nail the band's point of origin, even if you spotted me the fact that they're not from the US, i'd guess 1. Australia ('cause they remind of Radio Birdman [rhythm section, song structure] and the Saints a bit [leads, general atmosphere, they even do a song called "Wild About Me" which appears to be at least partially derived from "Wild About which the Saints covered on their first album]) followed by 2. New Zealand ('cause it's close to #1 and they also remind me a little bit of the Lime Spiders), and 3. Quebec ('cause they remind me a bit of Smash Up Derby and also 'cause i'd be grasping at straws at that point in time), and, as the Fastbacks once said, i would be WRONG WRONG WRONG. They actually hail from Bologna, Italy. Huh. I don't even think that woulda been in my top ten guesses (but, then again, i think i only know the names of like ten different countries, so who knows? Even a blind chicken gets a kernel of corn if he keeps peckin' long enough). Not a bad Rock Album at all;



- 4. Briefs/Shocks, split (Dirty Faces) 5. Real Losers, Don't Leave Me Now (Bancroft)
- 6. Feelers, Fuhrer's New Miniskirt (Death By Noise)
- 7. Knaughty Knights, I Love It to Death (GSL)
 - 8. Black Jetts, All Sexed Up (BJM)
- 9. Dropkick Murphys/Oxymoron, split (Knockout)
 - 10. Brainbombs, Grinder (Ken Rock)

the pointless cover of "TV Eye" gets neutralized by a pointful cover of "Mama, Keep Your Big Mouth Shut." Surely the regaining of the papacy is imminent for our boot-shaped European pals! BEST SONG: "Get Out of My Way" BEST SONG TITLE: "Wild About Me" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: I believe that "Wild About You" was originally performed by the Missing Links, though i seem to recall seeing it credited to a band called "The Unknowns" once, which would make sense, seeing as how the songwriting credit on (I'm) Stranded is attributed to "Unknown"which might be a stage name if you think about it (which i'm sure you are, deeply). -Rev. Nørb (Demolition Derby)

CINCH, THE: Shake If You Got It: CD

This record got panned last issue, so I want to drop in my two cents worth. First off, let me say that I have a great deal of respect for the Razorcake reviewers, particularly the two who reviewed this record. Still, I respectfully disagree. It's true that The Cinch are indie rockers. They're probably the favorite band of some skinny, effeminite, lonely guy who wears ironic thrift store t-shirts and works at the college radio station and wonders why no one loves music the way he does. And there are hints of Brit Pop. And it's nothing like what you've come to love about Dirtnap Records. I can understand why someone would pop this into the CD player and expect the wild Epoxies/Minds/Ends punk rock that Dirtnap is known for, and be bummed to find that they're listening to indie rock. I had that experience myself. On repeated listens—and, believe me, The Cinch are getting repeated listens—you get over that initial reaction and come to love this. Imagine an amped-up Holly Golightly or a more straightforward Sleater-Kinney and you're somewhere in the ballpark of The Cinch. Tight melodies, full guitars, and haunt-ing vocals. It's not what I normally listen to, but I'm listening to it normally, and I really dig it. –Sean (Dirtnap)

CRITICS, THE: No Salvátion: CD

I guess this is Australia's answer to Coheed and Cambria. Good or bad? If you are a fan of my reference, good. If you are like me, and think this is badit's like having itching powder on your butthole and you can't take it. butthole and you can't take it.

-Donofthedead (MGM)

CUT SHALLOW: Watch It Cave In: CD

They put it out there, so I'll tell you now: this band is religious. No matter to me, because I enjoyed damn near every song on this great first release by this SoCal trio. I happen to be a huge fan of All, so I could hear the similarity immediately—but the sound on this EP was all their own. Open your ears to this band. –JasonK (Basement)

DAYGLO ABORTIONS: Holy Shiite: CD

At the age of fourteen I discovered a band that embodied all that I thought was punk. Their Feed Us a Fetus record taught me that it's good to be pissed off but you better be having fun too. I've been caught screaming along to "Aargh, Fuck, Kill," "Proud to Be Canadian," or "Kill the RAZORCAKE 82 Hosers" more times

than I care to remember. I've always felt that they've never been able to reclaim the feeling of those first two records. I had almost lost hope that the boys might have another classic in them. That said, I feel that this is the record that the Dayglo Abortions have been striving to make. After decades of trying to successfully bond their love of punk and metal, they've finally found the right mix and it's called Holy Shiite. DGA is one of those bands that everyone knows. If you haven't heard them, you've heard of them. If you live in Canada, chances are that you've seen them play dozens of times. Always guaranteed to shock and horrify. For those who truly don't know, think The Mentors or The Meatmen drinking stronger beer. The record has every-thing you need to enjoy DGA. First, you have songs about stuff that pisses them off ("America Eats Her Young," them off ("America Eats Her Young," "Scientology"), and then you have songs about stuff that they like ("Let's Get Drunk," "Surfer Gir'). You also get songs to make you laugh ("Christina Bin Laden," "Release the Hostages") and songs that just plain rock ("How Low Will You Go?" "PUNK SONG"). They also end the CD with their credo, "Fuck the Word (If They Can't Take a Joke)." It's the music that makes this one though music that makes this one, though. From breakneck speed to heavy, Sabbath-esque dirges, the band is tight. The duelling of Cretin's unmistakably blown-out voice (he is Canada's Lemmy) and Gymbo's beefy vocals really works. Jesus Bonehead and Willy Jak are a solid back line. Love or hate them, they deserve credit for spending the last twenty-five plus years flying the flag of Canadian punk and hardcore. This record has them poised to contaminate yet another generation. I think I'll go give a copy of this to my fourteen-year-old cousin. Stranglehold (www.godrecords.com)

DEAD KENNEDYS: Live at the Deaf Club: CD

Long before their nasty lawsuits and counter suits, the Dead Kennedys were once hailed as the closest thing the US ever had to the Sex Pistols, another band who at the end of the day was embroiled in one legal mess after another. Caustic political humor, an enigmatic frontman, and the ability to polarize audiences everywhere earned them a reputation as the flagship band of the West Coast. While they were never deemed to be a threat to the social fabric the way the Pistols were, the DKs decidedly kept themselves at arm's length from some of the more meathead elements of punk rock. Listening to Live at the Deaf Club one is immediately impressed with the quality of the production, a rarity in live recordings of the time, let alone one taken from a 1979 punk show. The other thing that is striking is how musically competent the band was, standing in stark contrast to punk's shortcomings, both real and perceived. At turns, Jello Biafra's strained, otherworldly snarl is reminiscent of Lux Interior's cartoonish caterwauling but more often than not is the sound of unadulterated and pointed rage. Interesting highlights include "Back in Rhodesia," an early version of what would be re-written into "When You Get Drafted" and the previously unreleased "Gaslight." Fans of the band's b-sides will especially like hearing live versions of "Man with the Dogs," "Police Truck," and "Have I the Right." –Eric Rife (Manifesto)

DEK: Boner: CD

They look like Born Innocent-era Red Cross, they read like Shonen Knife, and they sound like an old punk band covering a new punk band. Dunno if I would recommend 'em, per se, but they were entertaining. –Jimmy Alvarado (Finger)

DENNIS MOST AND AUDIOLOVE: Live at the El Cid, December 1976: CD

A live set from a proto-punk band who, if they weren't from Detroit, should've been. KBD geeks will be all over this like ugly on a gorilla. –Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Trip)

DENNIS MOST AND THE INSTIGATORS: Vampire City: CD

Ladies and gentlemen, look no further, the missing link between Dee Dee Ramone and Johnny Thunders has been found. –Jimmy Alvarado (Trash 2001)

DEREK LYN PLASTIC:

Invisible Skin: 7" EP
This rules! A one-man punk rock explosion outta Atlanta! Kinda sounds like old Pelado records stuff, in the best way possible. Totally catchy, jump and up down '77 influenced punk rock! Records like these make me seriously question my current practice of only listening to the Marked Men! There is more music out there! And it rocks! I've already listened to this six times today! If this were a cereal, it'd be Fruit Loops. Hyper goodness! I love this record! Where's the full-length, please? -Maddy (self-released)

DEVILHEADS, THE: Never Lucky: CD

In the interests of full disclosure, I have to fess up-the Devilheads sent me a pretty cool t-shirt along with their album. If some band thinks they're going to influence my underpaid ass with some crappy shirt, well, I've got four large bins of concert shirts gather-ing dust in the attic, so forget that! But It think I'm going to wear this one until it turns gray like the others. The Devilheads, hailing from South Lake Tahoe, are one of the hottest threepiece psychobilly bands to come across my desk in a long time. To be completely fair, Never Lucky is hardly innovative. There are songs aplenty about drinkin', drivin', kissin', pinchin' and squeezin'. The album starts off with "Find a Way Home" which sounds like a b-side from the Reverend. And yeah, at their most polished moments, they have a tendency to sound a lot like the Stray Cats ("Gonna Be a Fight," "So Far Away"). But then there's tracks like "I Like You Better Drunk" which dispenses with the romance and kicks the album into high gear. Too bad they left that song to the very end. –Eric Rife (Self- released)

DIGITAL LEATHER: Mork Technology: CD

In the vast expanse of the Arizona desert, gila monsters bask in the blistering heat and lick their forked tongues along to electronic blips coming out of the shotgun shack of Digital Leather's practice space. Okay, so Phoenix isn't in the middle of nowhere like Yuma but still I can romanticize it for your reading pleasure, can't I? Digital Leather's mixture of '80s Euro dance with minimalism and somewhat jagged pop sensibilities is a welcoming fresh breeze in an otherwise soggy, gross state of current ho-hum recordings being put out by meagerly talented drones who follow the formula of the MC5 plus the Hives plus obscure powerpop band reference plus Exploding Hearts equals SUCCESS! Yeah, right. I strongly caution that this recording does not follow any rules. The capri-cious dance beats, the ominous bass lines, the distorted and otherwise emotionally distant/empty vocals and the wall of cleverly mixed synth/keyboards (he plays a Korg) paint a landscape of deserts, UFOs, goosh, running from attackers, cocaine and sleep deprivation-induced hallucinations of women having sex in the other room, and a myriad of other paranoias that plague the teen-angsted within us all. This project features Ryan and Matt Wong, Jay Reatard, and some other luminaries from the underbelly of the garage rock world. Thumbs up, punker dude. –Miss Namella J. Kim (Fatal Seduction, email mwong55@earthlink.net)

DIVEBOMB HONEY, THE: Beat, Beat, Beat: Demo CD-R A four-track, made-at-home new wave

duo that's much better that it sounds on paper (much like Altanta's great one man new wave band, Derek Lyn Plastic) because for all the keyboards, stripes, goofy sunglasses, and good singing, they haven't neglected the card often missing from the deck: songwriting. Catchy stuff that would fit right at home on the Valley Girl soundtrack. It's a little bit sparser than the Minds, not quite as tumbling as the Epoxies, but a damn fine debut that a savvy record company (along the lines of Alien Snatch or Screaming Apple) would do well to put out. –Todd (The Divebomb Honey)

DOA: Live Free or Die: CD

Jeez, Joey, what are you trying to do to us? Here you take some of the best DOA tracks to come out in decades, songs we were praying would one day come, get our hopes up high, and then bury them amongst a barrage of ska tunes? HORNS?!? That's just plain cruel and unusual punishment, sir, and there are laws against that. You could've ditched all but one or two of the ska songs (if you really felt the need to include something with a Caribbean beat on here) and had one corker of a record, man. For those interested in procuring a copy of this, here's my suggestion: set your player to play pret-ty much all the odd tracks and you've got a record that would fit nicely between War on 45 and Let's Wreck the Party. Take it as a whole, you're gonna understand what the phrase "the ecstasy and the agony" truly means. I guess it was no coincidence they nicked the riff for the song "39 Lashes" from Jesus Christ Superstar for one of the tunes here. –Jimmy Alvarado (Sudden Death)

DOLLARSTORE COWBOYS: And the Horse They Rode in on: CD

William Randolph Hearst once declared that a cover photo of a child, a dog, or a pretty girl was all he needed to sell newspapers. The Dollarstore Cowboys take this lesson to heart, slappin' on their CD cover a young cowpoke vixen with her shorts zipped down just a inch shy of her snatch. Yeehaw! Although they unintentionally cribbed the album title from Soul Asylum, And the Horse They Rode in

on is a rockin' debut complete with the usual cowpunk accruements; the Tacoma, Washington band proudly boasts of their white trash (damn, this scene is in need of some new buzz-words) heritage, greasy hair, and allegiance to all things trashy and dumb. To their credit, they have their Eddie Cochran cum Stray Cats licks down pat ("How Long You Wanna Live Anyway?) and dutifully pay homage to the Man in Black ("Folsom Prison Blues"). Original tracks like "Off the Wagon" are reminiscent of the Supersuckers at their honky tonk best while "Bowling Alley Blitz" sounds like Zeke at half the speed. -Eric Rife (Infect)

DOUG GILLARD: Salamander: CD

Gloomy pop from a former Guided by Voices member. When he is at his best, he channels the essence of McCartney and the boys at their jangliest, and when he's at his worst, he just cranks out some swell gloomy pop. While I would've liked some more oomph in the guitars in some spots just to make sure I was still paying attention, I gotta say, the brother can squeeze every last drop from a hook. –Jimmy Alvarado (Pink Frost)

DROWNINGMAN: Learn to Let It Go: CD

Okay, here is an open call to all of you to have an open debate. The topic is emo and why I should like it. All of you that are fans, please show me your wisdom and ignite the candle of interest in me. Second topic is why this band does not have emo tendencies. I hear it in the music. Tell me why I shouldn't think this as an emo sub-genre. To pick one side, I hear an H2O meets Bouncing Souls thing going. But on the other side of the debate there is that tuneless drone that I hear in emo releases that is unmistakable to these ears. Also, the pictures of tulips on the cover does not strike me as a punk rock subject to use in photography. So here it is. I am calling all you fools out to try and sway. Look in the magazine or website and find my contact information. Write me and tell me your position. I will respond.

-Donofthedead (Law of Inertia)

DUCHESS OF SAIGON: Hootenanny: 7'

Moving away from their earlier and wholly uninspiring White Stripes clone job, this boy/girl duo is now adding enough wacky postproduction elements to the mix (i.e. multi-part surfy vocal harmony overdubs and such) that i think they might have started sounding more like a cross between Harper's Bizarre and really early Meat Puppets—which, counterintuitively, seems to indicate that they're "on the right track." Be that as it may, the phrase "two-piece band" is beginning to invoke the same level of sheer terror in me that was previously reserved for the phrases "mature amateur" and "isn't that an earwig?" BEST SONG: "Painted Right" BEST SONG TITLE: "Hootenanny"—shit, that would even make a good album title.

FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA
FACT: One founding member of
Harper's Bizarre was Ted Templeman who would later go on to produce all those Van Halen albums for Warner BrothersTM. Whoopie ding! –Rev. Nørb (Plastic Idol)

DWARVES, THE:

...Must Die: CD
This is the record that proves that the Dwarves are truly a renaissance band.

While best known as the porno/horror show that kicks you in the nuts and bolts out the door in less than twenty minutes, people often forget the genius and talent involved. On this latest offering, Blag and company give us plenty of the punk rock adrenaline speedball that we have all come to expect, but there's something else. We wind up with some surf, industrial, sugar pop and even some hiphop(?!), all played well (although the jury is still out on Blag's rapping). While ... Must Die is kind of disjointed, every song stands on its own. They prove that they're more than a one trick pony. They're a band that has depth and diversity. Did I mention the Space Ghost cameo and the crucified midget? Ty Stranglehold (Sympathy For The Record Industry)

ENDS, THE:

Concrete Disappointment: LP

Spark. That's what sets these guys apart from other bands trying to replicate the poppy side of '77 punk. There's blood running through these songs and you can't fake that, though literally thousands of bands have tried. What they're doing isn't necessarily new or groundbreaking, but they bounce and pogo all over the place and they force the listener to do the same. You don't even have to wear striped shirts or white sunglasses to enjoy it. All you have to do is wait for those razor-sharp guitar hooks to slash its way into your brain (trust me, they will) and then you're done for. I'm actually amazed that they're not more popular. This is fantastic. –Josh (Dirtnap)

EXPLODING FUCK DOLLS:

Crack the Safe: CD
If someone had told me twenty years ago that the next millennium would see flood of bands who took the Clash, Stiff Little Fingers, and Social Distortion as their chief influences, I would have been elated. The Exploding Fuck Dolls have a great sound... almost too good. This is a band that toured as Deniz Tek's backing group, eventually gave birth to U.S. Bombs, and featured a lead singer whose voice is such a dead ringer for Joe Strummer's, the band should have been sued. And to think that when they started out in 1991, they looked like an unholy alliance between the Misfits and L.A. Guns. Crack the Safe is a collection of the band's first seven years of action and is essential listening, especially for any less-thanfully-informed Rancid fan. Reading the liner notes is a bit disconcerting, considering the band's intolerance for anything other than classic punk (the grunge scene irked them no end as is evidenced by the anti-Seattle screed "No Company Town"). Still, it pays to be focused, and on songs like "Satellite" (not the Pistols b-side), the anthem "American Bomb" and "Cheap Suits," the band delivers the goods with relish. Like Sham 69, the Exploding Fuck Dolls probably inadvertently inspired a lot of knuckleheads, but whose fault is that? Crack the Safe is an excellent sampling of an excellent group, albeit one whose vision was often myopic and whose boots were caked in the mud of the past. –Eric Rife (Disaster)

FABULOUS DISASTER: I'm a Mess: CDEP

When bands have line-up changes, they have a harder time proving their worth to longtime fans. Well, Fab-D lost singer Laura Litter and bassist Mr. Nancy. I'm not sure if the new bassist/lead vocalist Lynda Mess is in fact old guitarist Lynda Mandolyn. The only remaining member from the Fat Wreck/Pink & Black period is Sally Gess on drums who now goes by the title of Sally Disaster. Cinder Block from Tilt fame was supposed to be the new singer but they parted ways prior to this recording. So in this new incarnation, they seem, to me, to have taken a few steps back in their song writing. They play a more remedial punk styling than what was originally released on their last two full lengths. The song "Dead End" has parts that reminded me of Elastica. The cover of Joe Jackson's "Got the Time" was pretty good but I still like Anthrax's cover better. I think the band has a lot to recover from because they set the bar high when they wrote "Red Blister" off the *Put Out or Get Out* CD. That is still one of my all-time favorite songs. -Donofthedead (Rodent Popsicle)

FAST MATTRESS: Self-titled: CD

Oh man, you gotta hear this song "Daddy Has a Mullet!" It's about this girl, right—and she's, she's embarrassed to be seen in public with her father, 'cause he's got a mullet! A mullet! A mullet is like a really uncool hair-cut—and her dad's got one! Aw, man, you get it? You don't get it? Crap. I didn't tell it right. This one's on me. Let me start over. This girl's dad, right? He's got a *really lame* haircut. *A mullet!* And she has to like, you know, go places with him, and be seen with himhis mullet! So she's embarrassed and she wants him to cut it off! Man that's great. Brings a tear to my eye. Really great stuff. Hey, where ya goin'? I didn't even explain the song "He's a even explain the song "He's a Heterosexual" to ya yet!!! Oh well... if George Lucas ever decides to fuck up the Hell Comes to Your House compilation LP, i'd be cool with him sticking any two of these songs on the second side—however, i think Fast Mattress must only be a twin size, as three is pretty much a crowd here. BEST SONG: "Hot Boyfriend" BEST SONG TITLE: "Inappropriate Itch" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: thanks the city of Cleveland, BudweiserTM beer, and all those who serve it to him ice cold and promptly. –Rev. Nørb

FIVE KNUCKLE: Balance: CD

Political hardcore from England. They scream about flags in anger. The lyrics aren't bad but something about this band is annoying. The funky guitar riffs twang out right before the vocals come in every now and then. And the moaning singer reminds me of being constipated. I'm sure they try really hard. In fact, they probably try too hard and they should stop. –Gabe Rock (Household Name)

FLESHIES: Gung Ho!: CD

Fleshies rule. Who else could seamlessly pull together the seemingly incongruous elements of arena-worthy hard rock, chin-scratching weirdness, and bum-inthe-alley punk rock like it's the most natural thing in the world? Who else could take a possible musical trainwreck and plug it directly into the pleasure center of my brain? This is a collection of old singles and out of print stuff, and it really shows how they've grown as a band. The earliest stuff is more formative, like a noisier version of old Turbonegro stuff, with hints of what they would become but not fully warped yet. As the CD progresses, so does the band, and songs like "Gonna Have to Pass" and "My Buddy" just plain rip. All told, people like me who already converted to The Church of Fleshies will love this. If you're unfamiliar with this punk rock wrecking ball and would like to hear the musical equivalent of a mutant donkey sticking its dick in your ear (but in a really good way, I promise) check out The Sicilian first. This also has the drunkest live song that I have ever heard. -Josh (Life Is Abuse)

FLOGGING MOLLY: Within a Mile of Home: CD

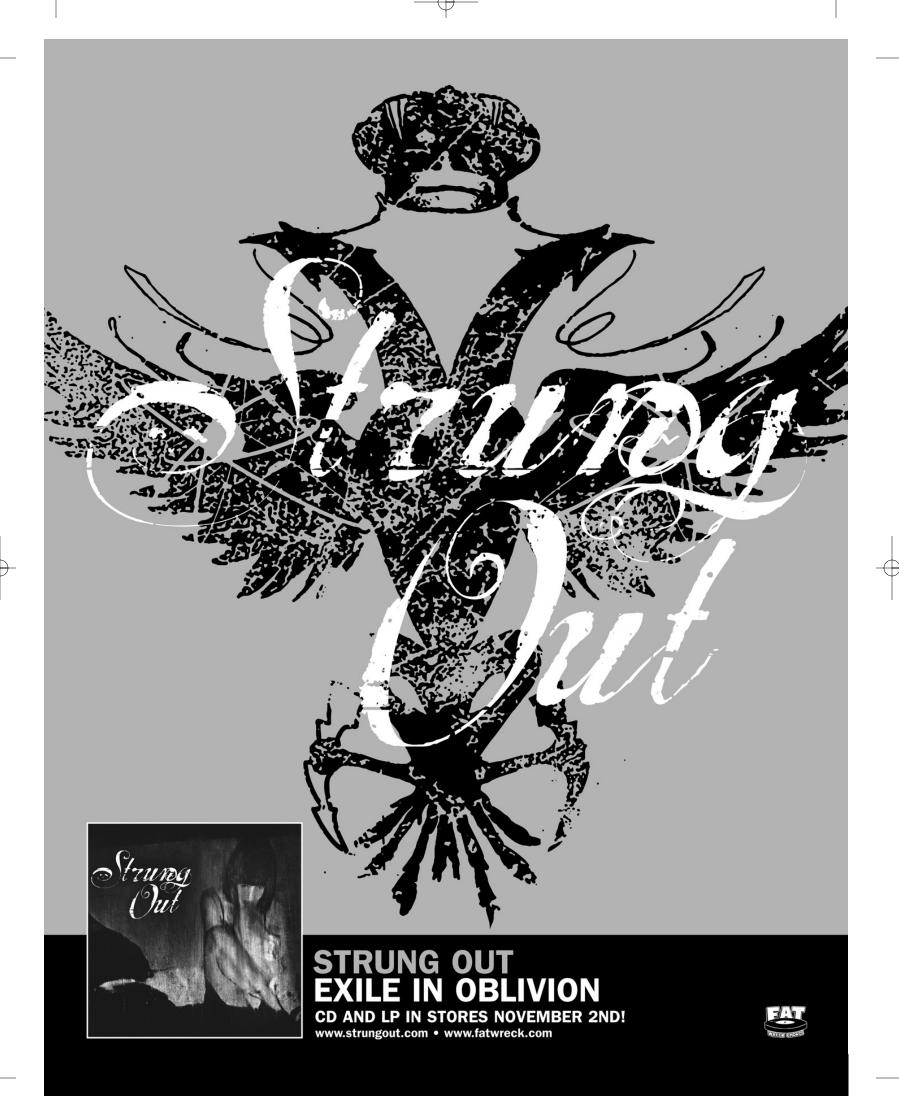
I have to admit that my excitement for this band has lessened. I listen to this and it feels comfortable and sometimes predictable. But at the same time, I am not captivated. The CD plays without me wanting to repeat a track. It just plays in the background without evoking any emotion. -Donofthedead (Side One Dummy)

FLOOR: Dove: CD

To see what sort of a nitwit (read: dimbulb) I am, see how I've seen the name Floor for years, but always lumped them in with bands like Spoon, Cake, Chair, Refrigerator, Tree, Ashtray, Pipe, Rake, and Frantic Freddie Flanagan & the Hotdog Watchers, only to, at this late date, find them to be on a level with bands like Kyuss, Sleep, and Boulder. And this "long-lost first album" from 1994 is a fitting soundtrack for self-punishment for such oversights, with its broke-string guitar and droning riffless poundalongs. -Cuss Baxter (No Idea)

FUCKED UP: Looking for Gold: 3-song 12" EP When the band handed this to me, dur-

ing my fourteen short hours in Toronto, I thought they were joking. "It's three songs, a concept." They could have gone further and said, "Well, the first song is a mix between Gene Krupa and Phillip Glass with an itty-bitty hardcore interlude." They could have said that because it's true. And coming from a band that's been glued to my ear ever since I first heard them, I knew I'd be happy to take the risk, put a seat belt on, and prepare for bumpy ride in front of the record player. You see, if you think pure, contemporary hardcore's all just a cheap xerox and it's cowering like an abused puppy in the corner when compared to past greats, Fucked Up will sink that battleship of a theory. Then I looked at the vinyl. It looked like two songs. No breaks on either side. Huh. My math's bad, but I know the difference between two and three. Maybe I heard wrong. One song starts with a three-plus minute drum solo (the Gene Krupa reference), gets accompanied by some guitar plug-in feedback for another minute. Cue echoey whistling for another minute. Fade. Thirty seconds if that-of yellin' and hardcore familiarity. Turn down the heat to a simmer. Complete fade into minutes of complete, measured silence. (Here's where Phillip Glass comes in.) It clocks in at nine minutes, give or take. And the end result isn't some artsy aural blowjob that juxtaposes a jazz drummer and a musical theorist, but the feeling of a blue collar hardcore renaissance. Wait a minute. The first side actually has two songs, but they're not one after another. It depends when you drop the needle on the spinning record, as there's two different grooves. You sneaky bastards. This song and the song on side two are the RAZORCAKE 83



anchors and the houses on which Fucked Up was built. Melodies on the tips of circular saw guitars buzz through the vocals, bass lines twine around the whole thing, keeping the song's meat juicy and firm. Fucked Up sounds like the house band to the Apocalypse. They make me want to get on one of the horses heading towards the Armageddon in the sky and whip it faster. Meet that shit head face to face, goading it. Yeah, it's pretty badass for just three songs. Highly recommended. —Todd (self-released)

FUNERAL DINER: The Wicked EP: CDEP

Screamo emo. It's so hard and extreme that I forgot to notice. Do people really like this stuff? I'm coming closer to forty than reaching puberty. This stuff is garbage in my book. Totally tuneless. The anger is not translated. I do not connect. Can someone show me the way? This music does not touch me the way a good, expensive piece of toilet paper wipes me clean. The cover does have a picture that might have been ripped off from Ansel Adams. Highlight? I don't know, since I can see pictures like that for free in photography books at the library. –Donofthedead (Alone)

GFK: Of Liberty Isn't Given, It Should Be Taken: CD

Growly tough-guy metal. I guess they didn't get the memo letting them know this genre is deader than Billy Milano's singing career. –Jimmy Alvarado (G7 Welcoming Committee)

GITS, THE: Enter: The Conquering Chicken: CD

Tragedy makes it tempting to overestimate the Gits. In light of the brutal rape and murder of vocalist Mia Zapata, who would want to say anything bad about her group? But before her death, her band was simply one in a long line of second-ran Seattle punk bands, little known outside the Northwest. That's not to take anything away from a group, which held a lot of promise until some pathetic bastard robbed the world of one of the best rock vocalists ever. Zapata, at her best, alternates from the painful wail of P.J. Harvey to the enraged howl of Courtney Love to the poetic musings of Exene Cervenka. And when she covers Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come," she recalls the soul of Janis Joplin. Listening to *Enter: The* Conquering Chicken, one can't help but feel that this was a band who was still finding their voice while at the same time laying down several standout tracks that only hint at the future. The Gits are at their absolute best when Zapata is firmly in control. The album's opening tracks "Bob (Cousin O)" and "Guilt within Your Head" are indisputably strong, but the band occasionally misfires, especially on tossaways like the dopey, quasi-sing-along, "Italian Song." And while most of her words have a guttural, soul-purging quality to them ("Seaweed"), sometimes Zapata's lyrics sound forced and perhaps a little too self-conscious, like the poetry of a broken heart, crammed with as much emotion as possible into every word. Then again, it's an uncomfortable position to put one's self in, second-guessing the raw emotion of a woman who more often than not produced gems not junk. Repackaged to include a (slightly muddled) seven-song live set, ... The Conquering Chicken leaves little doubt that the Gits, despite the rough edges and occasional goofs, were destined to

become one of the best bands Seattle had to offer, rather than a simple footnote in a scene fraught with much lesser groups. –Eric Rife (Broken)

GONGA: Self-titled: CD

Nice bong. Rock. Bong-rock. Lazing around at the juncture of Blue Cheer, Black Sabbath and... Cathedral? Someone like that. –Cuss Baxter (Tee Pee)

GRABBIES, THE: Live Raw Punk Shits: 7"

With a cartoony name like "The Grabbies" one might envision a cuddly pop punk band that dresses in funny '80s new wave clothing and excretes sugary little musical plums that get your toes tappin' and make you feel good all over. Now, I'm not always the best judge of character, but I think I'm fairly safe in saying that the Grabbies do not want to make you feel good all over. In fact. I think they'd rather butt-spray your curtains with diarrhea and light your pets on fire. And their sound is anything but pop punk. It's a heaving, blistering, seething, vicious wall of mis-anthropy that sounds like a bunch of rabid madmen gnawing their own limbs off—and liking it. This live recording is a veritable clinic on Punk Rock Audience Baiting; frontman "Anus" tells the audience to fuck off probably fifty different times during this brief show and still somehow manages to sound like he really fucking means it each and every time. GG, at his pissiest, had nothing on this guy. The story goes, in fact, that this performance unleashed on an unsuspecting crowd of patchouli-wearing college puds-resulted in our heroes having the power shut off on them and being run out of town.
While I certainly hope that that story is true, it obviously could be little more than an attempt to "sell the sizzle" of this new record. But either way, it's immaterial to me. This fucker is busting out all over the place with "sizzle" and it's a sizzle that latches onto your face like a pan of scalding hot grease. No selling necessary. I've got a Grabbies habit now and I need every Grabbies recording I can get my grubby little hands on. Very possibly the greatest live recording of any band I own. This is the shit religions are made of. –Aphid Peewit (Proud To Be Idiot)

GRAHAM PARKER: Your Country: CD

The British have a special affinity for classic American country music. From Billy Bragg and Pete Shelley to the Mekons and The The, some of the most faithful interpretations of Johnny, Carl, Patsy and Hank can be found emanating from the shores of the UK. Graham Parker, who possesses Dylan's cigarette-rough rasp and Elvis Costello's biting sense of humor, is perfectly suited to the task on Your Country, offering up ten original tracks and one seriously rewritten cover of Dave Edmund's "Crawlin' from the Wreckage." Graham, like Costello, Edmunds and, on another level, Richard Thompson, is a *songwriter* whose career has been distinguished both by intelligent lyrics and equally capable musicianship. And like his fellow countrymen, Graham has an ear for incorporating a variety of musical styles into his own work. Your Country is not, by most definitions, American country per se, nor is it even an extension of the work of Gram Parsons or, more recently, Steve Earle "Almost (although the song

Thanksgiving Day" comes awful close). Rather, this is Parker's music *informed* by American country, which is, perhaps, even more ambitious than simply covering other artists' work. Despite being on the Bloodshot label, this is not alt-country by any stretch of the imagination. Longtime Parker fans will instantly recognize his biting commentary and may even have to look closely to find any hint of what most people associate with country music. –Eric Rife (Bloodshot)

GROPERS, THE: Self-titled: CD

The singer reminds me of DeDe Troit, so it would naturally follow that this strikes me as a more rockin' UXA. Fairly solid SoCal-by-way-of-Seattle punk rock here. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.thegropers.com)

HALLOMASS: Last Year's Heroes: CDEP

Sounds like a garage-quality demo, but things are clear and the energy level manages to shine through. There's an obvious Misfits influence embedded in there somewhere, but it ain't so overt that they end up sounding like countless others beating that long dead corpse. Not bad. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.hallomass.com)

HEADACHE CITY: Knee Jerk Reaction: 7"

Three concrete-solid, organ-heavy tunes that are blunt on impact (there's no "trying to figure the song out" fineries), that effectively hold up to repeated listens, and includes an ex-Motard in its lineup. Although this three-songer has the checklist of "what is this new new wave doohickey?" marked off, these tracks seem much more genre-resilient and muscle flexing than most of the dandy poofs who are trotting out their keyboards and prancing around like heliumfilled robots in striped shirts. Headache City's got a bite and you can tap your toes along to them. What's not to like? –Todd (Shit Sandwich)

HEADS AND BODIES: Ground to Join the Dust: 5-song CDEP

If earnestness could automatically equate to a great record, Heads and Bodies would be way ahead of the game. It's apparent that they're going for something new and distinct. The CD starts off super promising. The first track, "The Will of Machines," is loud, swerving, and bombastic, and reminds me of a jubilant mix between Discount and Jawbox, punctuated by dual male and female vocals. On "Margo's Forehead Doesn't Deserve Jack Shit," it strikes me that I can't place another punk song that I've ever heard a clarinet on. But somewhere near the middle of that song to the end of the CD, the band loses my interest more and more. Songs meander and mope around. Structure seems to just collapse. Songs blend into one another and lack cohesion. They're too long. It's no fun at all. And, unfortunately, by the end, I'm just bored. It's sort of a chore to finish the EP. -Todd (Heads and Bodies)

HELGAS, THE: 'Til the Wheels Fall Off: CD Attention! This sounds nothing like

Attention! This sounds nothing like most Pelado bands. Not a garage punk thing at all! Instead, the Helgas sound like something you'd hear on the college radio in the mid-1980s, in between REM and the Pixies. Unfortunately, this is nowhere near as good as either of

those bands. Pretty generic, slower rock. If it were a cereal, it'd be Crispix. A relic of the past! –Maddy (Pelado)

HENCHMEN, THE: Three Times Infinity: CD

The Henchmen have all the usual garage band accruements, but more often than not come off sounding like a slightly amped version of Camper Van Beethoven. Maybe it's the smart ass lyrics or the lead singer's delivery. To their credit, they don't attempt to simply recreate that wonderful '60s garage sound. But their everything-but-the-kitchen-sink album, *Three Times Infinity*, sometimes suffers from a lack of focus. –Eric Rife (Norton)

HER CANDANE: Could Be Nothing to Some: CD Boo hoo. Hail Satan. Boo hoo. Where's

Boo hoo. Hail Satan. Boo hoo. Where's my Bathory lunchpail and official Pantera backpack? –Jimmy Alvarado (Sound vs. Silence)

HEY MIKE!:

Embrace Your Hooks: CD

Harmonious SoCal power pop punk of the most flavorful variety. I'll admit to my guilty pleasure from bands like Hey Mike! I found this to be a great release. The production was top-notch and these five songs ended much too quickly. If this is any hint at their future, these guys are off to a nice start. –JasonK (Takeover)

HOT SNAKES: Audit in Progress: LP

There are bands that you just trust where even if a song seems to come out of left field, you give them the benefit of the doubt and keep listening. For me, Hot Snakes are one of those bands. They have a very wormy quality about them; their songs have a way of burrowing deep into your brain to the point where it becomes a specific craving, like "I want to listen to this particular band," instead of "I want to listen to punk rock." Comparisons are hard to make. Essentially, it's straight-ahead rock and roll with thick, jarring percussion and a moody, explosive skew to it, but it's so much more than that. There are very distinct, almost ethereal guitar lines wrapping themselves around every song, a bit like the Wipers. It's experimental, but it's airtight rather than self-indulgent, more like No Means No than Sonic Youth. Much like the last Fugazi album, the familiarity between the musicians leads to much broader musical landscapes instead of predictability. In the end, though, they don't sound like anybody but Hot Snakes. Lyrically, they're unparalleled; Rick's ability to make the abstract seem very personal amazes me more and more with each isten. They're fucking unreal live, too. Everything about this record is unbelievable. –Josh (Swami)

J CHURCH: Society Is a Carnivorous Flower: CD

Okay. You have to support someone who has put out more records than I've eaten bowls of Lucky Charms. It's just a matter of principle! But, it does make it a little hard to get excited about a new J Church release, even if this one does feature resident *Razorcake* cartoonist and bass player Ben Snakepit. The same melodic pop punk you've come to expect, with some more rockin' production this time around, and a sad tune by Mr. Snakepit. If this were a cereal, it'd be Total. In a pinch, you

can always eat it, and RAZORCAKE 85

it's been around forever. Ah, the limits of metaphor! -Maddy (No Idea)

JABBERS, THE: American Standard: CD

Wow, I wasn't expecting much from the band I'll venture to guess is the same band that once backed GG Allin, but this was pretty good. It's interesting to note that at least two members of the Queers (Wimpy and Joe both contribute vocals) are on this, 'cause there's a definite "I'm Useless"-era feel to many of the tunes here, which fit in nicely with the post-Iggy scum punk vibe of the remaining tracks. Also contributing vocals to a couple of tunes are Jeff Clayton and Jeff Dahl. Surprisingly good. –Jimmy Alvarado (Steel Cage)

JEFF POTTER & THE RHYTHM AGENTS: Rhythm Riot: CD

Jeff Potter takes his cue from Jerry Lee Lewis, pounding the ivories and singing in a voice that could either testify for the Lord or send hundreds of teenage souls to the deepest pits of hell. This is the devil's rock at its most primitive and if Potter had been around fifty years ago he would probably be considered a threat to the social order on par with The Killer. The album's title track, interestingly enough, is this work's biggest departure. Gone are the hammered piano keys, replaced by—get this—a drum solo. –Eric Rife (Raucous)

JELLO BIAFRA WITH THE MELVINS: Never Breathe What You Can't See: CD

Those of you who thought this was gonna blow can breathe a sigh of relief.

'cause I gotta admit it's pretty friggin' good. Lyrically, Jello lays bare the dark, embarrassing recesses of the American empire, while the Melvins bash away in punk rock abandon, referencing both Jello and punk's past while pumping enough modern riffage to keep the whole thing from stinking of mothballs and stale clove cigs, resulting in what can only be described as one of Herr Biafra's best collaborative releases to date. Hell, I'd even place it above the latter DK stuff if I weren't sure I'd be burned at the stake for heresy by the puritanical hardcore unwashed who wouldn't know a creative idea if it came and sat in their laps. Sure, there's just a hint of metal in that guitar crunch, but somehow it actually complements rather than detracts from the proceedings. If you haven't been whining like a spoiled brat for the genero-thrash follow-up to *Bedtime for Democracy*, this will satisfy in all the right ways. –Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

JUDO RODRIGUEZ: Self-titled: CD Vaguely arty noise rock that is much

Vaguely arty noise rock that is much better than that description would lead one to believe. Of course, seeing as I was piss-scared this was gonna be some emo crap, my judgment might be a bit clouded by gratitude, but what I'm hearing is pretty fuggin' rockin'. These guys can play their instruments and it shows in all the right ways –Jimmy Alvarado (Paranormal)

JULIUS AIRWAVES, THE: Dragons Are the New Pink: CD

Kid says: "Hey, Grandaddy! Barenaked ladies!" Man says: "They might be giants." –Cuss Baxter (Sickroom)

KARATE: Pockets: CD

I'm with these guys: Steely Dan did rock too god damn hard! Thank God someone finally had the good sense to back off on that Unholy Pagan Rock Throttle-however, i am now too consumed with the burning question of "In a standard Karate competition, who would win: The Mighty Morphin' Power RangersTM or the Teenage Mutant Ninja TurtlesTM?" to enjoy it. BEST SONG: They don't have songs, they're an anarcho-syndicalist collective. BEST SONG TITLE: "Alingual," but it's a darn shame they couldn't find some way to do away with the music as well. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIV-IA FACT: NOT FOR RESALE. FOR PROMOTIONAL USE ONLY. PROPERTY OF SOUTHERN RECORDS. Fine. I'm done with it. Please come and get it now or i'll have you ticketed for littering. –Rev. Nørb (Southern)

KIDS OF WIDNEY HIGH, THE: Act Your Age: CD

There's something inherently conflicting about the artistic work of the mentally disabled. In the case of Wesley Willis, for example, those of us who loved the repetitive, Casio odes to his favorite rock bands had to ask, "Is this stuff genuinely funny? Or am I laughing at this poor soul's exploitation?" Of course this begged the question, "If he enjoys what he's doing, who am I to protest?" The Kids of Widney High are, like Willis, mentally challenged in one way or another but unlike Willis, have the benefit of a fully functioning band to back them up. The results are not just competent, they're admirable. And not admirable in a cloying, condescending sort of way—Act Your Age smacks of

the same goofy humor one finds in early Camper Van Beethoven. But where that band made a conscious effort at being irreverent, the Kids of Widney High are simply trying to capture their day-to-day existence—fears, frustrations and all. Highlights include the punky "I Make My Teachers Mad" ("Throw chairs across the room/My teacher comes over and hits me with a broom/Throwing dumpsters down the hall/I hear my name being called"), the self-empowering "Miss Understood" ("When I walk down the street/People stop and stare/They don't know what's wrong with me/They make a mean face") and the quasi-Calypso "Two Faces of Fidel," a thoughtful analysis of Castro's place in history. Most elling however, is the title track, a rote listing of (mostly) conventional advice given to children. You might be amazed how quickly tracks like "Life without the Cow" and "E-L-V-I-S" sink into your consciousness. —Eric Rife (Moon Man)

KILL VAN HELSING: Alien Hotrod: CD

What about European bands who take a stab at that distinctly American art form, surf music? Kill Van Helsing, are perfectly adept at re-creating the trebley snazz of the early '60s surf groups and throw in a little b-movie horror schtick in for a little extra flavor. This ain't the whiter-than-Wonder-bread sound of the big label California groups, this is the sound of an Orange County garage being shaken to its foundation by four young punk kids who haven't yet discovered a mixing board. Granted, the garage is in Somerset, England and the highest waves the members have ever seen are



the two-inch breakers of the cold, cold Atlantic. But the end product resonates with a gritty enthusiasm that should dispel the reservations of even the most skeptical ear. Like a lot of surf groups, the band is at their best in the studio (the second half of *Alien Hotrod* is live and features a weak cover of "Baby Please Don't Go"). Still, they should be worth checking out when they come to Hollywood later this year. –Eric Rife (Western Star)

KILLER DREAMER: Self-titled: LP

I'm betting a 40 oz. right now that one of these dudes has huffed paint, glue, or gas in the last three years. If I'm wrong, the Country Club's on me and I'll bring four straws. And if you think that's a slag, you'd be mistaken. Killer Dreamer are action rock flag wavers for DIY punk that fits right nicely between Toys That Kill (sometimes right on the button) and The Horrible Odds. It's spastic, fun, catchy, puke-where-you-stand stuff that goes by too quickly. If you're a sucker for zombies in rock songs, can't get enough of hearing songs about body parts falling off, rot, decay, and misanthropic (yet endearing) attitudes, this'll peel you off the couch. Upon repeated listens, undoubtedly enhanced by the brightly colored paranoia-informed album artwork, Land of the Lost-era The Freeze comes to mind, too. Curved boner, wide-smile, degenerate punk continues to be mighty fun. -Todd (Kapow)

KNOCKOUT PILLS, THE: 1+1=Ate: CD

In the Hinterlands—and possibly in other areas of the world as well, though

i cannot say with any certainty-there is a certain state of mind one can settle into on the weekend, in the time period after Daylight Savings Time has been revoked, but before Spring (or Daylight Savings Time, whichever comes first i kinda forget), when there is really no impetus to leave the house (although you will, occasionally, exit the home for some manner of brief walk or something, just to see what it's like out , and one has been sitting around the house all afternoon, playing records, and, for want of a better term, 'rocking out" all day. I mean, for a while there, you're the King Of The World (Or At Least The Living Room)—you're cranking records at maximum volume, chugging caffeinated beverages—i mean, why not? It's Winter so there's nothin' else to do today!—basically living like a pig in shit, simply because there's no reason to go outside, so, strangely, you're "free" from having to do anything but sit inside and crank tunes. Anyway, maybe you've been drinking all dayperhaps you've had a tussle with the halflings' leaf—perhaps you're just messed up on Diet CokeTM with Lime-but, sooner or later, the sun is gonna start going down, and you're gonna need to eat supper—so, you realize that your more or less uninterrupted state of sitting on the couch ROCKING THE FUCK OUT is going to be broken up by the physical necessity of you having to get up, turn lights on, make some supper, get ready to do whatever it is that you have to do that night (that by that time you don't really feel like doing), etc.—so, basically, the last album you play before the light fails, and nature forces you to take a break

from the state in which you have found such joy—rocking out on the couch in the daylight—has got to be a certain, special kind of album; an album that is conducive to listening to it during the last failing minutes of daylight; an album that will somewhat quietly announce that Phase One of the day is over, and the listener must now get dressed, make supper, and solidify his plans for The Night; and, most importantly, an album that enhances the experience of looking at the little green and red lights on the stereo, because that's what ya do when the sun goes down: Start noticing what the little lights on the stereo look like in the gloom. It is my opinion that l+l=Ateis such an album (i cannot say with any certainty as Daylight Savings Time will extend for four more weeks as of the time of this writing). On the one hand, this is a good thing, as a Last-Song-Before-The-Light-Fails album has a certain specific masterfulness to it that stimulates the listener, yet allows them to sort of thoughtfully muse on the Great Deeper Meaning of the lights on the stereo as well. On the other hand, to have the album sit in abeyance until the waning moments of sunlight also betrays a certain non-immediacy, because, i mean, if the album grabbed us by the nards and socked us in the forehead, wouldn't we have played it more around 1 PM than waiting 'til the sun was almost down to spin it? Be that as it may, i am virtually certain that this album will be a virtual colossus in the "fading-daylight" genre, and it sounds like the spring-wound blast of early Heart Attack (hold the Jesse Malin germs), with the Dickies on the far left of their spectrum and the Armitage

Shanks on the right. In light of current recording techniques that yield loud, "good" sounding records with no personality whatsoever, i'm down with the 4-track production—however, if Lou Reed was right when he said that "cymbals eat guitars," there are likely a whole buncha Zildjians sitting around the Knockout Pills' practice space belching, picking their teeth, and scratching their necks whenever a new, inexplicably emptied guitar case makes itself manifest. All in all, a Fading Daylight album is likely the most difficult type of album to successfully mastermind—thus do i consider myself officially knocked out. At this time i suggest you hold a mirror beneath my nose and check for condensation. SONG: "Summertime Rundown" BEST SONG TITLE: "Stab Wound Baby" or "Wait for the Apex" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT; Throwing out the low score ("Target H," first song, 2:00) and the high score ("Wait for the Apex," last song, 4:39), the other ten songs are all between 2:15 and 2:36 in length. -Rev. Nørb (Estrus)

KNOCKOUT PILLS:

1 + 1= Ate: CD
Oh yes, this does rock! Totally amazing punk rock from Tucson, Arizona! Take classic pop and rock melodies and add garage punk frenzy! This CD even made me dance around in my room like a fool—at eight in the morning! If you don't like this, then you don't like rock and roll! If this were a cereal, it'd be Rice Krispie Treats. (Yes, it does exist as a cereal!) You'd think, "This is gonna be generic garage rock/Rice Krispies," but then you realize, it's so

Pink Lincolns "BACKGROUND CHECK" CD



www.pinklincolns.con

THIS CD COMPILES NEARLY 80 MINUTES OF RARE MUSIC FROM THESE SNOTTY AND SARCASTIC PUNKS WHICH SPANS THEIR 19-YEAR EXISTENCE. FEATURING SONGS FROM OUT OF PRINT SINGLES, COMPILATION TRACKS, DEMOS, COVERS, LIVE STUFF, ALTERNATE VERSIONS AND UNRELEASED SONGS.

ash county sluggers CD



TAKE THAT EARLY SUPERCHUNK SOUND, MIX IT WITH THE CATCHINESS OF RADON & THE WEIRD GUITARS OF ARCHERS OF LOAF AND YOU'LL GET THESE 11 SONGS WHICH EXEMPLIFY THE 'GAINESVILLE SOUND'. RECORDED BY ROB MCGREGOR

gainesvillebandpage.com

COMING IN 2005

PINK LINCOLNS NEW STUDIO ALBUM "NO LO SIENTO"

SAW WHEEL - CD (ex-One Reason, all acoustic rock similar to Rumbleseat)

SPRINGTIME - CD (hardcore outfit from Germany, think Leatherface, Hot Water Music, Avail)



Hazzard Records

1941 Harding St., Clearwater, FL 33765 www.hazzardrecords.net

THE PUT-DOWNS



Brand new 7" from MORTVILLE RECORDS available ONLY at www.MortvilleRecords.com

Strain LIMITED to 300 Copies!!!

get it while you can online or PO BOX 4262 Austin. TX 78765

coming soon: ENDS/MINDS split 12"-- SWEETHEARTS 7" -- DESOLATION ROW CD

much better than that because... it's congealed with marshmallows! Yum! -Maddy (Estrus)

KNOCKOUT PILLS: 1+1=Ate: CD

If you saw the interview of this band in issue fifteen, you know that this band is well liked at HQ. That doesn't mean everybody thinks alike and has the same taste. That would mean that we are robots who only like what we are programmed to like. I admit that a lot of bands the other writers like do not suit my tastes and vice versa, but there is overlapping. Here is another case of it. I did not go out of my way to check out this band after seeing them profiled in the mag. Eight issues later, I get a CD to review. Cool stuff here. Garage punk that goes straight to the gonads with tinges of psychedelia and a surf beat. As soon as the music came pouring out of the speakers, I wanted to start shaking violently. Whoo! What fun! The song 'Summertime Rundown" is my fave here. Catchy with the tongue-in-cheek female background vocals make for a song that stays on the mind for a long time. With so many bands recording on ProTools these days (mine included), it's refreshing to hear someone record on a four-track and get great results. -Donofthedead (Estrus)

LAST BURNING EMBERS: Lessons in Redemption: CD

This reminds of a time in the mid-'80s when all the punkers began learning how to play their instruments and decided they wanted to be pop heroes instead of just screaming about how bad Reagan was over and over again for thirty minutes every night. Lots of creative guitar noodling and some nice hooks lodged here and there in the tunes, like sugared landmines. Dunno if it'd make its way into heavy rotation, but I do respect the work that was put in here and appreciate their efforts to create rather than ape the same old shit. -Jimmy Alvarado (Pink Frost)

LAZY COWGIRLS, THE: I'm Goin' Out and Get Hurt Tonight: CD

There's a certain endearing, meat-andpotatoes quality to the Lazy Cowgirls. Like those they've influenced (Supersuckers, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Speedbuggy) the 'girls play ramblin' country-esque punk rock that even your dad would enjoy if he had a few beers in him. And with every subsequent release, the band gets a little more ambitious. moving farther away from their ballsout, garage-burning meltdown interpretations of the 13th Floor Elevators and the Ramones. I'm Goin' Out and Get Hurt Tonight is another step in that "respectable" direction which may be artistically satisfying for the band, but might be kinda pushin' it with longtime fans. There's still plenty of barnstormers, like the intro track "Burnin' Daylight" and "Baby You Gotta Be Shittin' Me." Acoustic musings like "You Might Be Lost Now" and "The Risin' Sun Over Naga-Gun" are as powerful as their most rocking numbers, replete with the lonely squawking of lead vocalist/guitarist Pat Todd's harmonica. The band also takes the opportunity to re-write "Goddamn Bottle" one of their finest early tracks—giving it that extra sheen that only a better recording budget can produce. -Eric Rife (Reservation)

LEECHES, THE: "Integratron" b/w "Ghost Ship": 7"

They sporadically perform. They wear garbage sacks over their bodies like homeless people ponchos. Then they get fancy sometimes and duct tape the letter on the front. At one point, I think, because they didn't ever want to be considered a "real" band because it'd get too "serious" and that'd be a drag, there was a no releases code enforced. Luckily, that wasn't the case. The Leeches play dented keyboard surf music. Imagine Vincent Price's retarded sons on surfboards doing a cameo for a missing episode of "The Munsters Beach Blanket Bingo." It's ookey and spooky, campy instrumental fun. They also happen to be fantastic and spazzy live. -Todd (Kapow)

LOBE: In Aid of Swift Decisions: CDEP

. Came with more stickers than songs. Two basses and no regular guitar can work in lots of ways, but this isn't one. 3. Worst pirate song ever. -Cuss Baxter (no label)

LOBOS, LOS: The Covers: CDEP

Okay, I'm going to do something that is tantamount to sacrilege where I come from, but the cover of Ruben Blades' "Patria" on here is just plain bad. Granted, the original, a beautiful and moving explanation of what the concept of "homeland" means, is so damned good that even Blades himself would probably have trouble covering his own song but the version here is particularly bad. There, I've done it. I've offered up the first negative comment I've EVER uttered against a band that is as sacred to me as Hüsker Dü, the Big Boys, the Blasters, Charlie Parker and Cuco Sanchez. Excuse me while I pop off and wash my mouth out with soap... Okay, as I was saying, some mighty fine work is laid down here, with the soul-based covers of Bobby Womack and Thee Midnighters tunes really standing out, and the live run-through of the Blasters' Marie Marie" eliciting more than a little tail feather-shaking, but that cover of 'Patria," boy. Excuse me. Gotta kiss the Irish Spring again.... They manage to remain true to the original spirit of Elvis Costello and Tom Waits while infusing that patented Lobos groove to the proceedings and effectively turning what was old into something new. As with everything this band has so much as looked at, this is highly recommended. Just be sure to skip "Patria." Uh, excuse .. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.hollywoodrecords.com)

LOCOMOTIONS, THE: Teacher: 7" EP Time to dance, you jerks! Although this

record won't blow you away, I bet you couldn't resist twistin' and shakin' if your favorite punk rock DJ started playing it between bands at your basement show! Rock and roll dance music is go! If this were a cereal, it'd be Trix. Sugar! Energy! Punk rock! –Maddy (Big Neck)

LOGH: The Contractor and the Assassin: CD

There are a lot of great bands coming out of Sweden right now. Unfortunately this isn't one of them. In fact, I'm not sure why I even got this in the first place. I'm thinking this CD was intended for some fancy art show in Europe. -JasonK (Bad Taste)

LOOKER: ...On the Pull: CDR

Equal parts Sleater-Kinney, Fuzzbox, and the Strokes is what I hear. Dual female vocals that compliment each other but are uniquely independent in sound. They are both sweet when singing together, but one's vocals are definitely angrier than the other's. Musically, they play a straight from the garage sound that is raw and very clean. From the five songs on the disc, "Jet Screams" is one song that stands out. It bears the most emotion and without sounding cliché. It could have been an early Go Go's song. I'm interested in seeing what the future holds.

-Donofthedead (Looker)

LOST SOUNDS: Future Sounds: 12" EP

What separates the Lost Sounds from the garage bands "experimenting with keyboards" hordes is their tight, weird, hard-wired science. Like a perfectly exposed photograph of a '50s monster laboratory, they're sinister in a charming way. They've got a great sense of setting an atmosphere. Laboratory rats with smoking CPU chips stapled to their heads and nitroglycerine aural experiments bubble all around. Not far away, a flickering, overcharged Tesla coil of sound crackles and burns flashes of songs directly into the back of your brain like a polaroid. What keeps it all nice and non-ass is that the Lost Sounds are also all very tuneful, suggesting, perhaps, that there was more to glean from new wave's first emergence in the 80s than I first surmised. It just had to be hammered into pieces and Frankenstein'd together by the right scientists. -Todd (In the Red)

LUCKY STIFFS, THE: Today Will Follow You: CD

They call themselves Omni Punkwhatever the hell that is. Anyway, I guess Omni Punk means they sound just like a lot of other old punk bands you've heard. There are some musicians here, but they never came together as a group. I could stand to be surprised by more breakdowns like on the first track, "S.S. Shipwreck," but the rest didn't excite me. –JasonK (Five-Dime)

LUDICRA: Another Great Love Song: CD

This has got all the requisite components necessary to make a black metal album-fast parts, strangled cat vocals, classical influences, and an overblown, almost operatic sense of purpose—and they even add in a dash of 4AD shoegazer influence to give the proceedings a unique spin. Ultimately, however, this gets boring just as quickly as your average Century Media release. –Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

MAD CADDIES: Live from Toronto: Songs in the Key of Eh: CD

I was very friendly in the past in regards to this band. But why a live CD? That is such a hard sell for most people. Why didn't Fat put this in their live series Live in a Dive? The case that I got the promo in is for a two-disc set. Is there another disc? Did I get gypped? -Donofthedead (Fat)

MANNEQUIN: Warps Yr Head: CD

Having much in common with label-mates the Means, Mannequin grabs onto the noisy rock of days past and cranks out convincing homages to the likes of

Bleach-era Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr, Helmet, and the rest of the Amphetamine Reptile roster. –Cuss Baxter (Reptilian)

MAXIMUM RNR: Self-titled: CD

File this next to your Candy Snatchers and Nashville Pussy records. Oh wait, I don't have any of those records. If you do, or if you like hard rock, you probably think this is okay. If this were a cereal, it'd be Fruity Pebbles. Some people like 'em, I think they're boring. –Maddy (self-released)

MEAN REDS: Self-titled: CD

The LA Weekly referenced the Germs in their write up about these guys, so naturally my interest was piqued. While falling nowhere near that band musically (a more fitting comparison would've been to contemporaries the Ex Models), there is a spastic quality to their tunes that leads me to believe that their shows might get as anarchic as Darby's long dead band once did. The Warner Bros. stamp on the outer case means they have major backing, and makes me wonder what the label was thinking when they signed these kids. Not that they are lousy, mind you, but they are an entirely different kinda cool, the kind that doesn't get played on the radio religiously and sell millions of copies. Jimmy Alvarado (Record Collection)

MEDLAR DOSS: Demo: CDEP

I wanted to list them as "Medlar Dogs" because that's kind of what the handwriting on the TDK CD looks like it says, but then I thought that might not be fair, like in the case that they might be websearching for reviews or something, so I spelled it right. Unfortunately, it's bullshit grunt metal. -Cuss Baxter (no label)

MEKONS, THE: Honky Tonkin': CD

Which brings us to the Mekons, a musically schizophrenic group who have earned one of the most devout followings of the post punk era. Honky Tonkin', originally released in 1987 and re-issued here for the second time on a third label, helped cement the band's reputation as one of the most creative bands of their day. This is, again, an album *informed* by American country as opposed to the simple aping of a musical style. Tracks like "I Can't Find My Money" sound like outtakes from the Clash's Sandanista and even the closest thing to a Johnny Cash track, "Hole in the Ground," retains that peculiar English sound that prohibits it from getting into the dusty romanticism of classic Sun b-sides. That said, this is still one of the band's best efforts and was their last stab at country rock, cowpunk, or whatever you want to call it (see their 1985 release Fear & Whiskey for more faithful interpretations). -Eric Rife Quarterstick)

MELVINS/LUSTMORD:

Pigs of the Roman Empire: CD No notes came with this, so I'm speculating in a second: I think Lustmord is an old industrial outfit or guy who's probably been on the underground music scene even longer than the Melvins, and who here apparently remixes some parts of some new Melvins songs in the direction of ambience, while the new Melvins songs themselves, when not being remixed, are top-notch riffy Melvins fare, some

of the best I've heard in years. Perfect for every mood there is, including: excited, sleepy, sulky, beaming, wistful, hungry, and stung by a bee. -Cuss Baxter (Ipecac)

MENACE:

Rogue's Gallery: CD
Pretty by-the-numbers pub-punk from these onetime GLC haters. While they never come within the neighborhood of the intensity of their early work, it ain't bad as far as "classic band gives it another go" releases go. Their lyrics remain street-level political without getting preachy and there are enough hooks here to keep your average Cock Sparrer fan listening. Smart move getting the vocalist from Resistance 77 to front the band, too. –Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi)

MISS ALEX WHITE & CHRIS PLAYBOY: Young Monsters: 7"

This is the New Ick. BEST SONG: Whatever. BEST SONG TITLE: "Pop/Stall," because i'm queer for nonalphanumeric characters FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The chick looks kind of hot, but you can't really tell from the picture. –Rev. Nørb (Missile X)

MONOSHOCK: Runnin' Ape-Like from the Backwards Superman 1989-1995: CD

Gawd, here's a name I haven't heard in Contemporaries while. Supercharger and the Mummies, these guys mined the same "budget rock" recording quality as those bands, but their music was more rooted in the weird wasteland between psychedelia, the Velvet Underground, and the

Stooges. I heard maybe a grand total of one of their singles back then, but judging from what's on this disc here, it sounds like they remained pretty consistent in the quality of their output during their six-year run. If you like it loud and steeped in the coolest bands the '60s/'70s had to offer. You can't go wrong with this. –Jimmy Alvarado (S-S)

MORTICIA'S LOVERS: Smash the Radio: LP

In recent months, i believe i have stated (or, at bare minimum, implied) that 1. Bands to whom English is not a primary language would be better served howling in their native tongue, as opposed to clumsily verbally waddling thru already beat-within-an-inch-oftheir-life Anglophone punk rock clichés; and 2. Italian bands are such a buncha style flunkies that they'll never amount to anything, ever. It is now my distinct pleasure to inform you that gravity has reversed its field, objects fall upward, the sun orbits the earth, water flows uphill, time is flowing backwards, the sun rises in the west, matter is both created and destroyed and the Cubs have won the World Series: Mesdames et Monsieurs, voici MORTICIA'S LOVERS!!! (sorry, i don't know any Italian) ...now the whole thing is that, at the onset of the album, my previously stated positions appeared to be in no great danger of dethronement: The title track—located Side One, Track One—is a typical Continental excursion into Anglophonic punk clichés: "Smash the Radio." Yeah. We get it. Smash. Radio. Right. One gets that whole Hatepinks vibe of song titles created by drawing random punk words (plus an article! Hurray for diversity!) out of a hat, and

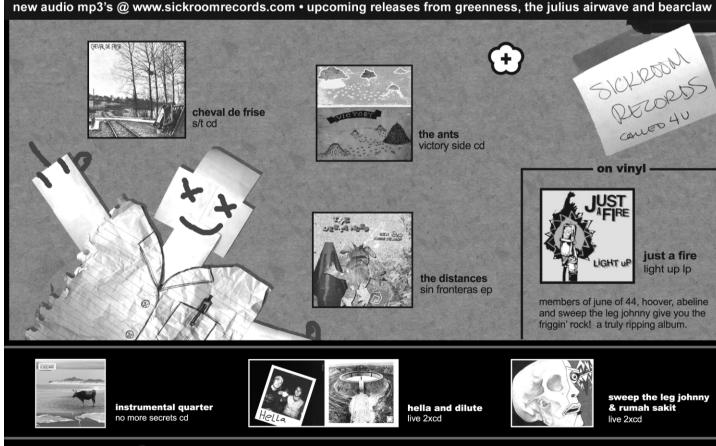
can't help but feel that this is the work of a band who are crossing their fingers and hope they wind up sounding kinda like the Minds or someone. However, shit begins to ramp up over the duration of Side One, and by the time song #6 rolls around—"How I Hate You"of a Superchargerish raveup a la "Get Outta My Life"/"Hippy Jerk" without actually sounding like Supercharger are performing it, which is all well and gone—this band has suddenly gone from holding on to their ass with both hands and hoping for the best to a band who have got the best sixth-song-on-aseven-song-side-one since frickin' "Suzy Is a Headbanger" ("Sheena Is a Punk Rocker" off of *Rocket to Russia* notwithstanding, because in that case track six is the hit, and track seven is the follow-up, which is an abnormal set-up for a seven-song first side, where song number six is basically seen as a placesetter for song number seven) (or so things are inscribed on the clay tablets of my imagination) (however, it's certainly the best song-six-on-aseven-song-side-one on album number two since "Suzy Is a Headbanger," and if you can prove otherwise, go for it). "How I Hate You," however, merely primes the punkly pump for the unspeakably and unutterably FANTAS-TIC "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing." Dude. I mean, DUDE. THINK ABOUT IT: "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing." I mean... *dude!* Every so often, a song comes along that need only be described using the song's title, and the word "dude." This is such a song. Dude, "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing." DUDE! I can go no further with my descriptive parlance. You must either take me at my "Dude!" or discard my opinion utterly. Choose wisely,

my son. In any event, it is quite obvious that something like "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing" could *never* come about were the non-English speakers required, as i had suggested, to sing in their native tongue. It is quite apparent to me now that putting non-native English speakers/manglers at the vocal helm of English-Singing Bands opens up an entirely new dimension of accidental genius, that, in my heinous myopia, i had not previously considered. I emerge chastened. Re-driving this point home—as if "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing" wasn't a forceful enough recitation of my shortcomings—is Song Two, Side Two: "Chemical Drugs." That's right. His baby's got to get off those Chemical Drugs. Fucking genius. Album cover of the month, album of the month, band of the month... everybody go nuts now. BEST SONG: "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing" BEST SONG TITLE: "Love Is Just An Hippy's Thing" FAN-TASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: "Saturday Night" is not, alas, the Bay City Rollers song—but "Alcoholiday" is, in fact, the KAOS cover. –Rev. Nørb (Demolition Derby)

MOTOCHRIST: Greetings from the Bonneville Salt Flats: CD

Motochrist is a band that sounds so polished, so well-produced, you wonder if they don't occasionally feel as if they're betraying their tattooed losers image. Not unlike the plethora of Green Day wannabes that have haunted the corporate airwayes over the last eight years, Motochrist has all the ingredients necessary for a really crankin' punk band. But instead they play it safe, putting out a pseudo-metal album

distro: www.southern.com



ANNOUNCING





The new label affiliated with THE BIG TAKEOVER magazine and distributed exclusively by Redeye! The quality sounds you would expect from such a trusted name in vital music.



DOUG GILLARD Salamander

Guided By Voices guitar hero steps out with his first solo effort. After eight years of GBV and solid work with Death of Samantha, Cobra Verde, and Gem, Gillard now releases a fully-realized work full of rich textures, indelible pop songs, and an overflowing bag of hooks. The sleeper LP of 2004!



LAST BURNING EMBERS Lessons In Redemption

Debut LP by the erudite, expansive, hard-hitting New York post-punk trio of guitarist/singer David Burokas, bassist Thomas Burke, and drummer Jack Rabid (BIG TAKEOVER editor/ex-Springhouse). LBE evoke a classic post-punk sound with much more: a sharp, modern edge and lushness with a passionate, intelligent lyrical angle. The press has compared them to Mission of Burma, Husker Du, Swervedriver, Wipers, and The Sound. A burning sensation!

For more info or to order a copy, see our secure online store at www.bigtakeover.com, or send a check or money order for \$13 per CD (postage-paid) to: Pink Frost/Big Takeover Records, 249 Eldridge Street #14, New York, NY 10002 (Foreign orders please add \$4 per order for extra postage.)

ARTIFIX RECORDS ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF PUNK



Ծոււ Now! BAGS

Survive b/w Babylonian Gorgon 7" black vinyl Official Reissue of 1978 Dangerhouse single! \$5 postpaid

CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE

21 track CD of previously unreleased material from 1979-1980. This band was seen in Decline of Western Civilization and featured Claude Bessy (Slash), Phranc (Nervous Gender), Robert Lopez (Zeros, El Vez), Rick Brodey (BPeople), and more! Comes with 12 page booklet of info and rare photos! \$10 postpaid



Distributed by: Revolver, Choke, Smash, Sound of California, Know Crap, Underground Medicine. Subterranean, and others...

Artifix Records * PO Box 641 * Moreno Valley, CA * 92556-0641 www.artifixrecords.com

that would be as accessible to both junior high kids and fifty-year-old headbangers. Greetings from the Bonneville Salt Flats is not the high-octane offering one might expect from glancing at the dragster on the cover. Ever see *The* Decline of Western Civilization: The Metal Years? Motochrist are, like Motley Crue before them, full of bluster and lyrics that pander to both thirteen-yearolds and big label reps in search of the next big thing. There are redeeming moments if you're willing to cut them a little slack—"Someday" sounds a tad like early Soul Asylum and there have certainly been worse Ramones covers than their take on "I Just Wanna Have Something To Do Tonight." All in all, Greetings isn't a bad album, just one that is repeatedly sabotaged by run-of-the-mill rock and roll lyrics. –Eric Rife (Heat Slick)

NAGG: Self-titled: CD

...having become Razorcake's de facto glam critic simply by virtue of having enough interest in the source materials to be able to call people on their shit when they're underperforming, i have found that the legitimacy of most of the modern-day would-be glamsters, to me, is called into immediate question by their not doing the things that i imagine i would do were i in their position (i.e., covering, say, "Really Gonna Raise the Roof" by Slade, covering something written by Chapman and Chinn, etc.). Imagine, then, my consternation and disgruntlement when i am finally confronted with a "glam" band (i don't know... they're kind of fucking ugly for a glam band. They should all be prettier, like myself) who actually DO cover, say, "Really Gonna Raise The Roof" by Slade, a Chapman/Chinn penned number ("She's in Love with You" by Suzi Quatro) (Quatro, Schmatro—it still counts), etc.—and they STILL don't have it right. I mean, the guitar player handles the "Really Gonna Raise the Roof" riff so uncapably that one would almost swear that he's got a wireless unit on his guitar and is playing it without benefit of headphones or monitors from a parked truck three blocks down the street from the studio, the "Bam banma loo banma baby, the man in blue says can you keep it clean" line (occasionally mis-transcribed as "Bam BAM A loo" etc., which is too Little Richard to be correct) right after the solo doesn't go "BUH-BUH-BUH-Banna Loo Banna Baby" as it should (the "BUH-BUH-BUH-BUH" indicating elevated levels of fren-zy and riotiousness)—hell, even the little decayed drum stutter before the end is all wrong. Further, at no point in time should any glam record remind me of Pat Benatar (actually, i think that would hold for non-glam items as well) and they should have covered that "Whoa baby you're a nag" song by Joan Jett. Off with their heads i suppose. BEST SONG: "She's in Love with You" BEST SONG TITLE: "Really Gonna Raise the Roof," which, for the record, is supposed to be spelled in Sladean English with the N's and S's backwards (funny that spellcheck doesn't pick up on that) FANTAS-TIC AMAZING TRIVIA ANSWER: Lexington Express! –Rev. Nørb (Dollar Record)

NEKROMANTIX: Dead Girls Don't Cry: CD

Like their fellow travelers the Horror Pops and Tiger Army, the Nekromantix offer up fat, meaty basslines, diddly-diddly-diddly guitars and frantic drums for the heavily tattooed. These three Danes pick up the Reverend Horton Heat's demonic punkabilly, add more than a hint of neo-gothic imagery (may as well cross over to as many audiences as possible, right?) and have subsequently earned a helluva substantial following both here in the States and in Europe. Dead Girls Don't Cry, featuring a very imaginative "Nosferatu" cover, is chocka-block with the sort of cheesy b-movie horror imagery first pioneered by folks like the Cramps. That's fine for the most part, although tracks like "Where Do Monsters Go," sound more than a little bit forced. That's not surprising given the album was, by the band's own admission, written on the fly with most of the lyrics dreamed up in a single night. Their follow-up to their 2002 debut (Return of the Loving Dead) offers no real surprises and those familiar only with their live sets may be disappointed. Those who are already fans will likely have less of a problem with the lyrical shortcomings. –Eric Rife (Hellcat)

NERVOUS SHAKES: Separate Beds? I Don't Think So: CD

First off, if they were really so compelled as to have to have their name be like half of "Nervous Eaters" plus half of "Morning Shakes," i'm not so sure i wouldn't've rather had them call themselves the Morning Eaters. Next off, this album probably could've been titled *Three Breasted Woman*, owing to the fact that it is stacked so peculiarly—the first twenty-five percent or so is basically these more or less inept rock & roll numbers revolving around sex, shaking, and positive comments on the appearance of one's own ass ("Get the fear, it's Saturday night—Sex! Sex! Sex-Sex-Sex-Sex!" the guy yowls, with all the convincingness and swagger of Ron Howard on that episode of Happy Days where Fonzie let Richie borrow his apartment above the Cunninghams' garage for his hot date)—and, just when one gets the feeling that the main point of debate for this album is whether it's Retarded Good, Retarded Bad, Retarded Both or Just Plain Retarded, they kick in with some kinda King/Rassler Queers song ("Number One") that i musta missed on account of i left the gig to get bubblegum and Pop RocksTM or something, followed by a token sex toy song ("Swedish Love Gun")—and THEN the band inexplicably cranks into an extended suite of sloppy, brilliant pop/rock/punk/roll tunes not unlike the Real Kids or Yum Yums' tight-jeaned, leopard-spotted-shirted, black-hair-dyed weird cousins (said suite to include a cover of "Be a Man" by the Brats, better known as the third song on the first side of the Infections album [let the record show that the only Brats song i was familiar with In The Day was "First Rock Star on the Moon"]). I mean, the last seventy-five percent of this record is, like, *great*—but the first twenty-five percent is practically a joke. Actually, it's probably just some manner of extended Belgian Mind Fuck, i'm sure they knew what they were doing all along. Kinda like most foreign films, though, this one makes more sense if you enter in the middle. BEST SONG: "Brat" BEST SONG TITLE: "Get the Fear" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The songwriting credits for "Can't Stand You" are nonexistent, but, the credits for the hidden track, "Suzie," are quite evident. Huh. -Rev. Nørb (Nun)

NEW MODEL ARMY: Great Expectations: The Singles Collection: CD I remember back in the mid-1980s, when

bands like New Model Army were prevented by the State Department from entering the U.S. The reason? "Lack of artistic merit," said Reagan's flunkies. It was a bizarre time that saw other lefty bands, like the Angelic Upstarts, being banned for thinly-veiled political reasons rather than the usual drug busts or criminal records. Listening to Great Expectations: The Singles Collection it's obvious that "artistic merit" couldn't possibly have been the true reason they were banned; NMA were really about as musically threatening as the Alarm. Earnest, smart, and talented, their songs had a lot of sweeping guitars where pumped-up, in-your-face power chords would have been preferable (at least to my ears). In the end, NMA was really an electrified folk band, not unlike the Mekons, and their influence would later be felt in the anarcho-crusty songs of the best folk-punk band of the lot, the Levellers. *Great Expectations* is an excellent introduction to a band whose righteous anger was always on display, even if it wasn't always manifested in the punk venom of other political bands like D.O.A. or the Dead Kennedys.

-Eric Rife (Superfecta)

NITZ, THE: *Necromania:* **CD** If these Nitz aren't already used to hearing themselves being compared to the Dwarves and Zeke, they better get used to it quick. Like those two bands, the Nitz play songs like a halfwit autistic kid bashing the guts out of a cat with a meat tenderizer. Their music comes rushing out your speakers like some apoplectic gorilla gone apeshit and you can only hop on its back and hold on for dear life or be trampled into a pile of goo. Sure, some nay-sayers are probably going to say the Nitz are shamelessly

ripping off Dwarves/Zeke riffs right out in broad daylight and that they should rightfully consider renaming themselves 'Dweke." And they might be right. In fact, if you told me this was a top secret Blag Dahlia/Marky Feltchtone side project, I'd believe it. But who cares? When you've got full-bore adrenaline music this pure, who gives a fuck where it comes from? This pleases me well. -Aphid Peewit (Reptilian)

NOODLE MUFFIN Regime Change: CD
A theme album of sorts, featuring biting,

sarcastic lyrics set to samples of Herr Bush's speeches, Tones on Tail, *Blazing Saddles*, the Cure, Ministry and others, as well as some original music programming of their own. Some funny, creative dissent here, and "Bush in 200 Words or Less" should be mandatory listening on Election Day. –Jimmy Alvarado (Noodle Muffin)

NOT VERY GOOD: Forget Me Hot: 7" EP

Since this record included one of those cool yellow Fisher Price record-hole-fillers (Attention: jargon-free zone!), I wanted to like it. But, in the end it's just pretty generic power pop. If this were a cereal, it'd be Kix. Basic stuff here! And, upon viewing their website, I'd like to say the following: band-based message boards are lame! A great band is supposed to make you want to scream along until you're hoarse, dance till you collapse from exhaustion, or just sit in your room and wallow in your own pathetic existence. A great band is NOT supposed to inspire you to write on a message board! What is this world coming to? –Maddy (Not It)

OAOAT'S, THE: Typical: CD Never mind the overall "Darlington tries

really hard to be the next Plimsouls but just can't quite make it to Teenage Fanclub-land" feel to most of the songs. Ignore their pretty inane lyrics. Just focus on the fact that "Can't Let You" is one HOT FUCKING SONG. Drony, jangly guitar hook, perfectly sparse lyrical content, driving beat, THIS is what long, late night drives and loud stereos were made for. If this were an EP or single with maybe "Hot Robot" and "On and On" on the flip, I would be personally handing copies of this out to everyone I happened upon. As it is, the other tunes are starting to grown on me. Sneakily catchy, this one is. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.theoaoats.com)

PACK/S.O.L.: Split: LP
Pack: Screaming Euro hardcore from
Switzerland, I believe, all rude and crusty and angry, as it should be. S.O.L. More of the same this time from a band who hails from Germany. On the whole, I gotta say, this was just the kinda noise necessary to break up the monotony.

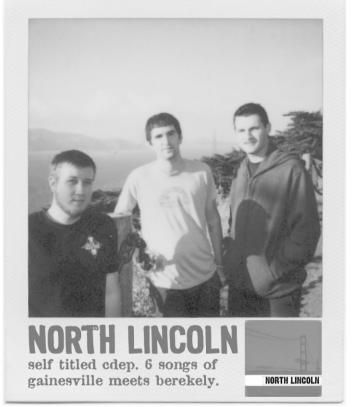
–Jimmy Alvarado

(rinderherz@gmx.net)

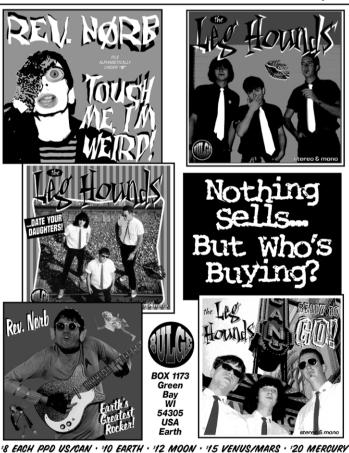
PAYBACKS, THE: Harder and Harder: CD

as much as Mike and John from the Hentchmen were the delightful embodiment of Chip & Ernie from My Three Sons made Rock in their previous band, so, in a miraculously inverted manner, do they now appear to we, the masses, as a titanic, granite-pectoral-muscled rhythm section of fucking ROCK, BABY, in their current band. Add to that a guitar player who sounds like he absorbed every relevant scrap of data

from every great three-letter-first-named lead guitarist in history (i'm thinking "Ted" and "Ace" here, but ou're welcome to bring your own findings to the table), and it is apparent that a unit of Rock Most Imposing has been manifested. However, the REAL keystone in this Granite Arch O' Boogie is one Miss Wendy Case, a shingle-throated chanteuse of such awe-inspiring HARDNESS and RAWITUDE that she makes Patti Smith seem like one of those buxom German broads whom one those buxom German broads whom one sees depicted toting around trays full of thick-bottomed beer mugs during Oktoberfest, and so blonde that she makes Penelope Houston seem like a brunette. I mean, fuck—Ian Stuart WISHES his vocals sounded this tuff on the first Skrewdriver album! If this chick gets locked up in the same cell as Angry Anderson of Rose Tattoo, it's Angry who's getting fucked up the pooper! Wendy Case is the fucking SHIT, and, when the band backs the intensity level down to mere Orange Alert status, it is apparent that we stand in the majestic presence of the thermonuclear-powered Faces of our time (although, as a gambling man, if you want my best guess on how many ounces of whatever that Wendy's stomach would offer up if they pumped it after she passed out onstage, i'm advising you to bet the under). Needless to say, this might be the first time ever it say, this might be the first time ever it could be said that a bitch has been the Paybacks. Okay, sorry, i couldn't stop myself. BEST SONG: "Me" BEST SONG TITLE: "Jumpy," because it sounds like something Rene Hall would've written on the Unitar. FAN-TASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: For the back-cover-gazers among you, 'Celebrate Summer' is not a misspelled



\$5 ppd from Salinas Records P.O. Box 20996 Ferndale MI 48220 Checks / M.O.s to Marc Reosti (salinas@beer.com for world prices) http://www.salinasrecords.cib.net http://www.littletype.com



25 JUPITER/SATURN · NEPTUNE (CALL FOR EXACT SHIPPING CHARGES)
SORRY. WE CANNOT DELIVER TO URANUS. PLUTO OR THE SUN No Klingons

Hüsker Dü cover, but is, in fact, a most outstanding rendition of the last T. Rex single to be released in Marc Bolan's lifetime. Double kudos for the band, as i never saw that song as anything other than a missed cover opportunity for the Silicon Teens. –Rev. Nørb (Get Hip)

PEAR OF THE WEST: Stupid Game: 7"

I've been wholeheartedly endorsing Snuffy Smile records for so long, I'm running out of new ways to sing their praises. This is disconcerting to me because I want to keep getting the review copies, and I know that I have to type for my music. So here goes: Pear of the West plays poppy punk rock, but it's more than that. There are the sweet, pop-style female vocals, but they're backed by music that's more complex and textured than you'd expect. Think of a Japanese version of Discount. Then factor in happy, Jughead-style guitar riffs, and you've got yourself a doozy of a seven inch. Highly recommended. Pear of the West has also released a kickass full length, This Means Little Resistance..., and a split 7" with Servo on Snuffy Smile. Those are highly recommended, too. –Sean (Snuffy Smile)

PINK SEXIES, THE: Rock and Roll Moustache Ride: CD Were Pere Ubu gay? Because if they weren't, these guys are the gay them. Poppier, too. –Cuss Baxter (Wrecked 'Em)

PIONEERS, THE: White Walls: CD

If you need a shot of Jesus in your punkabilly, you could do a lot worse than the Pioneers. The band plays a potent mix of the devil's chords (think Link Wray, the Cramps, the Trashmen, you know, the usual suspects) and chases it with some craaaaaaazy lyrics about laying rubber on the way to the house of the Lord. Conceptually, it might sound about as aurally satisfying as Christian death metal, but anyone who prizes their mom and dad's Kitty Wells and Ernest Tubb records (or Mahalia Jackson and Curtis Mayfield) understands the man upstairs has, perhaps inadvertently, inspired some pret-ty good music. Songs like "Me and My Lord and My Hot Rod Ford" and "Cruzin" pay as much allegiance to fat fenders and white walls as they do the old rugged cross and that's where most listeners will want to leave it. Preachy tracks like "Battle Cry" are strictly for the initiated. Feel like testifyin'? Drop in on the Pioneers at the Hot Rod Church for Sinners in Mission Viejo, CA where they're the house band, performing free ('natch) every Sunday morning. -Eric Rife (Self-released)

POTSHOT: Dance to the Potshot Record: CD

I found this in my review box with a note saying, "Megan, Japanese skapunk," which pretty much wraps it up. I'm not the biggest fan of ska-punk, ska-pop, ska-core, ska-whatever. I like my ska traditional with very few exceptions. That said, this is okay. The vocals are on the nasal side and none of it makes me want to dance to this record. —Megan (Asian Man)

PUT-DOWNS, THE: Corrupted: 7" EP

The Put-Downs aren't flashy. They're a deceptively simple band. No wheels are being reinvented. Sliced bread isn't

being debunked as history's best invention. But, somewhere inside these four songs is some damn satisfying chili con carne punk that fans of no-bullshit, nofanfare, obscure-by-geographic-location punk rock are sure to cotton to. It's a good mix of loosely corralled melodies, greasy bass fingerings, and slight whiffs of honky tonk, all crumpled up so it's not too showy. It begins to make sense when I put the pieces together. The band's led by guitarist Paul, who served time in the Motards prior to moving to Southeast Texas. Yup, there are Motards stains and all over this. Perhaps a more laid back Chop Sakis reference wouldn't be too off the mark, either. Paul also orchestrated the Put-Downs to play the Low Security Correctional Complex at Beaumont, Texas. That puts them in league with Johnny Cash. Well, not really, but they're very good and it informs you of the career direction of the band. Let this one grow on you like weeds on the front lawn. -Todd (Mortville)

RADIO REELERS: Rockin' Sound: CD

...pardon my ever-lovin' rectilinearity, but what-all does this activity called "shaking" entail? I mean, it certainly seems to be popular with our nation's young people, but how do ya DO it? Am i to just sort of quiver precariously? To grab an external element such as a maraca or infant and shake them instead? Does this shaking involve my booty? Am i to just deliver an endless procession of secret handshakes? Is it more of a tremble or is it a full-fledged spasm? Because, i mean, this band really seems to endorse shaking, so i reckon i better get hip quickly, lest i be deleted from the roster of the Shaking Guild in short order. Actually, this band is really into all manner of unquantifiis really into all manner of unquantifiable activities—apart from Shaking, they are also into Rocking, Rocking And Rolling (which is different than just plain Rocking, as i understand things), Shaking with a Girl Who Knows How to Shake (well, fair enough. I mean, virginity is way overrated if you ask me), and Getting the Party Started, which seems so qualitatively verifiable and concrete as to appear almost square by comparisonand i kind of know how to Rock, and how to Rock And Roll, i think, but Shaking i'm completely clueless on. What i actually do know is that this record is not quite as good as their debut (which i felt was unnecessarily dismissed by many of my peers-it's like, come on, what do you guys want with your shaking and rocking, a cure for cancer?), which means that, instead of being on the Better Rocking Thru Progress train like the Leg Hounds, or the Better Rocking Thru Breaking Up After One Record express like the Teenage Knockouts, these guys are actually hooked up with the Decreased Rocking Thru Radioactive Decay format, where the first album sets the standard of Rockingism (or, in this case, Shakeitude), and every subsequent album sounds just like the first one, except one half-life less rocking and shaking... i.e., Rockin' Sound only rocks and shakes, say, fifty percent worth of Shakin' at the Party, but the next one—presumably to be titled Both Rocking and Shaking with The Radio Reelers unless they start singing about Reeling as well as Rocking and Shaking—will only rock, shake and

reel like fifty percent worth of Rockin

Sound, which would only be twentyfive percent of Shakin' at the Party. Once you get down below about twelve and a half percent, it's time to call it a day. Anyway! The percentages quoted above were merely used for illustrative purposes; Rockin Sound actually rocks and shakes to the tune of about eighty or eighty-five percent of Shakin' at the Party (which, for the record, i thought kinda rocked. Shook. Whatever), but, for a shit-simple high-energy punk-nroll band like the Radio Reelers, that missing fifteen or twenty percent makes all the difference in the world (or all the difference between "yes, you should buy this record" and "eh," whichever comes first). The problem is that if you're gonna write songs like "S-H-A-K-E I-T," they better goddamn well be PERFECT, or close enough to perfect for Rocking And Rolling—and "S-H-A-K-E I-T" somehow manages to blow its own hook (hmmm... i think i saw a movie about guys like that once) by delivering the line as "S-H-A (pause), K-E-I-T!", which, to me, spells out "Sha Keit," not "Shake It," which sounds like the name of some guy on the FBI's ten most wanted list, not as a heady command to tremble, quiver and spell. Actually, if i think about this record any more, i'm gonna spend about four hours musing over whether or not it's a good idea for songs to have singalong parts that involve spelling out words with silent E's, thus i will leave the determination of this album's ultimate shakeworthiness as an exercise for the reader. BEST SONG: "Can't Be My Baby" BEST SONG TITLE: "S-H-A-K-E I-T," i guess, but shouldn't there be a hyphen between the E and I? FANTAS-TIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The Radio Reelers currently have the coolest lightning bolts in rock & roll. -Rev. Nørb (Zaxxon Virile Action)

RED LIGHTS FLASH: Free...: CD

Melodic punk from Austria that has the flavor of what I hear coming out of Europe recently. With tons of stuff I sift through month after month, I have to be hooked fast on a band's music because I do not have the patience and time to grow into something. Even though well-executed, my interest level never wavered. I noticed the thinness in the guitar, an ambient aura of tone that reminded me of emo, and the weird mix in the drums that do no justice to highlight his ability. So here I stand as not a fan. —Donofthedead (A-F)

REGRESS: Look Who's Pulling the Strings: CD

Cranky, smart aleck hardcore up to its neck in '80s Mystic records influence. If you listen closely, you may catch a stolen riff or two, like the one lifted from "Fuck Armageddon This is Hell." Cool shit. The vinyl version of this is out on Lengua Armada Records, collector freaks, but this disc includes the band's tracks from the *Histeria 2* comp. –Jimmy Alvarado (Hi-Fi)

REHASHER: Off Key Melodies: CD

Fast melodic punk outta Gainesville, featuring members of Less than Jake, Army of Ponch and Savage Brewtality. I'm usually a sucker for this stuff, but this was a little too generic (even for fast melodic punk!) for my tastes. Decent, but not great. If this were a cereal, it'd be Cheerios. The standard

base from which most cereals are made! The end! -Maddy (No Idea)

RISE AGAINST: Siren Song of the Counter Culture: CD

Hey! Don't most bands that leave or get kicked off major labels go to Fat Wreck Chords instead of the other way around? Are these guys popular enough to get a major label offer after only three full lengths? The people at Fat are wonderful and I know their bookkeeping is on the up and up. I would figure an indie pays a better per-unit royalty than the major. Distribution couldn't be the answer. Well, I wasn't there so I would assume it sounded good to them. I don't know if this is flying off the shelves, but this might be the one that breaks the camel's back. I don't know if they have the appeal to the masses to become successful. I remember when Schleprock went major and they disappeared after that. I think I was one of the few that liked that record. Here I am and I like this CD more than their previous material. At first, the mix was a bit annoying. The bass and drums are super loud in the 60hz and below range. I'm a music geek, so I have a pretty decent sound system in my car. The bass that pours through the woofers make me sound like I am listening to hip hop when you hear it outside the car. Waves of sound push and pull inside my car. The more I listened to the CD, I got what they were going after. Now when I listen to other music, I have to turn up the bass settings to capture the same sound. Musically, being removed from an indie title, they seem to be more adventurous. I would compare it to AFI's latest record. It's more of a rock sound with noticeably improved musicianship. I even dig the acoustic song "Swing Life Away." I've turned a few friends who like a little bit of punk on to this CD. They seemed real receptive to the music. So I wish the band luck and hope they get the support they were looking for. If not, I hope they don't give it up because they are a good band. –Donofthedead (Geffen)

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS: Backsides: CD

When I was talking to the Riverboat Gamblers' singer, Mike, he told me about this CD. It's some of their first recordings, covers, and comp tracks. Although not speaking ill of these songs, he was definitely looking to the future of the band, super stoked on the new songs they were recording. When I got it in the mail, I'll be honest, I didn't want to play it right off the bat. Something to Crow About, their latest, is quite possibly the best rock'n'roll punk album to come out in the last five ears. How're they gonna top that, you know? I just wanted the Gamblers to be in the happy rock place in my brain, right a the top of their game and not have it lessened. Time passed and I popped it in. Let's just say that Mike's a little too modest. This CD fuckin' smokes. Sure, it's rougher and the band was definitely finding its feet (and shuffling lineups), but good lord, nine-ty-nine percent of all bands would kill for A-side material of this caliber, let alone consider this B-side stuff. What's also interesting is that you can hear the spasm punk rock ala the Bananas and Toys That Kill more directly than on Something to Crow About. So, the result: a different type of album, definitely not merely a collection of tossedto-the-ground shit that was in fear of

getting scuffed and dusty while trving to cash in on the Gamblers welldeserved reputation. Plus, includes a blasting cover of the Motards' "No No the Girlfriend," "Jack O'Lantern," also recorded by the Marked Men, and a song written by what looks like a werewolf. It's hard to ignore talent this enormous. Since beauty comes from the inside, you'll feel more glamorous if you crank this in your underwear and dance, dance, dance. –Todd (Vilebeat; www.vilebeat.com)

ROBOTNICKA: Spectre en Vue...: CD

I've always liked French pop; I used to hear it when I went in the Limited with my girlfriend and I'd be looking at shiny socks and metal things on pants and the French pop kind of made it sort of enchanting. This Robotnicka seems (I can't find the part that says the people in it) to be a French band with maybe a Japanese singerlady, doing Network-style synthpop deal with some Blondie, Melt Banana and Locust thrown in. I would like to watch the cartoon that they would do the soundtrack for. –Cuss Baxter (Bloodlink/Irrk/Maloka)

ROCK N ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS: Country Boy/Yeehaa: 7"

Imagine you're at a party that your next door neighbors are having. A band is playing this wild rock-'n'roll, a combination of "Girl Can't Help It"-era Little Richard and This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb. It's a punk rock chicken shack. Imagine the party runs out of beer. More is on the way. In the meantime, you go back to your apartment to drink the last beer in your refrigerator. You sit on your couch and drink your beer and listen to the band through the wall you share with your partying neighbors. The wall muffles the sound, but it's still loud, it's still a crazy rock'n'roll hoedown. Imagine the good feeling that music and that last beer gives you. That's what listening to this seven inch is like. -Sean (www.vidalocarecords.com)

ROUTINEERS: Self-titled: CD

Due to the fact that I adored the band Discount, I often found myself thinking, "I wonder what happened to the rest of the band? Allison is in the Kills and changed her name to "ceiling fan" or something. Jason went to House of Fire (whose debut EP is a fuckin' mauler), but what ever happened to Bill, who had dreams of making a zine of him bathing in creamed corn? He shows up in the Routineers, a band with Amanda MacKaye (the lady who started Sammich Records in 1985, has returned the label from a long hiatus, and had put out early Soul Side and Swiz records.) "Thanks for the history lesson, Todd. But what do they sound like?" Like a mix between Slant Six—Amanda's got a great, clear, forceful voice-and brainy, mid-period DC hardcore (think Rites of Spring more than Minor Threat, if you're working on a slide rule). Angular, smart, but not afraid to throw some jabs. There's a lot of indie rock skipping around

this, too, but it's not so bothersome for me since it doesn't come across the least bit pretentious and the band peels out on several of the tracks My favorite cuts are when the male and female vocals spring back and forth, like in "Messy Room." -Todd

(Dischord/ Sammich)

RUM DIARY, THE: Poisons That Save Lives: CD

When the Chinese sage Lao-Tzu said, "the five musical notes deafen the ears of man" he was surely imagining the exact configuration of those notes as arranged by the Rum Diary into the various songs on this CD. The drowzy, atmospheric nap-scapes offered here put my ears to sleep. Utter innocuousness is a poison that does *not* save lives. I don't know exactly why, but for some reason I think listening to this is like having sex with a vacu-um cleaner. –Aphid Peewit (Substandard)

SCHEMERS: Self-titled: CD

The Schemers remind me of just how fun it can be playing in a band—too bad they have too many other distractions. SoCal Beach Punk in the spirit of Agent Orange. A predictable EP that does manage to throw in a few morsels. -JasonK (schemers13@hotmail.com)

SCRAPY: Unsteady Times: CD

In the past, I received a CD single from this band that was pretty good. So it's good to see that I received a copy of their full length. Same stuff as before. A great mix of street punk meets ska and two-tone. The production is so much better on this release. It establishes a good groove that is not only smooth but silky. The street punk songs are pint-inthe-air fun. The ska stuff is the stuff that stands out here. It makes me want to put on a trenchcoat with a target on it or go shopping for a pork pie hat. It's that good. Nine guys make music for a soundtrack for a good party. –Donofthedead (Mad Butcher)

SCURVY DOGS: It's All Gonna End: CD

San Diego Hardcore, a la Battalion of Saints. These boys must have been drinking whiskey down in Davey Jones' locker when they recorded this in-your-face album. Teetering right on the edge of being full-on thrash, the screaming vocals are right at home with the superslick bass riffs and rapid tempo changes. Don't expect any crucial breakdowns, just fast hardcore that makes no apologies. -JasonK (Rodent Popsicle)

SHEMPS, THE: Spazz Out: CD

ith the demise of the New Bomb Turks, The Stupor Stars, and the Devil Dogs, America—okay, I—has been patiently waiting for a party garage rock to flick the switch to expose all that lame trust fund hipster rock for what it is: tomorrow's single-ply toilet paper, the type where your finger pokes through, right to anus. What better band than the Shemps? This shit's supposed to be fun, dirty, and barely competent. But with a beat you

can dance to. It's supposed to, you know, hit you in the ding ding or the vage really hard and make your feet skitter around. This music's about slipping in puke, dirty taps, and faulty amps. It's about being poor and fucked and being a perpetually second class citizen. Then providing the party-time escape for twenty or thirty minutes so you can forget that stuff for a bit. It's reclamation time. Do it for James Brown. Do it for Chuck Berry. Do it for the Dirthombs. It's time to heave dirty underwear into the faces of the perpetually pouty designer rockers and say, "This injustice just won't stand! You are from penthouses, not the gutter! Slum somewhere else, charlatan! Real garage is not a mere diversion for the effete!" Or just take my word for it. This is a great record. It'd behoove you to buy this instead of some manufactured, over-produced poo rock that's going to be out of fashion quicker than ponchos. –Todd (Reservation)

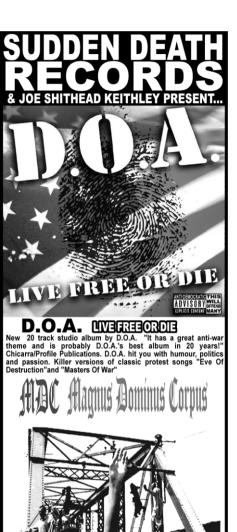
SINGAPORE SLING: Life Is Killing My Rock'n'Roll: CD

MOM, THE KIDS ARE MAKING THEIR OWN JESUS & MARY CHAIN ALBUMS AFTER YOU LEAVE FOR WORK IN THE MORNING!!! What's next, reusable maxi-pads??? Oh... wait... never mind. These songs sound virtually identical to what i remember the songs that weren't "Sidewalking" on that sort of odds-and-ends J&MC album sounding like, but i lent that cassette to a girl in about 1988 and never got it back, so i'm kinda going on dim recollections and foggy notions here—be that as it may, i can state with reasonable assurance that this would be about the third-or-fourth best Jesus & Mary Chain album, were it, in fact, an album by the Jesus & Mary Chain. The most fun you can have with Iceland-related items without intentionally pronouncing the silent j's! BEST SONG: "Life Is Killing My Rock'n'Roll" BEST SONG TITLE: "Curse Curse Curse" FAN-AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: And, on tambourine and maracas, it's Iggi Sniff! -Rev. Nørb (Stinky)

SIRENS

Long Distance Calling: 7' Man, I should really like this. It's

got all the road markers in punk that I'm a sucker for: multiple vocals, raspy singing, melodic guitars, and someone mentioning that they sound kinda like Kid Dynamite. But something's missing. It's like a model airplane with one sheet of parts not being in the box. All the parts, apart, look fine, "Oh, shit, this is gonna be rad," but, in the end, with some pieces AWOL, it doesn't fly. Each of these four songs has parts that I dig, but the song parts seem sloppily glued together. They don't quite match up (and a consistently faster tempo wouldn't hurt the proceedings one bit). The B-side's opener, "Washington St." is the breaker. I'm almost to the point in my life where I'm willing to give slack to bands that really like Bruce Springsteen and cite him as an unapologetic influence—if and only if they shake up the Boss's jar



MDC MAGNUS DOMINUS CORPUS

Great new CD from MDC, one of the most political bands of all time. This sizzling release is steered along in the right direction by having 3/4 of the original line-up back together again. MAGNUS DOMINUS CORPUS takes straight aim the US government and corporate bullshit.

RAW POWER

Raw Power is one of Italy's seminal hardcore punk bands and easily one of the best. They have made their mark around the world with their manic intensity.



THE REAL MCKENZIES CTIL

Real McKenzies Clashof the Tartans

wearing warriors.

Also in stock: Real McKenzies live album
"Pissed Tae Th' Gills" and their Debut
album/availble on CD/LP/DVD

JOE KEITHLEY **OShithead**

NEW BOOK! A sharp look at the spread of counterculture throughout Western society.
Joe details D.O.A.'s most vital times in

a hilarious and tumultuous way. Riveting, political and upbeat.



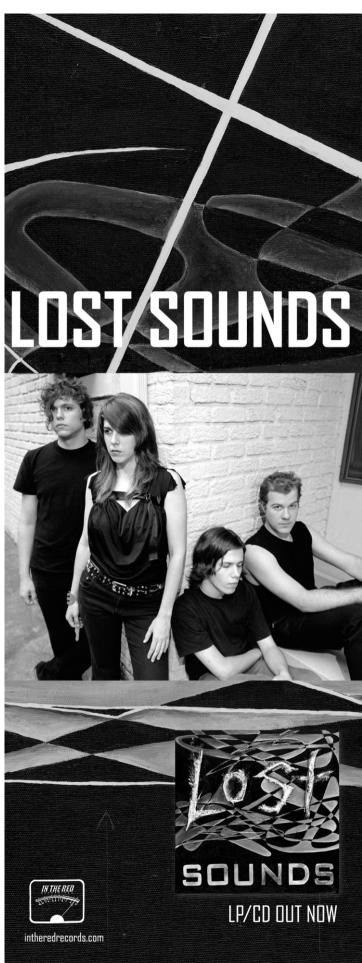
for CD/LP/DVD and 7" by D.O.A., Damned, THOR, Vice Squad, Rappresaglia, Vibrators, Remorse, Mojo Nixon, Geoff Berner, Toxic Reasons, Sham 69 and more!

www.suddendeath.com

Sudden Death Records Cascades P.O. Box 43001 iby, BC, da V5G 3H0

email: info@suddendeath.com





of fireflies while heckling the E-Street band. You know, a quick flurry of kicks to the nads and some abuse to the dude with the scarf on his head. But punk bands that remind me of Bruce Springsteen almost immediately and foremost, that teetered this release into the "nice try, but no" category. –Todd (1-2-3-4 Go!)

SLACKERS, THE: International War Criminal: CDEP

After ten years or so, the Slackers have gone from songs about romance to songs about politics. It's been interesting to see how many bands and writers made the transition over the last few years. People were just pushed too far politically to let the anarcho-punks have the only political voice. The Slackers are possibly the most consistent ska band ever, continuing to tour and put out good records long before and after the pinnacle (or lowest point, depending on your view) of ska during the '90s. Their songwriting is impeccable. At worst, their songs are good, and when they're on, you get some of the most soulful ska out there. At times, this EP ventures a little more into reggae than I'm used to, but it's still a great CD. –Megan (Thought Squad)

SLANDERIN, THE: A Rhumba of Rattlesnakes, A Murder of Crows: 7" What did the Reverend Horton Heat

ever do to deserve this sort of disrespect? According to their press release, The Slanderin "bitch slap" the good Rev and send him into the kitchen to make them cheese hot pockets! Whoa! What the fuck is this? A punkabilly throwdown? C'mon fellas, lighten up. Doncha remember Biggie and Tupac? That shit just ain't right. And for all the bravado, it's hard to imagine these guys sounding like they do without the manic Gretsch pickin' of the patron saint of punkabilly. Nuff said. The Slanderin most definitely have the chops to back up their boasts which they wrap tightly around a non-stop horror show of dead men, werewolves, and zombies from another planet. Truth be told, this is among the best shockabilly, psychobilly, goreabilly or whatever the fuck the kids are calling it these days. Definitely on par with Tiger Army or the Nekromantix. Watch for them to play the opening slot when the Meteors tour later this year! –Eric Rife

SMALLTOWN: The Music: CD

The Music is a fitting title for this album, because that's the only thing driving this band. They're not in it for a spot on the Warped Tour or a hair gel endorsement contract or anything else. It's all about the music, and you can hear that love dripping from every chord that they wring out of their instruments. So many bands have done this wrong. So many bands sound like they're reading from Cliff's Notes of Classic British Punk without anything resembling conviction or originality. There's literally not enough room in Razorcake to name all of them, and quite frankly, none of them are worth the teeny-tiny space that their names would take up. Listening to Smalltown makes me realize just how wide the gap is. Last issue, Todd said something to the effect of "listen to Smalltown instead of the new Stiff Little Fingers," but I think you could probably listen to this instead of *old* Stiff Little Fingers. Their heads and hearts are in the right place, and lest I forget to mention: they can fucking *play*. Tracking down every song this band has ever recorded is well worth the import prices that you'll probably have to pay. –Josh (Deranged/Snuffy Smile)

SNACK TRUCK: Harpoon: CD I like snacks, and trucks that deliver them. However, I do not like this arty screamo CD. -Megan (Perpetual Motion Machine)

SOCIAL DISTORTION: Sex, Love, & Rock n Roll: CD

If you asked me fifteen years ago if I thought that Mike Ness would still be blasting it out with Social Distortion, I'd say you were crazy. No, I would have told you that he would more likely be locked up or in the ground. Good thing I'd have been wrong. 1997's White Light, White Heat, White Trash was a turning point for the band. It finally found a balance for Ness's need to amalgamate the dirty, evil aspects of country music with the energy of punk rock. It started with Prison Bound and has been perfected with Sex, Love & Rock n Roll. The album has everything that a Social Distortion fan could possibly want. Hot, angst ridden punk blasts. Slow, drawn out angst ridden rockers... well, there's a lot of angst all around. The tunes here manage to pull you down to the deepest despair and elevate you with an amazing sense of hope almost simultaneously. I know I can tell a good record when I get a chill down my spine when I listen to it. This record just might be the best rock-

'n'roll record of the year.

-Ty Stranglehold (Time Bomb)

SOCIAL DISTORTION:

Sex, Love, & Rock n' Roll: CD Here is a release and a band that really needs no review; a band that has managed to survive the hardships of drugs, death, and turnover in their twenty-plus year history. Me, being the music geek that I am, ran out the day it came out to make sure I got it on sale. Retail CD prices are ridiculous! After a few days of listening to it non-stop, I got a call from one of my longtime friends from Canada. As usual, we shot the shit and start discussing the album. First is favorite song. I said my choice was "Winners and Losers," his being "Highway 101." Then we discussed place of importance amongst the band's discography. We both agreed that SD will always be remembered for the Mommy's Little Monster LP, so he said that this up there or even better than *Prison Bound*. I have to agree. My only complaint on this release is that it's too damn short. Only ten songs. I thought I read somewhere that they had recorded over thirty songs. The last record came out in 1996 and I expected more songs. But the chaotic life of a musician might make it real hard for them to get them-selves back in the studio. This way, they have two more releases in the bag. If the other songs are as good as these, we are in for a treat in the future.

-Donofthedead (Time Bomb)

SOD HAULER: Self-titled: CDEP

Heavy stoner rock that would benefit measurably (I'd reckon about eighteen heastrain (1 treewn about eighteen to twenty percent) from Josh and Aaron keeping their fucking mouths shut (I guess growing up in Seattle might expose a rocker kid to a little too much Eddie Vedder?), and maybe too (here, I'd go around seven percent) from some cut-it-out on the guitar virtuoso finger doodling. In other words, why can't

everyone be Sleep? I will say, however, that about a hundred years ago, a sod hauler would have held a pretty good stature in places like Nebraska and North Dakota where pioneering Americans had little else from which to build their homes but sod, and you can imagine hauling blocks of dirt and turf even short distances would've been a tiring job. And after all that, snakes would live in their walls and go in and get on the bed. Go to sleep right there in front of the fire. —Cuss Baxter (Inimical)

SORE THUMBS, THE/ HIT BY A SEMI: Split: 7"

The sound of hooligan sloganeering is a distinctly British phenomenon (although the Scottish give them a good run for their money). Several American bands have successfully replicated the sound, but culturally speaking, there's something innately weird about yanks belting out goofy, macho lyrics. To their credit, bands like Hit By A Semi perfectly ape the whoa-ee-ooooh backing vocals of their brethren across the pond, but to the jaded ear, this might not seem like that big of a deal. "Addiction" is the sort of song written for muscleheads who discovered punk rock after being kicked off their high school football team for excessive roughness. "Roll with the Punches" is yet another in a long line of jock punk anthems of self-affirmation—sort of like Anthony Robbins on a handful of black beauties and a twelve pack of Schlitz. Although the Sore Thumbs share the Semi's passion for the requisite backing shout vocals, their style is decidedly more Californian. In fact, if you're looking for a group that recalls the obscure '80s punk bands who never

got farther than a Mystic Records compilation, these guys are well worth checking out. Lyrically "Heartbreaks & Razorblades" might be cut from the same cloth as that of their labelmates, but the band sounds like they're having a lot more fun. —Eric Rife (Sacred Arts)

SPADES, THE: Learnin' the Hard Way: CD

Fuck this band. The lyrics are brilliant: "Get down and suck my dick." They talk about rape, hitting women, and beating the shit out of people. The worst part is, it isn't in the funny way. These guys are serious in the BRO way. For example, "Come on baby tell me if I push you too hard but don't make me get my gun." Plus they all got their tattoos photoshopped for the band's picture. How tough can you be if you photoshopped your skull tattoo on the promo picture? Just to make sure people could see what a badass you are? What the fuck, indeed. —Gabe Rock (Go Kart)

SPITS, THE: 19 Million A.C. EP: CD Punk rock has always claimed itself to

Punk rock has always claimed itself to be a sanctuary for society's rejects and unwanted dorks—the more "organic" of the cultural misfits—as well as the more dashing self-made rebels and troublemakers. Unfortunately, punk isn't always as open minded as it would like everyone to think and occasionally the natural born oafs get summarily shoved aside by the showier malcontents. So while all manner of crusties and street punks and whatnot bark and seethe and use their ass crayons to mark their various territories, bands like the Spits are content celebrating the happy dumb fun of the

Thoroughbred Clod. To get an idea of their sound, picture the most maladroit schmub you knew in highschool braces, pimples, laughable haircut, dia-pers and all—and imagine him eating a few handfuls of shoe polish and then doing a wonderfully inept Joey Ramone impersonation. Add some crude Ramones/Misfits type guitar riffs and throw in some random helpings of Devo-ish keyboards that sound like robots shaving or someone's annoying little kid playing with the tuning knob on a transistor radio and you've pretty much got the Spits. And on top of all that good wholesome stuff, they've got some pretty damn funny lyrics, to boot. All-in-all, this disc—which is a reissue of their 19 Million AC 7" with fifteen whopping "bonus" tracks—is pure lo-fi, low-brow fun. With Ramones dropping like flies these days, we need someone to pick up the Dork Gauntlet and run and trip with it. I can think of no one better than the Spits. -Aphid Peewit (Dirtnap)

STAGE BOTTLES: We Need a New Flag: CD

German skinhead music that doesn't suck. Now there's an oxymoron you don't run into everyday. –Jimmy Alvarado (Insurgence)

STARVATIONS, THE: "One Way to Remind" b/w "Give Me the Keys" 7"

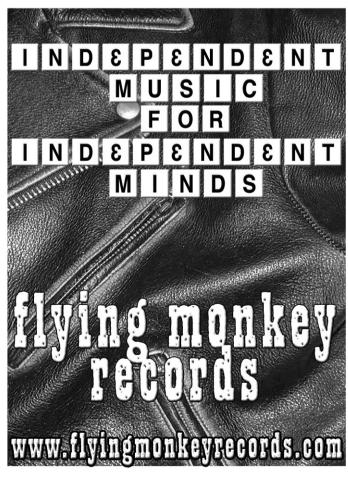
One of my favorite LA-based bands just keeps on getting better. It's hard to sound so lush, spare, and desperate at the same time—to be transfixed with the fungus and peeling lead paint of everyday living while still staring up into the atmosphere, hoping there's something sublime, maybe even con-

ciliatory, in all of the madness. Or maybe it's just madness. For lack of a better lexicon, the Starvations are roots music how I imagine it to be, not how it usually is—full of purple, hokey Americana aching to be a toothpaste commercial. The Starvations playing seems to come from hearts as fiery as the first swigs of uncapped whiskey, vet as broken as bottom shelf liquor bottles at the end of a rough night. I imagine the band akin to an impossibly well-stocked jukebox that plays only the dead-on, heart to ear to wet eyes tracks. With these two tracks, there's an accordion front and center, and it's the furthest thing from a Pogues rip or faux jig. It helps congeal the sound, like the pumping of another organic instrument, as natural as sadness and remorse or the melancholy that comes from fleetly remembering, then forgetting, a good time. The real deal. –Todd (GSL)

STATE OF FEAR: Discography: LP

If you saw me walking down the street, you probably wouldn't think that I listen to this kind of music, but every now and then, you need a little bit of belt-sander crust punk to sort of cleanse the palate, and State of Fear did it better than pretty much anyone else. With the exception of the recent rash of Portland-by-way-of-Memphis bands like From Ashes Rise and Tragedy, State of Fear is probably the best American band to ever attempt this type of thing. Lyrically and musically, it's not subtle in the least, but it's such vital and earnest stuff that I'd recommend it to anyone who's musical taste ever veers off into the D-beat end of the punk spectrum. —Josh (Profane Existence)





Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds

Abattoir Blues / The Lyre of Orpheus



The new two album set. Released October 26th

www.nickcaveandthebadseeds.com

Love Songs - All Branches, No Trunk



New CD. Totally brutal testosterone-fueled tough-guy mosh-pit rock. With syncronized dancing. And cartoons. OK, we're kidding, but buy it anyway.

\$8.00 ppd from
New Disorder Records
115 Bartlett St. SF, CA 94110
www.newdisorder.com









SUSAN & THE SURFTONES: The Originals: CD

Guitarist Susan Yasinski takes umbrage at the notion that her group is "just a cover band" as someone in another instro-surf outfit phrased it. Yasinski indignantly writes in the liner notes from the beginning we have played originals mixed in with classic and not-so-classic covers." She goes on to admit that the writer had a point and maybe the listening audience might perceive them as someone who only recalls past glories. That's a backhanded way of saying, "we're so good, you'll think we recorded this back in 1964." And to be sure, the Surftones, do play some great, treble-y surf rock with equal reverence for the genre's roots and contemporary innovation. Kim 13's Farfisa organ is something with which more surf revivalists should experiment. The background texture that it providesespecially on the excellent "Clam Digger"—gives Yasinski something to play around. But as with anything, there's going to be the occasional mis-step and in this case, it opens the album. The band kicks off with "Blue Hammer 99" featuring a opening riff which sounds like it was stolen outright from Echo & The Bunnymen's "Do It Clean." You almost expect Ian McCulloch to grab a mike and disrupt the proceedings. Regardless, this album is an impressive piece of work that is as adventurous as anything from Los Straitjackets or Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet. -Eric Rife (Acme Brothers)

SWEET J.A.P: "I'm Only Moonlight" b/w "Found There 'No Go": 7"

Come on. Two songs? TWO SONGS?!? That's not enough Sweet JAP for this reviewer. In my opinion, this is about eight songs too short, but beggars can't be choosers, I guess. Sweet JAP. They freakin' smoke. They smoke like a future throat cancer patient with Marlboro vouchers, possessors of that rock and roll Midas touch in league with bands like the Marked Men and the Knockout Pills. No wrong moves. No stutter steps. Just lightning bolts of garage trash excellence. These two songs aren't as manic as their fulllength, *Virgin Vibe*, but they're more hip-shakin'. There are also seems to be more backup vocals, presumably to allow the frontman to crash into the drumset or maybe get a beer. If you like music made with guitars and drums, you can't go wrong with this, and if you disagree, I'll buy your copy from you so I'll have a backup copy when mine wears down. –Josh (Dirtnap)

SWEET POISON: Yesterday's Sweethearts: CD

Melodic punk from Belgium that sounds like what the Teen Idols might have sounded like back in high school if they lived in the South Bay. –Donofthedead (Street Anthem)

SWING DING AMIGOS: The Mongolita Chronicles: CD

If first saw the Swing Dings in my living room about four years ago. Somehow close to a hundred people had flocked to our pre-July Fourth party. Fireworks were going off inside the house. Jug wine was getting spilled everywhere. The walls were dripping and waves of people were going nuts. I somehow lost my sock, but not my shoe, during their set. The Swing Ding Amigos fit the scene perfectly. Spastic, fast, and so

tightly wound—they have that sound that seems incapable of coming out of anywhere except Tucson. On the CD there are more melodies than I remember, and the songs have an addictiveness to them that had me listening to this album only for four days straight. I think my Spanish professor summed them up perfectly. I had asked her to translate the two songs in Spanish for me. After the first line she looked up at me shocked and said, "Megan, this is very bad. This is very dirty. And they spelled this word wrong." I couldn't agree more. —Megan (Rock'n'roll Purgatory)

TAMORA: There's No Tomorrow Baby, So How About Tonight?: CD

Modern hardcore, with all the requisite disjointed rhythms and anguished vocals. –Jimmy Alvarado (HCNL)

TAKARU:

There Can Be Only One: CD Scream, Crapula, scream! –Cuss Baxter (Alone)

THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB: Three Way Tie for a Fifth: CD Gracious, this LP is fantastic and is a

natural extension of the still-played-alltime-at-HQ Front Seat Solidarity. Don't let the words "folk punk" steer you to improper conclusions. It's not wimpy, patchouli-soaked creakiness with tattoos and a half-assed sneer. It's peppy, quick paced punk-informed music that seems to be "of the folks," you know, working class, hard thinking, hard drinking, hard-dancing stuff that doesn't get old, blasting from a stereo or in front of a camp fire. Think of a mix between Phil Ochs, the best old storyteller you've ever come across, be it a diner or a crazy uncle, and callused hands punk, like The Dead Things. *Three Way Tie for* a Fifth even manages to expand on the dance-along melodies and the rough and tumbley tag team vocals that are This Bike Is A Pipebomb's cornerstones. No where is it more apparent in "The Ballad of Sonny Liston," an epic of a song full of unexpected transitions, quiet laments, and a hell of a tale. Topically, musicians of all stripes could learn from TBIAP. Their lyrics are so far away from the clichés and vague self-absorption that often hollow out otherwise good songs. There are first-person narratives of a protagonist killing his family so when he gets to heaven, it'll be a nicer place. There are two songs about boxers, lighting up some history along the way—from Sonny Liston being killed by the mob to Jack Johnson, the first black heavyweight champion whose winning of the title from a white man triggered the worst race riot this country has ever seen." That's the stuff. Anything that simultaneously makes me laugh, smile, and think while clapping along will always get a huge endorsement. –Todd (\$5, ppd. Plan-It-X)

THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY/ FATAL FLYING GUILOTEENS: Split CDEP

A fitting split, based solely on the superficial fact that these two bands have, in my opinion, two of the coolest names in rock. This Moment in Black History: a more smoking live band you are not likely to find, and their recordings live up to their explosive shows. Imagine Tanner overdosing on blues and noise and you're on the right track. Fat, greasy bass lines, pounding drums courtesy of a Basshole, skronking guitars, and

howling vocals reminiscent of Jay from the Lost Sounds or maybe Chet from the Immortal Lee County Killers. Fatal Flying Guiloteens: Stonerific, like the Ace Frehley solo album put through the Drive Like Jehu filter. It's definitely not ass, but they could spend less time working on dynamics and more time moving the song forward. –Josh (GSL)

TIN ROOF CATS: On the Roof: CD Rockabilly bands not from these shores

are at a distinct advantage in their home countries. Tin Roof Cats, who hail from Bremen, Germany, probably don't have a lot of competition, but they'd wipe the floor with any contenders who might challenge them. On The Roof is brilliantly composed and produced and, like so much other rockabilly, a total blast to swing to—especially tracks like "Hold Tight, Miss Dynamite," "Bad Bad Boy," "Feelin' Kinda Dirty," and "Let's Go Boppin' Tonight." But if you're not already completely enamored with the genre, there's not a lot here you're going to go ga-ga over. The band is at their best when going out on a limb as with the Cramps-ish instrumental "Wild Bunch," which is punctuated with sleazy, b-movie guitar riffs. Endorsed by none other than the great Ray Campi. these Cats have their musical cliches down pat (of course that's not terribly relevant on the dance floor). You'll either love them for their proficiency or be bored stiff at their reluctance to go beyond the tried and true. -Eric Rife (Jungle Room)

TOXIC NARCOTIC/ MISERY: Split: CD

Misery is a fusion of metal hardcore punk radicalness, and you would hope so, to open the split CD with Toxic. The album also features two videos as well as some pretty wonderful drinking anthems, which reminds me: Toxic's song "Anthem," track five on the CD, is genius perfect punk fucking rock. Anyway, Misery isn't as fast paced as Toxic but they hold their own, making this a decent release. —Gabe Rock (Go Kart)

TRASH BRATS/ CAMPUS TRAMPS: The Hellraisers, Vol. 9: Split LP

really have no clue as to what the 'Hellraisers' series is all about, but, presumably, it's a series of split albums featuring previously released material by pretty decent bands (i know, how amazing of me to figure that all out by context clues). The Trash Brats were a glam/punk/rock band from Indiana who were actually pretty good, and would have been a lot better had all their songs not run a minute and a half too long; the Campus Tramps were the main English outposts of Yankee-style punk/rock/roll in the '90s. Neither band was so distinguished that they compelled me to run through the streets waving my arms above my head and screaming for passers-by to purchase their albums; however, both bands are certainly good enough that they deserve some manner of representation in your record collection—thus, half an album's worth of Trash Brats and half an album's worth of Campus Tramps might be the perfect dose structure. If these bands are lacking representation in your collection. you have hereby been put on notice. The End. BEST SONG: Trash Brats, "Feeding the Mosquitos" BEST SONG TITLE: Trash Brats, "Imitation Generation" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: In lieu of a band photo, the Campus Tramps substitute Wally Wood's famous "Orgy" illustration, depicting virtually every DisneyTM character of the day in flagrant deviant activity. Amazingly, he was never sued by DisneyTM over this, because Mickey's lawyers felt that the company would be harmed more by the increased exposure to this illustration that a lawsuit would bring than they would by suing Wally Wood for all he was worth! To coin a phrase: PUNK! –Rev. Nørb (Rockin' Bones)

TRAVOLTAS: Recorded "Live" at a Travoltas Party!: CD

There are few bands I hate more than the Beach Boys. I grew up hearing them on the radio and could never understand the fascination that bands like the Ramones had for these guys. Then, in the mid-'90s every other radio-friendly punk band decided that saccharine, harmonizing back-up vocals was just the thing the world needed. Then came the acoustic guitars! Someone shoot me please. So when I unwrapped the Travoltas' live album, modeled after the Beach Boys' 1965 release (complete with album cover parody and chatty house guests in the background), I got ready to lose my cookies. That was a premature reaction, to say the least. Maybe it's the farfisa organ noodling in the background, maybe it's their slightly whimsical (although thoroughly inappropriate) cover of Bad Religion's "Sorrow." Who knows? But for some reason these guys don't get on my tits... until they pull out "Barbara Ann," "Little Honda" and "California Girls." It's an interesting, ambitious idea that undoubtedly will be appreciated by folks a little less cynical than I. –Eric Rife (Infect)

TWENTY TO ONE: Suburban Battlecry: 7"

Fairly traditional sounding sXe hard-core that conjures up images of angry young men in hooded sweatshirts suspended in mid-air gymnastics poses, their faces grimacing with conviction. Twenty To One is ebullient and self-righteous and they rip it up damn well, drug-free or not. The singer even sounds a bit like GG Allin in spots, which, in the context of a straightedge band, makes me feel warm and good all over. Nothing ground-breaking here but, as Yogi Berra might say, if you like this kind of stuff, you're gonna like this.—Aphid Peewit (FNS)

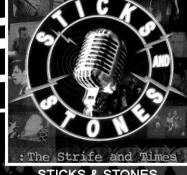
UNPERSONS: IV Self-Portrait: CDEP

Sometimes you are stumped on how to describe what you hear coming from the speakers. I'm really reaching here, since this music does not evoke any happiness. It's like a soundtrack to after the war when anything alive is mutated and amongst the radiation and devastation. In another setting, I picture an abandoned building that is used as a shooting gallery for heroin addicts. Inside: dirt and neglect. The stench of human waste and unwashed bodies of the addicts overwhelms the senses. This is the uncomfortable imagery the music of this band has inflicted me with. So dark and almost hopeless in feeling when it drags you back and forth from sadness to pure anger. The fast parts are where you feel like you are getting beat down by a crowd of out-of-control muggers. The slow parts are what you feel like after the assault. You are just

waiting to die from the RAZORCAKE 97









THE BOUNCING SOULS "DO YOU REMEMBER?" 2XDVD STICKS & STONES "THE STRIFE AND TIMES" 2XCD

VISION "DETONATE" CD



Chunksaah Records carries titles by The Bouncing Souls, The Arsons Worthless United, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Madcap, Sticks & Stones, Zero Zero, Wanted Dead, Paint it Black, Johnny X, The Ratchets, Let It Burn, and more!

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.CHUNKSAAH.COM

CHUNKSAAH RERECORDS P.O.Box 977 Asbury Park, NJ 07712

Distributed by Mordam Records

injuries. All this is from the one and only song on this disc that clocks in at a hair over fifteen minutes. I've listened to this song twice now and I need to walk away. -Donofthedead (Life Is Abuse)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Hold The Vocals ...A Tribute to the Instrumental Hits of the '50s, '60s, '70s: CD

It wouldn't be difficult to create a tribute album of pisstake instrumentals, the goal being to see how seriously one could screw up the more easily dismissed songs of a particular artist. The Squirrels, for example, take an interesting swipe at both Morton Stevens and Dave Brubeck in their odd "Hawaii Take 5-O." But would you ever be moved to hit the replay button? Probably not. Still, mixing classic cool jazz with hot surf is an interesting juxtaposition that one doesn't hear every day. Likewise with Clang Quartet, who reclaim Edgar Winter's "Frankenstein" from that inane Tiger Woods commercial. Other contributors seem so intent on doing a particular song justice they render it without a hint of parody or humor. That's the case with Hugh Jones' version of the Allman Brothers' "Don't Want You No More" or the Waterdogs version of Henry Mancini's "Experiment in Terror," which actually sounds sophisticated enough to be an outtake from *Dark Side of the Moon*. Then there's folk like freedirt (doing the Tornados' "Telstar"), D.A. Sebasstian (Link Wray's "Rumble") and Adam & His Ballard Playboys (Santo & Johnny's Sleepwalk") whose covers are more than competent but don't stray too far from the originals. Much more impressive are those who cut away the chafe from the originals, revealing the simpler roots which sometimes got lost in the jamming. Take Erik 4-A & Friends for example, who strip down the more avant-garde tendencies of Captain Beefheart's "Frying Pan" to produce a classic squall of traditional blues. Even more impressive is Bill Worford's Head whose admirably funkified take on Led Zeppelin's "Moby Dick" almost begs the question of what the band would have sounded like with George Clinton's acid-filled head orchestrating the whole affair. -Eric Rife (GO-Kustom)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Punk Noaban: CD

A punk compilation from Russia that features a lot of American bands that are already released here. Beer City is represented by DRI, MDC, and Toxic Reasons. Side One Dummy is represented by the Casualties, Avoid One Thing, Slick Shoes, and Taking Back Sunday. Scaredycat from Venice, CA got on here. One Russian band called Disfunction actually got on this. If I was in Russia and could not afford the import prices, this would be great. Since I live in the states, most of the stuff on this release is too available.
-Donofthedead (Rebel Records Russia)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Rock Against Bush, Vol. 1: CD

My Grandpa Rife, god rest his soul, was a very kind and giving man who, during one of my typical, visceral anti-Reagan rants, told me, "Eric, don't hate. You can dislike someone, but don't hate them. I'm sorry Grandpa, maybe I'm a lesser person for it, but my contempt for George W. Bush (not to mention the late, far-from-great Communicator)

trulv knows no bounds. I could go on and on, listing every war crime, class crime, and miscellaneous misdemeanor of our commander-in-chief but it probably wouldn't be more interesting than Rock Against Bush Vol. 1, a 2-CD screed against the most dangerous puppet alive. And besides, the booklet presents a very impressive list of forty reasons to hate the man. Between the two discs is a hodgepodge of second, third and fourth generation punk bands including DOA, the Descendents, Social Distortion, NOFX, the Ataris, New Found Glory and Sum 41. Hey, where's the obligatory Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn and Edward Said lectures?!?! None More Black's "Nothing to Do When You're Locked in a Vacancy" is a good opener with Rocket From the Crypt chug-a-luggin' guitars and even Sum 41 takes off a gin' guitars and even Sum 41 takes off a little of their high production sheen to turn in "Moron," a surprisingly strong effort. But as the liner notes say, the album isn't "... about who's a sellout and who's more punk; it's about uniting against a common enemy." That's a welcome and long overdue sentiment. -Eric Rife (Fat)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Rock Against Bush, Vol. 2: CD I have read that certain PC punk rock types have been voicing their opinion against Fat Mike, Fat, and Punk Voter. I agree on many points that they make as much as I do about what Punk Voter is trying to do. Maybe I am an old man trying to hang on to his childhood. But I thought punk rock was a way to get information outside of the mainstream and process it to make your opinion. My opinion about anything is NOT going to be the same as yours. I see this as at least a tool to wake up people to a new ideology that might differ from one's social circle or family. This is going to reach kids who are just starting their new life with punk rock. This in turn might lead people to volunteer for Food Not Bombs, protest, or at least continue to research in finding a concept of truth for themselves. I have been around long enough to realize that seventy to eighty percent of the people who get into punk do not stay for the long run. A person who really loves music stays for the long run. A person getting into the music for the fashion, crowd, or for the shock value does not have lasting power. But anything to effect their thought process in the future is a gain. My thought is vote or not vote. Vote for that fuckhead Bush or the lesser devil candidate in Kerry. Vote Nader to see if the country can create a third major party. At the very least, you are not being apathetic. Enough from the old guy who you will probably never meet or even notice. Let's get back at my obsession. The music. Remember, you are reading a music publication. I'm only going to name my favorite tracks that were unreleased. I really liked the tracks by the Dropkick Murphys, Foo Fighters, Sleater-Kinney, Dillinger Four, Sick of it All and the (International) Noise Conspiracy. The ^rDillinger rest of the bands supplied music that is available elsewhere. Bonus DVD has over an hour of music videos and shorts to further challenge your ideology. So, either this will affect you or not, at least someone will be intrigued by this. -Donofthedead (Fat)

VARUKERS: Murder: CD

It's kind of funny that this is released now when the singer, Rat, is currently on tour with Discharge. Is the timing coincidental? Starting off this CD is the Murder LP which was released on Asylum Records here in the states. I'm not sure who originally released it in Europe. The bonus tracks come from the *Nothing's Changed* 7" that was released on Weird Records. Both were released in the mid '90s after their reformation. For those who do not own one of the band's patches, this band has been flying the flag of Discharge for many moons now. This is not one of their strong albums. I prefer Blood Suckers or One Struggle One Fight. On this release, the guitars are really thin and a bit too clean for my liking. The tracks from the 7" have a better mix but do not compare to their other output before these releases. Both releases have been out of print for awhile, so here is your chance to fill up the collection.

-Donofthedead (Rodent Popsicle)

VOID CONTROL: Self-titled: CD

This is a perfect example of enthusiasm being channeled extremely well. I get the feeling that these guys are young, and instead of looking toward the Unseen, the Casualties, and Anti-Flag for inspiration—like many of their contemporaries—they're going to the well-spring and coming up with a bucket of cool, fun songs. In turns, they drum up flashes of the Adolescents, Blitz, Circle Jerks, and Social Distortion. On the whole, they're still rough and they still need to find more of a voice and sound of their own, but they are on the right track and they do spark continuous flashes from classic punk rock lessons well learned. "Hallucinations of Romance" and "Let Go" are flat-out, uncorked scorchers. I really dig how they're putting themselves together as a band and can't wait to hear more in the future. Traditional punk's getting another reconfiguration and, in Void Control's hands. it's definitely worth a listen. -Todd (Void Control)

WEAKLINGS THE Rock-n-Roll Owes Me: CD

Standard bar rock. Yawn! If this were a cereal, it'd be Wheat Chex floating in a pool of warm Budweiser. Beer commercial music! –Maddy (Waxvaccine)

WHISKEY SUNDAY: Self-titled: CD

I loved this band. The first track, "Thanx 4 the Violence," jumps into guitar melody reminiscent of some Flock of Seagulls, '80s-type shit (bad comparison) but the raspy vocals give it a badass run for Eddie Money. The band, especially the singer, sounds like the older (good) Descendents stuff. By looking at the CD, you would think they suck—with the Jack Daniel's logo mimicking the band name and "quality punk rock"—but they definitely are some quality PFR. –Gabe Rock (Ancestor)

WOLFMOTHER:

Self-titled: CDEPWith a name like Wolfmother, I figured I'd be getting some form of stoner rock, and boy was I right. This might as well say Iron Butterfly on the cover. '60s hippie metal rather than '90s "live by the bong, die by the bong" riff mer-chants like Sleep or Earth. I prefer nei-ther. –Josh (Modular)

WORKIN' STIFFS, THE: My Ghetto: 7'

Yeah, the Workin' Stiffs are, in essence, a street punk band, but they've consistently overcome every pitfall of that microgenre. Slashing, spastic guitars, almost like the Baseball Furies. A relentless drummer who never relies on the bap-bap-bap monotony of lesser bands. No fake Cockney Accents and no "Time to polish our boots, brothers!" lyrical follies. One of the few great, non-clichéd street punk bands of the past decade. –Josh (Radio)

Y EQUALS, THE: Consume Regurgitate Resume: CD

Dances the fine line between hardcore and screamo. Their pretentious aspirations failed to impress. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.theYequals.com)

YEAR FUTURE: The Hidden Hand: CDEP

Lotsa weird stuff I'm hearing in the mix here, most interesting of which are shades of a less satanic Mighty Sphincter (which would earn them hella bonus "cool" points if it was intentional) and other bands from the noisier end of the post-punk/proto-goth wing of the death rock hordes. This is not to say they're all gloomy and shit, but they do have that "dark" tinge to their sound, even if they do try to hide it behind one mean racket. Do be sure to float a copy of any subsequent full-length this way, will you boys? –Jimmy Alvarado (GSL)

YOUTH CLASS: This Is What I Remember: CD

A college band that needs to lay off the Weezer and procure some strong anti--Jimmy depressants. (www.theyouthclass.com)

ZEKE: 'Til the Living End: CD Fuckin' Zeke-man, is there any band that has as much full-on, balls-out rock chops as these guys? That's one of the reasons I was soooooo disappointed with their last (or was it the next to last?) studio album *Dirty Sanchez*, which pretty much blew. For awhile there, this mighty threesome seemed to be on the brink of self-destruction with cancelled shows and announcements of breaking up. It was a very sad day when I logged on to their website only to see the news that they were no more. Thankfully cooler, less strung out minds prevailed and the band reformed shortly thereafter to rock my world with their goofy Ramones cum Motörhead licks. Til the Living End, produced by Jack Endino, is a return to their tried-andtrue, high-octane formula. Actually getting through the whole album is mighty hard considering how many times you want to hit the replay button on the first want to like the play outloof on the first five tracks. The junkies' lament "Chinatown," the neo-biker "All Through the Night," and the opener "All Night Long" all sound like an unholy mix of Lemmy, Fast Eddie Clarke and the Supersuckers (when they still rocked). This is what speed metal should always sound like. -Eric Rife (Relapse)

ZOLAR X: Timeless: CD

Supremely (and not on purpose) goofy LA glam from the late '70s, that may be more interesting for the concept than for the Dickies-meet-Ziggy powerpop. Dudes went around with Spock haircuts, shaved-off eyebrows, shiny pantsuits and fake antennae ALL THE TIME. Even when they were not playing. In

1974 LA. Goofballs. Leave it to Jello to revive something this silly for all the universe's enjoyment. -Cuss Baxter (Alternative Tentacles)

RAZORCAKE 99



CONTACT ADDRESSES

to bands and labels that were reviewed either in this issue or posted on www.razorcake.com in the last two months.

- **1-2-3-4 Go!**, 732 56th St., Oakland, CA 94609
- Adlab, PO Box 5118, Orange, CA 92863
- **A-F**, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213
- Alone, PO Box 3019, Osewego, NY 13126
- Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141-9092
- Ancestor, 354 Shadow Run Dr., San Jose, CA 95110
- Arclight, 1403 Rio Grande St., Austin, TX 78701
- Asian Man, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030
- Astroglides c/o Lee/Tsviling, No. 11, Natan Alterman St., Hod Hasharon 45212, Israel
- Bad Taste, Box 1243,
- S 221 05 Lund, Sweden
- Basement, PO Box 511,
- La Habra, CA 90633-0511
- · Beheaded;
-
 <behadedband@hotmail.com>
- Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195
- **Bloodlink**, 4434 Ludlow St., Philadelphia, PA 19104
- Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA
- Captain Trip, 3-17-14 Munami-Koiwa, Edogawa-Tu, Tokyo, Japan
- Chunksaah, PO Box 977, Asbury Park, NJ 07712
- Coldfront, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT 06520
- **Demolition Derby**, PB 4005, 2800 Mechelen 4, Belgium
- Deranged c/o Gordon Dufresne, 1166 Chaster Rd., Gibsons, BC, V0N 1V4, Canada
- Derek Lyn Plastic, 691 John Wesley Dobbs Ave., Unit M, Atlanta, GA 30312
- Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111
- **Divebomb Honey**, 803 Thomas Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104
- Dollar Record;
- <www.dollarrecord.com>
- **Doppelganger**, 803 Saint John's St., Allentown, PA 18103
- Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 88227
- Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102
- Fast Mattress;
- <fastmattresssucks.com>

- Fast Music, PO Box 14542, Tel Aviv 61444, Israel
- Fat, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119-3690
- Finger, 18092 Sky Park Circle #51A, Irvine, CA 92614
- FNS, PO Box 1299, Boston, MA 02130
- G7 Welcoming Committee, PO Box 27006, 360 Main St. Concourse, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4T3, Canada
- Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317
- Go Kart, PO Box 20 Prince St. Station NY, NY 10012
- **GSL**, PO Box 65091, LA, CA 90065
- Haunted Town, 1658 N Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647
- **Havoc**, PO Box 8585,
- Minneapolis, MN 55408
- HCNL, PO Box 36997, Indianapolis, IN 46236
- **Heads and Bodies**, PO Box 80732, Minneapolis, MN 55408
- **Hi-Fi**, 2568 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60614
- **High Fidelity**, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483
- Household Name, PO Box 12286 London, SW9 6FE, United Kingdom
- In the Red, PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050
- Inimical, 1426 Harvard Ave. #103, Seattle, WA 98122
- Insubordination, PO Box 2846, Columbia MD 21045
- Insurgence, 2 Bloor St. W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2 Canada
- **Ipecac**, 356 Bowery #2, NY, NY 10012
- Irrk; <www.irrk.org>
- Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd., Wilmington, DE 19810
- **Kangaroo**, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam, Holland
- Kapow, PO Box 286, Fullerton CA 92836
- Last Chance, PO Box 42396, Portland, OR 97242
- Law of Inertia;
- <www.lawofinertia.com>
- Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620
- $\bullet \ Lobe; < lobemetal@hotmail.com >$
- Looker; <www.lookernyc.com>

- Mad at the World, PO Box 20227, Tompkins Square Station, NY 10009
- Mad Butcher, Kurze Geismanstr. 6, D-37073 Gottingen, Germany
- Maloka, BP 536, 21014 Dijon Cedex, France
- Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246
- Maximum RNR, Box P62-275 King St. East, Toronto, Canada M5A 1K2
- McCarthyism, 7209 25th Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20783-2752
- · Medlar Doss;
- <wyattwood71@hotmail.com>
- MGM Distribution, PO Box A1437, Sydney South, NSW 1235, Australia
- Missile X, 5912 N Washtenaw, Chicago, IL 60659
- Modular, PO Box 1666, Darlinghurst NSW 1300, Australia
- Mortville, PO Box 4263,
- Austin, TX 78765
 Nervous Shakes c/o No Fun Records, find the damn address yourself, I guess.
- New School, PO Box 2094, Oregon City, OR 97045
- No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **No Label**, PO Box 1946, Venice, CA 90294
- Noodle Muffin, PO Box 25697, LA, CA 90025
- **Paranormal**, 4647 Kingswell Ave., Suite 143, LA, CA 90027
- Pelado, 2208 Meyer Pl., Costa Mesa, CA 92627
- Perpetual Motion Machine, PO Box 7364 Richmond, VA 23221
- **Pink Frost**, 249 Eldridge St., #14, NY, NY 10002
- Plan-It-X, 5810 W. Willis Rd., Georgetown, IN 47122
- Plastic Idol, 410 Bell Ave, Apt. 25, Sacramento, CA 95838
- **Profane Existence**, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408
- **Proud to Be Idiot**, PO Box 410325, SF, CA 94141-0325
- Punk Core, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953
- **Radio**, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476
- **Reptilian**, 403 S. Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231

- Reservation, 7101 SE Reed College Pl., Portland, OR 97202
- Rock'n'roll Purgatory, c/o Ben Lybarger, PO Box 771153, Lakewood, OH 44107
- Rockin' Bones c/o Gualtiero Pagani, Borgo Palmia 31, 43100 Parma, Italy
- Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134
- Sammich, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington, DC 20007
- Shit Sandwich, 3107 N.
- Rockwell, Chicago, IL 60618 Sickroom, PO Box 47830,
- Chicago, IL 60647
 Side One Dummy, PO Box
- 23350, LA, CA 90078
 Sound vs. Silence, PO Box
- 2532, Salt Lake City, UT 84101 Southern, PO Box 577375,
- Chicago, IL 60657 S-S, 1114-21st St.,
- Sacramento, CA 95814
- Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125
- Stinky;
- <www.stinkyrecords.com>
- Stomp, 78 Rachel East, Montreal, Quebec H2W 1C6, Canada
- **St. Anthem**, 6201 15th Ave., NW #8306, Seattle, WA 98107-2382
- **Substandard**, PO Box 310, Berkeley, CA 94701
- Sudden Death, Cascades PO Box 43001, Burnaby, BC Canada V5G 3H0
- **Swami**, PO Box 620428, San Diego, CA 92162
- **Takeover**, 2069 N. Argyle #305, Hollywood, CA 90068
- Tee Pee, PO Box 20307, NY, NY 10009-9991
- Thinker Thought, 1002 Devonshire Rd.,
- Washington, IL 61571
 Thought Squad;
- <www.thoughtsquad.com>
 Trash 2001, PO Box 10 16
- 53, D-46216 Bottrop, Germany
 Void Control, 507 Eighth
 Ave. #1, Ashbury Park.
- NJ, 07712
 Volume Disk:
- <www.volumediskrecords.com>
- Waxvaccine, PO Box 40527, Portland, OR 97240
- Wrecked 'Em, PO Box 240701, Memphis, TN 38124



Send all zines for review to Razorcake, PO Box 42129, LA, CA 90042. Please include a contact address, the number of pages, the price, and whether or not you accept trades.



3RD GENERATION NATION,

#28, \$4 8 ½ x 11, offset, 66 pgs. Let me lay out all the cards on the table from the get-go: the review of this zine will only be about thirty percent accurate because seventy percent of the content is written in German and I'm barely getting by with English (as a second language). The little that I could read is your average punk rag fare of interviews with Bad Luck Charms, The Sleazies, The Minds, Wargasms, and The Ends. –Amy Adoyzie (Ralf Hünebeck, Grenzweg 66, 47877 Willich, Germany)

BAND AID CANCER, #1, \$1,

4 ½ x 8 ½, photocopied, 28 pgs. One of those not-so-rare publications that you can't read on the principle that you don't like reading boring, self-indulgent, diary-esque entries about how a dude went on a little trip tinged with alcohol, Midwestern punk rock shows, and really big pizzas. And even if you wanted to read this poorly executed exercise in literature, you can't do it physically because the entire fucking thing is handwritten and the photocopies are sub-par. -Amy Adoyzie (Stu, 240 Kline Ave., Lansford, PA 18232)

BANDOPPLER, #5, \$4.95,

8 x 10, 80 pgs.

The Bloodhag interview is excellent. It's easily the best thing in this zine. Not to dismiss the rest of it or anything, but most of the other band pieces are in the form of short articles rather than Q & A, which seems kinda press release-y. Other highlights include the long interview with cartoonist Lorna Miller, a self-effacing editorial sense of humor, and the nice cover drawing of a goth lady in her undies. Headscratchers include the really long, really bizarre piece that loosely revolved around the Cure and how their music related to the author and his friends and lovers. Not a bad read, just not really for me. -Josh (730 N 85th St #304, Seattle, WA 98103)

BEE'S KNEES, #20, \$3,

8 ½ x 11, 48 pgs.

I'd like to see a bit more risk taking in the layout. As it is, there's a whole lot of white space and everything looks pretty similar. It seems odd because the cover is actually very well done—simple and clean but not boring. The interviews (with Dub Narcotic Sound System, the Gossip, the Shins, and more) are all short, standard interviews and all the bands get asked pretty much the same questions. I'd suggest maybe having four or five longer, more indepth interviews instead of ten or fifteen one-pagers. There's potential here, but there's also a lot of

room for improvement. –Josh (PO Box 1035, Panama City, FL 32402)

BROKEN PENCIL, #25,

\$4.95, 8 ½ x 11, 80 pgs.

This is a Canadian zine with a decidedly feminist leaning. But they don't get militant, it's all very reasonable and thoughtful. It's also one of the best-written zines I've come across; almost more of a literary journal. Broken Pencil includes fiction as well as record reviews and a variety of lifestyle articles. One fascinating piece is a how-to guide to having sex in public, without getting arrested-not without getting caught, just without getting arrested. They do it in a museum, as an art installment. Complete with photographs, this is some very interesting reading. They describe themselves as "The magazine of zine culture and the independent arts." I can't say it better than that. -Brian Mosher (Broken Pencil, PO Box 203, Stn P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2S7, Canada)

CHAIRMEN OF THE BORED,

#19, \$2, $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11, xeroxed, 20 pgs. Is there anything better than a zine made by prisoners with attitudes? I think not. If anybody knows how to channel rage, it's these folks. Oftentimes, it's through crudely typed manifestos about how they've been wronged by the man or what they're gonna do when they break. This issue features an indepth interview with fellow prison zinemaker Chadd Beverlin, who publishes The Left Back from his cellblock in Ohio. More RUCKUS! than a Rhythm Chicken tour. -Greg Barbera (Cedric Knowles, #K-91158 fsp, Box 715071, B2-B4-22, Represa, CA 95671, Fanorama1@aol.com)

CHAIRMEN OF THE BORED,

#21, 8 ½ x 11, 32 pgs.

I'm once again filled with admiration for these guys, putting a zine together while incarcerated in two separate prisons. One of them wrote the majority of his contributions to this issue while in solitary confinement, his punishment for having made what the corrections system deemed to be threats against a guard in a previous issue. The writing style is a bit rough, and some of the print can be tough to read because of the cut'n'paste style, but it's a fascinating look inside the California Corrections Department, and inside the minds of two of society's castoffs. -Brian Mosher (Čedric Knowles #K-91158, FSP, Box 715071, B2-A2-30, Opressa, CA 95671, Fanorama1@aol.com)

CHAOS AND FRUIT PUNCH

#2, \$2, 8 x 11, laser printed, 18 pgs. I'm not saying this is necessarily a

bad thing, but if someone went to grad school to earn their M.A. in stereotypical personal zine-making, this might be their dissertation. You be the judge: The first paragraph talks about the maker's resolution to avoid typos. The second paragraph, where the author celebrates Creed breaking up and Christians being stupid, contains the first typo. He slings playground taunts at Bush. He talks about his computer breaking. He talks about how ugly, smelly, and untalented he is. Then again, he includes current political news that's backed up with actual facts and documentation, not just half-baked opinions, so he's definitely breaking the mold on that score. The layout is clean and readable, a definite plus. He throws in some punk and metal CD reviews that are nice enough, if not that descriptive ("the guitar sound is awesome"—well, sign me up!). Props for dissing modern radio hardcore—I don't understand how pierced Ken dolls singing Michael Bolton songs passes for rebellion, either. I was going to say save your two dollars since a lot of zines like this are free, until I got to the page with a bunch of "media statements" from a deranged woman named Bijou. It's worth at least four dollars just for that. Perhaps it's true that Courtney Love and Garbage's Shirley Manson are out to ruin Bijou's friendships with Todd Lewis of the Toadies and Chester Bennington of Linkin Park, but I'm pretty sure she's schizo. A definite conspiracy theorist, it's never made clear how Bijou knows any of these famous people, what she does (is she in a band? A groupie? An e-mail stalker?), but the whole thing left my head spinning. At one point she says: "There are some new albums out with these sad titles... I bought up those albums with the sad titles, because there may be a secret operation that I may be a part of." Okaaaaay... back away from the keyboard slowly, ma'am. Hands where we can see them. I'm starting to think Scott Weiland is trying to come between the Goo-Goo Dolls and me. That shit pisses me off. My advice to you: plunk down the two dollars if you like reading crazy people write seriously about crazy things. My advice to the publisher: make a whole zine of Bijou and charge ten bucks. I'll subscribe. -Brian Howe (Operation Phoenix Records, PO Box 13380, Mill Creek, WA 98082, www.operationphoenixrecords.com)

CITY TRASH, #17,

 $4 \frac{1}{4} \times 5 \frac{1}{2}$, 52 pgs.

The last issue of *City Trash* I saw was mostly in English, with a few reviews in German. This one is closer to 50/50. It includes inter-

views with Spider Rico, Rocket EAVES OF ASS, #3, 4 1/4 x 5 1/2, Freundental, Belch, and others. There are a lot of record reviews and Mark's usual opening fourpage column about all the shows he's seen since the last issue. He's got a lot of good pictures and the interviews are well done. All in all, a good read for anyone interested in the garage rock scene in Germany and its surrounding countries. Even better if you read German. -Brian (Mark Kuurman, Thorbeckelaan 65, 7942 CM, Meppel, tel. 06-14525645)

CITY TRASH, #19, 4 1/4 x 5 1/2, photocopied, 48 pages

Cool stuff from Germany. Several interesting interviews European garage rock bands (the Indikation from Norway, The Hara-Kee-Rees from Germany, The Cool Jerks also from Germany), a couple live reviews, and a boatload of record reviews (some in German). Also features a bunch of good photos, especially one of the bass player chick in The Ponys (very cute). Almost all the bands mentioned play garage rock, or something like it. They don't seem to indicate a price anywhere. -Brian Mosher (Mark Kuurman, Biezenveld 48, 7943 MC Meppel)

\$2, photocopied, 28 pages

This one is short, but well written. It's got a really interesting section called "Found Department," where they include photocopies of stuff they've found lying around in the streets-lyrics, poems, letters, photographs. There's also a funny story about how Craven, the writer of the zine, volunteered to participate in a scientific study about the effects of alcohol on safe sex. He's got some poetry, a dream about going to Lemmy's house, and various other tidbits. There are a few record reviews, or "Drunk Reviews," as Craven and his friend Davey Oil call them. You have to see it to understand. -Brian Mosher (Craven Rock, Eaves of Ass, PO Box 20692, Seattle, WA, 98102)

ELK, #2, 5 ½ x 8 ½, photocopied, 26 pgs.

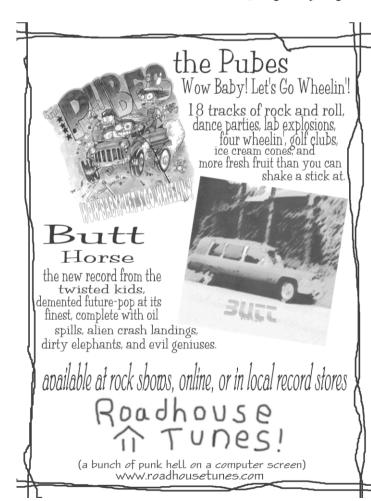
Oh, you crazy art kids with your little esoteric zines filled with pictures, anti-invitation flyers, and a story about hoagies and curses gone awry. Oh, you fucking crazy kids. Elk #2, published back in June 2003 (latest issue is #7!), is promising in its cover color photograph. It features a disheveled young woman checking out Blondie's *Plastic Letters* LP, a cigarette jutting from between her lips as she's about to tug it away. Then you look inside and absent-mindedly flip through the pages of drawings and Xeroxed photos. Yup... It's nothing to engaging or interesting and at its best it could be compared to Philadelphia's Junk Drawer zine, which excels in the mind/art/word vomit in a good way. -Amy Adoyzie (195 Powers Brooklyn, NY 11211)

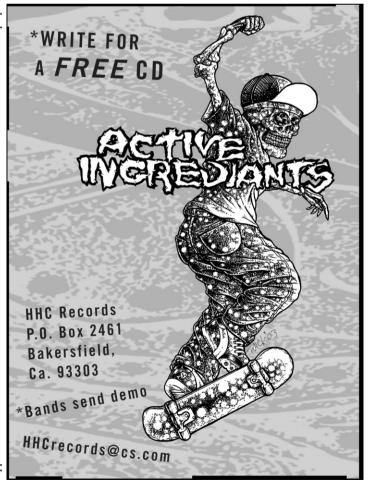
FRAN #4, \$3.50, 8 ½ x 11, 70 pgs. Smarmy hipster humor, and loads of it. An article about prison dating, a Joey Lawrence joke (Whoa! You guys don't care whose toes you step on!), blah, blah, blah. It made me think of that Minutemen song where D Boon yells out, "E! T! C!" You know, as in "et cetera." HOW-EVER! There's an article singing the praises of author John Fante and his novel Ask the Dust. I highly recommend that, and probably any John Fante stuff. -Josh (PO Box 291459, LA, CA 90029)

GHOSTS OF READY REFERENCE, THE #1,

3 stamps or trade. $4 \frac{1}{2} \times \hat{5} \frac{1}{2}$, copied, 48 pgs. In a zine world dominated by music rags, half-baked anarchist invective, and mind-boggling self-obses-

sion, quirky little rags like this are a breath of fresh air. The Ghosts of Ready Reference is sort of like the shit-hot Found, but narrows its scope to one set of found items: bits from the ready reference card file from a public library, where apparently the author works as, you guessed it, a reference librarian. See, before you could just Google any random fact you needed to know, librarians were cutting out wisps of information and gluing them to little cards: sort of an analog search engine. Now these card files are going the way of the buffalo, and the author of Ghosts has salvaged some choice ones and preserved them in this zine. Interspersed throughout the entries (ranging from an illustrated guide to necktie tying, to how one properly displays the stars and stripes) are transcripts of on-the-job interactions with the drunk and insane (classic: bug-eyed freak looking for information on how to make money by fucking). Not only does Ghosts profit from the eclectic fun of anything archaic and out-of-context, it could actually be useful: if I ever go camping with a deaf person, the entries on sign language, the rates at which various kinds of wood burn, and how to determine the wind chill factor will come in









mighty handy. A precious little slice of vanishing Americana. -Brian Howe (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

GIRLYHEAD #5, \$3.95,

8½ x 11, 64 pgs.

As much rockin' fun as you could want out of a magazine, Girlvhead is one of the most consistent reads out there. Smart, yet irreverent, and even thought-provoking. (To be honest, it mostly provokes me to think, "Where could I meet a girl who likes roller derby and listens to the Motards?") This issue's got an interview with David Cross where they ask him if Shaquille O'Neal is too tall (like I said, irreverent), reviews of two strip clubs that serve food, a history of the Amphicar (7 MPH in the water!), a rad, rad, rad, interview with BR Wallers of the Country Teasers ("Q: What do you want to be when you grow up? A: A gopher."), and tons more cool stuff. And to top it off, the first album in their record review section is a fucking Bad Company greatest hits CD. Zines don't get much better than this. -Iosh (Girlyhead, PO Box 225029, San Francisco, CA 94122)

GLOBAL OUTLOOK

#8, \$5.95, newsprint, glossy cover, 56 pgs.

Global Outlook is an independently produced magazine that provides a dissenting view on politics and news. Dissent is important and as American as apple pie. And skepticism is needed now more than ever. But skepticism is worthless if your science isn't tight. Conspiracy theorists will get plenty of fuel for their fires from Global Outlook. But truly skeptical readers who are also into critical reasoning (all of you "coincidence theorists") may be exhausted by the bunkto-logic ratio of some of the articles. Global Outlook gives you some good food for thought, but in order to wade through the balderdash, you will need to do so much independent research that you might as well have written the articles yourself. For example, one promising-sounding article is titled, "26 Top Anomalies of 9/11." Unfortunately, many of the twenty-six "anomalies" listed do not directly relate to the events of 9/11. Most of them are just broad accusations about the machinations of the can continue to claim that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a surprise. Good question—and there have been many interesting books written on the subject. But the issue is ultimately irrelevant, since it is neither an anomaly nor did it happen on 9/11. Sadly, there is very little background or follow-up on the on-topic questions this article does ask. The article implies that Donald Rumsfeld was involved in planning 9/11 by saying Flight 77 "crashed into the Pentagon on the opposite side of where Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's office is located, for some reason." Whether or not Rumsfeld knew about 9/11 in advance, this kind of logic simply fails to make the case. The plane crashed on the opposite side from where A LOT of people's offices are located. So, the janitor whose broom closet is on the opposite side of the building is complicit, too? And what about Don Knotts? He was nowhere near the Pentagon, for some reason. Really makes you wonder, doesn't it? Ultimately, the author of an article like this is guilty of using the same kind of specious reasoning and oversimplifications that he loathes so much from the government. (In fact, the 9/11 Commission Report ends up being a far more harsh rebuke of the government than much of what you'll find in this magazine.) The worst thing is that the articles in Global Outlook that are filled with half-baked logic and unfounded accusations call the veracity of the other articles into question and bore the reader. All of this grousing notwithstanding, this magazine is worth buying at least once. They deserve six of your bucks at least for being some kind of dissenting voice. -Jeff Fox (PO Box 222, Oro, Ontario, Canada L0L 2X0; www.globalresearch.ca)

U.S. government. Anomaly

#14 asks how the government

GO DOWN IN FLAMES W/STYLE – THE WEB WRITINGS OF JIMMY REJECT, free.

8 ½ x 11, photocopied, 17 pgs. I'm proud to say that Jimmy Reject is a friend of mine. Former drummer of Boston punks, The Dimestore Haloes, Reject now writes for the online zine *Now Wave* (www.geocities.com/nowwave), and maintains an online journal at www.livejournal.com/

users/reject77. This zine consists of screen prints of items he's written at both those websites. There's some really inspired stuff here about some of Jimmy's favorite music. The presentation is DIY to the extreme, but the content is top notch. –Brian Mosher (Jimmy Reject c/o Blueboy Productions, PO Box 2033, Ocean Bluff, MA, 02065)

GREEN ANARCHY, #17, Summer 2004, \$4 US,

free to prisoners, 8 x 10 ½, glossy cover, bound, newsprint At face value, I love this zine: it gives me all the information I would never be exposed to through normal, mainstream media channels. They've turned me on to Rewilding, the act of getting back to our caveman-like, self-reliant roots. Plus, as a minor league anarchist myself, they tend to expose the corporate backshilling big business fucks as the greedy bitches they are development equals profit (see any of your local "multi-use" environments under construction), too much technology is bad (my grocery store knows to send me Gillette coupons because their "discount" card has traced my purchases of razor blades), and democracy is an outdated mode of politik pussies. Understood. for Indeed. But then, as these antitechnocratic folks rage against the machine, you can point out the obvious flaws: a website, four-color processing for a cover photo, charging four dollars for an issue. Do anarchists have money? Do they buy subscriptions? I'm just curious, is all. It'd be a shame to lose GA to such a business model, and a bad thing not to hear the "other" side's thoughts, but, at times, reading GA can be like watching Fox News, where everybody is either for or against you. In times like this it's best to ask, "What would Tiltwheel do?" –Greg Barbera (Green Anarchy, PO Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440; collective@greenanarchy.org; www.greenanarchy.org)

HEY WHAT'S UP?,

#3, \$1, 5 ½ x 8 ½, photocopied, 18 pgs.

So I'm totally in love with Troy Gallaher and I don't care who knows it. I don't know who the kid is, but *Hey What's Up* is so fucking retardedly loff, unassuming, and full of creepy doodles that I can't help my teen-girl infatuation

with its creator. Troy is like that one friend you have, the one who's pretty low-key and tells stories with punch lines that are so subtle that he isn't even aware of them. The super-short short stories will make you chuckle and scratch your head; two of America's favorite pastimes!

-Amy Adoyzie (Troy Gallaher, 1047 Lanette Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45230, tabloidssay@aol.com)

MY FAT IRISH ASS!, # -6

(the Special Election Issue), \$2, full-sized, photocopied, 32 pgs. Mv Fat Irish Ass is the funniest zine around. Like a stuck toilet bowl at a fancy party, it is filled to the brim with pure raunch and you can't help but laugh. There are certainly loftier and more intellectual magazines out there, but there are few that are as funny or more inspired than MFIA. And not every mag on your coffee table has to be *Utne Reader*. either. This magazine is worth its cover price just for the one-panel family cartoons that are given new, dirty punch lines and hastily pasted-in drug references. That will never, ever stop being funny. If this mag had gags like this, but was only a few pages long, it might seem unimpressive. But they keep cranking issues out, jam-packed with obnoxious jokes. This is a serious effort. This issue is the Special Election Issue and it takes quite a few jabs at King George II. A favorite is the now-famous picture of the Dubya wiping out on a Segway scooter with the caption, "Falls off supposedly idiot proof Segway." It's juvenile, puerile and totally hilarious. Keep 'em coming.

–Jeff Fox (PO Box 6539,
Washington, DC 20035)

N.I.N.N.Y (NOW I'M IN NEW YORK), #1, \$3, 4 x 6, 38 pgs.

This is independent literature, written by a man involved with the punk scene for over twenty years. It's full of good short stories that remind you we're all fucking crazy. The author of the zine has lived all over the west coast and, now on the east coast, "grows to love New York more everyday." He says artists have long fantasized over a nuclear-ravaged metropoliptic city such as NY. His short stories are comforting and his voice has a tone familiar to many of us DIY kids. If you can read and live on the east or west coast or possibly somewhere in between, read this. You won't be disappointed. -Gabe Rock (PO Box 625, New York, NY 10276, ninnyzine@yahoo.com)

NEW SCHEME, THE #10,

free, 8 ½ x 11, newsprint, 42 pgs. A solid zine that you can tell wants to go glossy and get bar-coded, once the money comes rolling in—

for now, newsprint pages with a nice, clear layout. It's the standard format, interviews and reviewsthey have enough clout to score interviews with Challenger, The Unicorns (which the writer handled gracefully, even though he knew they were being dicks and fucking with him), and The Bouncing Souls. Some competent if not too thought-provoking political articles. Anyone who buys a zine with a caricature of Bush on the cover is probably already on our team, so I'm not sure what they're meant to accomplish. Created by a small staff, with most of the reviews written by the editor himself, this mag could use more diversity of voice but definitely has the desire and potential to expand and gain a higher profile (they already offer subscriptions with free CDs, online content, and have enough half-page ads from record labels you've heard of to mark them as a contender). The writing is mostly unostentatious and informative, actually telling you things about the music. No ranting, no one-sentence disses. Gad! What a concept. Sort of treading the line between rock/punk zine and trendy hipster rag, one gets the impression that The New Scheme is an ambitious publication that began as the former but is aiming for the latter. Godspeed, boys. You seem pretty cool; I wonder how you handle living in Boulder ("Damn it, Dave Matthews at the Fox again?") Call me when you establish a pay scale, my pen is poised. -Brian Howe (New Scheme Publishing, PO Box 7542, Boulder, CO 80306-7542, www.thenewscheme.com)

OX, #55, 4 Euros, 8 ½ x 11, 162 pages

At first, I was intimidated by the sheer weight and thickness of this zine. I was relieved to find that I not only didn't have to read all the articles, I would not be able to read all the articles even if I wanted to. While most of the headlines are in English, the text is all in German. There are interviews and features about dozens of different bands, hundreds of photographs, and reviews. If you read German, it's probably worth picking up. —Brian Mosher (Ox Fanzine, Joachim Hiller, PO Box 10 22 25, 42766, Haan, Germany, www.ox-fanzine.de)

PROFANE EXISTENCE,

#45, \$7, 4 x 6, 100 pgs.

Making punk a threat again, let's see...YES! For over fifteen years, *Profane Existence* has been one of the most important zines keeping the black bloc motivated. In this fifteen-year anniversary issue, they interview Phobia (what a surprise). *Profane Existence* features new underground artists and presents in-

depth articles on issues that would concern the typical vegan peace punk. Articles like "Globalization and Femicide" on p.37 focus on serious issues like the hundreds of raped and murdered women occurring in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico along the US border where there are more than three hundred foreignowned factories. A fine example of why *Profane Existence* is an informative zine making punk a threat again for those few punks who read. –Gabe Rock (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

PUNK PLANET, Issue #63,

\$4.95, 8 x 11, bound, newsprint It seems like only yesterday the scene police was all over PP for slapping a bar code on the front of their publication. But those days are only a distant memory now as PP has embraced a broader format. slightly redesigned the zine over the years to fit in short news articles and investigative journalism (along with their standard Q&A band interviews and exhaustive CD review section). The PP of today seems less content with exposing up-and-coming bands as they are trying to land themselves in some liberal/alternative news media echelon. I still enjoy each issue of PP, it's always a good read, but somehow the zine has outgrown its usefulness for me. Two things haven't changed: the publication still has one of the cleanest designs around and the review section still ranks as one of the best in the indie music world. -Greg Barbera (Punk Planet, 4229 N. Honore, Chicago, IL 60613; www.punkplanet.com)

PUNK SHOCKER, #11,

1.5 British Pounds, $4\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$, 70 pgs. This zine's been around forever The first issue came out in 1989. But no more. This is the final issue, according to editor Andy Shocker. So he's jampacked this little volume with excellent interviews with Poison Idea, The Gits, Sensa Yuma, and Icons of Filth. Andy's a guy who likes to drink and listen to good punk music, and then he likes to write about it. It seems like he's genuinely friends with a lot of the musicians he talks to, and obviously has a long history as a zine publisher in England. He's also got about a zillion record reviews, with some pretty insightful comments. Definitely worth checking out. -Brian Mosher (Punk Shocker World Headquarters, PO Box I.T.A., Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1TA, England)

RANCID NEWS, #7, \$4,

8 ½ x 11, 116 pages

Not a Rancid fanzine. The editor than in the larger skate glossies. I tries to explain how she came up with the name, but it doesn't seem I'm not going to RAZORCAKE 105

to make any sense. The articles are all hard to follow and are full of spelling and punctuation errors that make it difficult to know what was meant. There are interviews with NOFX, The Epoxies, 7 Seconds, and many more bands from both sides of the Atlantic. There are also a bunch of articles about living the DIY lifestyle and a series of how-to articles on everything from putting out your own zine to taking your band on tour. The editor is definitely passionate about the music and the lifestyle, but not so much about editing. –Brian Mosher (Rancid News, PO Box 382, 456-458 The Strand, London, WCR2 0DZ, www.rnzine.co.uk)

SCENERY: FIRE AS A METAPHOR,

#14, 8 ½ x 11, semi-glossy cover, professionally printed, 30 pages Fire As a Metaphor is an essay written by Rich Simpson. This zine is a graphic novel-style presentation of this essay, with art by Mike Taylor, publisher of Scenery zine. It deals with the city of Gainesville, FL, and how the city copes with and has been changed by the fact that it is host to the campus of the University of Florida. I'm not sure, but I get the impression both Simpson and Taylor are alumni of the university. The artwork is interesting, with a lot more depth than it seems at first. The text is a little hard to follow; I had to read several sections twice to get what he was saying. It's more poetic than your typical essay. Pretty interesting stuff, though. -Brian Mosher (Mike Taylor, PO Box 28226, Providence, RI, 02908)

SECOND WIND #2, free,

5 ½ by 8 ½, copied, 24 pages All right now. This is what a zine should do: document an aspect of the culture. Many music zines have forgotten this rule, becoming auxiliary arms of the PR machine instead. Many "personal" zines don't seem to realize that one person does not a culture make, and most of us aren't interesting enough for documentation of our passing thoughts and neuroses to be worth a damn. Second Wind, black and white, clean, simple layouts, is a no-bullshit snapshot of the skate scene from Albuquerque, NM. Real lo-fi, done on the chean but obviously with TLC. Grainy photos of pools, good grinds, hot tricks, gnarly rashes, and killer verts, accompanied by concise text that describes the locations and experiences with no whining or ranting. Published by a woman, you'll find more coverage of female skaters than in the larger skate glossies. I like the rest of this zine so much













even mention the cheesy poem about skating. Oh... shit. –Brian Howe (Teresa Trego, 412 High Street SE Apt. C, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

NMskatezine@hotmail.com)

SECOND WIND,

#3, \$2. 5 ½ x 8 ½, photocopied, 26 pgs.

A simple little skate zine produced by one Ms. Faye Lynn, stuffed full of photos of girls and boys skating junk. Faye visits Burnside and Newberg in Portland, Oregon; there are interviews with Hudson Postone and Ester Goody; and more pictures of girls skating. Did you know that skating and junk is the new playing house? –Amy Adoyzie (Faye Lynn Richards, 2311 Stevens Drive NW, Albuquerque, NM 87112)

SECOND WIND,

#4, \$2, chapbook, xeroxed, stapled, 32 pgs.

A skate zine by, and for, the girls from New Mexico. Contained herein are: interviews with Sasha La Rochelle and Haveboard.com website maker John Finnegan, a ten-parks-in-three-days tour diary of sorts from Arizona, and lotsa pictures of ditches. Ditches are my favorite thing to skate. God bless the ditch skaters of the world. —Greg Barbera (Faye Richards, 2311 Stevens Drive NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112; Nmskatezine@hotmail.com)

SLUG & LETTUCE,

#80, 11 x 17 ½,

free with postage, 20 pgs.

I still have the same problem with Slug & Lettuce that I always have: the print is too damn small. And because it's so small, and printed on oversized paper, there's a shitload of text to try to read. It's relatively well written, and some of the articles are pretty interesting if you're interested in the vegan wing of the DIY lifestyle. There are some articles about hardcore bands in the Richmond area, and a pretty cool photo collage of shots taken at various hardcore shows during the summer of 2004. -Brian Mosher (Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA, 23261-6632)

SLUG, Issue #188, free,

8 x 11, color/newsprint, 48 pgs. Seminal Salt Lake City zine featuring mostly band interviews and CD reviews with an obvious slant-slash-headnod to their locale. They recently put out a nicely packaged double CD comp called *Death By Slug* that pretty much sums up this rag's dedication to all things SLC. This issue has Sebadoh on the cover but nary an article about 'em

in the zine. Must be all that good Utah beer the staff has been drinking. –Greg Barbera (Salt Lake Under Ground, 2225 S. 500 East, ste. 206, SLC, UT 84106; www.slugmag.com)

SON OF HATEZINE #8,

51/2 x 81/2, copied, 45 pgs.

I tried to read this zine thoroughly; I really did. But my eyes kept bouncing off the page to alight on more interesting things, like the fly buzzing around the light fixture. Self-expression is great. It's everyone's inalienable right. More power to Rocco Roc Nuts (yeah) for getting his self-expression on. But it makes for pretty poor reading. I was worried when I saw the title. I'm a little too old for solipsistic angst and vague "the world is fucked" musings, and I'm only twenty-five. I was right to worry. This is like a blog on paper. The entire intro of the zine is about how hard it was to make the zine. At least two articles begin with the line: "I just woke up from a much-needed nap." Thrill to Rocco's accounts of crappy jobs, dreams about celebrities, masturbating to Internet porn, and dealing with his homicidal urges and the general stupidity of the entire human race. I don't know; I don't want to be a dick. Maybe I'm missing the point. But this seems like your typical "my every uninteresting move is interesting" zine, which often goes hand and hand with a sense of unbridled superiority and misanthropy on the author's part. Five bucks says Rocco irrationally loves Hunter Thompson. But gonzo journalism isn't so effective when it's about... nothing. Luckily, there's also some actual content: an interview with a local zombie-movie filmmaker, an update on the Woggles' activities, band features of some interest (if you live in Eugene, Oregon), a review of a nude beach, and a bunch of short album reviews. Good for a dash of local color, but I don't see how this would interest anyone outside of Eugene, unless you like reading about someone's trip to the video store. Hey, Rocco, it's nothing personal—my life's not that interesting either. That's why I write about things that ARE interesting, instead of my life. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go and take a much-needed nap. -Brian Howe (Hatezine HQ, Galloway, PO Box 2743, Eugene, OR, 97402,

STIR KRAZY, #8, \$3,

roccogalloway@yahoo.com)

8 x 11, 22 pgs.

Holy fuck, a girl pissing blood or kool-aid out of her well-illustrated color pencilized pussylips onto an American flag. Need I say more? Lots of stolen comics and a bunch of one-page articles on "Non-zero games for a better world." Whatever the fuck that is. Apparently, it's some shit on how to live your life, so this zine is perfect for rebellious teenagers or maybe a huge stoner. Most of the non-zero nonsense is notes about a book by Robert Wright, but the notes never flat out say anything specific. It's as if a guy took some acid and started writing. There's also a bunch of plagiarized shit from the protest tactics of the SFPD, an article on anthropologist Scott Atran, and suicide bombers. The zine lacks a focus and is not very entertaining. I would not give it two thumbs up my butt. -Gabe Rock (PO Box 25148, Rochester, NY 14625)

TAKE ON YOUR HEROS,

#4, free, 8 ½ x 11, 24 pages With a large font and double spacing, this zine is easier on the eyes than most. There's also less material than you get with most, but the quality makes up for the lack of quantity, and then some. Insightful interviews with The Rezillos, Hot Cross, Saccharine Trust, and Planes Mistaken for Stars, some nice photos, and some well-written record reviews. This is good stuff by a guy who's obviously a fan of DIY music, and who is also a very good writer. -Brian Mosher (PO Box 98395, Atlanta, GA, 30359)

THE SADDAM & ARMITAGE SHOW,

3 stamps or trade, 5 ½ x 8 ½, photocopied, 14 pgs.

Do you know who Deputy Secretary of State Richard Secretary Armitage is? Yeah, I didn't know who the fucker was either but I grew to love his grumpy bear demeanor in this fantasy pictocomic dialogue between he and dictator-galore Saddam Hussein. Is this making any sense? Okay, imagine you get really [insert your inebriation of choice] and you sit around imagining all the silly exchanges that might transpire in an interrogation between the bumbling Armitage and wiseass Hussein. It's slightly amusing, especially when the Ronnie Reagan ghost makes a cameo. Amy Adoyzie (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118,

www.ishitmypants.blogspot.com)

VERBICIDE, #11,

\$3.95, 8 ½ x 11, 63 pages More of a magazine than a zine, with real advertisements and everything. They've got a variety of features, including four pieces of short fiction, three band interviews (Descendents, Tiger Army, The Shins), some poetry from Jason J. Marchi, a collection of photos by Leanne O'Connor, a comic strip, and, of course, some record reviews. Like I said, it's more of a magazine, but it's still got that independent feel to it, despite the professional quality writing and glossy cover. The cover photo is of Tiger Army. -Brian Mosher (Scissor Press, 32 Alfred Street, New Haven, CT 06512)

VERBICIDE, #11,

\$3.95, 8 x 11, 65 pgs.

This zine features fiction and stories that are pretty choice reading. "Hotels and Hospitals" by Ben Folks is great, as well as "KALM Correspondence" by B. Brandon Barker. It's this fiction piece that starts with some crazy veteran's letters to a radio station, and it's the kind of story you read without knowing you almost finished the story. It also has interviews with Tiger Army, Descendents, and the Shins. If you are a fan of independent literature, give it a read. Other than all that, it has a boatload of reviews. -Gabe Rock (32 Alfred St., New Haven, CT 06512, www.scissorpress.com)

YOU IDIOT! #3,

5½ x 8½, \$2, 56 pgs.

Nate, the author of You Idiot!, is hilarious. Not hilarious like Jerry Seinfeld talking about what the deal is with those airline peanuts ("Didia ever notice that? And what is with those little cups?") or hilarious like Martin Lawrence eloquently critiquing how some women wash their nether regions, but hilarious like one of your buddies making fun of Macho Man's rap album (which he does in this issue). It's not highbrow comedy, but it's not strictly toilet humor, either. Just simple, funny observations on everyday absurdities. You *Idiot!* is the driving force behind the War on the War on Drugs, and truth be told, it's probably the only force behind it. He makes fun of anti-drug campaigns that I haven't thought about since before I was old enough to read, but like I said, it's hilarious. I'd go so far as to say that if I dropped this in the toilet while reading it, I'd actually consider fishing it out and finishing it. -Josh (PO Box 8995, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

RAZORCAKE 107

Bush Family Fortunes: The Best Democracy Money Can Buy: DVD

by Greg Palast

Greg Palast is an investigative journalist set in the mold of I.F. Stone and George Seldes. He's a muckraker who had written a great book titled *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*. He's an American journalist who gets most of his work via England's BBC TV and works for the *Guardian*, which indicates how much of a threat he is to the American political status quo. He has to go overseas to cover domestic politics. Not only is he a shrewd commentator on American

politics, he's a rock solid investigative journalist. This DVD is an hourlong documentary distilling the information he's collected from tracking Bush for several years.

Truth be told, Palast can be a heavy handed and a little finger wagging. I'm willing to ignore those slight annoyances and remember that previous "troublemaker" investigative journalists like Seldes were often called as subtle as house fires. What Palast ultimately brings to the table is something few political contemporary commentators can boast. Raw data unearthed by legal snooping techniques; the stuff that was supposed to be hidden for time eternal. He unseals evidence that's marked "confidential." He has the uncanny ability to sniff out inter-company memos and find weak links in governmental paper trails. If you find his commentary a little off putting, take a step back. You'll notice that no one is refuting the often very damning data that he's found. They usually just shut up, run away, or call Palast a vile human being. But they don't refute his evidence. This is an important distinction. Palast is on to something.

What *Bush Family Fortunes* accomplishes is a portrait of George W. Bush. It can be distilled one sentence: money and power are the fuels of politics. Palast makes many salient points, from George W. Bush's origins as a failed oil man (four of his companies went belly up), to a failed politician (he lost his first race), to becoming governor of Texas, through his presidency. Here are a couple of the high points.

There is no other reason that in 1968, twelve days before being subject to the draft, when George W. Bush scored an extremely low—twenty-five out of a possible hundred on the entrance exam—he leapfrogged over 100,000 applicants to get a coveted spot in the National Guard. He was also more of a rarity in that he applied as a non-pilot and got training in the guard. How? His father, George Bush Sr., a congressman at the time, called in a favor. Today, there is still a \$1,000 reward to anyone who can bring forth tangible evidence showing that he served duty when later stationed in Alabama. George W. Bush's records are currently incomplete. They have been purged, hidden. No Bush has come out and brought the documents to light. Here we come across The First Rule of Bush: deny everything that isn't positive and shred all evidence.

The people who supported George W. Bush's 2000 presidential bid were luxuriously rewarded for their contributions. Forty-three Pioneers—people who raised at least \$100,000 for the Bush candidacy, collecting record amounts of money for a presidential election—got sweet governmental appointments. Nineteen of them became ambassadors. One of the largest winners was Ken Lay, CEO of Enron. Three days after being sworn in as president, George W. Bush signed an energy bill which deregulated California's energy, nearly bankrupting California. Enron earned billions of dollars. Don't believe any of that hooshwash that George W. Bush didn't know Ken Lay. Palast was able to find video in which Enron heart-felt thanks for Bush's continued contributions, to both his family and his campaign. The Second Rule of Bush: extravagantly reward the faithful.

Florida's elections were rigged in so many ways. It's almost amazing that Gore scored any votes at all. Like a never-ending onion being peeled, graft occurred at the national level and trickled down to the smallest Floridian town. 179,855 votes were not counted due to Katherine Harris, Florida's Secretary of State, calling for a premature halt of the tallying. In addition to that, 94,000 voters were put on a purge list. 95% of the people were incorrectly identified as felons by faulty data collection. (Many of the people purged were listed as felons in the future. Some had their conviction date being in 2007.) It's hard not to feel cheated. That brings us to The Third Rule of Bush: cheat in fabulous ways. Pile it on, layer upon layer, to make it more failsafe.

To let you know that this DVD isn't just about digging up skeletons of the past, The Fourth Rule of Bush, their perpetual motion machine, is **RAZORCAKE** 108 "Money gets office. Office gets more money." Here is



where the entire enterprise gets dangerous without an end in sight. There are plenty of pictures of George Bush Sr. palling with the Saudi royal family (and remember that those who flew into the World Trade Center were fifteen Saudis, not Iraqis). What's dangerous is that all high-level investigations against powerful Saudis have been stymied. Investigations by the joint 9/11 inquiry, when the questioned possible links to oilrich, Bush-friendly families and corporations, have been thwarted by the same administration who has declared "a war on terror." It doesn't make sense until

you realize that many of George W. Bush's policies aren't really about thwarting terror. Those policies are about oil and power. Palast unearthed White House documents generated well before the second Iraqi war. It outlined strategic plans of dividing Iraq's resources, primarily oil. A conservative think tank, Judicial Watch, perfectly fine with legitimate reasons for America going to war, stumbled upon plans drawn up by Dick Cheney that parceled off Iraq to oil company executives. The second Iraqi war had nothing to do with military strategy. It was motivated by smash and grab economics

In summation: if you have friends or family members who say, "Show me some evidence. We didn't go to war for oil. We went to war for.... (fill in the blank)," this is the perfect DVD to show, often in their own handwriting, that the leaders of this country don't have soldiers, the middle class, and the poor in mind when masterminding a new war. Powerful, still-unrefuted data is the crux of this important DVD. –Todd (www.gregpalast.com)

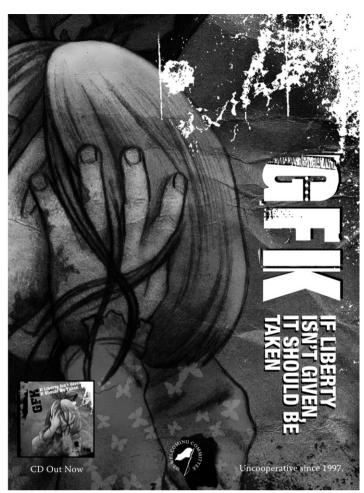
The Ex in Beautiful Frenzy, VHS

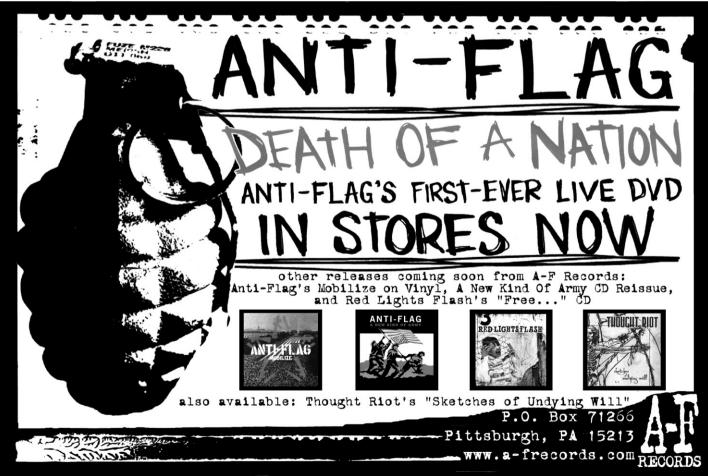
The Ex are the oldest independent band in the Netherlands, having recently celebrated their twentieth anniversary. If you haven't heard or heard of The Ex—and you're in good company—they're a challenging, discordant, far-reaching band with an expansive catalog. Think along the lines of Sonic Youth, the classical avant-garde of the Kronos Quartet, the syncopated, angular approach of Savage Republic, and wide-open jazz improvisation. This documentary, filmed over a period of two years, does a great job of encapsulating the band, letting them speak in their own words, play their own songs, and let the viewer get a candid, uplifting view of a long-running band. Many times, I was reminded of a similar band, Fugazi, and the extremely engaging film about them, Document. There's a definite love of the subject that permeates both films. Although Beautiful Frenzy is a little less than an hour, it covers a lot of ground at a very easy and natural pace. It covers the roots of the band, which seem almost as incidental as their music. One member happened to be a taxi driver who liked the band, only to suddenly join, and another member joined because of a shared interest in the Spanish Revolution, not necessarily the music. It's also funny that they had a gig before they even had songs to play.

What's impressive about the Ex is how down-to-earth and congenial they seem, while how they've operated as a band is nothing short of a complete rejection of the music industry. They control all aspects of the band, from being their own managers, to putting out their own records, to designing all of their artwork, to booking their own shows everywhere from bombed-out factories to huge jazz fests. They control their own destiny. It's all matter of fact, forward thinking, and the opposite of low-thought bands that are never in short supply, willing to sell off all shreds of artistic integrity for the dream of selling some CDs.

Here's the caveat. The Ex is not easy listening, and, no, they're not for everyone. They directly confront casual listeners and fearlessly go from punk blasts to Hungarian folk songs, to playing with full orchestras. This said, I don't think that I'm a fan of the band's music. It's organic, always moving away from any discernable center, employs expansive aesthetics, and is arresting. All of that is true, but they're too jammy and scattered for my tastes. But don't let that overshadow the fact that I have nothing but absolute admiration of The Ex's approach to not only music, not only how they operate as a band, but how they approach life. They're very compassionate to one another and their audience. It's irrefutable they're fighting the good fight, and since there are so few operational models for bands of this type, I highly recommend *Beautiful Frenzy* for anyone interested in music that doesn't easily yield into any mold. –Todd (Honey Bear, 1730 E. Oltorf #135, Austin, TX 78741)







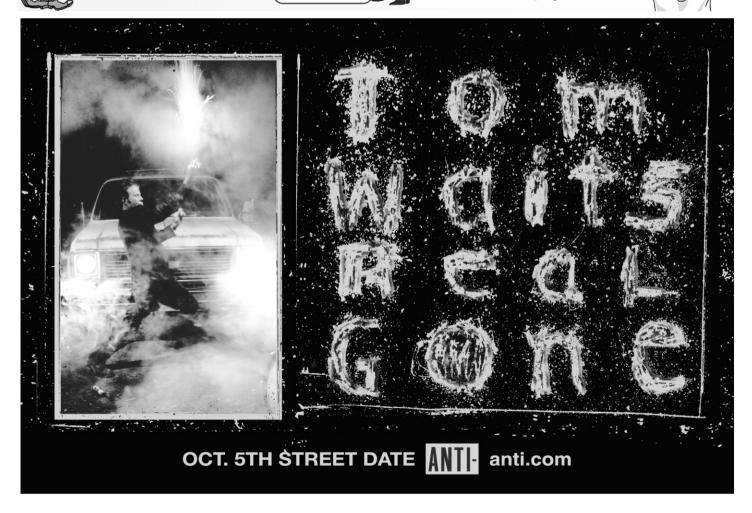
The Ultimate Punk Music Store! BUSINESS DAYS

Hey, everyone... I'm sure you know the holidays are coming up. You should consider [NIERUNICON] CIFF CERTIFICATES!

They're ALVANS [INSTOCES, and they're CHEAP TO STIP. Don't waste time hoping you buy the right gift! TARE THE CASY ROUTE and let them decide later!

Of course, if you want to pick something yourself, you have OXER SOCOONTENS OF MUSICAND MERCH to look through to find just the right gifts.





Rockin' Bones Videozine, DVD

A return, of sorts, to the golden age of punk "video zines," where a guy with a video camera sets out to assorted clubs and records interviews and live performances by his favorite bands, in this case the Briefs, the Casualties, TSOL, the Dead Kennedys, DI, Sloppy Seconds, UK Subs, The Queers and a bunch of others. As can be expected from what is obviously a wholly DIY affair, the sound quality ranges from okay to atrocious, but what is lacking in audio clarity is made up in some great live footage of, and interviews with some great bands (the Casualties excepted, of course). In short, some crucial eye candy. –Jimmy Alvarado (Rockin' Bones, PO Box 133, Benton, TX 76201)

Social Distortion: Live in Orange County, DVD

There was a time, approximately two decades ago, when I really liked this band. Their early recordings with Posh Boy were just the bee's knees, and Mommy's Little Monster remains one of my favorite pre-1984 punk records. I saw them oodles of times back then, slam-danced my little brains out and graffitied that little happy face with a fedora and X'd eyes of theirs everywhere for years. Then Mike cleaned up, found Johnny Cash and the band released *Prison Bound*. From that point onward, I have made a concerted effort to minimize my exposure to Social Distortion's music. Why, because they "progressed" and didn't sound "punk" anymore, in my opinion? Quite the opposite, my friends. I'm all for bands maturing and exploring the gray edges around this "punk" thing, but, frankly Mike's attempts at outlaw country punk have always rang hollow and silly to these ears. I saw this DVD in the piles at Razorcake and figured what the fuck, might as well check in and see if things were as dismal as I remember them. My verdict? Well, ves and no. Mike has become guite the professional over the years. Last time I saw him play live, he passed out midsong and kerplunked right into the drum set. Wasn't a pretty picture, indeed. Here, he's all cleaned up, sportin' tattoo-splattered arms and neck, and cranking out hits both from the days of yore right on up to the present. Lots of classics can be found here—"Mommy's Little Monster," "The Creeps," "1945," "Telling Them," and others, but sadly, no "Playpen" or "Mainliner"—interspersed with the later hits all the kiddies go nuts over. These are all delivered with precision and faithfulness to the originals, albeit a couple of beats slower, by Mike and a backup group that includes Johnny Two Bags and Chalo "Plugz" Quintana. The downside is that the

songs sound entirely too professional, almost like a corporate rock band covering old punk hits, which is really disconcerting considering who's responsible. Mike, with his eyeliner, fluffy hat and overalls, looks like one the Dexy's Midnight Runners gone grease monkey. He waxes poetic about the president, old punks, and White supremacists, and the more recent tunes are still pretty wretched. Add to that a bunch of pointless "extras" (unless you wanna see Mike shoot dice, ride around with his Chihuahua, and sing acoustic versions of his songs in a bathroom) and you've got one overwhelming recommendation to pick up a copy of the just DVD'd *Another State of Mind* and see just why this band was such a big fuckin' deal back when they mattered. Watching this was about as exciting as watching *The Song Remains the Same* stone sober. I'll try 'em again in another twenty years. –Jimmy Alvarado (Time Bomb, 688 N. Coast Highway PMB #519, Laguna Beach, CA 92651)

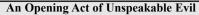
Skulls: Night of the Living Skulls, CD + DVD

It's cooler than hell when an old band comes back and is actually better than the first time out, and such is the case with the Skulls. One of LA's original punk bands, the original band released very little product in its initial run in the '70s and, while that product was good, it paled in comparison to what some of their contemporaries were doing. Which is not to say they weren't all that, but it is no easy feat to stand out when you've got the Weirdos, the Germs, the Bags, the Screamers and the Plugz to contend with, you know? They faded quietly, some members went on to Wall of Voodoo and surpassed all them other bands in notoriety, and those of us who dug their raw sound were forced to make the most of a single and some live tracks on the first of the *Live at the Masque* comps. When Billy Bones reformed the band a few years ago, there was no indication that anyone should even pay all that much attention, especially considering how many other bands/people from that bygone era had come back from the dead to take another stab at cementing their name in LA punk's history books, only to make utter fools of themselves. Then that first new release, a single on Headline Records, came out and coldcocked any naysayers and skeptics who lumped the Skulls in with the hordes of has-beens who had come before. Backed by an all-new group of young malcontents, Billy has managed to breathe some life into the corpse of both his old band and LA punk, and over the course of two albums has released some of the best music this tired, arrogant city has ever heard, and just in case anyone

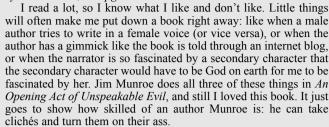




thought he managed to do so via studio trickery, here is a live document to prove that these guys can rip shit up when put in front of an audience. Recorded at a recent show at LA's El Rev Theatre (which also included a performance by the Weirdos, I believe), this multi-camera, pro-shot extravaganza shows a band in full command of an awesome artillery of musical prowess, great songs and seemingly limitless energy. They blast through their set like they're lobbing plastique-encased hand grenades at the audience, deftly showing all in attendance that you have to be neither young, inept nor a virtuoso to rock, just fucking determined, which is what good punk, at its core, has always been about. This is one of those rare documents where the viewer can actually pine for the lost opportunity of seeing the performance in person, while at the same time being more than able to make the band's next gig. Much respect and kudos must be doled out to the legendary Bad Otis Link, who is responsible for the direction and hard work put into making this look and sound as great as it does. Also included here are a number of interviews with Billy and assorted members, both past and present, providing a detailed history of the band, and some additional footage of the band performing at a birthday party for an eight-year-old kid named "the Milkman." I was also surprised to see an old schoolmate of mine, Benny Siegal (of local bands Batman's Enemies and AD Do, and Multiplication of the Typical Joe fanzine), interviewed on here as well, not to mention hearing him say that Ink Disease fanzine, which was started by two of his siblings, is planning to publish again, but I digress. If watching 'em play ain't enough for you, them fine Finger folks have included the set on CD as well. Dunno how long the Skulls are gonna be with us this time 'round, but I highly suggest you make the most of their presence while they're still here. -Jimmy Alvarado (Finger, 18092 Sky Park



by Jim Munroe, 250 pgs.



An Opening Act is a book about Kate, an artist type in Toronto whose roommate happens to be a demon. Kate accidentally walks

in on one of her roommate's demonic rituals, and she's immediately fascinated. She first convinces Lilith (the roommate from hell) to perform the demonic ritual at gallery showing that Kate is promoting. The ritual gets such a great reception that Kate gets the idea to take the show on the road. She schedules a seven-city tour with Lilith and two more sidekicks who they pick up along the way. As the book and the tour progress, things get more bizarre. Strange men from Lilith's past start appearing. The rituals get more intense. Kate and the two sidekicks are drawn in, and the tour keeps growing. They end up adding more dates at the end, and working their way down to New Orleans, the spot where the supernatural has room to become the natural.

As with any tour, the characters meet a bunch of interesting people along the way. They come to understand more about themselves and their subculture, and, as readers, we get to feel like we're on tour with them. We get to establish that bond that you can only form by travelling around the country in a weird, underground bubble, sleeping on floors and smelling each others odors and giving away deep secrets on long drives across middle America. In this way, the book is an extended, fictional tour diary. Really, though, with its rounded characters and lucid social commentary, it's much more than that. Lilith the demon is a pretty interesting character. I'm never as fascinated by her as Kate is, but it's okay because Kate—who swerved off the path towards yuppiedom and became one of us—is so engaging, she trumps Lilith. I also enjoyed this book because I've actually followed the same path that these characters take on tour. I've performed at some of the real life bookstores where they perform, and I know the roads they take. This adds layers to my reading. Still, the book's enjoyable even if you haven't gone on this tour. It's fun just to watch the ravenhead dance, to see the angel get stabbed, and to feel like you're

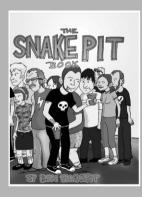
part of the show. -Sean (No Media Kings, <www.nomediakings.com>)



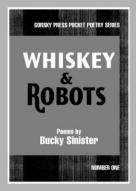


Circle #51A Irvine, CA 92614)

BORN TO ROCK BY TODD TAYLOR



THE SNAKE PIT BOOK
BY BEN SNAKEPIT



WHISKEY & ROBOTS BY BUCKY SINISTER

PO BOX 42024, LA, CA 90042 WWW.GORSKYPRESS.COM