

# Rock N Roll



Issue  
#5

## Purgatory

From Punk  
to Rockabilly  
and anything  
in between

Mindrot  
for the  
less than  
tasteful

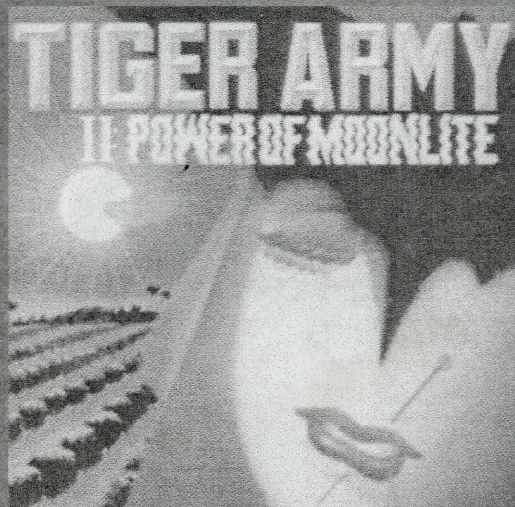
The Templars  
Big John Bates  
Iron Cross  
The Pits

The Roustabouts  
Dragstrip Demons  
Gein & The Graverobbers



Nick 13, Geoff Kresge & London May deliver 13 all-new tracks of dark, aggressive American Psychobilly where the rumbling of a stand-up bass crashes into haunting melody in an explosion of nocturnal power...

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Fuck off to: People who refer to other people as "chief," Nile virus-carrying mosquitoes, the tough guy moron who hosts Police Videos on Fox, bigoted bands afraid to share a stage with black people, and Limp Biscuit fans - I mean, what the hell is wrong with you, that shit is mindless macho bravado marketed to 14 year old boys desperately trying to mask their insecurities with lyrics almost as creative as what Fabio might come up with during roid rage, and music not even as interesting as a David Letterman monologue. I can't believe anyone would subject themselves to that torturous crap, unless their IQ was lower than Jesse Helms' sperm count. And don't get me started on even stupider bands like Crazy Town "come come my lady, sugar pie honey baby..." Ugh. And fuck MTV for making these people stars. Also bite me Guitar Magazine and your top 100 best guitar solos of all time, c'mon "Stairway to Heaven?" I mean, how can you place the Eagles (the Eagles for fucksake!!) in the top 10 of your shitty list and put Brian Setzer at 98?

# SAMIZDAT MAG

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**Iron Cross** Pg. 11      **The Templars** pg. 5

**Big John Bates** Pg. 2      **THE PITS** Pg. 18

**DRAGSTRIP DEMONS** Pg. 7      **The Roustabouts** Pg. 14

**GEIN AND THE GRAVEROBBER** Pg. 14

*Other Features:*

Music Reviews.....	26
Live Reviews.....	37
The American Pit Bull Terrier: Guilty Until Proven Innocent.....	24
Violette Szabo: WWII Heroine.....	23
Looking Back: Robert Johnson.....	10
How to Book Shows: A DIY Guide.....	20
Obituary: Big Daddy Roth.....	10
Horoscopes.....	48
Prisons For Sale.....	22

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# An interview with Big John Bates

<http://www.bigjohnbates.com/>

*When you think of Canada, you think of mounties, fresh cold air, socialized health care, and hockey, eh hoser? Well, add psychobilly to the list. Hailing from the same region that spawned the Deadcats and the Subway Thugs, I give you the newest psychobilly menace from the North: Big John Bates. This is an interview with him and his band conducted in April 2001. - BL*



RRP: Who are the current members of BJB, and how did you meet? Who are the Bombshell Girls?

BJB: The current band is myself, being Big John Bates, and the newly christened "Furies" (as in Big John Bates and the Furies) who are Caroline (bass/vocals) and Kermit (drums). The girls call themselves the Voodoo Dollz and they are Bombshell Betty and Veronica Vicious (no relation to Sid!) - they have some cool choreography and outfits and the routines they do to some of our songs are great, including setting themselves on fire with flaming torches!

RRP: Caroline, you play both electric and acoustic bass in the band, correct? I am wondering which you prefer, and what are the reasons to not just go with one or the other?

Caroline: Why limit myself to one instrument? The qualities and textures I can get from an upright are quite different from an electric bass. I play both regular and fretless electric bass, and they sound noticeably different. Some songs just call for the unique sound of one instrument over another. Most songs could be played on either fretted or fretless electric, or upright, but using the "right" instrument can make a good bassline great.

RRP: I understand you [Caroline] are also an "accomplished belly-dancer." How does one become an accomplished belly-dancer? Do you do it professionally?

Caroline: Passion and practice. When I started dancing, I was a bit of a natural and picked up the basics quite easily. I took (and still take) classes with a few very good teachers, and moved to advanced classes in short order. I'm at a semi-pro level, you could say: I could dance professionally if I wanted to, but at the moment I am doing it for the sheer joy of it.

RRP: In addition to belly dancing, I've read that you come from a classical and jazz background. How did you get involved in rock-n-roll, and do you still pick up work or enjoy playing the aforementioned styles?

Caroline: To clear up some miscommunication from the Backfire article: I've played one form or another of rock-n-roll since I started playing bass when I was 13. I spent a lot of that time playing on my own. I haven't played in many bands: a few grunge bands in high school, a brief stint in an industrial band during university, some work with an indie singer-songwriter, some time in a goth band. The classical and jazz bit was when I played the upright in high school. It gave me some technical foundation (which I didn't have on the electric, being self-taught), and what little music theory I know, I learned in those classes. But it was never my ambition to be a jazz or classical musician. I always intended to play in a rock band. My tastes run from goth and early 80's British stuff to Middle Eastern pop to ska; for the last year or so I've been extremely into Tom Waits and Nick Cave. Until I met John, the only rockabilly-ish bands I had heard were the Stray Cats and Southern Culture on the Skids. The first time I saw John play, I remember saying to myself, "I could really get into this kind of music."

RRP: [to Johnny] Are you into classical or jazz?

BJB: Me, I don't enjoy classical music very much but jazz and blues I really do like, especially Mississippi blues. And I can really get into good western swing.

RRP: How would you describe the sound or musical style of Big John Bates?

BJB: Well Ben, I figure it's jacked-up, hod rodged rockabilly. We're considered a psychobilly band because we blend rockabilly and punk. Our lyrics are a little on the strange side - just like us. But we aren't playing punk with



an upright bass like some psychobilly bands, we're playing rockabilly that is fast, tough and mean or slow and a little dark. We are definitely more similar to bands like the Reverend or the Cramps (define them if you must, I can't!) than being like Nekromantix or Tiger Army. This band is something I've been working towards as long as I've been playing and with this group of people, it just feels so damn good!

RRP: People seem to gravitate toward the fact that you were once in the speed metal band, Annihilator, and that you penned many of their early songs. Why did you decide to leave the band? Do you still remain in contact with them?

BJB: I left because I wanted to go in a more Cramps/'billy direction - the thing is I loved was playing music, not necessarily metal but just playing, and that was a band we put together because no one else in town was doing it. It was supposed to have been an AC/DC cover band but it just went down a very different road! Jeff Waters and I still work together - I still write some stuff for them and Jeff and I have mixed together (including Bates Motel). In fact he and I are probably going to mix the next BJB record in the fall - it should sound fuckin' great!

RRP: Are you still interested in the metal scene at all? What are your impressions of the late eighties metal styles compared to the newer crop of bands?

BJB: Nope, I'm not really interested in metal at all, it was cool to be there when it started but I have little in common with what's going on in it now. The 80's bands generally had a high level of musicianship and that was something I liked, but it was also pretty shallow and elitist. Now, after Cobain cleaned house, once again it seems to be about looks and the whole funk-metal thing appeals to me not.

RRP: You were also in the band Bates Motel. What kind of music did you play, and what led to that band's demise?

BJB: I swear Bates Motel was some kind of alien test - we did everything from basic bluesy psychobilly to fucked up metal riffs, strange experimental sounds to gothic backdrops. Our early tapes were more like BJB because I formed the band after I saw The Reverend open for the Cramps in Montreal in 1990! And then it went everywhere - but nowhere. There were too many musicians without identity and I kinda lost control of it. Without identity the music really had no direction and that was what I broke the band up to find. Then I wrote a psychobilly song called Dig Myself a Hole (it's on the Psychobilly Freakout comp on Raucous Records), and a surf-punk number called Super Chrome Deluxe and found what I was looking for.

RRP: What sorts of bands do you claim as influences, and what bands (of any genre) do you find yourself getting into these days?



BJB: My original influences were the Reverend, the Cramps, Southern Culture on the Skids, old bluesy Thoroughgood and even Angus Young. The first psycho band I ever heard was Demented Are Go around '86 and they are still my favorite of the old-school psycho bands - Holy Hack Jack! Transvestite Blues!!! These days I've been listening to Setzer (the Stray Cats albums never really moved me much but the guitar playing on the Dirty Boogie does), Calloway, Hillbilly Hellcats, Deadbolt, and anywhere I can get a fix of cool melodies and "scotch on the rocks" guitar tones. There are some cool newer bands I've been listening to on the internet as well like the Heptanes (from Virginia I think) and Boston's the Kings of Nuthin'.

RRP: You mentioned that on your recent tour "every night in Utah ended with somebody taking a beating in a parking lot." What happened?

BJB: Good god . . . I don't know! I guess that's the way they end their rock'n'roll shows there. No one in the band got into any fights but one jerkoff grabbed Bombshell Betty's ass - so she hit him with the whip she was holding, then the promoter and a fella from Utah's "Unlucky Boys" (probably the rockiest cowpunk band I've ever seen) took him outside and removed his will to live. It made her so happy, I can remember her tears of joy splashing in my beer . . . I love playing around SLC because there's a definite desire to rip and party (hell, they're celebrating just being out, they're great!) in the people that live there . . .

RRP: Do you find yourself in many fights, either while on tour or just in general?

Kermit: ---- just with Morris, my invisible friend and lover.

BJB: Well, I don't know about Kermit and I've never met Morris but no, we're showing up to play not to fight. That's why bars hire bouncers. If we were that into fighting we'd just play Caesar's Palace!

RRP: I also read on your site that you got a concussion while riding your bike to get concert tickets when you were fifteen. What show was that for, and was it worth it?



Kermit: ----- Abba, no not really.

BJB: Funny guy that Kermit . . . was it worth it - well I still have a scar around my left eye that will be there until I die and I'm still going to rock'n'roll shows so I guess it was. It was an early Van Halen show - 4 guys show up drunk, get drunker, don't finish a song and even if they did they were so loaded they weren't playing the same one - sounded like rock'n'roll to me.

RRP: When not working in a band, what other jobs have you had, or currently hold?

Kermit: I was a condom boy in a house of ill repute once.

BJB: um, yeah.

RRP: I know that you are into motorcycles and cars. What do you have, and have you done any racing or cross-country road trips?

BJB: I only race on city streets where someone can get hurt, never on tracks. Naw, that's just too lame these days. I watch amateur races because I prefer racing relatively stock vehicles and push those to the limits - that interests me a little more than the pros racing their product evaluations. Take me out to the dirt track . . . I ride with the Ton-Up Club - a bunch of rockabilly reprobates that ride old European bikes (except me - I have a classic '76 GL1000) - so we ride, stop for a pint, ride, stop for food and a pint - you know the deal.

RRP: If you had to take Charlton Heston and Bettie White on a lengthy road trip, what the hell would you talk about?

Kermit:- whether it's better to be injected or blown, bosonic string theory vs. supersymmetry, the NRA, whether chucks bummed that he didn't get a piece of Dr. Zaia, if Bettie White is related to Bettie Page - kind of like an alter ego gone nice - the quantum mechanics of bent light, and world peace.

RRP: What is the rockabilly/psychobilly or punk rock scene like in Vancouver Canada, where you are from? Is that your original hometown?

BJB: When I was a kid I lived in Canada's capital city - Ottawa - but I was born in Toronto and spent a lot of time in the 1000 Islands (yeah, where the salad dressing is from). I've lived in Van since the early '90s and as long as I stay in Canada I'll probably stay here - the bar scene's not exactly overwhelming but I can ride my motorcycle a lot more than anywhere else in Canada. There is definitely a punk scene here - think of old-skool bands like DOA or SNFU, Young Canadians that were/are from here - and a lot of young punks follow the tradition. The psycho scene is pretty much divided between here and Seattle with us and the Deadcats being here and bands like the Spectres being from Seattle.

We have some great western swing bands here as well, like Ray Condo, and the traditional rockabilly scene here is actually quite good, it's strong enough to support weekly nights. We divide our "local" shows between here and Seattle, because in Ballard (north Seattle) there is a helluva 'billy scene, at the Sunset and the Tractor especially.

RRP: What is on the horizon for BJB as far as recording and touring?

BJB: We'll be playing around BC and Washington this summer then going back into the studio in October and doing a tour around then as well - probably Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, San Diego, LA, Santa Barbara and Las Vegas.

RRP: What other sorts of interests do you have (books, film, liquor, origami, etc.)?

Kermit:----- books, psycho b movies, Morris and his girlfriend Athena and their pet centaur

BJB: I like to support local artists like *12 Midnite* (who's painted both of my Gretsches) and *I, Braineater*. I try to travel now and then, get my motorcycle dirty, read & screw around on the Internet. I check out shows in Seattle/Vancouver whenever somebody good shows up.

RRP: What is your earliest childhood memory, and how has it affected your ability to perform sexually?

Kermit: ----- Julie Newmar as the Catwoman standing over a restrained Batman, greatly enhanced the whole sex process, how couldn't it??

BJB: yep, that says it for me too.

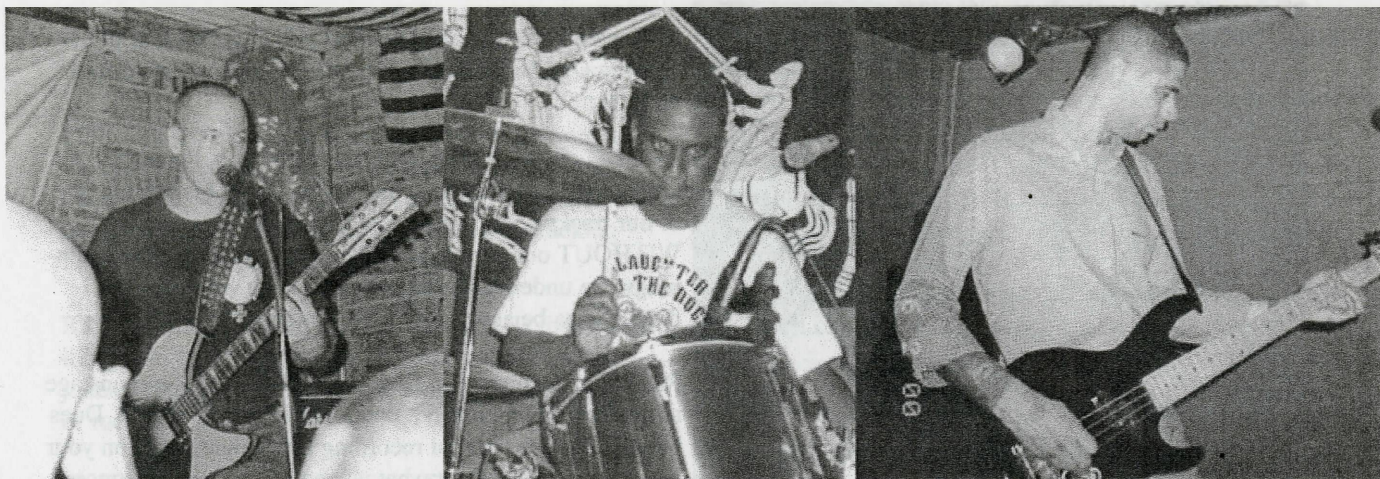
RRP: Do you have anything else you want to say that I neglected to ask?

Kermit:----- Morris' stop touching me!!!! and brush your tooth.

BJB: ha hahahah hahahahahahaha - who IS this guy!? Thanks Ben - you and Lisa have a wicked 'zine - cheers, Johnny







## Interview with Phil from The Templars

<http://www.thetemplars.com/>

*If you haven't heard the Templars by now, either you don't like Oi! music, or you are a shmuck. They are hands down one of the very best acts in the genre, and have been pummeling any resistance since the early 90's. With more releases under their belts than Puff Daddy has guns under his, and with the recent full-length release of Horns of Hatin, they have certainly earned the title Grandmasters of Oi! The following is an interview with Phil done over e-mail in late June 2001. - BL*

### The Templars are:

Carl: Lead vocals and guitars  
Phil: Medieval Battering Rams  
Perry: Bulldozer Bass

### Correspondance:

The Templars  
P.O. Box 602  
Bayshore NY, 11706-0660  
[templecombe@hotmail.com](mailto:templecombe@hotmail.com)

RRP: I know you and Carl are the original members. How did you meet each other, and also Perry (from Chapter 21)? Also, what happened to your first bass player, Don Gerle?

Phil: We knew each other from a mutual friend... he figured two people into the same style of music should meet each other... we knew Don also from the community college we all went to... he was more into hardcore shit but we knew he liked some oi and he played bass as well... as the years rolled on we knew he was getting less interested and more into hardcore nonsense... also the fact he got into some personal nasty habits didn't help... we already knew Perry from a fanzine we were featured in and read on a

regular basis... so he was a good friend of the band before he joined... in late 1994 we told Perry to learn some songs on bass and in early 1995 we played our first gig with Perry... I had already seen Perry's bass playing before when he and I joined Pist N Broke for an impromptu short set in 1994.

RRP: With you doing a residency as a doctor now, Perry working full-time and doing night school for Geography and Urban Studies, and Carl working on degrees in Scandinavian Studies and Swedish Language and Literature, how do you envision the future of the Templars? Doesn't it get more and more difficult to work on songs and do shows as your workload continues to increase?

Phil: We all have personal lives and feel the band/music is our escape from stresses of everyday life... our way to unwind. Playing all the time and hanging out in a van for weeks on end doesn't appeal to me at all in the slightest... especially when you hear about all these bands breaking up on the road... we'll keep playing and releasing stuff until our fans tell us stop or personal commitments take over... but I don't see that at all in the near future...

RRP: In your MRR interview you mentioned that teachers aren't able to make a decent wage in this country and that European schools in many ways are superior. In addition you noted that most kids there speak more than one language. What do you think is the reason there is so much opposition to teaching Spanish, for example, in elementary schools here? Several studies have shown that it is easiest to pick up a second or third language before puberty, and also that there is a correlation between bilingualism and higher IQ scores, so where do think the resistance or reluctance comes from?

Phil: Fear I guess... people seem to forget that America is a melting pot... when people are afraid they don't give a fuck how many studies are done...

RRP: I read in your bio that you have a passion for old British/French Oi! and punk music. What were some of the



bands that stick out in your mind?

Phil: Komintern Sect, Nabat, Snix, Major Accident, Angelic Upstarts, Little Bob Story, Count Bishops, Gorillas, Warsaw, Crisis, Blitz, The Jam, The Chords, Cock Sparrer, 4 Skins, Last Resort, Indecent Exposure and a shit load of others.

RRP: On a similar note, who are some of the newer bands that you are getting into, or have played with and been really impressed by?

Phil: First Strike, Adolf & the Piss Artists, Breakaways, Traditionals, Urban Riot, Counterattack, Siege, Battalion 86 and some others.

RRP: There seems to be a variety of other subtle influences in your sound. Aside from Oi! and punk, what other music do you like?

Phil: British rock & roll from the 60's, folk music and some harder edged 70's progressive rock.

RRP: Having been around since 1990, what are some of your favorite shows and experiences and why?

Phil: Our shows in Europe are always a blast... especially Germany... our shows in Atlanta are always kick ass... why?? good turnout and good company amongst friends.

RRP: I have to ask this because it has perplexed me for so long. What does the hand signal you guys are giving with your thumbs on the cover of your Oxblood split 7" mean?

Phil: Hahahahahah... one of the most asked questions... remember the band Slade... if not, check them out... you'll be impressed...

RRP: In NYC, where you are from (except Perry), I've read that the punk and Oi! scene suffered a bit a few years back with "unrelenting violence" at shows causing some clubs to close their doors to you guys and other bands. I also remember reading in Oink Skinzine several years back that in addition someone was sabotaging shows and spreading rumors. What exactly was going on, and has the situation improved much since then?

Phil: Jealous "scene" fuck-ups who weren't involved anymore with the up and coming bands felt it necessary to sabotage shows... I guess they felt if they couldn't be part of the glory then there wouldn't be any glory at all... also the trouble we'd get into as younger individuals caught up with us... kinda like a payback... it just proves the old saying... "don't shit in the same room that you eat in"... I don't blame the club owners but it still made me upset... it's been so long since those days.

RRP: Your bio also mentions that you decided never to

release anything else on Dim Records after "Return of Jacques De Molay." Why did you decide to sever relations with them?

Phil: His constant need to release right wing horseshit kinda turned us off... also dishonesty about his putting one of our tracks on a compilation with right wing bands WITHOUT our permission. We thanked him for the beginnings, we understand that people change with time but I don't wanna be associated with that change...

RRP: I understand that Chet from APA joined you onstage at the Beer Olympics in Atlanta as a second guitarist. Does being a 3-piece live but recording two guitar tracks on your releases seriously limit what you can usually do in concert, or are you able to strip down and adapt many of your songs to just the essentials?

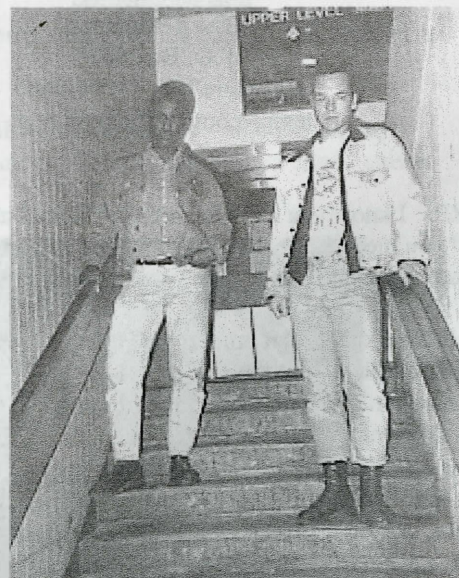
Phil: Yup... it limits what we can play live... but not anymore since Chet joined... we had to play recently as a three piece b/c Chet couldn't make the gig but it was no problem... it was like old times.

RRP: Tell me a little about Wodnes Thegnas, the band on the B-side of one of your more recent singles. The word is that Wodnes is a side project of the Templars. Is that correct? If so, what does the name mean and how did that project come about?

Phil: Wodnes Thegnas... Thanes of Odin... Carl's side project... Carl's brother Scott is playing the drums... anyway, expect another showdown single between both bands... there are actually a shitload of tracks recorded.

RRP: You are named after a once incredibly powerful, but then betrayed and persecuted Medieval order of knights, The Templars, so I was curious why you chose them as a namesake. How does their history relate or appeal to you?

Phil: Why not glorify them... they are responsible for so much back in the middle ages and even today... unfortunately, they were used, manipulated and abused and eventually punished wrongly... kinda like alot of youth subcultures out there today don't you think...





RRP: You are rumored to be playing under an alias this year in California. What is the reason for using an alias?

Phil: We were going to do that but that fell through... the reason we were going to do that was to avoid the club owners that equated our name with violence... our last gig in SF at the bottom of the hill was a fucking bloodbath towards the end of our set.

RRP: Thanks so much for this interview. Is there anything else you'd like to add: amusing anecdotes, bad jokes, parting words, advice to young people, prophecies or recipes?

Phil: Recipe for band longevity... friendship before the band, creativity and the ability to appreciate other forms of music... advice for young people... hhhmmm, be true to yourself and do something cause YOU want to.

### An Interview with The

<http://www.geocities.com/dragstripdemon/dsd.html>

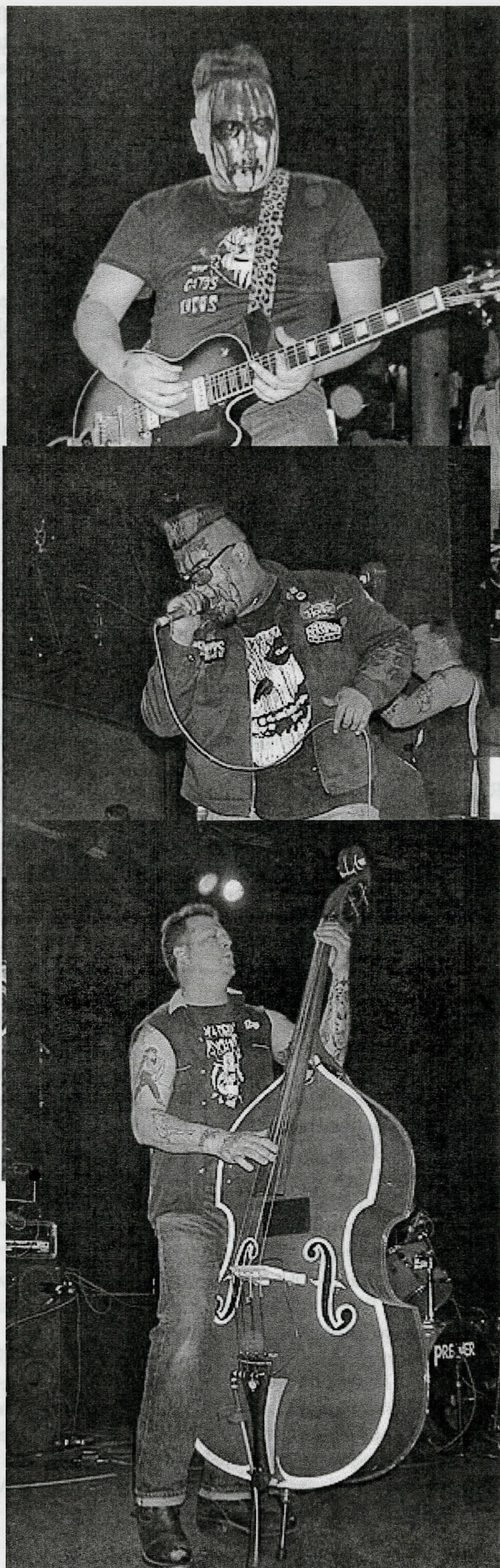
# DRAGSTRIP DEMONS

*If you dig heavy psychobilly that puts the punk rock before the 'billy, then you just might need a fix of these West Coast upstarts with a penchant for blood and guts. The Dragstrip Demons are a relatively new band poised to inject their venom onto the psycho scene. Here is an interview we did with them in April of 2001. - BL*

RRP: Where are you from, when did you form, and how did the band come together?

Manuel: Well, we are from all over some from the heart of Los Angeles and some from the burb's. We formed well..... Phil tells the story better HA! They just came up one day and basically asked me one day if i wanted to rule the American Psycho Scene and i said "OK".

Ralph: I'm from L.A., this band was all ready established, but was still in the works! I was approached by Satan himself Evil. At the time the band needed a bass player because the last bass player was dropped from the lineup. Phil: Los Angeles, California Early 99'. Well I was playing in Rockabilly bands for a year prior to the formation of The Dragstrip Demons. I then wanted to do something different at that time I was heavy into bands like Mad Sin, Demented Are Go, the Sharks and Batmobile. I then convinced my long time friend Manuel Evil Lepe to Sing for the psychobilly band I wanted to start. We then got his cousin Cesar Lepe to play drums and





then found a guitar player through the classified ads, that's how the band formed.

RRP: Around the Midwest, if you mention psychobilly, you are bound to get some bewildered looks, since virtually no one has any idea what it is. Is it bigger where you are from?

Manuel: I think it is a little bigger than the midwest but don't be fooled there are some stupid bambinos out here that don't know their head from their ass out here also. Sometimes when you mention Psychobilly people are like "ooohhh i love psychobilly, I have Morrissey and The Stray Cats," or there are a ton of local bands that play punk or cheesy pop rock and dress like greasers. They automatically think they are all psycho. It's funny, fucken "rebels" (The fag kind that pluck there eye brows not the cool 50's movie kind).

Phil: I would have to say so if people give you a bewildered look in the midwest. Its on a rise here in California and in Los Angeles. A lot of punk kids searching for something new.

Ralph: Psychobilly is a mixture of punk rock and rockabilly but with a lot of balls. In L.A. the scene is very big but it can be limited because there are some bands that claim to be psychobilly and people become drawn to fucked up cowpunk/punkrock bands.

RRP: How did you get into psychobilly music? What sorts of things did you grow up listening to?

Ralph: Well I grew up listening to bands such as Misfits, Samhain, Ramones, Final Conflict and Dead Kennedy's.....But when I met Evil in College in 96' he introduced me into the good psycho shit such as bands like Mad Sin, Demented Are Go, Nekromantix, Klingonz, Skitzo etc. Which has influenced our music that we write and our skills.

Phil: Well a buddy of mine who was a Wrecker introduced me to Demented Are Go in late 95. I then was captivated on the that style of music: Total Rockabilly Influence With Demented Lyrics and Creepy guitar and Bass. Demented Are Go is the Misfits of Psychobilly. It was nothing I ever heard before, totally took the stamp of psychobilly from the Reverend Horton Heat. I would say he is more Neo Rockabilly then Psychobilly. I grew up listening to band like the Smiths, Cramps and Rocket from the Crypt. When I Discovered American Roots music ( Rockabilly, R&B, Doo wop) in 95 my life changed forever.

Manuel: I used to listen to a ton of modern Rock-A-Billy bands and the old school stuff, but more neo type stuff because I was used to punk and rock when I was growing up so it was a change. But same as Phil it was a

friend (Pat you fucken rule you dirty fucken punk) in high school that handed me my first Demented Are Go and Wrecking Ball records. After that it is all history and I have never stopped loving psycho music and the life-style.

RRP: A lot of punks are drawn to psychobilly to escape the politics of the punk scene. What appeals to you most about this type of music?

Manuel: Since I can remember me and my little sister always like cult/horror movies. We would never rent those stupid kid movies. It was either Texas Chainsaw Massacre (Bubba's going to get you BOY) or Friday the 13th. We dug all the late 70's and 80's slasher films. Now that I grew up I found out I have more respect for the Universal monster films. Before when I was a kid they kind of sucked because they where in black and white so I was easily bored, I needed blood. Now my girlfriend who is a manager at blockbuster snags all the Universal monster DVD's. We are a regular Bonnie and Clyde. So when I heard of Psychobilly it had a natural appeal to me and my sister (I got her into Psychobilly also).

Phil: Well I like it cause it can be more dynamic then playing additional rockabilly. I, being in rockabilly bands, know that it's hard to be really good cause its all been done before; you really have to work super hard just to be decent. I think with Psychobilly you can push more and more barriers then before. That's why i enjoy playing it. Plus every true Psychobilly loves traditional rockabilly. A slew of Psychobilly groups cover rockabilly songs..... So the two go hand in hand.

Ralph: Well what's cool about this music it draws in only the hardcore nutty psycho's that want to try something that is a step up!

RRP: Have you been in any other bands?

Ralph: Well I have experimented with bands and there are people that have influenced me to play such as Union 13, Teenage Rage, and Tracy Lee Skull.

Manuel: Stryper (Christian rock ROCKS! J/K)

Phil: I was in a Rockabilly Cover band called "Fanny Photo" (don't ask me why i always thought that name was gay). The bands drummer had a pin up on the drum showing her fanny.

RRP: Would you say that your sound is primarily influenced by European Psychobilly (Demented Are Go, Meteors, Mad Sin), or do you also draw upon other influences, either intentionally or unconsciously?

Manuel: Well, we are more rock and the Euro stuff is



more billy'ish. It's the best don't get me wrong. That's what true Psychobilly is but we are more like punk rock with an upright bass. We sound more like American psycho bands than Euro bands. Bands like Los Gatos Locos, Barnyard Ballers and The Hellbilly's.

Phil: I would have to say the Misfits.

Ralph: Our sound is somewhat like European psychobilly because bands like Demented are go, Mad Sin, Nekromantix, Quakes, Os Catalepticos etc. These psycho friends of ours have had a big impact on us. But we, The Dragstrip Demons, have blooded European psychobilly and upgraded into what us Demons call Mexican Psychobilly!!!!!!

RRP: What are your favorite bands, past and present?

Manuel: Bands I truly love are Os Catalepticos, Reverend Horton Heat, Hellbillys, Gorilla, Wrecking Ball, Demented Are Go, Misfits, Mad Sin, Nekromantix, Ramones and Johnny Burnette. I grew up around a lot of classic rock and metal when I was a wee boy then got into punk and Rock-A-Billy and now am heavily into Psycho.

Phil: The Real King of Rock n Roll Wynonie Harris, Johnny Burnette, Collins Kids, anything from the Sun label, High Noon, Marti Brom, James Intveld, Nu Niles, Smell of Kat, Polecats, Restless, Rockcats, Sonny West, Glen Glenn, Batmobile, Demented Are Go, Mad Sin, Sharks, Rocket from the Crypt, The Smiths, The Cramps too much to list.

Ralph: Misfits, Reverend Horton Heat, Nekromantix, Os Catalepticos, Klingonz, Mad Sin, Demented Are Go, The Lost Souls, Skitzo, Quakes and so on.

RRP: When not playing in the Dragstrip Demons, what sorts of things do you do (jobs, obsessions, illegal activities)?

Ralph: Drink beer, whiskey, vodka, fuck and hang out with The Demon Wrecking Crew.

Manuel: I have always worked in politics and the city so that's what I do for a living. My obsessions would have to be music, baseball (Fuck you, i am not a jock) and food (I am fat, live with it). Illegal activities wellllll... we are banned from a ton of places. So we will see what kind of shit we can get into when we go to your fair city he he he.

Phil: I run my own Record Label (Loveless Beat Records). I also spend a lot of time with my buddy Jack Daniels.

RRP: I read that you recently were on television or shot

a video. Could you talk about that experience a little?

Manuel: It was fucken weird. Who knew we would be rockin' the idiot tube in one of the biggest markets in the U.S.A.? It was a great experience (thanks Joe "Diablo" at Nietherworld Video Zine) and we hope to do it again all over the country next time.

Phil: It was cool. I just couldn't hear the vocals.

Ralph: Well, that was a great experience because it is different than being in a studio. I never had 5 movie cameras filming me in 5 different angles.

RRP: A lot of psychobilly deals with the horror and sci-fi genre. What sorts of things do you sing about? Any favorite films?

Manuel: We have songs ranging from nekromatizme ("Graveyard") to being a psycho killer panther ("Rise of the Panther"). Witches ("Salem"), Vampires ("Blood A Go Go") and Cadillac's ("Psychobilly Cadillac"). Like I said earlier all Universal monsters and 70' and 80's slasher films have influenced me and most of the band.

Ralph: Things we sing about are horror blooded bodies, Zombies, Witches, Satan, things that have to do with our Mexican culture such as Dia de los muertos (Day of the Dead) and films such as Frankenstein, Dracula, Return of the Living Dead... all of the originals.

Phil: Well another term for Psychobilly can be Horror Movie or Comic Book Rock... I am a cult movie fanatic. So the list is too long to list but it wouldn't be serving all of them justice if I just named a couple...

RARP: What were some of the most memorable shows you've played so far and why?

Ralph: So far the best shows we played are like with The Nekromantix at The Bowlarama. It was a kick as show because they have influenced us so much and they are the best band that has came out of psychobilly for years, and they are very good psycho friends of ours. Another show that I can recall is with Tiger Army at The Galaxy. I got the chance meet and share the same stompin' ground with London May (X-member of Samhain) and who is now currently playing with Tiger Army, and Son of Sam with Davey from AFI.

Manuel: I think the most memorable was the sold out (700+) Tigerarmy show at the Galaxy we played. They gave us a huge dressing room a ton of beer and it had a huge backstage area. We fucken trashed the whole room (a' la Who). Blood was all over the restroom, the carpet, the mirror, the sofa and they banned us from the Galaxy. We had a ton of exposure and the fucken AFI kid's loved



us, he he he. We made a lot of fans and debut Rockin' Rick Tanner x-Hellbillys. It fucken rocked. Ralph makes a good reference though, I also loved playing with Kim [Nekromantix] and the boys.

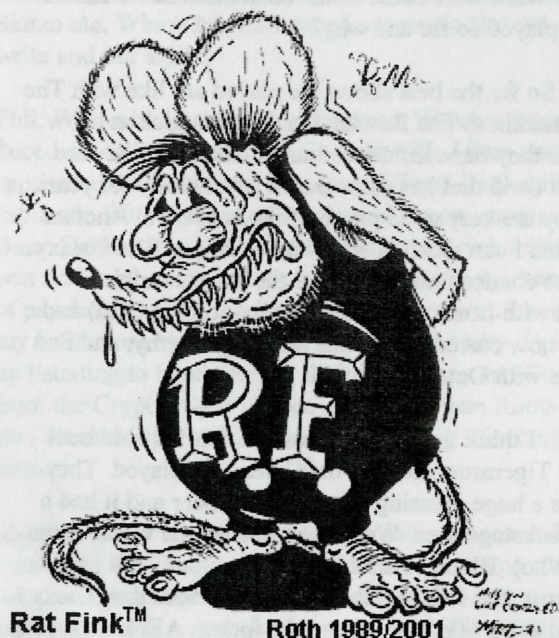
Phil: Well there is a couple but I would have to say this past Troubadour show. We got the five star treatment and overall it's a very cool venue to play...

RRP: What is in store for the Dragstrip Demons as far as touring and releases?

Phil: Talk to Manuel.

Manuel: Well our upcoming West Coast Wreckers Tour this July. A possible trip to Europe with Los Gatos Locos and once we are there I have been talking with our friends in Spain (Mutant Crew) and France (Ricky at Wild Kat Productions) and all over their fucken country we might tour with Nekromantix if we end up going to Europe. I have been talking with Kim for a while now. If we don't end up going to Europe we will do an East and Mid-West Tour for the beginning of 2002. Recording wise we release our first E.P. called "Psychobilly Cadillac" (Out this June) and our first CD-Rom (So you can see us live and spank the monkey or churn the butter all night long baby!) also late June early July. Check out the web site for more info and dates and remember kids do drugs, worship the devil and have sex but most of all stay PSYCHO MUTHERFUCKERS! Check out the Official Dragstrip Demons Website at [www.geocities.com/dragstripdemon/dsd.html](http://www.geocities.com/dragstripdemon/dsd.html)

Ralph: Look out for The Dragstrip Demons who are on rise and taking everybody by surprise. Future summer tour and hopefully hittin' Europe in the near future!



Blood splats to ya!

## OBITUARY:

# Ed "Big Daddy" Roth

By Randy Payton

Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, king of 1960s' weirdo-monster hot rod art died April 4. This writer first discovered Big Ed during his initial heyday when Roth's popularity rode high among motorheads, surfers, custom car buffs and teen-aged, aspiring artists like myself who copied Roth's studio style like the guy was a modern Master! Today, youths have a wide spectrum of cultural avenues through which to express their creativity and social alienation at the same time (Punk, Metal, etc.) but in the mid-'60s USA, such outlets were slim pickings indeed for working class punks like myself, for whom things like (then cool) AM rock radio, skateboards and Big Daddy Roth were like GODSEND, baby! How many other long-haul non-conformists Big Daddy had a hand in inspiring early-on one can only guess... Though Big Daddy has gone to that big pin striper in the sky, I suspect his legacy (like that of comic book legend Jack Kirby) will only grow as time goes by. Check in at <http://www.finktank.com> for more on the Great Man, memorial info and more.

*Looking back:*

## Robert Johnson

*King of the Delta Blues*

By Lisa M. Donnalley

If there were a man responsible for the birthing of the Blues, a man who influenced the best of the best, a man who would sell his soul for music, we would have to be talking about Robert Johnson. Johnson was born on May 11, 1911 in Hazelhurst, Mississippi. He grew up watching his older brother play the guitar and started to teach himself how to play the guitar and harmonica, admittedly not too well. He dabbled around the South, playing the guitar with a few local musicians but never impressed anybody much. In 1930, he got married but lost his wife during childbirth.

Depressed, Johnson vowed to become a Bluesman and disappeared for a few years wherein, according to myth, he met the Devil at the crossroads. It was at these crossroads that Johnson sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for the ability to play the guitar like no other. It has been noted that by looking at the couple of pictures of Johnson that are available, one can see that he had unusually large hands that enabled him to play chord movements and note selections that would be nearly impossible for those with normal size hands. His unique style of playing and moving lyrics allowed John-



son to travel to Memphis, Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit and New York. It is also well known that during these travels Johnson would meet up with different women and was never usually alone at night. Johnson recorded his songs only twice, once in 1936 in a San Antonio hotel room and then again in 1937 in a Dallas warehouse.

After his last recording session, Johnson wandered around the Delta playing bars, small clubs, juke joints, and women. It caught up with him on August 11, 1938 when he was poisoned with strychnine laced whiskey by a jealous husband.

Robert Johnson may have died over a half a century ago, but his influences can still be heard as bands like The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Led Zeppelin and the Red Hot Chili Peppers cover his songs. In 1980 he was inducted into the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame and in 1986 was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

# Iron Cross

Interview with Sab Grey

<http://www.ironcross-theband.com/>

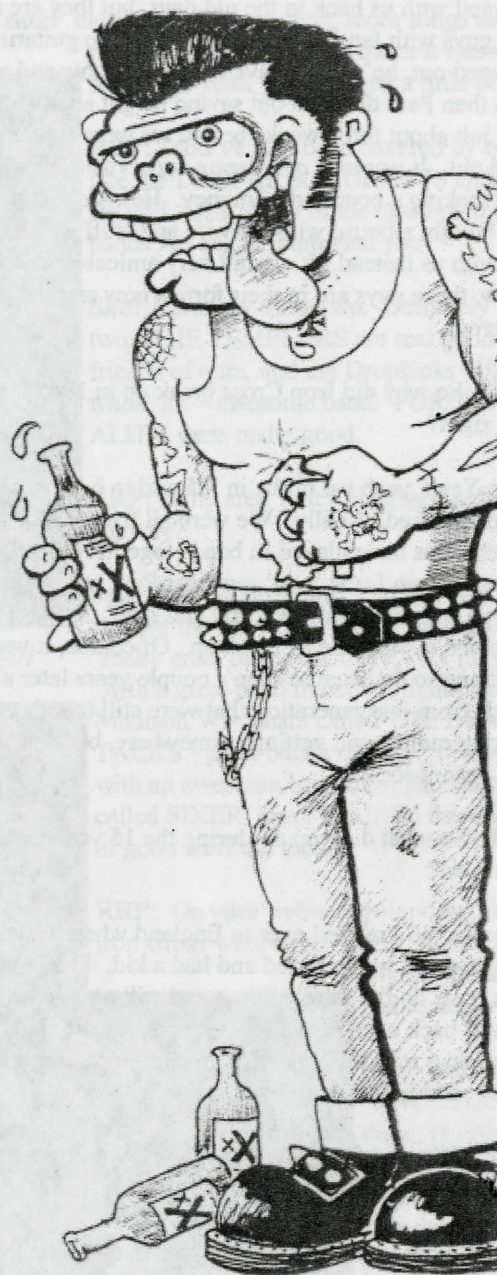
By Ben Lybarger

*Hailing from Washington DC, Iron Cross are often referred to as one of the premiere skinhead rock-n-roll bands in the States. They stuck out from the countless hardcore punk bands that were popping up all over; playing punk rock more in the vein of the British Oi bands than The Exploited or Minor Threat. Yet their reputation today far exceeds the meager success of their early years, and the band continues to build momentum. I caught up with Sab Grey, singer and songwriter, at the Blind Lemon in Cleveland before their show on March 16, 2001. Who I met was a soft-spoken, tall gentleman with a greaser haircut and goatee - looking as though he'd be just as comfortable, perhaps more so, playing three sets in a country dive on the edge of the interstate. Here's what he had to say...*

**RRP:** When did the band originally form, and how did you all meet?

**Sab:** Well, we originally formed in 1981, the end of '80 is when we started talkin' about it, but it was early '81 when we actually started. We just met through being around town. I still lived in Baltimore at that time, and I was going down to DC pretty regularly so I met up with Mark and Dante down there. Well, actually Mark wasn't in the band yet, Dante and I met, then John Falls and the other guys.

**RRP:** What prompted you to get back together again?



**Sab:** To be honest, we thought we'd do three shows. The old bass player was playing in a rockabilly band with me called THE ROYAL AMERICANS, and that broke up. The guitarist from that band got married and moved to California, so Paul and I were sittin' there, you know, why don't we do three shows for fun, and we'll play DC New York and Boston, and that was what we thought. It just kinda snowballed from there. Record companies started phoning up, "do you want to do this, do you wanna do that," and I was like "okay!"

**RRP:** How many people in the band right now were in the band during the original duration of Iron Cross?

**Sab:** Only me at the moment. We got back together in 2000, and it was the old guys except for Kent, who



jammed with us back in the old days, but they are married guys with families and stuff. First the guitarist dropped out, he's like I have a daughter now and a job. And then Paul dropped out saying he got an awesome new job about three weeks before we were supposed to head out. It was sort of a dream supervisor job where he's making a boatload of money. He's got two kids and just bought a house with his wife and stuff, so Dee came out with us instead. It was all very amicable, but you know, these guys are in their forties now and life's little different.

**RRP:** So why did Iron Cross break up in 1985? It was '85, right?

**Sab:** Yeah, yeah we broke in '85 and to be honest, we were just tired. Really. We were all friends, and a bunch of us have played in bands together since Iron Cross. When I was livin' overseas Paul used to call me every Christmas and we'd talk and stuff. We were just tired and it was time to break up. Of course, it was stupid thing to do because then a couple years later all the bands from our generation that were still together started making money and getting' somewhere, but you know, that wasn't for us.

**RRP:** So what did you do during the 15 years until you reformed?

**Sab:** In '86 I moved over to England where I lived for 11 years and was married and had a kid. I have three kids now, do the family thing, and still play in bands. I moved back over here a few years ago, started playin' music in a rockabilly band, broke up, went on to Iron Cross, and here we are in Cleveland.

**RRP:** Was the first show you played with the new lineup the Superbowl of Hardcore?

**Sab:** No, that was the first show this year. The first show we played was last year in March of 2000 at the Garage in Washington. We played with Murphy's Law and the Spitfires, and some other band I can't remember.

**RRP:** Could you tell me a little about your other band, SAB GREY AND THE ARTICULATE REDNECKS?

**Sab:** Sure, that's the extension of what I've been doing for the last 15 years. Basically that band is sort of dark country/rockabilly with a punk rock attitude because we are all punk rockers, or ex-punk rockers. We all grew up with that so we approach it from that angle. That's what I do when I'm not doing this. I also do my solo acoustic stuff as well, just under Sab Grey.

**RRP:** So do you have any releases under that name?

**ab:** Well, there was a Sab Grey, little home mini CD

thing, but we're sold out of that. There's a solo Sab Grey CD coming out later this year on Lowside Records, and then the ARTICULATE REDNECKS are recording later this year for GMM. So, at the moment, no, but it's all in the pipeline

**RRP:** So were you always a fan of country music, or is that something you moved towards later?

**Sab:** Yeah, well, it depends how you define country, I mean even back then everybody loved JOHNNY CASH. You might hate Eddie Rabbit, but not Johnny Cash. I mean, it's the same way it is now, you know, people will say "I hate country music, but I love Johnny Cash." The first song I can remember hearing in my life was Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" on the radio when I was only six. It has just been a natural progression. the first song I learned how to play on guitar was "Folsom Prison Blues" and the second song was "Your Cheatin' Heart," and this was back when I had spikey hair and nose ring.

**RRP:** You guys are hailed as one of the first, if not the first, American Oi bands. Is that a label you are comfortable with?

**Sab:** We always saw ourselves as a punk band. Back then Oi was a very British thing, so we didn't see us as that. Now there's an Oi scene and Oi record labels, but in our day there wasn't. We were always like, "well you can call us what you want, we're just us. There's four guys in the band and this is what we play." We happened to play closer to that style at a time when everyone else in the city was playing 400 m.p.h. thrash-punk, you know, and we did, at the time, make a conscious effort not to play like that. For one thing we didn't want to because everyone else was doing it, for another thing MINOR THREAT were our friends. It's like: are you going to go beat them at their own game? It's like - no, let's do our own thing. On the other hand, it wasn't even a conscious thing, it was "let's write some songs."

**RRP:** Were you skinheads?

**Sab:** Yes.

**RRP:** I've read that you never officially released a full-length recording. Were you then surprised to see the reaction you got once you reformed, how people were really interested and a lot of the younger kids knew your songs?

**Sab:** Absolutely. Stunned. Yeah, we put out the stuff on Flex Your Head and the two EPs, and like I said I moved away. I had no idea that AGNOSTIC FRONT had covered the song (*Crucified*). You know, they were friends of ours from before, but I didn't know it became an anthem or something. Now I get people from Italy e-mailing me and sending me Italian versions for it: Cruci-



foso ton something or other. I had no idea, because again, I wasn't here, so I walked back into this and it's been a hell of an eye-opener.

**RRP:** So how do you think your name has endured over the years?

**Sab:** I honestly have no idea. Dante, the old drummer, and I were talkin' about this. Why did our band, which was not the premiere band of DC at the time, why are we out there with Minor Threat, you know what I mean, when they were miles bigger than us at the time (and quite rightly too, they were an awesome band)? And there were a lot of bands from back then that were higher than us on the food chain of popularity that nobody could care less about now. I don't know how that works, but I am grateful for it.

**RRP:** So how do you think the punk scene has changed since you guys first started?

**Sab:** It changed a whole lot... a whole lot. For one thing, it is more segregated than it used to be. Now you have different scenes within the punk thing, you know, which again, you could have called us an Oi band back in the day, but that didn't mean that every punk rocker didn't go as well to see your shows. You didn't have that, we were all friends, we all played in different bands, but we'd go and see each other's bands. At the same club, the 9:30 Club where we used to play, I saw SISTERS OF MERCY there, I saw DWIGHT YOAKEM there, I saw THE BLASTERS there, I saw BIRTHDAY PARTY there. You know, it was like you went to see music, not necessarily the music associated with the clothes that you were wearing, but you went to see music because it was better than what you were spoon-fed on the fuckin' radio. That's what it was about. You couldn't buy Doc Martens, you couldn't buy bondage pants; you had to make your own stuff. It wasn't handed to you on a spoon, you had to go and find it. And once you found it, you went looking for anything else that was like it, which is why I went to see SILLY WIZARD, and Irish folk band in '82. I was working at a record store and the guy put the record on, and I was like "this is fuckin' hot." They guy was like, "I got free tickets, you wanna go?" I was like "fuck yeah." I had blue hair

and I'm sittin' there goin' "this is great, more songs about potatoes and women!" I mean it was awesome. So yeah, it's changed a little bit.

**RRP:** You've also been covered by bands like the DROPKICK MURPHYS and THE TEMPLARS. Who of the new breed of bands has really impressed you?

**Sab:** Certainly those two. Definitely those two. THE TEMPLARS are real good friends of ours, and the Dropkicks I like a whole lot - awesome band. FORCED REALITY were really good.

**RRP:** Why aren't they playing tonight by the way?

**Sab:** Because they broke up like five days before the tour. You know, there are some really great bands out there. We played with a great band the other night from Madison Wisconsin called THE BRASS TACKS - great bunch of guys. I played with an awesome band from Richmond called SIXER: great band. So there's a lot of good stuff out there.

**RRP:** On your web-site you point out that Iron Cross were never Nazis. Is that a stigma you always had to deal with?

**Sab:** Well, the "never nazis" thing, if you get a hold of one of the singles, it actually says that in the part of the record where the needle goes around and round at the end. We actually wrote that into it. That's where that quote is from. We did get a little shit from that because we were skinheads, and because we had the name Iron Cross, which didn't occur to us in our youthful stupidity, or naiveté

rather. But it's nice to see that certainly hasn't carried over. Every skinhead and their dog knows that we were not nazis.



Above: Sab, 1983 Below: Sab 2000-01





An interview with

## GEIN AND THE GRAVEROBBERS

<http://www.geinandthegraverobbers.com/>

By Ben Lybarger 5/01

**RRP:** How is your song-writing different from what it was when you first started, and what sorts of things are your lyrics about?

**Sab:** Well, I'm not mad at my parents anymore, and I'm kind of mad at my ex-wife.

**RRP:** Good answer. So what's on the horizon for Iron Cross?

**Sab:** We finish this tour, then we go to Germany for a weekend, then we have a tour of the South heading down to the Beer Olympics. Then we come back from that and record our next thing, which will be a split single, probably with Combat 84, on GMM. Then we go to Europe in the Fall and after that is too far ahead. There will be an album next year.

**RRP:** What you have out now is a live album, is that right?

**Sab:** No, what we have is the only official release of the old stuff. It just came out on GMM, it is everything we ever recorded: the 7"s and the Flex Your Head, plus all the stuff we recorded at that time but never released. It's been sitting in a box underneath Dante's bed for God knows how many years. That's what we have out now, we figure we'd start by getting the old stuff out so you don't have to spend stupid money on e-bay for it. It's called "Live for Now."

**RRP:** You played the Beer Olympics last year didn't you, how was that?

**Sab:** Yes we did, that was awesome. Oh, that was a hoot. That was a great time – a three day drinkfest where bars don't close until like 4:00 in the morning.

**RRP:** I've been wanting to make it down, hopefully this year.

**Sab:** You should, we're playing this year and CON-DEMND 84 are headlining.

**RRP:** THE TEMPLARS are playing too, aren't they?

**Sab:** Yeah, and PRESSURE POINT, who are another great band that kicks ass. PATRIOT were really good too. They broke up, but they are getting back together to play the Beer Olympics.

**RRP:** Cool, well, is there anything else you'd like to add?

**Sab:** I just like to say thanks to everybody for caring and keeping the name alive for all this time, and lettin' us take some time out from our day jobs.

*Have you ever been cutting through the woods late at night and have a terrifying feeling that Dick Dale was following you wielding a bloody Stratocaster? Have you ever heard the shrill cry of a blistering tremolo riff echoing through the cobwebs as you carry your torch deep into the secret catacombs beneath the wealthy but eccentric Dr. Caligari's mansion estate? Probably not, but if you had, listening to the horror-surf of Gein and the Graverobbers would probably trigger a traumatic episode of breathless fear and pants-wetting. This relatively new band from Massachusetts has so far released a 5-song 7" EP of creepy instrumentals with haunting melodies called Humanoids From the Deep - a recording that is destined to drag you 10,000 leagues beneath the dark sea and drown you in reverb.*

**Q:** First off, I would like to know how you all met, how long the group has been together, and how you picture yourselves dying.

**Gein:** I've known Kemper since I was 5... Sloth and I met in High School, and Myra I met in college. The band has been together for a couple of years, but this current line-up is only a year old. As far as dying is concerned... I could see myself dying in a drag race, Myra in a rumble, Kemper by dysentery, and Sloth by trying to skateboard off of his house.

**Q:** How would you describe the sound of Gein and the Graverobbers to the uninitiated?

**Gein:** I would say we are a mix between Dick Dale and the Cramps... or you could say our sound is something like the Munsters theme song, just more aggressive. I guess the music is something that Grandpa Munster might have cranked in the Dragula when he was cruisin' around looking for chicks.

**Q:** Tell me about the band's name. I am assuming that your namesake is Ed Gein. If so, do you find him to be the most interesting serial killer? Why or why not?

**Gein:** The name does come from Ed Gein. He has always been my favorite murderer. I have been really in to horror movies since I was a kid and I think Ed Gein is very important to the world of horror films. Since Ed inspired many of the big horror movies (Psycho, Texas Chainsaw Massacre,



Silence of the Lambs) he, in a sense, is a kind of "Godfather of Gore." With out Eddie, who knows what horror movies would be like today. For this reason, (not to mentioned he invented the whole "crazy mom" thing) I find Gein to be the most important/interesting... perhaps even prolific murders of our time.

**Q:** Have you always been fascinated with horror films and mass murderers?  
What do you think the appeal is?

**Gein:** I've been into horror of all kinds since I was a kid. I think we all have a dark side... for example anytime you drive by a car wreck you slow down and take a look. Why do people slow down and look? To see bodies of course! I think most people won't admit to or tap into their dark side, which is unfortunate. People miss out on a lot when they deny their natural morbid curiosity...

**Q:** In your bio it says that when you aren't writing music or watching horror movies you enjoy "finding animal carcasses, boiling off the remaining flesh, and making artwork with the bones." Please tell me this is true. What kinds of things do you make, and do you sell them? Where do you get your carcasses?

**Gein:** That is 100% true. I typically find carcasses on the side of the road, or in the woods. Then I bring them home, toss 'em in my skull boiling pot, and clean up the bones. My favorite thing to make out of the bones is wind chimes. I've never really thought about selling them before... maybe someday I won't mind parting with my art.

**Q:** Since you are obviously well-versed in the horror and sci-fi genre, what elements make for exceptional movies, in your opinion? What do you look for in such films, and what are some of your favorites? Conversely, what are some examples of what you'd consider to

be lousy or lackluster films, and why?

**Gein:** I have two different schools of thought with horror movies, I enjoy both the serious, dark, gritty horror, as well as the slasher b-films. I think an important aspect of a serious horror film is to not show too much, it's best when things are left to the imagination. Roman Polanski is a master at this. The end of *Rosemary's Baby* is amazing, because

you don't see the baby. When I saw *9th Gate* the people sitting behind me were complaining that "they didn't show the Devil." I'm sure what I could imagine as "The Devil" is far worse than what any special effects crew could come up with. Even *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, everyone always talks about how gory TCM is. Watch it again, there is very little blood

and gore on screen... you don't actually see the girl get impaled by the meat hook. I think this gives a certain class and credibility to the genre. The other main thing I look for in a serious horror film is atmosphere. You don't need a fast pace, or things jumping out at you for a film to be scary. What you do need is an underlying sense of creepiness that permeates every part of the movie...ie *The Changeling*. Another amazing movie everyone should own is *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*.... without a doubt one of the creepiest movies I ever seen. Now with slasher B movies its anything goes. They should pack in as much bad dialogue, naked girls, blood, and gore as possible! As far as "lackluster" movies... I would have to say following a cliché formula, bad acting, and depending too much on special effects.

The worst movie I have ever seen in my life is definitely *The Mummy* (w/ Brenden Fraiser). Not even the special effects could carry this crapfest of bad one liners and over the top Hollywood cheesiness. Coupled with the fact that the movie stars Brenden Fraiser, who is the





worst actor in cinematic history. I've seen better actors in porn. My main beef with that movie is that it is a remake of a classic and ends up making a mockery of it.

**Q:** What is your impression of the recent Hollywood blockbuster, *Hannibal*?

**Gein:** Well, I went to see *Hannibal* expecting it to be as good as *Silence of the Lambs*... this was a bad move. For the most part it was a decent movie, but it did not live up to its predecessor. I think what the sequel lacked was the sense of realism that "Silence" had. For example, I thought the whole ending dinner scene was a little silly. I thought the ending was more suitable for an episode of *Tales from the Crypt*... After Ray Liotta ate his own brain I could hear the Cryptkeeper saying "Looks like Hannibal gave him a piece of his mind!" Now, nothing against TFTC it is without a doubt my favorite show, but it is a different kind of horror than *Hannibal* should have been. *Hannibal* should have had a more "Seven" feel to it.

**Q:** Whose films would you most like to score with the music of Gein and the Graverobbers?

**Gein:** Wes Craven, Roger Coreman, Sam Rami, (the late) Ed Wood, Tobe Hooper, George Ramero, Herchel Gordon Lewis, Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez, Guy Ritchie, heck even John Waters.

**Q:** In addition to the movies, what has inspired and shaped your musical style?

**Gein:** Definitely old school surf music (The Nocturnes, Dick Dale, The Revels) as well as punk rock (The Misfits, The Cramps). Glenn Danzig has always been a major influence on me. Everything from Misfits to Samhain, Black Aria, and his current group Danzig. Glenn has a real sense for making spooky atmospheric music. I like to keep the songs pretty short, fast, aggressive, melodic, and creepy.

**Q:** I also read on your site that you and Myra travel to haunted locations throughout New England. What places have you gone to, and could you talk about the "spectral run-ins" you've experienced?

**Gein:** There is a great book called Haunted New England. The book lists a bunch of places, mostly southern Mass, that are known to be haunted. We've gone on many ghost-hunting trips, and there have been a few weird things that have happened to us. For example, seeing a girl cloaked in black walking bare foot in a graveyard and then vanishing. There was also the time we were run off the road by "The Phantom of Rt. 44." There's also been times where cameras will fail while in a haunted location and then work again once we leave... stuff like that.

**Q:** On the subject of horrific experiences, what is your big-

gest fear and/or the most terrifying nightmare you remember having?

**Gein:** I guess I've always been afraid of clowns, and Jack Palance. My most terrifying dreams all have a similar theme... basically me trying to get rid of a body of a recent victim before I get caught... I wonder what it all means.

**Q:** You seem to be very interested in what is generally considered the darker side of human nature and the imagination. What sort of spiritual beliefs do you have?

**Gein:** I am very big in to Aliester Crowley. I believe in the law of "Do What Thou Wilt." I think this is why the dark side of human nature doesn't bother me... everyone must follow their will. Some people's will is to murder, while other's is to die. I also don't believe in good or evil... its all relative. For example, if you saw a spider on the ground and you killed it that would be good for you, but evil to the spider. Essentially everything happens for a reason... even "bad" things. The idea is to look at the "bad" things as not being negative, but rather positive. I think a healthy person should be like a Ying Yang... their light and dark sides should be equal.

**Q:** Here's a question about etiquette that you might be able to help us with: Is making love in a graveyard disrespectful, or is it okay as long as it is not with someone you found there?

**Gein:** Making love in a graveyard is a beautiful thing... and I think its okay even if its with someone you dug up there... after all necrophilia means never having to say your sorry.

**Q:** What other sorts of hobbies, interests, and/or jobs have you had?

**Gein:** My main hobby is collecting stuff. Horror movies, old horror comics, movie posters, toys, records, serial killer memorabilia. I also like to work on my car (1972 Dodge Dart).

**Q:** Have any of you been in other bands in the past? If so, tell us about them.

**Gein:** We've all been in punk bands before, ranging from Misfits style, to Schreeching Weasel, to hardcore stuff. The first real band I was in was myself, Kemper and Sloth... It was called "Midget Sperm Bank." We sounded like Look-out! style punk... the songs were basically about 80's pop culture and filled with crass offensive humor. It was pretty fun.

**Q:** How long have you played guitar, and what was the impetus to begin playing?

**Gein:** I started off playing bass, I think I was 11 or 12. I



picked up guitar around 13/14. I basically started playing when a friend showed me how to make a power chord... I found that guitar was a lot more fun than bass... I had more leeway musically.

**Q:** I understand that you all recently did a European tour, is that right? How was that experience?

**Gein:** The tour was amazing. Our tour consisted of 12 shows throughout Belgium and Holland. It was cool to see how much people are into surf over there. We got a really positive reaction from the crowds. It looks like we'll be going back next year, this time we'll add Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark to the list.

**Q:** Is there anything else you'd like mention before The Almighty hiccups and swallows the world?

**Gein:** First off, thanks for the interview... these have been some really cool questions. Secondly, everyone should boycott "The Mummy Returns" and buy the movie "Deranged." Lastly, if anyone happens to see us live, after the show feel free to come talk with us... just don't come up to me and say "That was cool, but why don't you guys sing?" GRRR Fangs! Gein

## The Roustabouts

*When you think of raging punk rock-n-roll, Oklahoma probably doesn't spring instantly to mind. At least it didn't for me. However, once discovering this young band at the Streetpunk 2001/Midwest Oi Fest show this year, my musical geography was instantly altered. While I still haven't heard any of their recordings, I did manage to contact them*



*and do the following interview in July 2001. - BL*

**How did you meet, how long have you been together?**

**Jesse:** Three of us (Nick, Chris & Jesse) have known each other our whole lives. We've been friends since grade school. We started playing around musically when we were like 14 or so. We met our second guitarist (Daniel) back in late 1998 and we started the Roustabouts once we added him. So we've been playing for a little over two years now. Nick is the lead vocalist and plays guitar, Daniel plays guitar and sings a few songs, Chris plays bass and does backing vocals, and I play drums.

**What sorts of topics do your songs deal with?**

**Nick:** Just everyday things like trying to get by, and hanging out with good friends.

**What is the music scene like in Oklahoma? What sorts of things are there to do?**

**Jesse:** The music scene here in Oklahoma was dead for about a year. It's just now picking up because a new club called Green Door has opened up and is bringing through a lot of good touring bands. There was just a lack of a venue here and nobody promoted shows so it just died out for a while, but we're helping bring the scene back and we have a lot of good bands coming through like L.E.S. Stitches, Lower Class Brats, Hudson Falcons, The Unseen and lots more.

**Being from Oklahoma, what is your opinion on the whole McVeigh trial and execution?**

**Jesse:** Once you constantly hear about the bombing for what, like six years now, you kinda get tired of the whole trial and everything. We live 7 or 8 blocks from the memorial where the bombing actually took place and I've never even been to it once. I'm just glad the execution is over with and now everyone can get on with their lives.

**What are your favorite bands and conversely what bands and songs nauseate you?**

**Nick:** Favorite bands



that all of us can totally agree on would be The Clash and the Ramones, and as far as horrible bands I have no comment. We don't like to bash on other bands.

Jesse: I've been listening to U.S. Bombs "The World" a lot lately along with the new GC5 EP "Horseshoes & Handgrenades" and the Hudson Falcons new album.

**What's the sickest thing you have ever witnessed?**

Jesse: We went on tour with a certain band that I will not mention a few months back, and we were driving over night to a show and one of the members of the band was really drunk and had the shits. Their van is in front of us and one of them hung a bag out the window that was filled with barf and it got all over the side of the van. So they pull over at a Texaco that was closed to clean off the barf and one of the members had to shit and the gas station was closed. So everyone told him to get on top of the Texaco and shit on the roof. It was pretty gross considering we could see everything. Sadly, that's the second person I've seen shit off of a roof.

**What sorts of things do you guys do to occupy your spare time (hobbies, interests, sports, ceremonial mutilations, etc...)?**

Jesse: I'm really into computers. I've been designing websites for that past few years and almost all my spare time goes into that. I design our website also, [www.roustabouts.net](http://www.roustabouts.net)! The only sports that we are into seem to be Playstation sports games. Other than that we work to save up enough money to go on tour and get new merchandise.

**What was the last book you read and when was the last time you went to church?**

Nick: I am trying to read the Godfather now, and I went to church a couple years ago with my mom on Mother's Day.

Jesse: I honestly can't tell you the last book I read or the last time I went to church.

**If you were trapped in a Yellow Submarine with Paul McCartney and the cast of Designing Women, what sort of beverage would you desperately need to relax your nerves?**

Nick: I would be toe up on some wine and trying to get inside a Designing Women lovemaking sandwich!

**Any other comments?**

Nick: Boner from King Size Braces is the shit and we still have a piece of Paul from the GC5's pants hanging in our living room!

\*\*\*\*\*

*Q&A with Lancaster, Pennsylvania's  
rock-n-roll lunatics*

# THE PITS

<http://www.pitshorror.cjb.net/>

*Hailing from Amish country, this is the beer-drinkin', B-movie gore-obsessed band that proves to pulpit puppets of the Northeast that the old adage "give the Devil an inch, and he'll be your ruler" is a serious concern. This lo-fi rock-n-roll trio more than makes up for talented musicianship with sheer punk rock exuberance and primal rhythms that remind me of the early days of the Cramps. What you get is rudimentary, brain-eating, foot-stomping, humanity-bashing ghoul rock that hits below the belt. Given the sorry state of much rock-n-roll these days, The Pits strip it back down to the essentials and beat you over the head with them. - BL*

**1. Who is currently in the band, and what have been the line-up changes?**

Dr. Morbid is lead vocal and guitar, Dusty Booze is bustin' up his drums, and 3-D Lou is playing some awful bass guitar. Line changes include just Elvistein (1998-2000) on bass. But he's dead now. We don't like to talk about that.

**2. How did you all meet, and how long have you been together?**

Did you say meat? OK, rare, please.

**3. What releases do you have, and how can people get their filthy hands on them?**

"Lost in the Nineties", "Dead Against the Living", "The White Album", "50,000,000 Pits Fans Can't Be Wrong". Check the website or a show. Will trade for beer.

**4. How would you describe the Pits' sound, and what bands have inspired you?**

It sounds like a busload of rabid Catholic school girls plunging down an elevator shaft with monkeys biting them. Influences? Pro wrestling, monster movies, Pabst Blue Ribbon(our sponsor), and the Hillbilly Werewolf.

**5. What other stuff are you into (such as films, hobbies, bukkake, freemasonry, etc.)?**

See # 4

**6. What is the antithesis if The Pits, the very opposite of what you stand for?**

Hmm...Lo-Fi Lee is a douchebag (a scummy promoter from NYC. He'll make a couple thou on a show and then give the bands \$3.75 or some shit. He needs to get a foot broken off in his ass).

**7. What makes for a good show in The Pits' philosophy of**



entertainment? What are some of your most memorable live show experiences?

See # 5

8. *I read on your web-site that you have gotten kicked out of several venues, once even during a sound check. What's the story behind that?*

Dr. Morbid was asked to play an "A" chord and he asked the sound guy, "What's an "A" chord?". That really happened.

9. *What's the most trouble alcohol has gotten you into?*

We're really sorry, but our lawyers won't let us talk about it. And don't say anything about DUI's, the state of Delaware, hotel rooms, swimming pools connected to hotel rooms, fireworks, or the chick named Ada which involved a broken sink.

10. *What are your biggest fears?*

No beer, the sun, answering questions, Guitar Wolf retiring. Oh yeah, and in the movie, "Oh, Heavenly Dog!", there's a scene where a keg of beer gets shot. Oh, the humanity!

11. *What was your happiest moment?*

That case of Pabst. Yeah, this one right here.



12. *Do you remember where you were when they cancelled Full House? How did you cope with the event?*

Dusty wouldn't come out of his room for two weeks, Dr Morbid was out bird watching, and 3-D Lou was waiting for the Olsen twins to turn 16 and make the HBO special "Full Blouse".

13. *Out of the following timeless dichotomies, which would you prefer:*

A.) *Elvis or The Beatles* -- the King

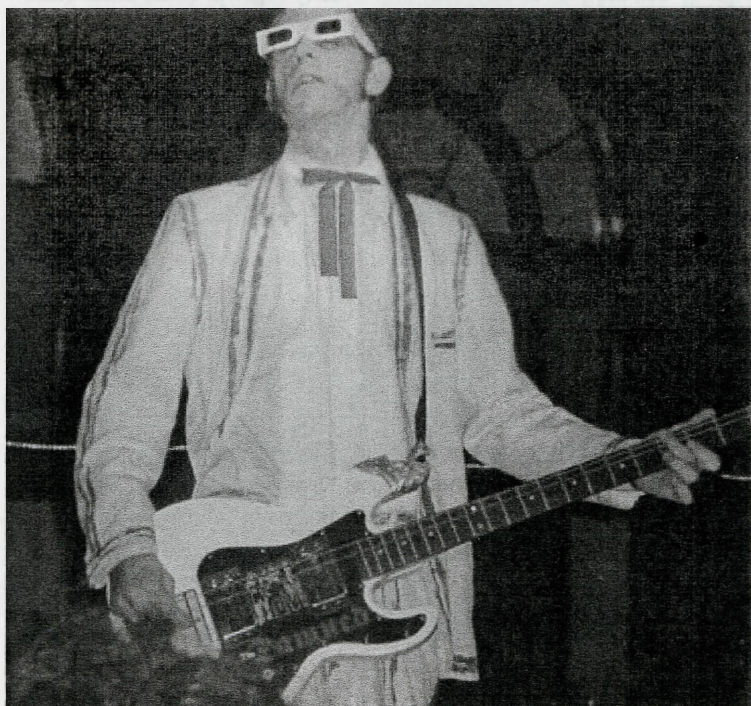
B.) *Mary Anne or Ginger* -- Mary Anne DOING Ginger

C.) *Ornithology or Paleontology* -- Well, the philosophical implications are staggering, being a Rhodes scholar at Cornell University and working for the Audubon Society for two years, we would have to steer towards ornithology. The reason being is that birds are the direct descendants of the warm blooded dinosaurs. How do you like that answer? Fuck-O!

D.) *Drinking alone or with a dog named Roy* -- Drinking with the Olsen twins. Roy could come along.

E.) *Blissful love and spiritual connection or chemical intoxication and hardcore porn* -- Hardcore porn with the Olsen twins and Mary Anne and Ginger. And Pabst.

F.) *listening to an Olivia Newton John album or a horrid death involving piano wire, rabid gerbils, and 40 lbs. of lead paint chips* -- A death match with Matsunaga and Mr. Pogo with Olivia Newton-John and a barbed wire piano. With the Olsen twins (naked) as refs. And Pabst.





14.) *What is the most perverse act you've been involved in or aspire to?*

Have you been reading this?!

15.) *What is on the horizon for The Pits?*

Our Horizon broke down. Now we have a Ford Econoline and life just got a whole lot better. As for us, we will be around until the Year Million-Billion. And we are first in line to inherit the Pabst Brewing Company. (With the Olsen twins as secretaries.) (Naked)

16.) *Is there anything else you'd like to add?*

If you'd like to check out the best Chick Surf-Rock band, see the Brimstones. Don't let 'em fool ya. They drink hot cocoa and say "poop". This interview is over. The cops are knocking. Later, Dickie!

## DIY: How to Book Shows

By Nancy Ballast

Originally, doing shows appealed to my friends and me because a venue went out of business. Monster Island, in Kalamazoo Michigan had had shows for a while, then the owner of the space wanted to use it for different purposes. Too bad, since the US Bombs, Anti Flag, Peter and the Test Tube Babies, and many other bands had played there. The place was getting quite a following. Also, a promoter in Grand Rapids was screwing bands in order to support his outside pursuits (pot smoking). We wanted to give bands a better place to play and pay them better than he was. We're still doing shows. Contact Paul at [workingyouth@yahoo.com](mailto:workingyouth@yahoo.com) for booking info.

Doing shows will not gain you scene points, make people like you, make you popular, or earn you money (unless you are trying to screw the bands). You can, from time to time, see bands that might not otherwise come to town, and help the kids in the scene do the same. You will also get to hear bands you never knew about, who you may or may not like. Be prepared to put up with a little rock star attitude, and a lot of hassle. Be prepared to piss people off doing what you have to do, lose money and friends. But hey, someone has to do it.

### 1. Venue

People who own property won't let you use it from the kindness of their hearts. They want to make some money from your show. Depending on your town, venues can be a stumbling block. Must the show be all ages, or would an older crowd be okay? Sometimes the band/agency specifies the crowd.

#### Bars

If a bar is willing to let a show come in, you have some of the initial hassle gone, since the bar has PA (right?) and will usually not charge a ton to loan it to you for the evening.

Bars are more concerned about making money from alcohol sales. Some bars are hesitant to accept an underage crowd (in Michigan, that's under 18) since less people can buy alcohol. Also, some bars are hesitant to get a punk crowd in. Depending on the person at the bar, it might be wise to hedge the truth a little, say, it's a local hard-rock band that are friends of mine. That way the show can go on. On the other hand, the truth might be the best if you know the band has a wrestling act they will finish the show with, and you want to assure the owner they bring their own tables and chairs to smash.

Expect to pay around \$100 for the use of the PA, either from the door or up front. Depending on the turnout, the bar might want an additional cut. Try to make sure the bar's cut is decided on before the night of the show.

#### Halls

Halls are great places for shows. They are big, usually some promoter has used them before so kids in the scene know about it, and sometimes you can rent the bar too. But halls are expensive, and there is no PA provided. Also, most halls make you pay up front and will not wait until the night of the show for a door percentage. Anything you want you have to bring yourself, ice, cups, beverages, etc. The hall we use most frequently has a midnight curfew.

The yellow pages list halls and available places to rent. Halls can cost upwards of \$200, and some force you to pay a "cleaning fee" deposit you can't avoid, even if you clean the place yourself. Halls require diplomacy: the people who run them are friends with members who rent, and there usually aren't problems with weddings, union meetings, bingo games, etc.

#### Other

Coffee shops, music stores, any business that has a bit of space and wants to get people in the door. Our cheapest venues are places like this. Not exactly legal in some areas (like Michigan) since there is no "dance permit" but as long as the crowd is under control, usually not a problem. Cops will usually be more concerned by open alcohol containers, people drinking in their cars, fights, etc. The best thing about these places is paying from a door percentage. Our regular haunt asks for 20% of the door.

#### *Squats, basements and warehouses:*

Be very careful before getting involved with some places. If it is an established location that has had shows before, go for it. Be aware of cop presence. Do cops patrol to bust homeless people or prostitutes? Will they stop to hassle two kids making out and ask them where they have been drinking? Basement shows can be cool and have a great turnout, but people will try to get in for free, thinking, you can't make me pay, it's just a basement/warehouse, even though the money is going to pay the bands. And if the cops show up at a basement show, someone might get locked up for serving to minors.

### 2. Bookings



Weekend shows work best. If you're in a town that isn't considered major, it might be tough to get bands on a Friday or Saturday. A lot of bands we work with would plan on Detroit on Friday, Chicago on Saturday, and somewhere else on Sunday. If there is an opening, we get Monday or Thursday. Sundays are okay if the band plays early. Crowds are harder to draw if they think 'I have to go to school/work in the morning' and they think the show won't be over with at 2 am. So for weeknight shows, advertise on the flyer 'show starts promptly at 8 pm, and then make sure it happens. Avoid holiday weekends. Yeah, even for a punk show that appeals to a younger audience, a holiday will have a sucky draw, and most likely lose you money.

### **Getting bands**

Email, calling bands, check tour dates on websites, these are all ways of getting bands. We managed to get bands when other venues fell through, or a venue screwed over a band and they were willing to try a DIY promoter. Once or twice we saw a band had holes on tour, and helped them fill a date. If you want to get local bands and you don't know them, go to a show somewhere else and leave your phone number with the band. It's always a good idea to tell bands about others you have booked, and let them know they can check up on you.

Set up an email account just for booking. Also get a PO box for people to send stuff to.

Some bands book through agencies. Most agencies have contracts, guarantees, etc. Don't sign things until you are sure the date is confirmed in your town at your venue and you can pay them. We see a lot of weird 'rider' contracts, stipulating the bands get dressing rooms, fresh towels, etc. If riders have to be signed, cross out what you can't provide, tell the agency what you can do, then sign it. Usually nothing bad happens, but if the show falls apart, the contract says you can be sued for costs (equipment, meals, guarantees, etc.) If you have to cross anything out, write something like 'no available facilities' on the contract.

Once you get established, tons of people will be calling, sending stuff in the mail, blind emails, etc. Before you risk

money on a touring band, try to determine how large the risk is. 1. Is the band good? Listen to the cd, demo or whatever they send. Make sure they will have some release for sale at the show. 2. Has anyone heard of the band? Is there a good band that would draw a decent crowd if no one has? 3. Has the band opened for other bands in a nearby city, did they recently come off a big tour? If you still have doubts, ask someone else, especially if you're dealing with a music genre you're don't know. It is easy to give in to a band that really needs the date, then no one comes to the show, and you have nothing to pay them with.

Essentially, don't bother booking bands that don't have a following unless they are going open up for a band who does - that way the unknown band will get a crowd - and you won't feel like crap.

### **3. PA**

It's best if you can hook up with someone with a PA. Kevin (a working youth collective member) bought a PA so we wouldn't go broke renting stuff all the time. Still stuff got broken. We had another sound guy tell us that to use his rig would be \$150 per night, to have him run it would be another \$50. And that was a 'deal just for us.' Professional places are even more per night. A pal of ours did a large 'fundraiser' and signed a contract with a sound place, and ended up owing more money for the sound and hall rental than they took in at the door.

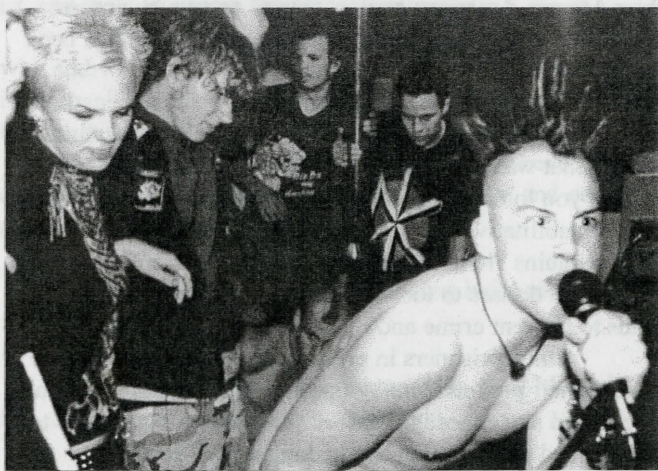
Things break! It's good to have back up mikes, cords, stands etc. since these take the most abuse.

Hauling PA; a real treat. If you provide PA, it's best to have a vehicle you can use to haul it in: a hatchback or a pickup. I kept a beater 1987 Honda Accord hatchback, because it could fit the whole PA rig. And with a hatchback, if there were two shows in a week, I could drive around, no one could see it to steal it, and we wouldn't have to lug it back in the house.

### **4. Promotion**

You can never have enough flyers. Try to see if another promoter/band has a mailing list, and mail flyers to it. Go to all the record stores, coffee shops, body piercing, resale clothing stores, party stores in rental neighborhoods, and flyer. A full-sized flyer is good to display, but leave a stack of small size flyers for people to take. If there is a venue that won't have this show, but the crowd you want goes there, flyer outside or during their shows. We flyer at parties and other people's shows. It's a good idea to have flyers for the next two shows at the door when you have a show. Grand Rapids is a medium sized town, but we go through over 100 flyers per show with the mailing lists, and regular stops for flyers.

Make sure to add the phrase 'no alcohol' for your All Ages flyers, unless the venue does serve alcohol - and that is the responsibility of the venue to see that minors are not served.





Email mailing lists work too, but a flyer is better.

If local record stores carry the band's cd, see if they will split some promotional costs. Then put on the flyer 'sponsored by xxx' or 'cd available at XXX'.

Try the local independent weekly paper to see if they will list your events. Also the daily paper's entertainment section. If you have a press kit for the band, send it along, who knows they might run the listing next to a small interview or photo. If local radio isn't too corporate play-list controlled, or there is a college/independent station, send them a CDR of the bands before the show, and give listing details as well. Even if they don't announce it on the air, the more crap you send them the more legitimate they will realize you are.

### **5. Hassle**

Working a show can make you a control freak. It's easy to forget things like cups, markers, extra paper, a stamper to mark people's hands, change/ singles, food for the bands. Stuff like that is no big deal, but it can be a show stopper. It is best to split the responsibilities for the show between several people to make sure nothing important is forgotten.

Hassling with people (and the people you call your friends) is hard too. Are these people being nice because you're running the door and they want to sneak in alcohol, get in without paying, or get their crappy band a show? Do what you like, but if there's a guarantee and 5 people get in for free, the money has to come from somewhere. We are real hard asses when it comes to running the door since we have very little back up funds.

Seeing a worried parent show up to look for their child and gawk at the guy with the two-foot Mohawk who's sitting with you at the door. This was the most fun once, since the dad was cool and the mom was psycho. The dad is asking us questions, and really interested, and the mom is telling us we're freaks.

Break up fights. Stop people from getting in who want to kick someone's ass, stop people from getting in who haven't paid. This means getting physical. It's easier if there are a few six-foot men on your side (preferably with tattoos, over 200 lbs. or skinheads), though my friends Kristen and Dana can have a threatening physical presence.

Cleaning up after the show ... glamour time. Sweep the floors for broken glass and the massive pile of cigarette butts. Wipe tables. Cruise the parking lot for bottles. (Less evidence for the cops). Pick up trash. Pick up bandaids that fell off of sweaty bodies (eww, better bring gloves) try to get graffiti off the bathroom walls. Pay the venue for broken stuff (better to stop things before anything gets broken, but sometimes you can't help it).

### **6. Fun**

We still have fun, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the pain of doing a show. Some of the bands get to be your friends. We look forward to seeing a lot of the bands, to catch up on their lives and reminisce. You realize that musicians (duh) are people, regardless of the amount of rock star

attitude. Treat everyone

the same, the way you'd want to be treated, and they'll appreciate it. (btw: bands really like it if you give them food.

Maybe nobody does this.) From time to time, it is worth it, when a band gets a good turnout, and you know you're helping them get new fans. And then someone comes up to you during the show and

says "hey, do you work here? This was great. Are there more shows like this?" Better than staying home and watching TV every night, right?

## **PRISONS FOR SALE**

*By David Wilson*

Director Ashley Hunt remembers reading a New York Times article, "They were analyzing a juvenile prison and uncovered gross human rights violations, and being a privatized prison, the focus was on profits rather than helping to rehabilitate the children who are thrown behind bars." Hunt's interest in privatization of prisons and the prison industry grew and led him to make *Corrections*, perhaps the most controversial film at *Slamdance* this year. From his first-class documentary, one can see that the corruption in our penal system isn't anything new, but is getting progressively worse. *Corrections* is a daring critique of capitalism and how it impacts minorities and victims of poverty.

"After the Civil War the U.S. South had a large problem - their primary labor resource had been a free one - slave labor," says Hunt. "White southerners felt extremely threatened by the notion of 'free blacks'." As a result, criminal codes were expanded in order to target the newly emancipated men, women, and children."

*Corrections* exposes the fact that the Civil War never truly abolished slavery. Almost immediately following the war, politicians and corporations were already finding ways to re-enslave newly liberated African-Americans. At a time when most African-American had no land, laws were passed prohibiting vagrancy. In addition, the Thirteenth Amendment passed, outlawing slavery in all cases except when people were convicted of crimes. With the new laws outlawing vagrancy, many African-Americans found themselves criminalized and held behind bars. Southern states began leasing their African-American convicts out to private businesses; often back to the same plantation owners they had just been freed from.

Atrocious as it sounds, none of what happened after the Civil War could foreshadow the mass institutionalized slavery that was to come in today's privatized prison industry. "If you look at history, before the 60's we still used far more rehabilitative measures to lower crime than we do today," explains Hunt, "Right now, our government is wasting millions of dollars to lock people up, yet spending little funds to prevent crime and rehabilitate criminals."

Since prisoners in privatized prisons labor for free to keep their prisons running (such as kitchen and janitorial labor), and since these privatized prisons can charge \$30 to \$60 per bed per day, they are making a huge profit.

"It's legalized slavery," claims Hunt.



Due to the powerful lobbying efforts of the corporate prisons, the masses in the U.S. appear convinced that increased sentences are essential for reduction of crime – which according to Hunt, doesn't add up.

"The 'tough on crime' ideology assumes that people commit crime because laws aren't strict enough," Hunt continues, "people commit crimes out of poverty, rage, ignorance, drug addiction, and even mental illnesses, but I have yet to see a convict who committed a crime because a law wasn't strict enough."

Hunt makes a good point, and the statistics are in his favor. As sentences for nonviolent crime increased, crime and incarceration increased. Since 1970, prison population growth increased 614%. Today, The U.S. has a higher rate of incarceration than any other country in the world – some experts claim the highest in history.

"Prisons are factories for crime – not a solution." Hunt continues, "many prisoners will be locked up again and again, often times for the same crimes, because the prisons do little or nothing to rehabilitate them – which is the only way to ensure consistent growth and profit for the privatized prison business."

Judging from the facts, the privatized prison industry is big business – a 50 billion dollar industry that thrives on putting people behind bars and free labor.

Right now, the prison industry is targeting children, which leaves human rights groups in panic.

"It's really sad," says Hunt, "our government won't sufficiently increase funding for public schools or build decent recreational facilities, but they will spend millions of tax dollars on juvenile prisons."

Exploiting the 'do-the-adult-crime-do-the-adult-time' rhetoric, the juvenile prison industry is booming, targeting children at ages as young as 9. To keep profits high, these young victims of the prison business are often malnourished and physically abused. Human rights organizations have documented cases of children with ruptured eardrums, resulting from blows to their heads. Cuts and bruises seem commonplace. Cases of sexual abuse are also documented.

When asked by *Human Rights Watch* what they wanted to change about the juvenile prison in Tallulah, the children responded, "we'd like for the guards to stop hitting us, and we'd like more food."

"The privatized prison industry is not concerned with addressing the real problems that cause crime or reducing crime," explains Hunt, "what they are concerned with is their shareholders and continuing to make a profit."

See this film and brace yourself to be forever changed in the way you view criminals, prisons, and our government in general.

For more information, visit: [www.independentfilms.com/corrections](http://www.independentfilms.com/corrections)

\*This article originally appeared in *Slug Magazine*, Feb. 2001, and is reprinted by permission.

## Violette Szabo: WWII Heroine

By Lisa M. Donnalley

During WWII there were many heroes who sacrificed their lives to stop Hitler and the Third Reich. One of these heroes was a woman named Violette Szabo, who not only gave her life, but also managed to kill several Nazis in the process. Born in Paris on June 26, 1921 Violette Bushell had a French mother and an English father. She grew up in Stockwell, South London where she became very skilled with a rifle and grew to be a voraciously independent and strong willed woman.



During WWII, Violette fell in love with a Captain in the French Foreign Legion and she and Etienne Szabo were married August 21, 1940. Shortly after their marriage, Captain Szabo was posted abroad and he and Violette were separated for over a year. He returned for seven days and Violette became pregnant, this was the last time she was to see her husband alive, as he was killed in

North Africa. Shortly after, Tania Szabo was born.

The widowed Mrs. Szabo received a letter asking her to attend some sort of interview in London. There she met Mr. E. Potter who told her that her fluency in French, her knowledge of France's geography and her marksmanship skills could be useful in helping the French Resistance. He asked her if she would be willing to do dangerous work in native country: become a spy and make life very unpleasant for the Germans who occupied France. She agreed immediately. After her training she parachuted into France and was captured twice by the Germans, but escaped the first time. On her second trip into France she was forced to retreat into a house in the southwest where the Gestapo surrounded her. She seized a Sten gun and as much ammo as she could carry then barricaded herself in the house. She kept moving around the house as not to be cornered and fought until she dropped of exhaustion...but not before she killed several Nazis.

Violette Szabo was then arrested and put into solitary confinement where she was kept naked, in a dark damp cell and was repeatedly raped and beaten. Yet, she never gave anything away to the enemy. After her torture and interrogation, she was sent to Ravensbruck Concentration camp where she was executed at age 23. After her death, Violette Szabo was awarded the prestigious George Cross for her courageous acts of bravery, the first woman to receive this award. The King of England gave the Cross to her four-year-old daughter.



# The American Pit Bull Terrier

## Guilty until Proven Innocent

By Ben Lybarger

I am sure you've seen it in the news, a dangerous breed of evil killer dogs is responsible for killing another of God's children. It may be a Rotweiler, Doberman, or any other targeted breed of "vicious" dogs, but most often it is the Pit Bull. I mean, look at it. It's obviously an intimidating canine beast with a rippling muscles, a huge thick head, and a bark that makes door-to-door solicitors piss themselves. This a clever animal with the ability to take down a raging bull. Such a villainous creature must dream of eating babies and hunger for the taste of small children as they run away in terror, right? Wrong. Once again we have the media sensationalizing stories, and once again, there are very real and disastrous consequences.

Sure, there are many genuine cases of these dogs (and other breeds) biting people, even killing them. But what you often don't get a chance to hear is how these dogs were trained and raised. You are all too often left to surmise that the guilty dogs are genetically hard-wired with a thirst for blood. To test this hypothesis, I spoke with Scott Dailey of Salem, Ohio, who has always been an ardent supporter of the breed, about his experiences with his own Pit Bulls: Belker and Cheetah. Belker has been a part of his family for six years and Cheetah for two years. Cheetah came from a litter of eight that were deserted and locked inside a garage without food or water. A couple of her bothers and sisters were dead, and Cheetah was little more than a skeleton. However, the "rescue" did not simply end there. The Humane Society, in accordance with Ohio law is not permitted to allow adoption of this breed, so they either get put down (i.e. murdered), or the owner has to claim them and show proof of insurance. Fortunately, one of the Humane Society staff didn't agree with such policy, and let Scott try to find good homes for the surviving dogs, which for Cheetah, ended up being his own.



Cheetah



Pictured above and on opposite page: Belker

I asked Scott to talk a little about the legal problems that I knew he'd encountered from owning dogs of such a stigmatized breed. First off, after a minor non-violent incident, the dog warden was called to his home and Scott was left no option but to comply with the state laws relating to Pit Bull ownership. He had to install a six foot fence in his back yard, build a dog kennel complete with a roof inside that six foot fence, and when the dog is in there, it must be on a chain and the door must be padlocked. If you think that is excessive, on top of that, he had to prove that he had \$150,000 worth of liability insurance for his one dog (he only had Belker at this time). While he spent much time, labor, and money building the fence and kennel, his home-owner's insurance not only wouldn't cover his dog, but dropped him totally - basically giving him the ultimatum to get rid of the dog and remain covered, or lose all coverage completely. Naturally, he kept the dog and kept searching for insurance companies that would cover Belker. NONE of them in the state of Ohio would. Apparently the American Pit Bull Terrier is at the top of a dangerous and uninsurable dog list. He eventually found a place through the State that would insure his house, but still will not insure his dog. So, to comply with Ohio law is next to impossible. It seems to be a less direct alternative to the outright bans some cities and states have tried. The fine for no insurance on a Pit Bull is \$1000-\$1500, and if his dog were to get out and be picked up, he would be unable to get him back unless he could prove that it is insured. So, every time a Pit Bull, or other "dangerous" dog, gets loose, it runs the risk of being captured and killed, since many owners cannot get or afford insurance.

Scott also notes the reactions people have to his dogs, such as people running by his house afraid, neighbors angrily confronting him over not wanting Pit Bulls in the neighborhood, and people would even call the police when they saw Belker tied up out front. He feels that the media has played an important role in stigmatizing pit bulls and causing the hysterical reactions. Aside from the negative, fear-inducing news reports, you also have gang-bangers and drug-dealers making the Pit Bull



fashionable. These are also often the people who mistreat the dogs and train them to attack humans. Scott, half-humored, half-dumbfounded recalls being accused of being a drug-dealer, nazi, and even a cult leader – all slurs stemming from the unfounded supposition that pit bull owners have their dogs for sinister reasons, as if no decent citizen would own such a dog.

The truth about the average pit bull is far from the stereotype. As Scott notes, they are excellent guard dogs: loyal, strong, highly intelligent, and very good around kids. Belker has been around his son and his son's friends since his boy was 7 years old, taking the usual aggravation a kid can dish out, yet never an incident occurred. He also credits their high tolerance for pain as a reason Pit Bulls are one of the least likely dogs to attack children. Scott's view on this and the other positive attributes of this breed is supported not only by ample anecdotal evidence and in many books written by owners and breeders, but as Cherie Kavanaugh (quoted by Richard F. Stratton, noted Pit Bull advocate) states:

This breed is not known as an indiscriminate people-biter. It has the innate ability to distinguish between true aggression and play; therefore it is a good family companion that will offer protection when and if needed. It is unusually tolerant of small children and accepts their roughness as a matter of course, gauging the child's strength and playing in accordance (35).

It becomes obvious that Ms. Kavanaugh was writing in 1974, since today the Pit Bull is known as an indiscriminate people biter, however unjustly. To see how their image has changed, look at the television show, *Our Gang*, in which Petey, a Pit Bull, is a patient and trusted dog owned by a group of young children. Now try to imagine a kid's show today that features a friendly Pit Bull -- not likely to happen.

Often, the media will use the inflammatory tag word "Pit Bull" to describe an attack or mauling that was actually done by a mixed breed, not a pure Pit Bull. For most of the city bans, including the one in Cincinnati Ohio, a "Pit Bull" is a category that includes a Staffordshire Bull Terrier, AmStaff, APBT, the American Bulldog, and/or any dog "which has the

appearance of being predominantly of the breed." To make matters worse, many breeders of Staffordshire Terriers, the show version of a pit bull, have tried to distance themselves from the plight of the American Pit Bull Terrier in an effort to de-stigmatize their own dogs, which are as close to the APBT as you can get.

Another major concern is amateur over-

breeding.

Much of the problem stems from irresponsible owners who buy a 'big, bad pit bull' to boost their shallow egos, and then abandon it when it loses its appeal. The real problem is people. The Pit Bull Terrier has become to these "breeders" a product - a

completely disposable item that is only as good as its last litter and the revenue it brings. As Richard F. Stratton notes in *The World of the American Pit Bull Terrier*, "a Pit Bull owner should be a more responsible person than your average owner" however "its appeal is all too often to the irresponsible types – but not always" (10). Pit Bulls traditionally have been bred to fight other dogs, and not to attack people. Legitimate breeders will not allow people-biters to reproduce, with the exception of protective bites. Here is where the general middle-class public with their reactionary fears will want to solve the problem of unethical breeders by banning pit bulls altogether. This is much like the mentality that wishes to revoke the Second Amendment in the interest of "safety." In both cases we have an over-simplification of the problem with a naïve solution that will primarily criminalize respectable citizens. However, this viewpoint is even worse in the case of dangerous dog legislation, because it treats the dogs as devil creatures with less of a right to life than all others, and basically amounts to genocide: either directly or indirectly.

To make the point further, if we consider the dominant image of the criminal propagated by the media as someone of color, would it be a viable solution to ban those people from cities or to require "dangerous minority" insurance? It's absurd and immoral. While a dog is not completely comparable to a human, I am arguing that both have a right to exist without being categorically targeted for people's generally unfounded fears and biases. As Richard Stratton states, politicians will "be held accountable in the final analysis for the unnecessary expenses they bring on their constituents by arbitrarily and vacant-mindedly pushing for discriminatory (and, thus, unconstitutional) legislation" (29). Let's hope that he is right.

For more information:

- \* <http://www.ukcdogs.com/> (the only major breeder's association, 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest in the nation, that acknowledges the APBT)
- \* <http://www.dogwatch.net/> (learn about breed-specific legislation)
- \* Books by Richard F. Stratton, (life-long pit bull advocate)





# Music Reviews

\*All reviews by Ben Lybarger (BL) or Lisa M. Donnalley (LM) unless otherwise noted.

## Gorilla

*Genetic Joke*

Crazy Love Records [www.crazyloverrecords.com](http://www.crazyloverrecords.com)

Holy fucking shit this is smokin'! The band is from Hungary, the style is psychobilly, the approach is innovative, the music is wickedly good, and the conclusion is: Get this. There is more talent in this band than there are empty seats at Mötley Crüe reunion tour. The album is very well-rounded, with alternating tempos and some scorching guitar-intensive songs interspersed with some drum and bass-driven tracks. The upright bass player is among the very best that I have heard – just insane. On songs like “Planet of the Apes” and “Luni Bin” he gets downright maniacal and leaves you more disoriented than Farrah Fawcett. The guitar rhythms also absolutely crush all in their path, whether they have more of the proficient metal-driven intensity of the Nekromantix as on “Psychotic Paradise” or a more nitro-injected rockabilly style like “When I was Young.” The CD actually begins and ends with a short instrumental bluegrass/folk tune, “Headless School Bus Driver,” and there is a great psychobilly cover of Steppenwolf’s “Born to Be Wild.” You’ll also find a rockin’ big band swing song on here that is stellar as well. This is one of my new favorite CDs – one that will raise more than just an eyebrow in the psychobilly scene and should be appreciated by anyone with musical taste. – BL

## V/A - A Fistfull of Rock'n'Roll vol. 7

Victory Records

The Donnas kick this 19 band compilation off with a hard-rockin’ Joan Jett meets AC/DC number. This is my first introduction to their music, although I’ve heard a lot about them, and I must say, I really dig this song. Most of the other bands on this compilation I have never even heard of, but a lot of them are really good. Alabama Thunder Pussy lays down a slab of raw, Southern, hard-as-steel, rock-n-roll that I think dwarfs somewhat similar artists like Antiseen and Nashville Pussy. The Launderettes are another great band included on here that has a sort of garage surf sound and female vocals. Also, the Loudmouths deliver their trademark slab of unrepentant punk rock. Other bands on here are: Puffball, Hellions, Les Viperes, Push Rods, Hell-side Strangers, Gels, Shut-ups, and more. While I don’t like several of the songs very much, I’d still claim this is a really good and enjoyable sampler of cool bands that I am not used to listening to. – BL

## The Dead Kings

“King by Death, Fool for a Lifetime”

Crazy Love Records [www.crazyloverrecords.com](http://www.crazyloverrecords.com)

Review by Mikey the Thumb

I’ve been a die hard, downright rabid Mad Sin and Batmobile fan for years so you can imagine my excitement when I first caught wind of CRAZY LOVE RECORDS’ new all-star outfit, THE DEAD KINGS! Yeah that’s right, Kofte (front man from MAD SIN) and Johnnny (skin-slapper from BATMOBILE) have combined forces with members of the KLINGONZ and NEKROMANTIX to put together one hell of a wreckin’ debut - *King by Death, Fool for a Lifetime*. Kofte’s intense vocals add a lot of Mad Sin flavor to the DEAD KINGS, but this act is no spin-off - some of the most original punk-edged psychobilly I’ve heard in a long time! So what the hell are y’all waitin’ for? Hit CRAZY LOVE RECORDS up for your own copy today!

## Hudson Falcons/King Size Braces

*Attack EP*

Squigton Records [www.squigtonrecords.com](http://www.squigtonrecords.com)

Carve an extra notch in yer belt ‘cuz you’re gonna eat this shit up. The Hudson Falcons immediately knock the wind out of you with the title track that has got to be one of their most intense songs to date. They deliver six tracks total on this CD, three of which are new ones, including a great song honoring working women. In “Responsibility” they say “selfishness and apathy are the two very deadly sins / pray for the lost souls, and do something if you can” - once again showing themselves not only as a band concerned for those displaced by companies who commodify and abuse labor, and with the upper class living well off the broken backs of workers, but also concerned about those at the bottom and middle who are indirectly complicit in the suffering. There is also a couple excellent covers, including Stiff Little Fingers’ “Alternative Ulster” and a blistering rendition of MC5’s “Kick Out the Jams.” After them, King Size Braces dish out a hearty helping of skinhead rock-n-roll that manages to sound fresh thanks to their obvious knack for writing catchy songs with rough vocals and lots of energy. You can hear touches of Dropkick Murphys and Rancid in here, mixed with a definite Oi sensibility. They have five songs on here, all of which’ll put you in a drinkin’ mood, including a cover of Merle Haggard’s “Mama Tried.” In summary, this is one worth tracking down for certain. - BL

## Tension Wire

*Explicit*

Seymour Records [www.seymourrecords.com](http://www.seymourrecords.com)

I am not sure what to say about this. I’ve listened to it all the way through, and it didn’t really grab me. They are sort of pop-punk, but not there’s a darker, drudging feel to it. I’d put this in the player if held at gunpoint by Mexican bandits, or if later I feel like second guessing my first impression. They are not bad if you like this sort of music I guess. - BL

## Rip Carson

& The Twilight Trio

*Stand Back!*

Rolling Rock Records c/o Ronny Weiser 2460 Casey Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89120



If this disc don't make you want to move, you probably need a team of several burly lumberjacks to remove that rather large stick from your ass. This is rockabilly that has a very rootsy feel and lots of energy. The musicianship is excellent: you get good thumpin' bass rhythms, 50's sounding guitars ripping it up, and Rip's vocals really seal the package. He has one of the very best voices in the genre, and brings his own style and charisma to the table, moving from croon to howl as the song dictates. I think this disc would appeal to people who don't even know much about rockabilly. It just has a level of energy and charm you don't find too much these days. Everybody needs to own this slab of pure, raw, and infectious American rockabilly that is not just dead nostalgia, but rather seems more alive than it ever was. - BL

### Brass Knuckle Boys

*American Bastard*

www.hauntedtownrecords.com

Tired of pre-fabricated anthems, recycled punk rock clichés, and bands without a clue? Well then, I recommend getting a hold of this CD and having a taste of some "No Coast Street Punk" played with enough heart and sincerity to make The Man in Black nod with approval. There are covers of bands as diverse as Kris Kristofferson, Johnny Cash, Hanoi Rocks, and Skrewdriver – the latter with adjusted lyrics, of course. Original songs on here deal with the mistreatment of war veterans, class warfare, incarceration and despair, loyalty and friendship, and so on. One song even tells a different side of the Irish gangster Jimmy Coonan's story. All are written in the personal voice of singer Mark Dacey and are delivered with the southern punk rock signature of Billy Blitz's [The Stagers] guitar playing. This is definitely one to track down. - BL

### The Partisans

*So Neat EP*

TKO Records www.tkorecords.com

Here you have three tracks by this important and influential English punk

band that started way back in 1978. Hell, that's when my sister was born. These songs mark the first new material by the band in 17 years, and they aren't bad. While you don't get the exciting rush of "Police Story," their song on the 1981 *Punk and Disorderly* compilation, they do maintain a late seventies punk style that most of their other material had. Still these songs are pretty mellow and are missing that ingredient X that makes it come alive, but for a band just recently come out of hibernation, this is pretty decent. - BL

### The Templars

*Horns of Hattin*

www.gmmrecords.com

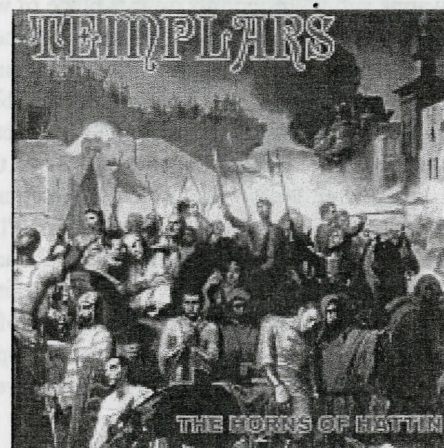
If this were any better it would be one of the seven deadly sins. This is some great stuff. The first track, after the lengthy movie clip intro, is called *Video Age*: a song delivered in their signature "Brickwall Oi!" style. While their last full-length release on GMM, "Omne Datum Optimum," was a great album, it was also somewhat of a departure from their previous, almost trademark, sound. However, on "Horns of Hattin" the guitars once again have less distortion and a little more of the raw exuberance and charm of their previous work. Some songs like "Breakdown" and "Ockham's Razor" add a little more of a rock-n-roll feel, and there is a great hidden track tacked onto the end of the disc – altogether making this some of their best work. Personally, I think this is the top Oi! band out there, and while you can hear a variety of influences in their music, they've definitely carved out a unique style that sets them apart from the pack. I'd get this if you aren't some sort of bloated jackass with less wit and sophistication than a TV weatherman. - BL

### Sloppy Meateaters

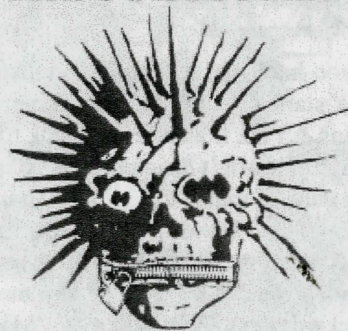
*Forbidden Meat*

Orange Peel Records P.O. Box 15207, Fremont, CA 94539

This is a fine example of a band doing something pretty well that I don't really care for. Sloppy Meateaters come from the Blink 182 school of punk rock and have a fairly tight sound with extremely



### THE FORGOTTEN



ASK NO QUESTIONS





poppy vocals. Now, I am not into macho posturing, nor am I an angry person, but this just sounds really... well... wimpy. Like bubble-gum music that makes your head bob from side to side with a ridiculous grin on your face as you skip down the sidewalk on your way to clean the pastor's minivan. Check it out if you dig that sort of thing. - BL

## Os Catalepticos

### *Zombification*

Crazy Love Records [www.crazyloverecords.com](http://www.crazyloverecords.com)

If I were a brontosaurus, this CD would be like a delicious shrubbery covered in tasty beetles. If you like psychotic coffin-bass slappin' and 80's death metal, you are gonna wanna rub your genitals on this piece of work. I definitely have a soft spot for both, and have had more than a few intimate moments with this disc. This band is from Brazil is *much* heavier on the psycho than the 'billy, and this new full-length has a somewhat higher production value than their last one. At first, I thought it made the tracks sort of run together, but I've really grown to appreciate this outing almost as much as their last full album, "Little Bits of Insanity." If you remember liking metal back before the wannabe gangster rap fusion whore vomit shit, back when the spandex-clad imbecile druggies with poofy hair were the worst we had to deal with, then you'll appreciate this. Plus, the addition of a frantic upright bass player into the mix really adds some serious kick. - BL

## Skins & Pinz 2

### *GMM Records*

[www.gmmrecords.com](http://www.gmmrecords.com)

Whoo-hoo! A CD compilation that titillates my brain and kick-starts my fight or flight response. Here we have the Skins & Pinz II an extreme punk rock disc featuring 26 songs that won't disappoint. This is all pretty much balls out punk/oi music that gets you pumped up for some drinkin' and brawlin. Let's see...there is some Major Accident, The Wretched Ones, Iron Cross, Pressure Point, Agnostic Front, Patriot, Relix, and more! Some of my favorite tracks you ask? Well, there is "Main Street" by the Main St. Saints, "Third Man In" by the Dropkick Murphys, "Breakdown" by the Templars, and "Abandoned Vets" by the Hudson Falcons. I really like track 7, "Kids with a Vision" by the Boils, a band I am not too familiar with, but am now interested in. Another surprise band for me is the Ducky Boys and their song "Doing Time." It's got a slow ballad start and then kicks into a fast song, pretty good especially since they use an organ player in this track. Lots of good stuff on here, pick it up and tell 'em Lisa Marie sent ya! - LM

## The GC5

### *Horseshoes and Hand Grenades EP*

#### Leprock Records

<http://www.leprock.com>

Here you have a band that engages the brain, as well as the various sensory organs that lead into it. I can tolerate some lame-ass lyrics in the interest of a good tune, or perhaps a

lackluster album with inspired lyrics, but here you get both; it's like beer without the hangover or religion without the guilt. "Sheep in Wolf's Clothing" seems to touch on the idea of co-opted "revolutionaries" in the music business and manufactured pop stars within a consumerist society. "You look so young and full of danger / Just a glorified re-arranger / In bed with the money changers / Kissing ass to total strangers." Elsewhere, "Culture Wars" deals with the clash of different ethnicities and backgrounds, and the mindset that adheres to a perverse sense of purity and privilege in this country. The third track on this five song EP somberly observes that in the current economic system "somewhere there is a bottom line more important than yours." While the subject matter may be heavy, the songs don't feel oppressive or preachy, but instead come off as an impassioned outpouring of ideas. The music is up-beat punk with engaging songs that aren't whiny or watered down for general consumption. Great stuff. - BL

## Lousy

### *Best Wishes*

Knockout Records [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

This German band has an average, hard punk sound with Motorhead tendencies, but the vocals really ruin it for me. He sounds almost comical, with low throaty vocals similar to the kind you'd make when you are pretending to be a monster while playing with kids. Or maybe it's better compared to Fat Albert's voice. The songs are okay, but unimpressive and mostly sound alike. I just can't get into this at all. - BL

## Charge 69

### *Vos Lois Ne Sont Pas Nos Regles LP &*

#### *Apparence Jugée LP*

Knock Out Records [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

"Vos Lois Ne Sont Pas Nos Regles" is the newest release by this band, and, since it is in French, I haven't a clue what they are singing about. Still most of the songs sound really good, as is the case on their previous full-length, "Apparence Jugée." They are a French street punk band with more melody than simple blind aggression, which makes for more memorable songs, yet they don't sound weak or poppy. There is a definite early 80's British Oi! influence in there too. Most songs transcend the language barrier, and they are definitely not simply regurgitating the same tired formula over and over. While there are a few songs that don't get my motor running, they definitely have their own voice and there is a good deal of creativity in the compositions, as well as some musical talent. Fans of West Side Boys, Braindance, Vanilla Muffins, The Business, etc. will probably like these two albums. I do. - BL

## The Forgotten

### *...Ask No Questions*

Knock Out Records [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

These guys are a very well done, punchy punk band with interesting lyrics. The first song, "Conflict," is political; it concerns the United States' involvement in funding foreign



wars and being the world's self-appointed police, and how that makes the rest of the world hate us. Other songs like "Smash It Open," on the other hand, look at internal personal conflict "...I have to please all the people inside me/the worst thing is let them start to argue..." Eight tracks are on this disc and I like them all. I do not recommend this to fans of Emo or pop punk, you will be disappointed. However, if you like solid, get up and slam punk, give this a try. Very recommended! -LM

### Knock-Out in the 5<sup>th</sup> Round

(various artists)

Knock Out Records [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

Ah-ha! Here is a bitchin' comp full of a mad bunch of music I love. There are 22 tracks on this and there is Oi!, punk, Psychobilly and good ole rock. There are a few tracks by the Wretched Ones, a song in French by Charge 69, and a neat sounding song by Emscherkurve 77 in a language unidentifiable by me. Now on to further excitement!!! YES, there is a song by my favorite Oi! band the Vanilla Muffins, whoo-hoo! The song is called "Mommy It's Me," and whenever I hear it I sing loudly and dance around. Damn it, the Vanilla Muffins just make me so freaking exhilarated! Another great track is by Splodge Nessabounds where they explore the bloody curse of the bipedal in the song "My Socks Gone Down My Shoe." Ah, but wait there is more deliciousness yet to spring forth from this disc...there is a kick ass SKA song by the band F.B.I called "Mururoa" and even though I have no clue what he is saying, he has got a splendid voice and the music rocks! More you say, you want more!? Ha! Get this, there are TWO tracks of Demented Are Go! "Human Slug" and "Busted Hymen" two fabulous Psycho songs that make you feel all filthy and violated. And if that wasn't enough, there are even tracks by bands like Bonecrusher, Ozymoron, Molotow Soda, The Meteors, and more. C'mon, can your soul really afford to pass this one up? -LM

### Naked Raygun

*Free Shit*

Haunted Town Records

[www.hauntedtownrecords.com](http://www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

This is a live album recorded in November 29 & 30, 1997 at The Metro in Chicago, Naked Raygun's last two shows actually. The show was recorded using a 16 track recorder and is of remarkable sound quality. I know these guys have been around since the mid-

eighties, but they sure haven't lost any energy. I am not too sure how to classify them as they are not the typical '80's sounding punk, but a bit more melodic. Naked Raygun are great musicians, that know how to have fun and put on a good live show. I get a kick out of reading the lyrics, like "Metastasis," which goes "I am a fetus, I am a tumor, I am the local slime mold. I am a pupa, I am a larva, I am emperor Tojo. I am a lizard, I am a nymph, I am a three toed gecko." There are 22 songs on here including a cover of the Buzzcock's "I Don't Mind." Of course they sing "Rat Patrol" and the popular tune "No Sex" which goes "never wanted it in the butt, never wanted it in the rear." Just hearing that song brings a tear to my eye: this is some good stuff. -LM

### Sixer

*Saving Grace*

TKO Records [www.tkorecords.com](http://www.tkorecords.com)

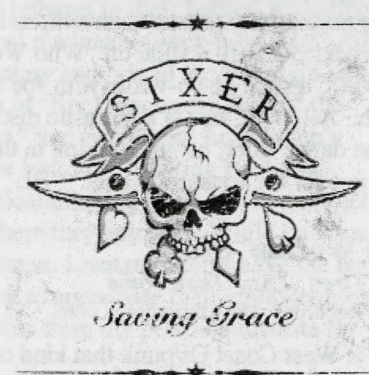
For me, this is dangerously close to being pop punk or a good rock band, kinda teetering between both, yet lacking something to be either. I mean, it's not like there is anything apparently bad about this CD, but there isn't anything that just jumps out at me and says "love me!" I get bored with it actually. One song that mixes things up a bit is track 6, "Don't Ask Why," which is musically together and you can hear some cool bass playing. Track 7 is also pretty decent with a classic country feel, but punkish...make sense? It seems to pick up during the last half of the album. An okay album, just not for me. -LM

### The Business

*No Mercy for You*

Epitaph/Burning Heart

For over twenty fuckin' years this band has been chugging along. I remember seeing them several years ago at a bar in Cleveland when there was only like 30 people there. Micky Fitz was sitting at the bar alone, and ended up buying all my friends and me a round of drinks. Since then, they have really been on an up swing, apparently signing to a label that will get them distribution, and what band deserves it more? This is one of the key bands that defined the early British Oi! and street punk sound, and





they haven't changed a bit with this release of 16 new songs that sound like they could have been recorded in '84. Here you have some pub singalong songs like "Guinness Boys," some heavier material like "Hate N.D.," but most songs fall somewhere in between – with catchy choruses and guitar melodies. They haven't compromised a bit over the years, and while this release isn't breaking new ground, it is still certainly one to pick up. Why fuck with a good thing? - BL

### **Lobos Negros**

*Las Viejas Cintas Del Sotano*  
www.talaveraweb.com

Lobos Negros (which means "Black Wolves") is a rockabilly trio native to Spain that have an obvious rooting in early american rock. They cover Bob Dylans "Highway Revisited 61," The Ventures "Dick Tracy," Johnny Burnette's "Lonesome Train" and the Violent Femmes "Blister in the Sun." It seems as though they have a lot of fun playing, but musically they don't really capture my attention. I'm not saying you have to be a brilliant musician for me to like, these guys just don't do it for me. Although it's pretty neat hearing "Umbangi Stomp" in Spanish with a SKA beat. -LM

### **Brian Setzer Trio '68 Comeback Special**

*Ignition*  
Surfdog Records

I can't say I was too big a fan of the Brian Setzer Orchestra, although I do like some of the old Big Band stuff. That said, I was therefore really interested to hear his return to the more scaled-down rockabilly of his Stray Cats days. While there are two songs on here that I am not very fond of, the rest of this is golden. Setzer shows why he is one of the greatest guitarists of any genre with some of the most phenomenal leads and infectious rhythms around. My favorite song is "Hell Bent," which actually gives me chills when I hear it. Some songs have more of a country feel, like "5 Years, 4 Months, 3 Days," a song that bares some resemblance to the classic "6 Days on the Road." Upright bass player, Mark W. Winchester, serves up not only a driving slap-beat accompaniment, but he also sings to the swingin' rockabilly strut of "Rooster Rock." There is even some Spanish flavoring with excellent songs such as "Santa Rosa Rita" and the traditional instrumental "Malagueña," (which coincidentally is also covered by Hispanic psychobilly greats: Calavera, so look 'em up). Setzer also rocks out with a slide on "Who Would Love This Car but Me?" a song he co-wrote with Joe Strummer of the Clash. All in all, this is a fantastic disc for moving your feet on the dance floor, or just basking in the waves of guitar rolling over the rockabilly beat. - BL

### **The Workin' Stiffs**

*Dog Tired... And Then Some*  
TKO Records www.tkorecords.com

This is West Coast Oi/punk that kind of puts me in the mind of Pressure Point or a similar band. The singer has a unique

voice that doesn't always work for me, but the music is good and the band is competent. This is their early demos and releases on one CD. While I do like this, it really doesn't stand out above the rest. - BL

### **Charge 69**

*Région Sacrifiée EP*  
Knock Out Records  
Postfach 100716 \* 46527 Dinslaken \* Germany

Hmm, I really like this. Even though I don't know what they are singing about, the delivery is like a pizza with extra cheese brought to you on a golden chariot - Hooray! It's an 8-song punk EP that is punchy, fast, and attention-grabbing. It's just good, ole edgy punk rock. They come out the starting gate with a fierce gallop as they careen through the first side with perfection. On side 2 the first track is an instrumental called "Scream," and the last three songs are all live. The music is well put together and the vocals give the lyrics an intense feel; together making this certainly a worthwhile album to have. -LM

### **Psychotic Reaction**

*Red Alert 7"*  
<http://psychoticreaction.net/>

I don't really know what to make of the Russian, Cold War, Communist Invasion song that starts this off. I think it is tongue in cheek. I mean, if they were seriously afraid of powerful communist nations, wouldn't China be a more appropriate choice these days? That point aside, this is a pretty decent punk band, and this 4 song EP includes a well-done cover of UK Subs' "Warhead." It's nothing to run into a burning building for, but also not something to throw at joggers as you pass them in your car. - BL

### **First Offense 7"**

Sewer Skum Records suburbanthreat@yahoo.com  
Guest Review by Dennis A. Bell

Punk Rock the way it's supposed to be played: loud, fast, out of control, short and to the point. That's what these five members of the Kaos Krew bring to the platter in this vinyl serving of five appetizing songs. First entrée, *Kids that Count*, my personal favorite and a rocker. Next entrée *United Youth*, rock from the first bite to the last, and then please give me another serving of *Fuck Love*. Now for the main course of *Dirty Fucking Hippies*, I'm totally with you on this with one. To all you dirty hippies, go dance in Hell! For desert a nice fatty tune called *Laced for Battle*, the Kaos Krew's anthem. After a heavy meal such as this you can feel the rumbling in your gut that Dan, Troi, Tom, Bryan and Smitty with their Exploited-type sound that just makes you want to belch out Rock-N-Roll and give yourself room for another spin of this tasty vinyl morsel. To you I say bon appetite!

### **Busrider**

*Best Friends Forever*  
<http://members.theglobe.com/busrider>

I don't really know what to make of this band, but I can say



the guitars are the strong point, very unique. There are 12 tracks, and honestly, after the first one I wanted to maim myself. However, the second track is way cool, kind of a baroque instrumental with only two guitars harmonizing. Personally, I think the band should stick to this. Many of the songs are musically interesting and nice, but the vocals are whiney and suck ass. Actually, Bus rider reminds me of Weezer with a hint of Ween. Pretty enjoyable aside from the vocals, which *really* ruin it for me. -LM

### **The Babyshakers**

S/T CD Nervous Wreckids USA  
babyshakersrocknroll@hotmail.com

Here you have some really good, raw, gritty punk rock-n-roll from Austin, Texas. Apparently they had their web-site deleted because of their name, as though the band is actually a front for some sort of clandestine society of Babyshakers that travels home to home in the Still of the Night, jarring infants, blaring Whitesnake, and laughing with glee at their heinous acts as they congregate for one big Satanic orgy. But I digress. This band has touches of Social D and the Randumbs, and while the vocals are a little too deep in the mix, the quality of the songs still shines through. Most are tongue-in-cheek, and delivered with something that falls between punk rock snottiness and country melody. You'll love this almost as much as that Vietnamese sex slave chained up in your basement. - BL

### **59 Times the Pain**

Calling the Public  
Epitaph/Burning Heart

Here is a melodic punk band that has a nice tight sound with lots of variety. They are of the more jovial sounding punk; they aren't angry and full of angst. There are 12 songs on this CD and I like quite a few of them like "Upgraded System," "Room With A View," and "Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The lyrics all rhyme, but aren't cheesy like so many bands. While they definitely aren't hitting my G-spot for whatever reason, I can still say they are a pretty decent band. -LM

### **The Nerve Agents**

*The Butterfly Collection*  
Hellcat/Epitaph Records

This band sounds like they passed through a wormhole in the late 80's and ended up here playing hardcore punk in the style of that period. Actually, this is quite good, since I like that type of thing. They capture the energy and grim sort of positivism from that era, and they have a somewhat dark sound teetering on a Rudimentary Peni comparison. Some songs have interesting lyrics, like "What Then?" which contemplates the result of viruses becoming resistant to the antibiotics and medications that we use to eliminate them. I'd say you ought to get this if you are into that style

of harder punk. They do it well. - BL

### **Thug Murder**

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Round*

Flat/TKO Records 4104 24<sup>th</sup> St. #103 San Francisco, CA 94114

With a name like Thug Murder, you're probably thinking its going to be yet another gangsta rap band, but you'd be more wrong than a man who thinks Pee-wee Herman would get your back in a bar fight. This is a three-piece, Japanese, all-girl street punk band that has an aggressive sound and a refreshing approach. While the English diction is bit confused, the vocals instantly grab you, moving quickly from an intense roar to catchy harmonies without missing a beat. Also, the songs have enough variation to make this CD listenable all the way through, instead of each song sounding like a slight variation of the previous tune. There is a cover of "I Fought the Law" on here, and even that doesn't come off as yet another stale version. I strongly suggest that you wrap your bony fingers around this sucker and don't let go. - BL

### **The Legendary Invisible Men**

*Come Get Some*

Dionysus Records <http://www.dionysusrecords.com/>

If this CD were a deep mine, not only would the canary live, we'd start dragging sickly ones down there to clear up their respiratory congestion. This is hard-hitting garage rock-n-roll with a touch of surf, due to ex-members of The Ghastly Ones and The Bomboras being in the band. There is a 60's sounding church organ vibrating through several tracks, but it doesn't ever overpower the really good, creative guitar work and the put-your-fist-through-plaster rhythms. All the songs are upbeat, so if you were hoping for a power ballad, you might be woefully let down. There is a song devoted to smoking pot though, so take your lighters out of the air and lay some flame on your bowl. I really dig this CD. - BL

### **Antiseen**

*The Boys from Brutalsville*

TKO Records [www.tkorecords.com](http://www.tkorecords.com)

If those burly whiskey-drinkin' redneck bikers at your local bar started a band, this is what it might sound like. This band has more than 50 releases in their bellies, including an album with the late great madman of rock-n-roll, GG Allin. This stuff is as rudimentary and primal as you might expect. There are covers of "Six Days on the Road," the Ramones' "Commando," and Screaming Lord Sutch's "Smoke and Fire." The lyrics on "Melting Pot" really shows their lack of critical thinking skills, as they advocate "everybody go back where they belong." While I admire their political incorrectness, I reckon I don't have the benefit of enough inbreeding to appreciate their ethnocentric point of view. Still, aside from my personal distaste for



some of their ideas, this CD is okay, just nothing exceptional musically. - BL

### **Billy Hancock & The Tennessee Rockets**

*Shakin' That Rockabilly Fever*

Bluelight Records - Box 153, 00171 Helsinki, Finland

This is a dang good traditional rockabilly disc, with some ferocious piano...think Jerry Lee Lewis. It's all upbeat, swinging and filled with vocal hiccups and ripping guitar riffs. Billy Hancock was the singer and bass player for the late Danny Gatton when he was in Danny and the Fat Boys, so you know this guy has to have talent! This disc was recorded in the late seventies, but you would think it was a classic Sun recording: very authentic. There are 17 tracks on this album and it starts off with a very jumping tune "The Boogie Disease," and goes on to a very '50's love ballad titled "You Pass Me By." One of my favorites on here is "Knock-Kneed Nellie" an obvious homage to Charlie Feathers. Hancock also adds a rockabilly flair to the old Muddy Waters tune "I Can't be Satisfied." I recommend this CD to fans of old Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis and Charlie Feathers. A nice album. -LM

### **Hudson Falcons**

*For Those Whose Hearts and Souls Are True*

GMM Records [www.gmmrecords.com](http://www.gmmrecords.com)

The Hudson Falcons are not known for penning watered down lyrics that avoid touchy political topics in an effort to gain a larger fan-base. Mark Linskey, the principle song writer, is an actual Labor organizer for an Educators Union in New Jersey, so of course you'd expect these blue-collar punk rock revolutionaries to deliver more anthems for the working class on their second full-length release on GMM. And they do, but rest assured, they have not come up with a recycled version of their first album either. Instead there is a better production value and a real progression in the band's sound that doesn't forego what they did before, but rather builds upon it. New songs like "Fallen Heroes" and "Loyalty," which is dedicated to the memory of a good friend of ours, continue to show their ability to add character and personality to their subject matter, rather than seeming like slogan-churning ideologues. "Requiem for a Patriot" reveals their nationalism not as just simply a blind adherence to pro-imperialist ideals, but rather as a pride based on the sacrifices of generations before us in the hopes of improving the quality of life, whether it be by serving their country working hard to achieve the American dream. As usual, the lyrics are delivered with Mark's trademark raspy growl backed with 100 megatons of guitar provided by Uncle Chris. I also need to mention that this recording also showcases the addition of Ben and Craighton from the original line-up of the Brass Knuckle Boys, who joined the band last summer. Thanks to them, the rhythm section definitely has much added force compared to earlier recordings. There are also new versions of previously released songs like "I'm a Worker" and "Scab," as well as an acoustic number called "Disciples of Soul" in which Mark sings with

an outpouring of emotion and empathy. And while there is still the great Stiff-Little-Fingers-meets-Bruce-Springsteen feel to a lot of these songs, there is also a more rockin' aspect to some of these tunes, as Linskey shows he ain't afraid to cut loose on guitar with songs like "Sweet Rock-N-Rollin' Bad Ass Bitch," a Crowns-inspired breathe-taker that'll have you grinning like an idiot as he blisters his fingers along the frets. One *damned* fine song. "Sleep, Drive, Rock'n'Roll, Repeat" is another rocker featuring some slide guitar provided by Uncle Chris, along with a primal rhythm that socks you in the gut. Again, great stuff with searing vocals. The last track is a Springsteen cover, "Open All Night," that'll take you to the edge and push you over into the Promised Land. With the Falcons you don't get pretentiousness, they don't put on airs, and they sure as hell don't try and make it pretty and palatable for those with champagne and caviar tastes. These guys have real venom, real energy, and play songs with a driven sincerity. - BL

### **Split Lip Rayfield**

Self-titled CD (1998) & "Never Make It Home" CD (2000)

Bloodshot Records <http://www.bloodshotrecords.com/>

*Guest Review by Sugar*

"If you wanna die with me, let's go!" That's a line from one of my favorite songs, *San Antone*, off of the '98 CD. I'll tell you what, you need to hang on for dear life when you listen to these CDs! Two words for you: PSY-CHO BLUEGRASS!

The '98 CD is primarily the three-piece of acoustic guitar, banjo, and tank fiddle (a homemade upright comprised of a gas tank, neck, and one weed-whacker cord tuned to G). The simplicity of the three-piece allows the breakneck speed of what they're playing shine through. You're not gonna believe how fast the acoustic guitar strums and the banjo picks.

But then on the 2000 CD, the mandolin player is back with the band, and if those guys play fast - he plays at warp speed! This disc begins with *Movin' to Virginia*, a song with a mandolin hook that if it don't snag you, you are one dead fish!

I can't say enough about the beautiful harmonies of bluegrass, and SLR does those right too. As typical of bluegrass music, the songs will be about immensely sad stories, sometimes even gruesome. But when sung in such beautiful harmonies, you'll find yourself happily humming along to a lyric about being hanged, as in the title track from "Never Make It Home." That song also features an awesome kazoo solo as the tank fiddler displays his multi-talents! The song *Crazy* makes me wish I couldn't identify with lyrics like this: "Nighttime drives me crazy, I bang my fist on the wall. She used to call me baby, now she don't call at all." Brings a tear to my eye every time - as does the wrencher off the '98 CD, *Pinball Machine*. That one tells the story of a guy who takes a trip to Chicago to follow misguided dreams and takes too long to return home. His best friend calls him: "John, I know you wonder about yer babies and yer wife, pneumonia got yer babies and yer wife took her life." I'm



tellin' you, it'll get to you, but you gotta hear it sung in those harmonies – this black and white print can't do it justice.

In a couple songs on the '98 CD you can hear the bass player smackin' on the gas tank, which sounds real cool, like on *Combine*. This song has a great syncopated rhythm that will make you bop your head like a chicken – especially with the lyrics “find me a girl that can't shoot straight, I'm gonna piss her daddy off when I take his daughter home late.”

I think you'd be happy with either one of these CDs, but happiest with both. Overall, their songs are about accepting your doomed fate, and they are sung with some breath-taking harmonies, cool rhythmic breakdowns, and super-sonic speed solos. Yeeehaw!!

### **The Mullens**

#### *Tough To Tell*

Get Hip Recordings [www.gethip.com](http://www.gethip.com)

The Mullens are a melodic, garage, sing-a-long band that has a melodic garage punk sound that reminds of both the 60's and the 80's. They aren't hard, they aren't new wave, they are happy-go-lucky and fun, kinda like the Ramones. There are 12 songs on this disc and all are originals written by the band members. I don't think any 'NSYNC fans would like this disc, which may be reason enough to like them. Most all the songs sound the same, same beat, same style; very repetitive...that gets kinda old, but still better than a swift kick in the backside. -LM

### **Gore Gore Girls**

#### *Strange Girls*

Get Hip Recordings [www.gethip.com](http://www.gethip.com)

These girls kick ass! An all girl trio that play gruff yet feminine garage rock. They would be the love children of Blondie and Jon Spencer...maybe what the Bengals would be if they had a clue. There are lots of great songs on here, including my personal favorite “I'm Gonna Get You Yet,” which has a very updated Supremes/Dixie Cups sound. Another excellent one is the last track “Getting a Room,” a fast paced, in your face, kicking the gas can over and catching the garage on fire track. Needless to say, I like this band a lot and listen to this disc on my own free will during leisure time. -LM

### **Vanilla Muffins**

#### *The Power of Sugar Oi!*

Reality Clash Records

PO Box 491, Dana Point, CA 92629-0491

Whew! Do I have a sweet tooth and do the Vanilla Muffins satisfy my craving or what! They call themselves Sugar Oi!, but what they should be called is my new favorite band. You see, I was depressed, mulling around the apartment feeling generally dismal. I got this package and lo and behold, there was this disc. Feeling nothing could make my wretched existence worse, I put it on and abruptly became enraptured in the Power of Sugar Oi! Instantly, a smile lit up my face, I lost 15 pounds, the boil on my buttocks van-

ished! It was a miracle and I decided that there and then I was going to change my life. I started volunteering at the zoo, donating non-perishables to the food bank and sharing my Vanilla Muffins CD. Ever since that life altering day, I listen to the V.M. at least once a day for maintenance of my mental health. Seriously, this is some of the best, positive, enlightening music I have heard in a long time. Kinda remind me of the Addicts and the Business fused together. I think everyone will like these guys and if you don't like them...then I will have a Christian pray for your soul cause I'm not going to, you crummy bastard. -LM

### **R.L. Burnside**

#### *Well, Well, Well*

M.C. Records [www.mc-records.com](http://www.mc-records.com)

This disc is as raw as the Mississippi Blues can get, all live, all acoustic, all Burnside playing his guitar as though the strings were connected to his heart. The CD starts off with R.L. talking a bit about how he started playing guitar and singing the blues. You get treated for sure with R.L. doing his own arrangements as well as old standards like “Going Down South,” plus covering the best in blues like Muddy Waters, Lightnin' Hopkins and Willie Dixon. You even get Burnside commenting on various tracks like his rendition of “Staggolee,” which is noted on the insert that it is “not suitable for airplay.” This is one of my most favorite blues albums. I sit back and close my eyes and listen to R.L. and become thick, southern air, full of lightning bugs or maybe a sad summer rain. This is for true fans of the blues, people who like it dirty and crude, not like Eric Clapton or the similar likes. -LM

### **Flathead Mike and the Mercurys**

#### *self-released*

[flatheadmike@mindspring.com](mailto:flatheadmike@mindspring.com)

This is a band to watch out for. While this CD is demo quality and just gives just a rough idea of what they are capable of, once you see them live you'll realize they are explosive. The sound is an American-style punk rockabilly. I think once someone sees the potential in these guys their next disc will be a must-have. Any band that sings the praises of cow patties is alright by me. -BL

### **The Generators**

#### *Tyranny*

TKO Records 4104 24<sup>th</sup> st. #103 San Francisco, CA 94117

These guys are a five piece street punk band from Los Angeles that have an especially upbeat, cheerful sound that hides the biting lyrics of vocalist Doug Dagger. The melodies are fun and catchy while maintaining the rough quality of underground rock. There are 12 songs that deliver up what your punk rock soul craves: snappy guitar, good rhythm and vocals that don't sound like that diseased guppy, Dave Mathews (ick). While there are a few songs on here I skip past, altogether it's a deserving CD that you should acquire. -LM



## **The Bad Luck Charms**

*Bad Luck and Heartbreak*

Zodiac Records

6611 Somerset St., HBG., PA 17111

Creed, BEWARE! You think you are the new face of Rock N Roll? Think again! The Bad Luck Charms are what rock music is all about. This quartet plays a bit of dirty, 'billy, spaghetti, punk rock that could charm the pants off a priest. There are a lot of smashing tracks on here and one of my favorites is "One Man's Ruin" - the way Kenn sings this reminds me of Ness. Not the vocal style, but the sincerity that Kenn has makes me choke up when I hear him sing. While there are a couple tracks I could do without, the rest more than make up for it. "When Night Falls" is a very '50's inspired rock love anthem that features a saxophone player, "Bad Luck & Heartbreak" should be every greasers anthem, and there are impressive covers of "20 Flight Rock," and "Lil' Red Riding Hood." I endorse this album for sure, BURN CREED, BURN! -LM

## **Big Black Cat**

S/T

bigblackcat@cs.com

This 6 song CD has got some funny lyrics, as in the song "True Love Don't Die," which is about making love to your beloved deceased. Big Black Cat is a trio that has what I would consider to be a retro rock sound, kinda odd, but interesting nonetheless. You get the Elvis vocal vibe from the singer and there is an upright bass player, but I wouldn't categorize them as rockabilly. "Cryin'" is actually very old style country and probably the best track on here. -LM

## **V/A - O Brother, Where Art Thou**

Universal Records [www.obrothermusic.com](http://www.obrothermusic.com)

After watching this movie (based on Homer's The Odyssey, but set in Mississippi), I ran out and bought this soundtrack. I play it at home and at work, I sing it in the shower and in my sleep. There are 19 tracks on here that will give you enough hillbilly to crowd a tractor pull. Since I don't have cable, I didn't know this until just recently, but there is a video on VH1 to the main song on this disc "Man of Constant Sorrow." The film stars George Clooney, John Turturro and Tim Blake Nelson as three escaped prisoners in the deep south in 1937, and this soundtrack compliments the film perfectly. There are different versions of "Man of Constant Sorrow," an acoustic, a balls-out bluegrass, and an instrumental version. I still don't know which is my favorite! There are the classics "You Are My Sunshine," "Po Lazarus," "Big Rock Candy Mountain," and the old spiritual "Lonesome Vally" performed by the Fairfield Four. I was totally impressed with Alison Krauss whose angelic voice raptures my pagan soul on "Down to The River To Pray," and then ironically temps my flesh when she joins up with Emmylou Harris and Gillian Welch to sing "Didn't Leave Nobody But The Baby." If you are a fan of old school folk, bluegrass and spiritual music or just want something different to add to your collection, try this CD out. -LM

## **Sleepy LaBeef**

*Tomorrow Never Comes*

M.C. Records

[www.mc-records.com](http://www.mc-records.com)

Well, the first thing I thought when I heard this was, man does this guy have a great voice. It's nice, deep, and rich...a great voice for traditional country, and that's what this disc is like. Being in his late 60's, Sleepy captures the customary style of Cash, Haggard and Jennings but has a bit of a rock tilt in his music. There is a rendition of the old gospel "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" featuring guest vocalist Maria Muldaur. The classic surf tune "Wipeout" is covered as well as "Poke Salad Annie." Sleepy mixes up the styles on here, one song being southern rock, one pure country, gospel, and also southern blues. There is a cool Chuck Berry cover as well, "Too Much Monkey Business," which has a piano and a rocking bass slappin' solo. This is pretty good, but doesn't really have enough kick for me. -LM

## **Symarip**

*Skinhead Moon Stomp*

Trojan Records, 1995

Guest Review by Nancy Ballast

Yee hah. Ska the way it should be. Symarip's original single, "Skinhead Moon Stomp" had a ton of popularity, and they went on recording stuff that Skinheads in Britain liked in the 60's. (They recorded a lot of early ska standards, which were later covered by Oi bands, like "Skinhead Girl.") For some reason, though, Symarip never attained the following of other ska bands. In the liner notes, Trojan mentions their own "peculiar and diverse distribution methods" as one of the reasons why their first single was never a national hit. There are some pretty tunes here with great harmony, like "Must Catch a Train" and "Stay With Him". And there's fun tunes; the title track, a cover of "These Boots Were Made for Walking," and something called "Chicken Merry" which is too much on the jokey side for me. But even when they play lighthearted songs, Symarip manages to be consistent in singing and playing and sound like professional musicians.

It used to be that I wasn't willing to give ska a chance, and my main complaint was that the horn sections were annoying. And there are a ton of sound alike ska bands out there with too-blatty horn sections that don't play harmony. If this has been your worry about buying ska, don't let it trouble you if you get the chance to pick up this disc.

## **American Fight Club No. 1**

Outsider Records [www.outsiderrecords.com](http://www.outsiderrecords.com)

The Authority kick off this 4-way split CD with a fast'n'heavy track called "Embrace the Hate," which has an almost metal punch to it. They deliver a total of six tracks, which are pretty good hard-hitting street punk tunes, although a couple tracks drag a bit. Callaghan from Chi-town follows them with their unique brand of punk rock debauchery (and I mean that in a good way). One adjective comes to mind when I hear these guys: decadent. They just have



that feel to 'em, you know, kinda sneering tongue-in-cheek vocals and that don't-give-a-fuck, your-shit-don't-impress-me-much attitude. I am thinking of a band, or amalgamation of bands I could compare 'em too, but nothing really comes to mind. Definitely different than the generic crap that clogs the airwaves - and a lot of punk comps. After their 8 songs are a bunch of live tracks by the Hudson Falcons from their radio appearance on WMBR in Cambridge, MA. They do two previously unreleased tunes: one called "Eucalyptamint" that has a strong 50's rock-n-roll feel to it, and another called "Barrel of the Gun," which is also a great tune. In addition there is a kick-ass version of Chuck Berry's "Little Queenie," and a slew of other originals from their previous releases. Wrapping up this disc is The Trends who play a good fast punk with catchy choruses. The vocals aren't very rough at all and I wouldn't listen to them everyday, but I still wouldn't lump them in with the thousands of pop-punk bands out there. Some good stuff here. - BL

### **Lars Frederickson and the Bastards**

Hellcat Records

This album is a side project of Lars Frederickson from Rancid, and in the liner notes is a lengthy and moving dedication to an old friend of his that passed away. That said, this is a really good disc of some in yer face punk rock, yet it manages to mix up the sound and doesn't get monotonous. Really, the only song I don't like is a cover of Billy Bragg. All the others are upbeat and catchy without becoming poppy or sterile. Choice cuts are "Six Foot Five," "Army of Zombies," and a knuckle-busting cover of "Leavin' Here." This is worth getting your grubby paws on. - BL

### **Dropkick Murphys**

*Sing Loud, Sing Proud!*

Hellcat Records

One thing I am sick of hearing is that the Dropkick Murphys were better with Mike McColgan singing than they are now with Al Barr from the Bruisers. I like "Do or Die" a hell of a lot. I cried like a little girl when he left the band, cursed God for letting it happen, and carved up my flesh with a pen knife to bleed for my fallen idol, but alas, I am over it now. Now that I have that off my chest, I have to say that this too is very good album - much better than their last effort, although I do like a handful of tracks off that one as well. While DKM started as more of a street punk/oi band with Irish tendencies, the Irish tendencies have really taken over with this release. They've added mandolin, tin whistle, and bagpipes throughout the disc, and even got Shane MacGowan, former singer of the legendary Pogues, to sing on their song "Good Rats." And let me tell you, Shane sounds drunker than ever - no meager accomplishment for this notorious alcoholic savant. There are also two traditional Irish covers, "Wild Rover" and "The Rocky Road to Dublin," both done in the spirit of the tunes, but played a lot harder. The Irish edge neither becomes too predominant for my tastes, nor does it come

off as a gimmick, although I think I am pretty weary of covers of "Wild Rover."

Anyway, not all the songs have the Irish feel. For example, "Fortunes of War" has street punk sound and is dedicated to the memory of Brian Deneke, who, as most everybody knows, was a teenage punk killed in Texas by some jock that later beat the rap. "The Gauntlet" is another great, steel-plated bruiser of a tune that has a much more punk-rock-n-roll feel to it. One of my favorite tracks, "Which Side Are You On," is bare-knuckled number that begs the question "will you be a lousy scab or will you be a man?" The "Spicy McHaggis Jig," however, takes a lighter tone telling the story of Spicy, their drunken Scot bagpiper who apparently has a soft spot in his heart, (and a hard part in his kilt), for women of the heavier variety. There is also an acoustic ballad called "The Torch" about a father passing down his hardened indifference and bitterness from a life of hard work and tribulation to his son.

The Dropkick Murphys have become known for their barroom sing-along choruses and rough-yet-infectious melodies, and this release proves to be no exception. There is even a new version of "Caps and Bottles," done very well I might add, to really annoy the legions of McColgan purists out there. This is surely worth picking up. - BL

### **The Briefs**

*Hit After Hit*

Dirtnap Records / PO Box 21249 / Seattle, WA 98111

The press sheet for these guys describes them best: "New wave with bite... 70's style punk which discards the embarrassing tough guy posturing." And nothing gets under my skin more than some skinny cracker trying to mask his insecurities by singing about how he can kick everyone's ass. On the contrary, this disc immediately put me in a great mood when I put it in, and will definitely appeal to more than just 14 year-old boys trying to prove their manhood. It'll simultaneously have you cracking a beer and a smile, with songs like "Silver Bullet" that commands you to "Kill Bob Seger right now."

*... I must obey... can't fight it... too strong... must eradicate that sterile lump of putrefied flesh....*

In addition to the programming of your mind made susceptible by the catchy song-writing and raw guitars, you get the short and cryptic song "Dolly Parton" to wrap things up. *Dali Lama, Dali Lama, Dali Lama, Dali Lama, Dolly Par-ton!* I will spend the rest of my days drawing the parallels between those two modern mystics. To sum up, I love this disc, buy it. - BL

### **Meteors**

*Psychobilly Revolution*

Raucous Records

www.raucousmusic.com

Here you have live material from the band's visit to St. Petersburg Russia interspersed with snippets of interviews and promotions made during that excursion. It's not always the best sound quality, but the raw energy does



come through, and what the hell do you want, something as slick, overdubbed, and contrived as Peter Frampton's "Music for Eunuchs" album or something?

I realize that last comment may have offended you Peter Frampton fans out there, and I feel mighty bad about that, but then I really doubt either one of you are reading this. No, you are probably wanking off in some toilet stall at a Star Trek convention all dressed up like a Klingon warrior. Not that there's anything wrong with that either, mind you, many a time have I dressed up like a fictional space creature to masturbate over a filthy public latrine. But let's not discuss that now. Let's refer to this Meteors album and finish up by saying that it is pretty good, but you might want to pick up some of their studio stuff first if you are just now getting into this classic psychobilly band. - BL

### **The Dagmars**

*We are the Dagmars and We Rule the World*  
Raucous Records  
www.raucousmusic.com

I don't know if these fellows rule the world, but in the off chance they do, I better write a good review. Actually, this EP isn't bad. The first song is a cover of the Beastie Boys done as a sort of hillbilly stomp/rockabilly number. They also do a rockin' cover of "Flyin' Saucer Rock-N-Roll" and "Thirteen Women," although I have always hated that song for some reason. "Honky Tonkin" is really good track though, and all in all, this is decent - just not something I will be listening to a lot. - BL

### **Rocket 455**

*Go To Hell*  
Get Hip Recordings  
www.gethip.com

This is garage rock done raw and dirty the way it should be, by this now defunct band from Detroit. It's noisy stripped-down production and broken blues rhythms put me in the mind of Jon Spencer, but there is definitely a louder, discordant, and heavier element to it. Good chaotic music for street racing or self-mutilation. I think these guys are really an acquired taste, a sometimes difficult listen, but if you already dig this sort of music or feel adventurous, you'll want to pick this up. - BL

### **Reducers SF**

*Crappy Clubs and Smelly Pubs*  
TKO Records 4104 24th St. #103 San Francisco, CA 94114

As you may have guessed by the title, here we have some blue-collar punk rock tunes fit to raise a pint to. The disc was produced by Steve Burgess of Cocksparrer, and the songs all come off as upbeat but not fast or in your face, and are peppered with memorable guitar melodies that accent the punk rock rhythms. The songs are written more from a personal angle dealing with endless work stealing your life away, getting older and growing up, and inhabiting the smelly pubs mentioned in the title. There are a lot of singalong choruses and the recording comes off as ...

well... happy. And I think it should - there needs to be angry music to stir people to action, but there also needs to be working-class tunes that offer some sort of refuge. Good tunes for a backyard barbecue or to stick in the player as you labor another day away. Worth checking out. - BL

### **The Berlin Project**

*The Transition Radio EP*  
Orange Peel Records www.orangepeal.com

You know, a bad review from us shouldn't be anything to get upset about. I am sure these are really nice people to drink coffee and eat bagels with, but I don't think I'll ever listen to their music again. It is very poppy/emo and I just can't get into that stuff. It hurts my feelings. It is well done for what it is. The band is pretty tight and so on. Blah-blah and so forth. - BL

**Angela Davis** - *The Prison Industrial Complex*  
Alternative Tentacles P.O.B. 419092/ San Francisco, CA 94141-9092

This is a lecture that was given at Colorado College in 1997 by the famed activist and intellectual, Angela Davis, who was once also a political prisoner. Here she offers, among other things, insights about the ever-growing and profitable prison industry: how it can be connected to the activities of transnational corporations, the war on drugs, the construction of "enemies," and the over-representation of poor people and minorities as criminals. Since the fall of Communism as the great enemy of the nation, the "criminal" has become the target of demonization and our national fear: the criminal who is represented dominantly as a young Latino or black man, and increasingly as women of color. She also looks at how the immigrant has become an enemy - and not the European immigrants who constitute the majority, but people from third world countries. They seem to have become scapegoats for the transnational corporations, who cross national borders in their endless search for profits and move jobs out of the U.S. to exploit cheaper labor markets. Alternative economies, such as the drug economy or prostitution for example, are often what are left for the lower-classes to participate in. In place of the migrating corporations, the prison industry has cropped up to feed off those who are involved in alternative economies. What is most disturbing is that communities actually invite prisons because of the jobs they bring, meaning that prisons are quickly becoming an important part of our economy. Of course, that means more and more people can be expected to become incarcerated in the future. A wonderful thought, isn't it? Fortunately, she winds up her talk with ideas of what can be done to improve this situation: like establishing communication with prisoners, focusing on biased media representations, corporate activities, and government policies, as well as the long-term goal of reforming the educational system. This is just a rough idea of the ideas Ms. Davis presents on this compelling recording. I recommend acquiring this disc.



# Live Shows



## Lords of the Highway

Lester

At the Mantis, Kent OH

3/24/01

I missed the opening band, and don't even know who they were, so I am a piece of shit reviewer, I know. But what the hell, it is not like I am getting paid to do this - and people tend to treat my opinions like dead and rotting dog corpses on the turnpike and steer clear of 'em anyway. Regardless, Kill the Hippies were supposed to play this show, but they ended up in New York instead. What made up for it was an extra long set by Lords of the Highway, who after warming up with a modified-for-dirt-track-racing version of "Walk the Line," officially peeled out of the starting gate with their surf/metal instrumental, "Rip-off." They also played a slew of new songs such as the rock-n-roll tribute to beer in bigger cans, "Tall Boys," the truckabilly crusher, "Johnny Nemeth's Lounge," and another heavy-yet-exotic intro called "Egyptian Moshpit." Also in their set were covers of Danzig, The Cramps, Blue Oyster Cult's "Godzilla," and a drunken singalong version of "Folsom Prison Blues." Lisa joined the band on washboard for a few songs toward the end of the set, and everyone at the Mantis this night really got into the Lords' raging brand of rock-n-roll satisfaction. After Lords of the Highway, Lester took the stage. They played a bizarre set of cathartic musical explosiveness. I actually had to make a beer run during their set, so didn't catch all of it, but what I did see had some okay moments with nice and loud driving rhythms, but then a lot of rather cacophonous elements that weren't very gratifying. - BL

## Split Lip Rayfield

Dirty Bottom Boys

At The Beachland, Cleveland, OH 3/27/01

Let me start this review by saying that this was the first time I saw these guys, and I swear, Split Lip Rayfield are one of the best bands I have seen to date. They play jaw-droppin', breakneck bluegrass that'll have you feelin' so hot you'll be stompin' the flames out of the sun just to cool down. Their brand of corn-liquored pickin' and mule-kickin' rhythms is something that has to be seen to appreciate fully. Not only do you have those great bluegrass harmonies, but more musical talent than a busload of genetic cross-breeds between Bill Monroe and W.C. Handy all hopped up on crank and playing at gunpoint.

Split Lip Rayfield are a four-piece band with an acoustic guitarist, a mandolin player, banjo player, and a bassist who plays a gas tank from an old Ford strung with a weedwhacker cord - and it sounds damn good too! Insane. They mixed up the tempo throughout the night with some wonderful bluesier numbers, and some that had an almost Kansas City jazz feel to them. But they definitely have that streak of demon speed bluegrass that even a punk or metal-head could enjoy. In between songs they joked about sell-

ing off their hippie who was handling their merchandise. If only I had twenty bucks to spare... my grandma lost her hippie during the war. All she has left is a charred draft card and a handful of wilted daisies. Its been so many years, I think it's time she moved on and got another. Anyway, it appears I am not the only person in absolute awe of this band, because they were enthusiastically cheered back for three encores after a very lengthy set. I strongly recommend checking out Split Lip Rayfield if ever you get a chance.

Earlier in the night was the Dirty Bottom Boys, who played humorous country songs about prison rape, women with tattoos, and mullets (although none that combines all those themes - a pity). Some of the lyrics were pretty clever, while some really needed a few more revisions. The "Mullet Man" song made me realize that making fun of mullets is wrong and insensitive, and if this world is ever to have a chance, we all need to work together. Mulletts of America, I embrace thee into my humble and hairy bosom. Together, may we link arms and charge into battle against good taste, veganism, and books of all shapes and sizes.

But seriously, the more popular mullet-bashing becomes these days, the cooler it will be in a couple years to sport a rat-tail or a feathered Michael Bolton series haircut as a way to rebel. Do you want that on your conscience? Our youth will revolt against our standards of decency and start growing Kentucky waterfalls just to spite us... to see the tears form in our eyes. Then the mullets will start rising up, earning actual respect from their peers, turning on women over 15, and then who knows?? A Cabinet post maybe? Acceptance into the military? Eventually you will have your head in your hands weeping because your son has come home with the beginning of a cascading mullet, claiming that old cold-necks like yourself just don't understand his generation. I know you scoff and think it could never really happen, that the very notion is ridiculous, ludicrous even... but think about it my friends. How many hippies got beat up in the 70's only to resurface a generation later in the early 90's Black Crowes bell-bottom revival? You weren't laughing then were you? Hell no. So I implore you, stop mocking the mullets, for the hipper it becomes to ridicule them, the more you have assured their resurgence in the future of our misguided rebellious youth. I speak to you not as some high and mighty prophet of doom, but as a sinner who once wallowed amongst the mullets, smoking roaches stolen from my friend's parents and listening to Metallica back when they were cool, man. If I had stayed on that track up to the present day, I may have eventually gotten laid by a girl who is just now the age I was back then - but no, I gave up the mullet, and my life began anew. I still feel a dark kinship with the tortured mullets I see everyday around me, and want to help them to feel the breath of freedom against their cloaked necks. So you see, I don't want any idiot kids like me ever thinking it is cool again. Prevent the revival: refrain from public mullet bashing. Thank you for your time and attention. - BL



## **Hudson Falcons, The GC5, No Cause**

At Cedars Lounge, Youngstown, OH April 6<sup>th</sup>

## **The GC5, Hudson Falcons, CD Truth**

At the Euclid Tavern, Cleveland, OH April 7<sup>th</sup> 2001

Ahhh, dollar drafts and two of my favorite bands, what could be better? This show, like the countless other times I saw these two bands, was a damn good time. And somehow they just seem to fit perfectly in a city that has a Steel Museum and a Museum of Industry and Labor. Go figure.

No Cause are a relatively young local band that warmed up the night in Y-town with decent set of melodic punk rock. Next up was GC5, who although they wouldn't play "Trouble" by Elvis, did whistle the theme song from Andy Griffith when I shouted out the request. And it weren't no half-ass job neither. Hell no, these boys did it with such conviction that I nearly shed a tear in my beer thinkin' of all the times pa took me fishin' at the pond where we tried to catch the cantakerous ole one-eyed Petey – the elusive giant walleye. Other than that, they delivered a full-on set that would make Aunt Bea wet herself with excitement. After them came the Falcons, aided and abetted by Doug McKean of GC5 on bass and Craighton stepping over to guitar since Uncle Chris was reportedly on leave in Amsterdam. As always they tore through a great set, with some highlights being Pete Kyrou and Lisa Marie onstage belting out the chorus to "Revolution" and a scorching Springsteen cover that could split atoms.

The next night I continued my binge of rock-n-roll escapism in Cleveland. This time my friend Scott's son, Anthony, took the stage for the chorus on "Revolution," and GC5 headlined the night. I missed most of the opening bands while sitting in the adjacent lot pounding beers with Doug, but I understand that CD Truth were sort of reminiscent of Devo & Angry Samoans. I'm not sure how accurate that is, but I figured I'd mention something about them. The Falcons came next and opened with a warning to well-to-do hipster kids slumming it at a Falcons show before they kicked into "Rich Kids Can't Play Rock-n-Roll." Again the set was tight and the sound was really damn good. After them the Gary Coleman 5 hit the stage and played like a pack of angry child stars from the seventies as they churned out songs such as "Bodies" and "Currency." The one thing that bothered me was the group of kids who hung out half the evening outside the doors, but never paid to come in the club. Don't know what that was about, but it was a fun night. - BL

## **Southern Culture on the Skids**

**Robbie Fulks**

Beachland Ballroom April 10<sup>th</sup> 2001

Well, I can't say I really liked Robbie Fulks much at all, as this was my introduction to his music. Some of the songs were pretty decent with clever lyrics,

but they just fell kinda flat for me. For those that don't know, he is a country performer, yet he pushes that genre in several other directions with varying degrees of success. To me, it came off too clean and sterile, and just didn't grab me in any way. The song he opened with was perhaps the worst cabaret show tune I ever heard, and I was certain I would gore myself with a broken beer bottle eventually if all his songs were like that one. Fortunately, there was marked improvement.

Southern Culture, on the other hand, were fantastic. Looking like a motley bunch of lunatic hillbillies, they rifled through their standards as well as several cuts from their latest outing, "Liquored Up and Lacquered Down." Rick Miller has also been doing some crazy surf medleys mixing surf classics with their originals, and then riffing off of that. It comes off something like Link Wray meets Jimi Hendrix. You really have to see this guy play to appreciate his style of chicken neckin', lip-curlin, crowd-pleasin' guitar. I can honestly say he's the first person I've ever seen play guitar with his butt. It was also interesting when he said as an intro to "Soul City" that it was about hangin' out and playin' with the late, great Junior Kimbrough at his place.

Bass player Mary Huff's voice was outstanding also as she sang "Daddy was a Preacher & Momma was Go-Go Girl" and bumped up to beautiful on the new ballad "Just How Lonely." Then there's illustrious Dave Hartman on drums and the multi-talented Crispy on the keys, accordion, second guitar – whatever you need, it seems he plays it.

For those of you who haven't caught this band live before, you are really missing out. You get a hybrid sound of Southern rock, rockabilly, country, and Delta Blues fused into one hillbilly package that's sure to get the stick out of that tight ass of yours. By the end of the night, about 30 girls were on stage tossing chicken into the crowd and doing the camel walk. Hell there was even some nudity by a zealous fan, who got them mammaries a'swingin'. My only disappointment was that there was no Santo this evening, as they didn't play their tribute to the famous Mexican wrestler and offer an audience member the honor of donning the mask and playing the part. Estoy muy triste. ¡Santo, nosotros amos tú! - BL

## **Lords of the Highway**

**The GC5**

**Blatant Finger**

The Mantis, Kent, OH April 11<sup>th</sup>

Sixer was supposed to play this show, but they backed out at the last minute due to threats that the Mantis was going to get raided by a bunch of angry thugs. The rest of the bands were undeterred, however, and there was a really healthy crowd for this show, despite being on a week night.

Blatant Finger from Columbus Ohio began the festivities with a heavy punk rock mixed with elements of



rockabilly and country. They even threw in an intense cover of Billy Idol's "Dancin' with Myself" as well as some newer original material that blew me away. These guys are definitely a band worth checking out.

Next up was Lords of the Highway, who had the biggest crowd reaction of the night. They play truck-drivin' punkabilly with some surf, honky tonk, and touches of metal thrown in. Dennis A. Bell kicked off with "Trucker's Lament" and proceeded through a set filled with either monster riffs and hard drivin' rhythms, or boisterous singalong choruses such as in "Honky Tonk Asshole." The only problem was Dennis' guitar shorting out during the set, but they still pulled through, and the crowd certainly didn't mind one bit. Sugar not only worked the upright bass in her usual erotic fashion, but danced with crowd members also while playing. I also gotta mention that Scottie is one of the best drummers I know. This band should be much bigger than they are.

After them, The GC5 took the stage. I think they were kinda leary about this show too, but quickly they saw what shows are like in Kent. People were slamming and getting to the mics to sing on songs like "City Lights" and "In the End," whereas a lot of Cleveland shows just don't have this good a vibe and crowd participation. The also played SLF's "Suspect Device" and a cover of Billy Bragg, I believe, with just Doug singing and playing guitar. I've never heard a bad set by these guys, but this was one of my favorites. All in all, this was a great night, and Sixer missed a great fuckin' time. - BL

### **Viva Las Vegas**

At The Gold Coast Las Vegas April 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>

This was a splendid, enjoyable weekend in Las Vegas, complete with beer, Elvis and prostitutes. Aside from there being enough hair grease to slide Rosie O'Donnell into a size 6, I have never been surrounded by so many Bettie Page and James Deans in my life, at times I was scared. Nonetheless, I got my boot o' beer and headed towards the music. There were 3 stages and bands were on them all at the same time, so I didn't get to see every band perform, but that's okay 'cause I seen plenty of great artists. We were there for three days, having missed the first due to work.

The first band I saw was Skinny McGee and the band looked like they were scared stiff. Skinny was a proficient upright player and singer, but lacked enthusiasm, which is a must when you mostly do Johnny Cash covers. What I enjoyed the most from this set was the harmonica player; he played with so much life he nearly resuscitated the rest of the band. But I won't be too hard on Skinny, I mean it must be nerve racking playing in front of such a large crowd at such a grand event. After Skinny, we went to another lounge and saw Marco Di Maggio, a very enjoyable time. Marco played mostly covers because he wasn't there with his normal band, as a matter of fact he just met the bass player Jeff and the drummer Jefe that night! Marco is one of the best guitarists I have had the pleasure of seeing live. If ya get the chance, see this Italian Stallion! The next act I seen was so fantastic: Marti Brom! She is *the* best female singer I

have ever heard in my life, and I absolutely adore her. As a matter of fact the first thing I did upon arriving home was order all of her available music. She sang songs like "Blue Tattoo," "Eat My Words" and "No Good Lover." She wears these cute 'lil western outfits that she designs herself, this night it was red and fringy. If you ever get a chance to see this Texan play, take it at any cost. Later, we stuck around for the Fleabops and I was a little disappointed. While the music was okay, I was hoping the female bass player would get some attitude with the bass and kinda liven things up a bit. Another memorable band was Cave Catt Sammy. The singer/bass player, Beau, is still a teenager and immediately won the crowd over with his boyish good looks and his amazing bass playing. The Satellites from Australia were another of my favorite acts of the weekend. I have been a fan of these guys for a while and was so psyched to see them play. They were all over the stage, standing on the bass, kicking off their shoes, having a great time. The Donettes from Seattle were another neat band, with a gal upright player, singer and guitarist. They played energetic 'billy and the way the singer presented herself gave the set a very glamorous appeal, she reminded me of a '40's Hollywood starlet. There were several acts this weekend that were a let down or bands that just fell flat. A lot of the bands all sounded the same, and didn't deviate from the roots much. The bands I really liked were acts that were a little different than the rest, or just did the roots thing better and with more enthusiasm than image consciousness. I am reliably informed that one of the worst bands was Royal Crown Revue, a neo-swing band. Fortunately I had a migraine and missed them, but I understand their set was long, dull, and smarmy. Other very enjoyable acts included The Barnshakers, and Carlos and the Bandidos, and several others that I just don't recall the names of since we were bouncing from one stage to another. There were a couple Doo Wop bands as well, The Fabulous Harmonaires and The Cadillacs, who were good, but just not my thing. Living legend Wanda Jackson was okay, but didn't do much for me either. Same with Marvin Rainwater. One particular highlight was when Paul Burlison from the Johnny Burnette Trio joined DiMaggio onstage with his guitar for some great songs and dueling leads. VLV being a rockabilly weekender, I sure got my fill of traditional rockabilly style music, but I still plan on going next year because that's damn good stuff. --LM



Photo: Satellites



**Buddy Guy**  
**Southside Johnny and the**  
**Asbury Jukes**  
**Tommy Castro**

Power's Auditorium, Youngstown,  
 OH 4/19/01

This place is where they usually have symphony shows and plays, so they weren't prepared for the amount of heavy drinkers that showed up. They actually ran out of beer well before Buddy Guy, which had to surprise them because the show wasn't even a full house. Anyway, this place is a huge old theater with like 35 ft. ceilings in the lobby, and everything decorated in a sort of rococo style. Beautiful. I actually got into this show as a volunteer, since I definitely didn't have \$30 to spend to enter this ritzy establishment. That meant that during Tommy Castro's entire set I was selling raffle tickets for a guitar autographed by all the bands. I did take a break during Southside Johnny, but didn't really care for what I heard of their set. It struck me as rather bland pop-blues rock with as much feeling as a frost-bitten limb.

Buddy Guy came on stage in a flurry of blues licks then proceeded to move through a set that had the crowd out of their seats most of the night. When I say "move" I mean it. He was all over the place both musically and physically. He not only served up large helpings of Buddy Guy songs, he also teased the crowd with bits of John Lee Hooker, Jimi Hendrix, and added his seasonings to songs by BB King and Wilson Pickett. He also did a tune by the late Junior Wells, whom Guy had played with for like 20 years. Physically, Buddy Guy never sat down, and kept leaving the stage while playing and singing, having a man follow him with a cordless mic. He moved through the crowd often, then through the lobby, the parking lot, and even the restrooms as people swarmed around him, all the while ripping out some of the most intense guitar solos I've heard and singing with that amazing voice of his. I mean, this cat sings with more soul than the devil can afford to buy. And I love how he modulates his guitar sound and volume, rolling through flowing clean blues, then exploding into tremendous riffs that could stop a pacemaker at 500 yards.

I should also mention that he had an incredible sax player and second guitarist with him as well. Each had their moments in the spotlight (that is, when the person running the follow-spot actually figured out who was playing). The rhythm section also was able to follow Buddy wherever he went seemingly spontaneously, laying down beats that unclogged your arteries. He'd tell them to "make it so funky I can smell it," and I definitely caught an odor where I was



*Photo: Marti Brom at Viva Las Vegas*

standing. There was also a pianist who really slammed the keys when soloing, and kept the smooth backbeat when not. Guy proved to be the consummate showman, able to translate club blues to the concert hall without losing that intimate feeling or watering it down. I guess after over 40 years of playing the definitive Chicago Blues, he's learned how to work the crowd. What was truly shocking at this show, however, was a 12-year-old kid from Cleveland who took over Buddy's guitar for about 7 minutes. He not only shred that thing with the proficiency of a seasoned musician, but played with a real feeling for the blues that just can't be taught. And here the coolest thing I could do when I was twelve was make fancy clothes for my Barbie, err, I mean pop a wheelie on my bike. Fucking depressing. But one hell of a show.

**Flatus**  
**Lords of the Highway**  
**Lazy Dynamite**

4/21/01 Blind Lemon, Cleveland

Flatus opened this show with a dedication and cover of the Ramones, in honor of the recently departed Joey Ramone, which I thought was very cool of them to do. Flatus is a band from Jersey that has been around since 1988. They play a fast punk rock, kind of in the vein of the Ramones, but with a sharp Jersey attitude. They weren't bad at all, although I did miss much of their set. I also left early and so missed Lazy Dynamite's set as well. What I did catch all of was the Lords of the Highway, who tore it up for the really small crowd that turned out to the Blind Lemon this night.

The Lords play music for people with sick minds and diseased souls. After a modest meal of exotic insects, these road-ragin' banshees hit the stage in a cloud of radioactive smog that instantly altered our cellular mitosis and caused birth defects in every pregnant woman's belly. That is except for Sugar, the dangerously sweet villainess on the acoustic bass, and who carries the unborn progenitor of darkness in her evil womb. To her right was Dennis A. Bell, with his goat-like beard and cloven hoofs that suggest his demonic heritage. And let us not forget the percussive assault of Scottie Ling as we are led down the Highway to Hell by these Dark Lords of the Underworld. After just two songs I was mesmerized by their glowing eyes peering through the dense fog as they plucked and contorted with their instruments in a fashion that would make Aleister Crowley wince. I knew I was in a battle for my very soul, and my bones had begun to melt like withering stems inside a sack of flesh. But what could I do? They were far too powerful for me, and I could see that my time was short on this earth. I began to dash toward the restroom in the basement to cleanse the sonic residue from my skin, but my legs



gave way and my spine collapsed like a balsa wood support beam. My head was floating in an amoeba-like pool of gelatinous ooze that once was my body as I sludged my way down the steps like a desperate jellyfish. At the bottom I collected into a pile of others in much the same condition as me – some far worse. There was a tall man in an asbestos suit using a plunger to force my soggy brethren down the drains. As I saw my good friend Ezra gurgles toward oblivion down a urinal, I realized this was it. I bid farewell to the world as I congealed slowly, awaiting my turn in the ringer.

It wasn't until last week that I recalled these details, although now time is nothing. The drains had led to the underbelly of darkness – the womb from which I was born again as a Lords of the Highway drone – doomed to spend eternity in their midst, breathing their toxic fumes, and craving their delicious music as if it were virgin's blood. - BL

### **Dropkick Murphys**

#### **Lars Frederickson and the Bastards**

#### **Reach the Sky**

#### **Thug Murder**

The Agora Theatre, April 27<sup>th</sup>

Unfortunately, this show started damned early and we missed Thug Murder. I didn't even know they were playing. Reach the Sky was on when we came in and they are a hardcore band from Boston. I only caught a couple songs and they were okay. After them came Lars Frederickson and the Bastards. I really dug their set, which included most of the songs off their CD – Lars' side project apart from Rancid. There was, however, an "unknown bastard" who introduced them in a black mask and bounced around the stage while they played, which struck me as just plain silly. Aside from that distraction, though, they pulled off a good set of coarse punk rock and had the packed crowd moving on the floor.

I was really excited to see the new Dropkicks line-up, which includes Ryan Foltz formerly in The Boys from County Hell on the mandolin and tin whistle, as well as Spicy McHaggis on bagpipes. I wasn't let down. The pipes bellowed as they started their set with "For Boston" and then proceeded through tons of songs from their latest effort, "Sing Loud, Sing Proud." A few songs were done from the "Gang's All Here" album as well, like "The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>" and "Curse of a Fallen Soul." If you haven't seen the Dropkicks before, you ought to get out to one of their shows because it's just a boisterously great time, since most of the songs they write have a sort of raw energy and barroom feel that translates very well to the stage. I also gotta mention that the sound this night was excellent and clear, and not a bad mix where certain instruments are drowned out in a muddy wall of noise. For different songs they were joined on stage by Lars and the Thug Murder girls to sing back-up. At one point the bagpipes rang through the concert hall as they did a revved up version of "Amazing Grace" that had the whole place

echoing with voices of the jam-packed crowd singing along, which was also the case on "Caps and Bottles" and several of the other DKM trademark songs. They belted out a blistering cover of Iron Cross later in the evening, and for the encore they did "Boys on the Docks" with about 60 people on stage singing, and "Skinhead on the MBTA," which of course always morphs into TNT by ACDC and gets the fists in the air. And to make this show even better, they actually also did "Fortunate Son" by CCR, which has got to be one of the coolest fucking covers a band can do!!! All in all, this was a great show not to be missed, although you very well could have as early as this sonofabitch started. - BL

### **Rockabilly Freakshow**

*Lords of the Highway, Highway 13,*

*The Heptanes, Rocket 88s*

*Nemeth's Lounge, Painsville, OH April 28<sup>th</sup>*

I drank a lot of beer this night, some may say too much. However, I was introducing the bands and was a bit nervous and nothing calms your nerves like chugging several Rolling Rocks. The first band up was the Rocket 88s from good 'ole Cleveland. It seemed like these fellows were just as nervous as me, as they bumbled through their set. It didn't seem like the bassist's monitor was working, which may have been why they seemed a little off time. The Heptanes got up there next and blew away the crowd with their West Virginian brand of kick ass. With the sound mix being as bad as it was, I could barely hear Kevin's wicked, rockabilly guitar slayings all through the first half of their set. Tackett, the lone electric bassist of the night, charmed the pants off all the ladies by showing how much rhythm he has with the bass. Al, the drummer, played while grinning like a chimp and made jungle noises. Man, I get excited watching these fellas do "Devilmeister" and a cover of Hasil Adkins "No More Hot Dogs." Now, who was up next...damn. I think this is the part of the night where I starting blacking out. I do remember watching Highway 13 and dancing all over in a maniac frenzy while the band beat out tunes like "Stepside Chevy" and "On the Lamb." The Lords of the Highway gave me the usual treat of sweet trucker 'billy and an added bonus: two new songs! "Damn You Miller," and "Johnny Nemeth's Lounge," which are both excellent additions to their set. I had a lot of fun, made an ass out of myself and branded everyone with my red lipstick on various parts of their bodies. -LM

### **The Knock Outs**

#### **The Ultimatics**

#### **Lords of the Highway**

@ The Revolution in Parma May 4<sup>th</sup>

Lords went on first and kicked ass. 'Nuff said, since I review these guys so much I feel like their propaganda machine. After them was the Ultimatics from Pittsburgh, who played to a much emptier bar. They delivered a decent set of punk rock that fell pretty flat for me, although



they weren't too bad. If they were a girl, I'd barely be at half-mast. After them came the Knockouts, who get two thumbs so far down that Satan can see 'em. Actually, I wish I could grow more thumbs so I could press them through the earth's crust and poke 'em through the ceilings of Hell. They played bubble-gum pop rock and every song was about a different girl. Then they covered The Beatles, "All you need is Love" and I become violently and copiously ill. These guys played so long I could feel the lines in my face forming and my skin began to sag with age and the bitterness of a life gone bad. I wish I could've left like most everyone else, but I was there with the Lords, and they stayed until the end. At least I don't think any permanent damage was done. The guitarist was pretty good, but I didn't appreciate this band at all. - BL

### **Psycho Charger**

Bottom Line Saloon, Cleveland May 5<sup>th</sup> 2001

These guys get booked in the strangest places. I am not sure what the people at this bar to see the Michael Farley Band, who apparently are a Dave Mathews geek jam band, thought of them. I mean, the night before they were booked at Jillian's in Akron, one of a chain of yuppy bars that caters to the white-collar mall crowd. You know, people who can afford to buy corporate rock from Camelot Music for \$18 a CD. That had to have been a blast seeing their faces as Psycho Charger belted out their lewd and heavy set, making the Gap girls wrinkle their powdered noses.

Anyway, this night they came on stage wrapped in nothing but saran wrap, and proceeded to bash out "Devil Snake," a pulsating industrial "trashabilly" number. Singer/guitarist Jimmy later quoted Devo by saying that they are "through being cool, it's time to get stupid," and they delivered. A female fan kept shoving money down his makeshift cling wrap underwear using only her mouth, then later he literally interpreted the phrase "guitar masturbation" for the crowd, and at one point he had his way with a sexy plastic bovine he found sitting around the bar. The bass player also performed the strange feat of jogging in place in front of the stage while staring nonplused into the great beyond for an entire song. And it wasn't no short song neither. His faces at other times throughout the night also cracked me up. All in all, these guys are hilarious, as you can tell they really have a good time on stage. The music is good and unusual too: a strange hybrid of industrial and 'billy served up with sandpaper vocals. It is actually pretty strange to hear such a heavy, grinding, rhythmic assault delivered in such a comical way. Fortunately, we cleared out before the next band got a chance to ensnare us in their coffee-house boredom. - BL

### **Tim Scharf Memorial Jamfest**

Night One Featuring: *Hudson Falcons, Brass Knuckle Boys, Philadelphia Experiment, Lords of the Highway, Roundtable 69*

Saxon Club - Salem, OH May 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>

This show was a great time, but one that is difficult to recollect due to the free beer with paid admission. The evening began with Roundtable 69 who are a local rock cover band, and when they went on, very few people were even there yet. By the time the Philadelphia Experiment went to the stage later with their heavy Oi-core sound, and I had already become well acquainted with the kegs. I make no apologies, though, since Salem is my hometown, and this benefit was in my friend's name. Hell, I knew ¾ of the people there, although I understand the crowd was considerably smaller than the second night's crowd. Anyway, by the time the Lords of the Highway went on, everyone seemed in a great mood, and judging by the reaction they got, everyone really dug the Lords. What's not to like about hard-drinkin' hill-billy/surf/punk music? I think Our Lady of the Highway, Sugar, was almost as tanked as me. She got down off the stage onto the beer soaked floor and fornicated with her upright bass and danced with the crowd. After the Lords, the Brass Knuckle Boys went on next, and delivered a great set of Southern-tinged, street punk rock-n-roll. If you haven't picked up the debut BKB CD yet, I'd strongly recommend doing so. By the time the Falcons hit the stage, I was about to hit the floor. I reckon they put on a great show, as they are in the habit of doing, but honestly, I only remember snippets. Here are the highlights: crowd-surfing 12 year-olds, group vocals on all their old songs, lots of spilled beer, people dancing, drinking, falling down, and one guy actually break-dancing in front of the stage. All in all, this was great night, despite me having the hiccups for an hour on the way home to Kent; coupled with the hellacious hangover I endured the next day. - BL

### **Punk Rock Prom**

Featuring: *Hudson Falcons, Brass Knuckle Boys, Step-sister, Mystery Addicts, CD Truth + more*  
High Five Bar, Columbus, May 10<sup>th</sup> 2001

When I came into this show, which had already been going on for quite some time, a pop-ska band in the vein of Catch 22 was going on. They were like 15 years old, the brass section didn't seem in tune or the right key, they sang about gummi bears, and one kid actually chatted on his cell phone during the set, as their yuppy, suit-and-tie parents stood in the crowd and clapped like trained seals. I felt like amputating my head. Punk as fuck, these ruffians were. Anyway, the other bands weren't as bad. The Mystery Addicts were pretty good





*Craighton of H. Falcons & Marky of Brassknuckle Boys*

actually, playing a sort of Electric Frankenstein rock-n-roll. There was also CD Truth from Akron, who play a really strange but cool sort of new-wave punked-up pop. Some songs were melodic, but not in a terribly lame way, and some were just good rockin' tunes. The lyrics I did catch also displayed a sense of humor. Another band that I caught that simply kicked ass were Stepsister from Cleveland. They play an intense, heavy-as-a-lead-pipe kind of punk rock-n-roll that scares children and livestock. After them the Brass Knuckle Boys played a short, short set that left everyone aching for more. It was not their choice however, since with so many bands,



*Photo: Mark from H. Falcons*

the club had make the sets brief. This fact had earlier really pissed off the guys from Stepsister who only got to play a few songs, and who nearly got into a brawl with the sound guy. I do think the BKB's got robbed too, because they

only played for like ten minutes, but what can you do? The Falcons luckily got to play a lot longer, and they sounded excellent. I think they earned the respect of everyone that hung out until the end of the night. - BL

## **Iron Cross**

### **Criminal Authority**

Blind Lemon, Cleveland May 16, 2001

Well, Forced Reality were supposed to play, but they broke up. Stepsister were supposed to play too, but there was confusion with the club on the date of the show, so they couldn't do it. That sucked ass, because I was looking forward to seeing both bands. I didn't pay to get in, but I know that the under 21 kids who came had to pay like \$13 for only two bands. Anyway, Criminal Authority opened up the show. They play '82 style Brit punk, and are pretty decent. I have a soft spot for this kind of stuff, so I enjoyed what I saw. Iron Cross played a good set of a lot of their classics like "You're A Rebel" and others, but didn't play what everyone in the somewhat small crowd was yelling for: "Evil Skin." I did like how they added a more rock-n-roll feel to a lot of their songs, and the band seemed really together. Sab, the singer, was the only original member, and to be honest, it seemed like he was just tired. Their set was really short, and they never came back on, although everyone expected them to. It was pretty hard on the wallets of those who paid to get in this short show, but at least they got to see a band that is a part of punk rock history. - BL

## **Dick Dale**

### **Frantic Flattops**

### **Satan's Satellites**

The Beachland Ballroom, Cleveland May 18<sup>th</sup>

*By Ezra Haidet*

When coming to this show I had high expectations, since this would be the first time I'd get to see the King of Surf Guitar, Dick Dale. First to hit the stage were the Frantic Flattops, however, and they proved to be a worthy opening act. There was a fog around the bass player, as if he were on fire as they cruised through a set of gritty rock'n'roll. After them Satan's Satellites were introduced by the local B-movie TV host, the Ghoul, who came out setting off firecrackers and accompanied by a six foot amphibian named Froggy. They had a very good set with plenty of great surf instrumentals, but their 60's garage songs with vocals weren't as entertaining. Then came the moment I was waiting for. With a thunderous roar came the loud violent wail of the King. All I could do was stare at his fingers; they seemed to have a life of their own as Dick paced effortlessly and winked at girls in the crowd. After a good part of the set, he



started walking through the crowd to the back of the Ballroom. He then continued on out into the middle of the street, taunting passing cars as his fingers kept abusing the strings with his trademark picking. Needless to say, this show made me feel more complete. King of Surf Guitar seems to be an understatement.

### **Midwest Oi Fest**

Kansas City, Missouri May 26 & 27

Featuring: *Niblick Henbane, Beerzone, Hudson Falcons, The GC5, The Staggers, Brass Knuckle Boys, Razorburn, The Louts, The Roustabouts, The Messengers, Tanka Ray, and more...*

So, my friend Scott calls me up two days beforehand and says, "you wanna go to KC for the Midwest Oi Fest?" Strangely enough, he was serious, and we set off Friday afternoon through 8 hours of rain and storms, and then another 8 of clear skies. As with most weekenders, I ended up missing several of the bands for a variety of reasons – all of which involve drinking in some way or another. For this show we crammed a keg in the trunk of my friend Julie's grandmother's Buick and smuggled it across several state lines from Ohio to Kansas City. As my sleep-deprived, highway-dizzy brain got intimate with this large shiny barrel of beloved brew on the first night, I remember fragments of several bands such as the Booked and Tanka Ray, but my neurons didn't fire even semi-correctly until The GC5 hit the stage. They kicked ass as usual, then someone tried to kick my ass, then the Hudson Falcons went on. The Falcons played probably the best show of seem of theirs yet, and the crowd ate it up. At one point Billy Blitz of the Staggers and Brassknuckle Boys got up on a speaker stack and began dancing, only to be accompanied on the opposite side by Doug McKean of GC5. Talk about moves. If they played street punk on Soul Train, these cats would, no doubt, be regular fixtures. Anyway, at one point Mark called for a moment of silence on this Memorial Day, before breaking into "Abandoned Vets." On several occasions between songs he also made short speeches, one dispelling the ridiculous rumor that HF are anti-patriotic communists, that got the crowd fired up before the band exploded into the next number. I really can't explain this night, they just did everything perfect. I remember people onstage singing, including Jason from Main Street Saints, and at the end



*Ben and Billy Blitz*

the Falcons got called back for 2 or 3 encores. That was probably the first time I heard 60 people do a soccer chant to get a band to play – it

gave me goose bumps.

The second night I stayed perfectly sober, having regretted my sorry state the night before. The Messengers began the night with punk rock-n-roll from Cincinnati I believe. They were fronted by a female singer with a mohawk as they belted out covers of "Strychnine" and The Georgia Satellites in addition to their originals. All in all, they weren't half bad. The Volts also played a good set of dirty rock-n-roll and featured a maniacal frontman who seemed to have cerebral hemorrhaging as he convulsed through their set. The Guitarist and drummer I believe are from the now defunct Oi! band 90 Proof, and both played very well. The Roustabouts proved to be the biggest surprise though, because they were just plain excellent. This young Oklahoma City band was tight, and their style was rough street punk anthems peppered with heavy doses of rock-n-roll guitar. I felt like an amputee who catches the glistening sparkles of a golden arm hanging in the window of a prosthetics shop. After them came a band that is so good they just might be able to walk on water. Well, that may be going too far, but they are a new favorite of mine: The Brassknuckle Boys. They played relatively early, but still got a huge crowd response because they play like their lives are at stake. Go see them while (or if) you have the chance. The Staggers went on next, and although I really love this band, they didn't sound as good as when I saw them back home some 8 months prior. There was a lot of new material, and towards the end things seemed to come together better. The highlight was their amazing punk rock rendition of the gospel classic "I Saw the Light" that made even the angels in heaven smile. Beerzone came on later, and I wasn't quite sure what to expect despite having seen them more than a year before. They played a set of blistering punk rock with more energy than it took to fry McVey (I know, I know... that was wrong, but funny). Their songs were catchy and light-hearted in subject matter for the most part, but still raw and executed perfectly. Damn good, even without beer! Last was one of the longest standing American Oi! bands. From New Jersey, Niblick Henbane hit the stage and worked the crowd into a frenzy. They played all of their classic songs, as well as their twisted cover of "Angel." People were going nuts, and personally I thought they sounded a lot better than on their albums. As the night progressed, they too played several encores after the soccer chants echoed throughout the Torreon. Once Niblick ended, I hopped into the car, which was crammed full of my sleeping friends and girlfriend, and I drove for the next 12 hours. It was pretty cool being in St. Louis for the first time, right next to the arch as the sun came up: beautiful. This weekend turned out to be a great experience. - BL



## The Templars

### The Traditionals

### The Throwbacks

*Cool Peppers, Pittsburgh, PA June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2001*

So I'm staring another boring weekend in the face when I get a call from my friend Scott informing me that The Templars would be playing Pittsburgh later in the evening. That's no short drive for me, so I took a shower real quick and hit the road, because this was an extremely rare treat. Actually, I think this was the first time the Templars ever played Pittsburgh, and I don't believe they've ever been to Ohio. Despite their popularity, they are not a touring band, due to all the members having jobs and other responsibilities. They've been a favorite band of mine ever since a friend of mine, Joe Oi, put their split with Glory Stompers on a tape for me about 4 years ago, so I was undoubtedly pumped for this show.

The first band to hit the stage that night in this little bar that was hotter than Satan's sauna was the Throwbacks. They played an energized set of oi/punk that wasn't bad, although the sound was terrible. They did a humorous song called "Clown Power," and a number of others. I understand from people telling me that their singer is a real nutter, and usually dresses like a clown and throws shit at the crowd. He didn't do that for this show, unfortunately, but he did dash off the stage and knock the crowd around pretty good. After them The Traditionals went on and sounded much better than I remembered, but still something about their set didn't keep me interested for the entire time. Instead we headed out to the car to down beers, since we all were rather broke that evening. One of the highlights for me was Scott casually puking as he walked down the street in broad daylight as old people on benches looking on with horror and disgust. A truly priceless image.

Anyway, we came back in as the Templars went on, and there was a good crowd packed inside the little heatbox annex to the bar where the stage was. The band churned out great original songs like "Skins and Punks," "The Templars," and "My Revenge." Actually, those songs were so good I didn't mind hearing them again as everyone demanded one last encore at the end of their lengthy set. They also covered the Clash, and did a

wonderful job at that, as well as Skrewdriver's "Back with Bang," during which Carl told the crowd that his voice was going, so it became an audience singalong number. Skrewdriver is probably the closest comparison for The Templars sound-wise also (obviously minus the racism of later Skrewdriver), but I'd definitely say they up the ante on that band. Vocally, Carl has a much more unyielding presence than Ian, whose voice I find terrible, and the arrangements are often much better. I was worried that The Templars would be a disappointment live, unable to match the charm and sound of their albums, but instead I wound up being far from let down. Their stage presence was also refreshing, as they really seemed to enjoy themselves up there, with Phil even coming out from behind the drum kit between songs to take pictures of the crowd and to do a stage dive.

After the show a bunch of shit went down outside with people who hadn't been at the concert. I don't know exactly what happened, but some people got hit with bricks and forties, and tons of cops ended up flooding the area. It was quite a commotion, but entirely unrelated to the show or to the band. When it was all said and done, it was an excellent show and a memorable night. - BL

## The Amazing Crowns

### The Cowslingers & The Squirts

*Blind Lemon, Cleveland 6/20/01*

For some things, "good" is an understatement. For this, "fucking spank my ass this is good shit dear Lord" may also be an understatement. I swear, the Amazing Royal Crowns just get better and better. Theories abound as to why this is. Some say they signed a pact with the devil in the Robert Johnson sort of way. Others claim they are really robotic slaves infecting our brain waves with telepathic mind control messages from the government, and they become more and more proficient musicians as computer chip technology



Above: Jason Kendall (Crowns) and Dave McKean (GC5)  
To the Right: Jack Swinger of the Crowns





progresses. Then there was that mushroom farmer from Providence Rhode Island who swears he saw them crash land an alien vehicle one dark and stormy night as he lay naked in a field of fungus and debris. When they emerged from the damaged capsule it instantly biodegraded into a puddle of toxic waste that an EPA crew in hazmat suits cleaned up the next day claiming it was a chemical spill from the Rolling Stones tour bus. Whatever the reason, The Amazing Royal Crowns left a boot in the ass of almost everyone at the show this night. Singer Jason Kendall was his usual energetic, crowd-antagonizing self, pouring his beer on people in front and getting in their faces. I love it. I also love how he calls the greaser lifestyle "the skinhead retirement plan." After seeing Iron Cross on the same stage a few weeks prior, there seems to be truth to this. Anyway, Jack Swinger played a rippin' bass solo that left the stench of his burnt fingers in the air. J.D. Burgess made the hair on my arms stand on end as he just tore up the guitar, and their new drummer pounded like a drunken demon on the door to heaven. What else can I say? They kick ass.

Before them was the Cowslingers, who really got the placed warmed up. They too have a good guitarist, Bobby Latina, who plays with uncontrollable facial accompaniments that show he's either really into what he does, or that he's passing kidney stones. As for the Squirts, I missed their entire set. - BL

## **Hot Club of Cowtown Blue Lunch**

Beachland Ballroom, Cleveland 6/24/01

I had never heard either of these bands before. Cleveland's own Blue Lunch opened, and delivered a lengthy set that moved from light swing to blues, and hit just about every area in between. They did arrangements of Professor Longhair, Muddy Waters, and Freddie King, as well as many others I didn't know and even some originals. The Blue Lunch line-up features piano, trombone, trumpet, sax, upright bass, guitar and harmonica – and all of them are very competent musicians. For several songs the brass section would leave the stage and the others would go through the more bluesy numbers in their set. At one point half the band was in the crowd playing amongst the many active swing dancers of various skill levels. I have to say I was impressed by this band.

Next came Hot Club of Cowtown, and I wasn't sure what to expect. They are a 3-piece band with an upright bass player, guitar player, and a violin player. The musical style moves from ragtime, jazz, old-time country/bluegrass, and even gypsy music. I later came to discover their namesake and the best comparison for their sound: Hot Club of France, a 30's jazz band featuring the 2-fingered legendary Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt and the famous Stephane Grapelli on violin. Their set left me scrambling around the club looking for my

jaw; it was just that good. The guitarist plays through an amp that looks like it was made in the 40's and I swear, he is one the most fascinating musicians I have ever seen on that instrument. I can't even describe what his hands were doing, and it sounded absolutely fantastic. He traded vocal duties with the violin player, who also had more talent on her instrument than Einstein had interesting theories. She played pizzicato at times, plucking the instrument, and also using quick taps to really get some cool sounds. About half their songs were instrumental, and at one point during their fastest song a couple brave dancers took the floor with some of the fastest synchronized legwork I have ever seen. Toward the end of the show the bass player was forced to do a solo by the hungry crowd, and he somewhat reluctantly delivered a great slappin' breakdown. To sum up, go see these guys. You will not be sorry. - BL

## **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Heavy Rebel Weekender**

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

July 6,7,8 2001

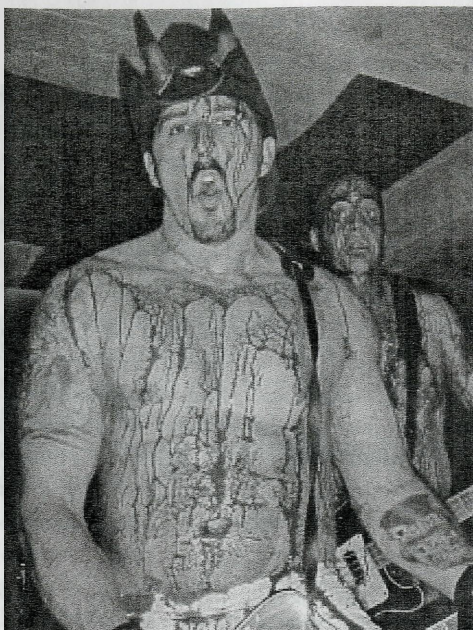
After a long, yet amusing drive for 8 hours down to N. Carolina (picture a driver with an afro wig, passenger with a Mexican wrestling mask on, and Leatherface from Texas Chainsaw Massacre in the backseat passing you in a Blazer on the highway) we finally ended up in Winston-Salem. The first night of this show was fun because we hooked up with some friends, but it seemed like not many good bands played. The Straight 8's were pretty good rockabilly, but the rest of what I caught didn't seem very impressive, and there was a wide mixture of musical styles. I might have missed someone great, though, because there were three stages.

The second night ended up being better. After some jello wrestling outside, where our friend Ezra donned an 8-year-old's wrestling outfit, a lucidor mask and wrestled 4 women at once, there was a peel-out contest that smoked up the street where they had the classic car show. Then our hometown pride, Lords of the Highway hit the stage first, and actually had a great response given that they played at 5:00. People were eating it up, and their set of hillbilly punk rock went over like a Strip-o-Gram at the Clinton household. The Belmont Playboys also played and this was the first opportunity I had to check them out. They were excellent, especially the guitarist/frontman, who tore up the strings. Earlier Holy Smokes also played a wonderful set downstairs, and they featured the upright bassist from Belmont Playboys. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage called the Jailhouse we also caught Psycho Charger. They play industrial rock with some 'billy thrown in: a truly unique act. This time, instead of wearing saran wrap underwear, they were in their skivvies drenched in blood. Their set was one of my favorites of the weekend – powerful stuff. The last band on this night was The Frantic Flattops from Rochester New York, who played the longest set of the whole weekender. I am not complaining though, because they were



quite good. Their style mixes rockabilly, punk, straight rock-n-roll, and elements of western and swing. Really worth checking out.

The third night, however, was my favorite. It started with The Baby-



shakers on the main stage, and they really impressed me with stage presence and intensity. They play a good hard punk rock but with a bit of a fifties influence to it. In between songs, singer/guitarist Denny Mack told the crowd about the time they went to Willie Nelson's house, knocked, got scared, and took off. He also sent out a song to any girl who had ever punched him in the face during sex. Funny shit. Later, Flathead Mike and His Mercurys absolutely kicked ass on the second stage with their psychobilly stylings and onstage charisma. They did a fantastic version of "Train I Ride" by Elvis, as well as a ton of intense originals. The drummer would twirl the sticks in his fingers before he unleashed on the drums, which took more of a pounding than Madonna's diaphragm during a solo he did. On the main stage Blue Flame Combo played and delivered a really competent set or rockabilly mixed with pop punk. While I didn't care for the Green Day feel, the guitarist was really skillful, the bassist was very freakin' good, so overall the band was pretty decent. Later on the same stage, The Pits played a short set of their primal horror punk rock with a strong nod to The Cramps that got the crowd to look more alive than they had all weekend. I can't talk enough about how good this band is. Not necessarily instrumentally, but how they extract all that is pure and wild from rock-n-roll and serve it up in a drunken frenzy. The singer/guitarist dresses up like a zombie doctor with dripping flesh, and you just get a chaotic all-or-none feeling from all the players. The drummer concluded his set by diving through his drums after they were joined onstage by the deranged madman/beast, Hillbilly Werewolf, on vocals for their last song. I thought the debauchery and mayhem couldn't get any worse, but I was wrong. Once the Hillbilly Werewolf set up for his set, things went wild. He plays an intense sort of stripped-down and raw hillbilly rock-n-roll that absolutely kicks ass, and his onstage persona is at once abusive, humorous, decadent, and charming. Punk fucking rock. It was nice to see a hint of danger put back into rock-n-roll. A couple



Top Left: Jimmy from Psycho Charger; Top Right: Lisa and the Hillbilly Werewolf; Below: Phil from Rocket 350

of times I thought someone out front was gonna get bashed with his guitar, and he ended up kicking apart the drumset at the end of his short set – I think startling the drummer a bit. Must be the moonshine that keeps this monster performer going. All the time The Pits and Hillbilly Werewolf played, people pelted them with beers and got rowdy, a state of mind that carried over into the Rocket 350 set where there was spontaneous co-ed wrestling, beers being spit and thrown, and psychotic dancing. And I don't want to mislead you into thinking all of this was contained on the floor. Instead, for several songs it seemed there was almost as many people going nuts on stage. Rocket 350 seemed to have a great time and played many songs from their forthcoming release that sounded incredible. This is definitely one of the best bands in the rockabilly/punkabilly genre. After their set ended (too soon) because of time constraints, everyone went outside for some illegal fireworks downtown and some more impromptu peel outs. All in all, this was a great weekend. - BL



## Cave Catt Sammy

### Shelley King

Beachland, Cleveland Ohio, 7/18/01

I didn't know what to expect from the opening act, but I was very pleasantly surprised. Shelley King doesn't sing the type of music I listen to a lot, but she does it so well that I was immediately drawn into it. Her voice was powerful and beautiful as she led her band through a great set of Texas country with leanings toward folk and blues. Each song was expanded live, which was very cool, and the band was very talented. In talking to them, they also showed an extremely friendly disposition and seemed to be genuinely good people. After their set, Cave Catt Sammy was up, and I have to say that they are one of the very top bands in rockabilly these days. Beau Sample fronts the band on upright bass and vocals, and he excels in both duties. The guitarist, Steve Scott, was absolutely smokin', and especially cool was an instrumental gypsy tune that he wrote. Their set was served up with such vigor and enthusiasm that you'd have to be a cratchity old bastard turned bitter from years of constipation not to appreciate it. If that evening weren't such a drunken blur, I'd tell you more about it. I did gleam a nugget of wisdom though: cheap wine and Little Kings are a powerful duo not to be taken lightly. Great bands, and a fun night. - BL

## Horoscopes

By Ben Lybarger

*Your guide to the celestial underbelly of filth  
and things better left unsaid.*

Due to unpopular demand, the horoscopes are back. I know some of you are probably still doubting my ability to forecast your future, since I am just some Ohio brewed cracker with the intellect of a dried grapefruit and the credibilty of a drunken sailor returning home to his wife. But what you fail to note is that I didn't ask for this gift. I was born with it. It is in my blood; I've been cursed from day one with visions of the future. I will not patronize you with no phony self-help bullshit, or come at you with general platitudes and mystical melodrama. Hell no! I deal it to you straight. No spiritual miscommunication here: No deliberate buttering-up of your doomed fate. This is Truth, my brothers and sisters, and I preach it *un-di-luted*. This ain't no Diet Coke prophesy for the weak-minded; this is ain't no Lite Beer for your soul. I don't just simply read the stars, I can write with them sons-a-bitches too. I am scripting your future, so take heed and open your eyes to what I see foaming on the horizon.

### Aquarius: January 20 - February 18

Ancient prophesy will prove true when a boatload of furious pygmies land in Cape Cod to begin the extermination of the American people. You will be among the first to perish, as they find you cowering in a pool of your own urine holding tight to a stuffed iguana named "Mr. Stevey."

### Pisces: February 19 - March 19

Scandal will erupt when you are arrested for soliciting a prostitute while attempting to lobby in Washington. It turns out the Senator you approached that night was an

undercover agent in a sting operation.

### Aries: March 20 - April 20

Doctors and other men of science will be perplexed by your ability to see through people's skin and discover potentially malignant growths. You will quickly become wealthy and powerful, and later become betrothed to a robotic hamster as you grow weary of the human species and their various cancers.

### Taurus: April 21 - May 21

The burden and dissatisfaction with the gender you were born with will lead you to hours of listening to Annie Lennox, shooting smack, and eventual suicide by coating yourself in honey dancing naked with a headdress made entirely from NRA membership cards in front of a hungry Rosie O'Donnell. One day later you will win the lottery and a Nobel Prize.

### Gemini: May 22 - June 21

In the eternal battle between good and evil, you will rise to the forefront as a special arbitrator called in to resolve the dispute. You will suggest that the Prince of Darkness take a 15% cut in his annual gross income of damned souls, and in return the Almighty will cease hiring scab workers to emotionally blackmail the fearful mortals. You also propose a freeze on the construction of all roads to Hell paved with good intentions until a fact-finding committee discovers who actually owns the rights to said intentions, and what the street value of these intentions is. Your recommendations will earn you immortality as both God and Satan grow irritated with the sight of you and deny any claims on your worthless soul.

### Cancer: June 22 - July 22

I am sensing a great fear in you Cancers lately: a fear of encountering the truth regarding your inexplicable desire to run into the woods and empty your bowels upon a patch of wildflowers. Let us understand your corrupted mental faculties as trying to convey a metaphorical message to your wilted intellect. Within your twisted fantasy lies elements alluding to feelings of great stress, a desire to escape proper society, and to desecrate all that is natural and beautiful. Therefore, I must suggest that you take a deep breath, put on some soothing music to relax those beastly impulses, and start plotting your brutal revenge on all those who have ever slighted you -- and leave the poor helpless flowers alone, eh tough guy.

### Leo: July 23 - August 23

A freak accident involving a lawnmower, 3 scented candles, and a pig farmer from Louisiana will quite effectively spell your doom. However, you will then discover an afterlife in which you play tennis with George Hamilton for hours before hitting the showers wherein the entire cast of Sesame Street watches you, all the while making rude jokes and poking fun at your soapy body. Grover is cruelest of them all, and your tears spill down the drain where they join a streaming gutter of sadness and regret.

### Virgo: August 24 - September 23

You feel distance growing between yourself and your lover,



and wonder if maybe this coldness and isolation is all just your imagination. Well, it isn't ... but your lover is. It is time you worked on your relationship with your imaginary friend turned lover. Communication is the key. Focus on the positive and try to repress further all those nagging self-doubts you have projected onto your non-existent paramour. Re-kindle that sad little flickering flame which once burned inside you both. Learn to listen to those voices inside your head as though they are whispering happiness into your very soul. Sanity is a rock to smash your love.

\*Also remember to remove the alien tracking devices from beneath your toenails.

**Libra: September 24 - October 23**

A black season of death, famine, and pestilence will choke you like a diseased cloud of disaster descending upon God's enemies. Be on the lookout for that special someone who will be your soul-mate.

**Scorpio: October 24 - November 22**

An amnesiac philanthropist will give you a large sum of money for re-constructive surgery to make you look like Andy Warhol. He will later sue you, not recalling the incident, and Lou Reed will keep trying to sell you drugs.

**Sagittarius: November 23 - December 21**

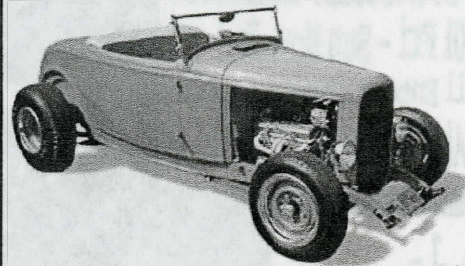
Meditate on the roots of your current dissatisfaction. Perhaps an ancient curse has come to fruition and claimed your happiness as the price for your ancestors offending the gods. Or perhaps as a child you were locked inside a cube of chicken wire, fed beetle paste everyday, and forced to try and express yourself with only algorithms and various mathematical formulas. Years of this have created for you a certain emotional instability and a superior language of mathematics in which you are able to understand the complexities of the universe and the human condition within it – thereby alienating you from mankind and making you feel far above your infantile species, yet at the same time a bit lonely and in need of their companionship.

**Capricorn: December 22 - January 19**

The agony of choice proves too much for you as you collapse at a local ice cream store, faced with over 100 different and delicious flavors. While unconscious you have a vision of bodies strewn across a battlefield, bleeding and decaying quickly into mounds of chocolate, raspberry, and cookies-n-cream. You run screaming through the scene, salting the corpses with colorful sprinkles and chocolate chips. When you come to, you decide to have a sugar cone packed with French vanilla ice cream. As you eat your delicious desert, your lips begin to quiver and a tear wells up in your eye.

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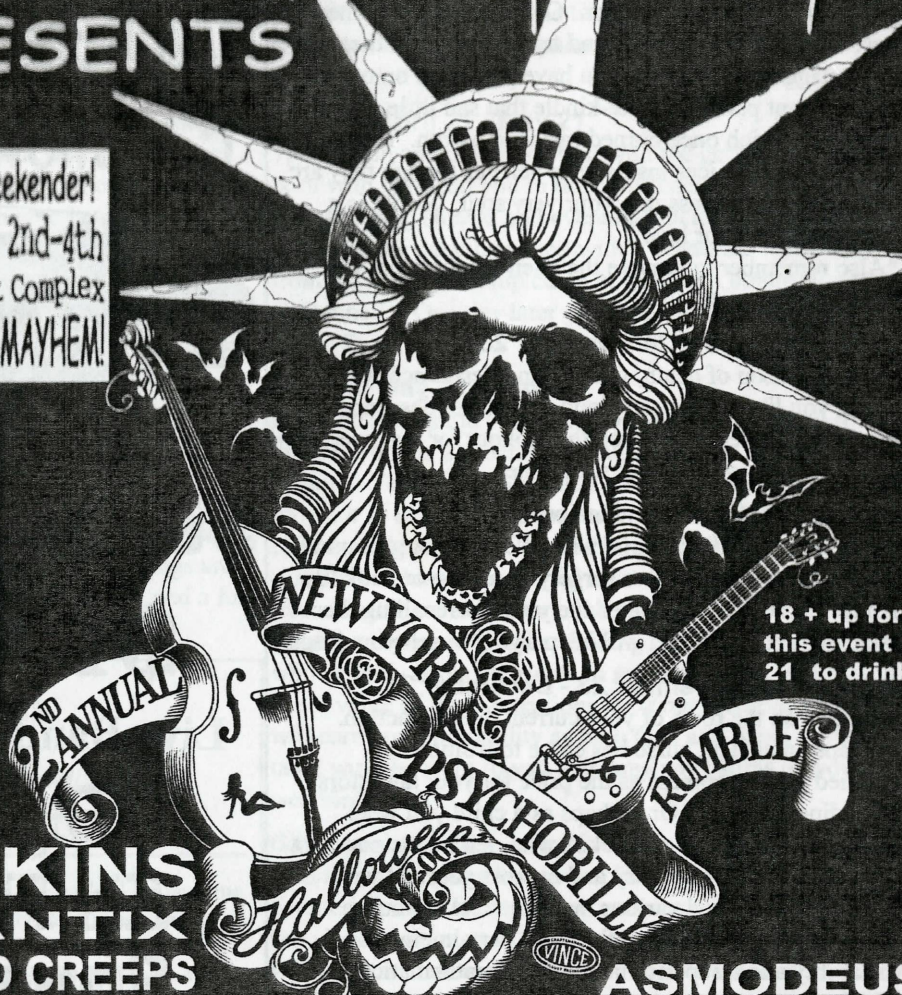
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