

# RAZZORCAKE



fanzine \* webzine



\*  
**Fat  
Wreck  
Chords**

\*  
**The  
Causey  
Way**

\*  
**The  
Gossip**

\*  
**Selby  
Tigers**

\*  
**Smogtown**

\*  
**Youth  
Brigade**

premiere issue \* three dollars

# RAZORCAKE

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## Contributions

We're fucking stoked with our columnists right now, but if you'd like to submit an interview or are interested in doing record reviews, feel free to drop us a line. It's probably a better idea to contact us and see if we're interested before you do any actual work. We'll keep an open mind towards most things, but Razorcake absolutely refuses to run any interviews with Thomas Pynchon

### AD DEADLINE FOR ISSUE #2

April 15, 2001

### AD SIZES

Full page, 7.5 inches wide, 10 inches tall.  
Half page, 7.5 inches wide, 5 inches tall.  
Quarter page, 3.75 inches wide, 5 inches tall.  
Sixth page, 2.5 inches wide, 5 inches tall.

\*Covers are already taken in perpetuity (forever), but if you put in a request, we'll put you on the list.  
\*Please make all checks out to Razorcake.

### ADVERTISING STIPULATIONS

\*All ads are black and white. There are no immediate plans for color insides.  
\*Make ads the right size and orientation. If ads are the wrong size, they won't run or we'll chop 'em up with scissors to fit.  
\*We will not accept electronic ad files. Hard copy only.  
\*Send good laser prints for the ads. Use solely black ink on all art. Do not output your ad on a bubble jet printer even if it looks black and white. It will reproduce like complete shit when it goes to an offset printer.  
\*Only for full-page ads, we'll accept film. Positive stats, RRED (right-reading, emulsion side down) only.  
\*All photos must be halftoned using a 85 LPI (85 line screen).  
\*If you feel the need for us to invoice you, understand that your ad won't run until we have the cash on hand, so make those arrangements before the ad deadline.  
\*If any of this is fuzzy, don't hesitate to contact us. We'll explain it.

## From the editors:

You're probably wondering who the hell we are, right? Basically, a bunch of us used to write for a punk magazine called B-sides or something like that. Maybe Flipside? It was actually the longest continuously publishing punk rock magazine in America. It may still be. I can't say for sure. All I know from my personal experience is that I did an interview with Against All Authority sometime during the summer of 1999, and that interview is set to run in the next issue. So if it does still come out, at least we know it's timely. Anyway, if you want to know more about Flipside and its possible demise, check out Todd's column. And now on to the things I do know about.

I know Todd left Flipside and wanted to start a new magazine, so first he went to Tucson to meet with Skinny Dan and Katy. Together, the three of them came up with the name and the beginnings of a web zine. Shortly after that, Todd took a vacation to Florida to hang out with me and drink away his woes. While he was there, we started talking about the web zine and I said something like, "What about poor fuckers like me who can only use the internet in half hour intervals at the library?" Todd said something like, "You're fucked, then, aren't you?" Then I said, "Yeah, but most punks are in the same boat as me. You should really go to print, too." And Todd, always being one to turn responsibility back to the critics, told me that, if I really wanted a print version of Razorcake, I should get off my ass and do it with him. I thought about it, and I had all the right qualifications: I was unemployed, not really doing anything with my life, and I like punk rock. Also, I have an incredibly patient and understanding fiancé who told me, "Fine, go to California to put out that zine. It'd be nice to get your broke ass out of my hair." Or something like that. Thus, Razorcake was born (in less than a third of the time it's gonna take for that AAA interview to run).

The rest is basically logistics. I came out to Cali, we set up shop, hit up a bunch of record labels for ads and stuff to review, did some interviews, gathered up some columnists, got drunk in Vegas, and worked on this zine. Meanwhile, Skinny Dan and Katy are still rocking along with the web zine, and the web and print serve as nice compliments to each other. So that's how this zine ended up in your ink-stained fingers. I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.

**-Sean Carswell**



**Congratulations Matt Average and Erin  
on their new son, Henry.**

**THANK YOU BOX:** (in no particular order) Roger Moser, Jr., Davey Tiltwheel, Money, Harmonee, Nardwuar, Designated Dale, Jimmy Alvarado, Rhythm Chicken, Rich Mackin, and Gary Hornberger for their columns; Kat Jetson for her pictures and interview with the Gossip; Julia Smut for all she did with Smogtown; Vanessa from Fat for hooking us up with the first ever Fat Mike and Erin interview; Donofthedeat, RumbleStripper, Jimmy Alvarado, Roger Moser, Jr., Harmonee, Liz O., Bob Cantu, and Pete Hucklebuck for record reviews. And last but not least, Felizon Vidad and Sara Isett for their patience and understanding.

Issue #1

# RAZORCAKE

Cutting. Tasty.



[www.razorcake.com](http://www.razorcake.com) and PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042

Visit [www.razorcake.com](http://www.razorcake.com) for exclusive live reviews, exclusive interviews, news, gossip, and contributor information.

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Razorcake is put together by Skinny Dan, Sean Carswell, Katy Spining, and Todd Taylor. Special thanks go out to Julia Smut for doing the Smogtown layout and Dave Guthrie for making the logos.

Razorcake is bi-monthly. Issues are \$3.00 ppd. in the U.S.

Yearly subscriptions (six issues) are \$15.00. Plus you get some free shit.



*Them snaggle-toothed Skoal-lipped good ol' boys are as quick to pull their guns as they are to vigorously pull their puds... yippy-tie-yie-yay, indeed!*

Texas has undeniably had its fair share of media attention lately with the villainous devil-may-care escapades of seven escaped convicts who effortlessly slipped out of a southwest Texas penitentiary virtually undetected (of course, they've since been recaptured, rounded up, and returned to state-sponsored captivity), and the even more villainous underhanded political poopooing of a certain son-of-a-Bush character (yep, let's all give a hearty round of sarcasm-laced applause to the corrupt politically-biased government of Florida, specifically Jackass Jeb and Contemptuous Kathy... afterall, they authoritatively took it upon themselves to appoint our nation's newly bestowed prez; he certainly wasn't elected!). But, hey, at least ol' Dimwit Dubya is no longer governor of Texas, and we native Texans are no longer subjected to his confrontational cockiness and overconfident arrogance, his regressive political agendas, his manipulative mismanagement of the state's school system, his corporate-backed flagrant disregard of our irreparably damaged environment, and his Hitleristic zeal for executing prisoners. Damn straight, he's currently the entire nation's scourge ("we've got a bigger problem now", to plagiaristically quote Mr. Jello Biafra!). Anyway, I've obviously digressed, so please permit me to consume another euphorically intoxicatin' 12-ouncer before I blissfully continue this incoherently informal lil' rant...

Since I was born, bred, brewed and stewed here in Texas, I can knowingly give argument to the common misconception that Texas is nothing but endless miles of apocalyptic tumbleweed-strewn scrubland crawling with such utterly despicable critters as scorpions, rednecks, and rattlesnakes. The panoramic surface of Texas is a terrain of awe-inspiring contrasts as diverse and colorful as its people, its culture, and its history: cactus-dotted rocky deserts dip perilously into craggy canyons as ancient and weatherbeaten as

time itself; vast endless expanses of grassy plains stretch as far as the eye can see and effortlessly blend with the eternal openness of the celestial western sky; the Gulf Coast shores glisten with effervescence, excitement and exoticism like a paradisaical swirling dervish of wickedly divine hedonism; lush forests of evergreen pine thickly cover rolling hills that seem to never have been touched by the foot of man... pure, pristine, and unscathed. And whoooooodoggy, Texas is musically as resplendantly disparate as it is culturally: blues, rockabilly, tejano, zydeco, punk, metal, the most raucously rowdy

BBQ beef more tangy and tastier than the most succulent of all exquisite and exotic cuisine ever placed on a platter, and rowdy unruly honkytonks where insurmountable intoxication and loud blaring ditties inspire many a couple to frenziedly shuffle their feet and kick up the dust into the wee wild-eyed hours of the morning. Yeeeehaw, indeed!

But there are lifelessly colorless regions of Texas severely lacking creative musical and artistic expression, awe-inspiring cultural diversity, liberally-inclined openmindedness, and the undeniable inalienable right to freely express one's self

becomes mush, where guns are the true measure of a man's worthiness in society (if ya don't own an arsenal of firearms in these here parts, son, you're un-American; a gawdamn yellow-bellied lily-livered communist. Smith & Wesson should open several outlet malls in Texas 'cause they'd make a killin' here, pardon the pun! Yup, them snaggle-toothed Skoal-lipped good ol' boys are as quick to pull their guns as they are to vigorously pull their puds... yippy-tie-yie-yay, indeed!).

I unfortunately live and dwell in such a pleasureless place... a catatonic cowtown so culturally retarded that taking a daily dump is considered a monumentally newsworthy occasion. Indeed, redundant predictability runs rampant here in Longview (or Dungview, as I've so poetically and appropriately renamed it!); the garbage-strewn streets lead nowhere fast (dead-end dead ahead more often than not!); a nonprogressive, unidealistic city government forcefeeds their outdated self-serving values and flaccid limp-dicked old-man morals upon a braindead unsuspecting population; fascistic Christian conservatives self-righteously condemn any free-thinking naysayers to eternal damnation in Hell; and urban enlightenment is next to nil (oh sure, there's a couple of hoity-toity upscale art galleries for the snivelin' martini-drenched crowd and a hippy-drippy handful of slacker-swarmed coffee shops, but anything else out of the extraordinary, culture-wise, is deemed too risqué, decadent and sinful for public consumption. Thanks for livin' my life for me, oh highly revered and much respected self-annointed nobodies!).

Sooo, what's a poor boy to do (shameless "Street Fightin' Man" reference there, folks!) for salacious spiritual salvation and enthralling inspirational escape from the everyday routine tedium of smalltown mediocrity?!? Well, at an understandably early age, I eagerly embraced the melodiously mind-

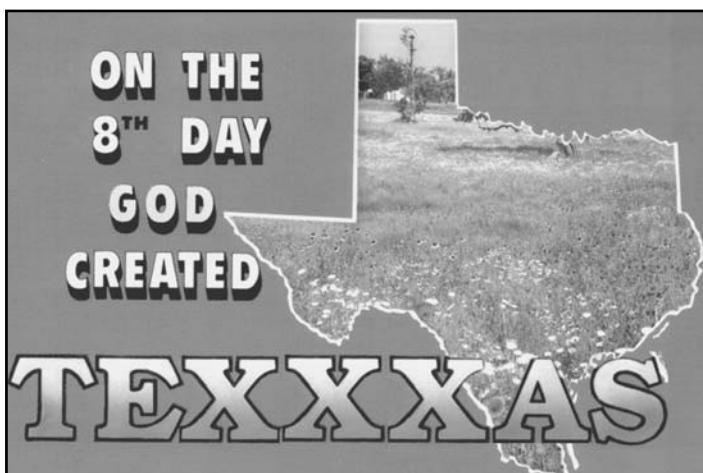


rock'n'roll ever to be robustly blasted, twangy heartbroken country'n'western swing, and so much more (graciously givin' birth to such cacophonously gifted musical characters as Bob Wills, Buddy Holly, Bobby Fuller, The 13th Floor Elevators, The Moving Sidewalks, Bloodrock, Hates, Big Boys, Dicks, Butthole Surfers, Southern Bactones, Bulemics, Roller, and a healthy heapin' helpin' of so many others!). And let me not neglect to mention the other perversely pleasurable aspects of Texas: bountiful abundances of freeflowing spiritual elixirs and zesty coma-inducing sizzle-sauces for the soul (beer, whiskey, tequila, and other such eye-blurrin' beverages!), the most bodaciously buxom and generously proportioned gorgeous gals ever to bask beneath the sun's life-enriching grandeur, mesquite-smoked

without fear of violent retribution... sparsely populated places and beastly inbred areas where social ineptitude is the norm, where fanatically fervent religions intermingle with militant right-wing politics, where the skies always seem drearily dismal and the sun surely never shines, where ignorance and intolerance rules supreme, where Confederate flags freely flutter in an industrial-polluted breeze (inspiring fear, uncertainty, and even more mistrust and strife among the races after all these years of so-called progress and unity), where radio stations putridly permeate the airwaves with unrelenting regurgitations of Fleetwood Mac, The Eagles and The Doobie Brothers (the blandly vile epitome of 70's schlock-rock repugnance!) until a person's ears are lulled into uninspired catatonia and the mind

altering magnificence of music (most specifically, the ragin' roar of "rock'n'roll music, any ol' way you choose it", to gratuitously quote ol' guitar-maestro Chuck Berry!). My dad possessed quite an impressive collection of Elvis Presley 45s and CCR 8-tracks which I repeatedly played over and over again with passionate zeal as if there would be no tomorrow... man, such sonically smoldering sounds hedonistically titillated and cacophonously corrupted my impressionable young ears to no end like a sinfully decadent breath of sensuously fresh air. Hot damn, I was hopelessly hooked and irreversibly addicted... I became spastically tantalized and mindlessly mesmerized by rock-'n'roll's raunchy rebelliousness (I obsessively sought any and every style of audial damage pertaining to its mighty thundering wrath!). I spent mind-numbing amounts of time (not to mention school lunch money!) in music stores during my so-called "formative" youth religiously pursuing the rawest, rowdiest and most raucous records my ears could possibly encapsulate. After a deviant audial dalliance (that persists to this day) with Black Sabbath, I desperately desired something stronger, harsher, and more extreme (I'm talkin' about music here, kiddies; not drugs, dammit!)... enter the scruffy sonic insurrection of the Sex Pistols, the darkly brooding aural belligerence of Black Flag, the giddy goodtime cartoonish cacophony of the brudda Ramones, and the decadent swash-bucklin' juvenilistic savagery of the Descendents. My dearly deceased and beloved cousin, mentor and brother in beer-sloshin' sinfulness, Scott (a semi-pro skateboarder, a highly learned articulator of thought-provoking opinions, and an all-around professional brew-imbiber), irreverently introduced me to such musical miscreance in the early 80's as he frenziedly ollie-grinded and chaotically careened through many a stretch of pavement and numerous geometrically curved plywood ramps. My mom will exasperatedly assure you all that I've never been the same since...

Due to the inspirationally chaotic sonic fury of punkrock, I became a nihilistic entity unto myself while feverishly transforming my onceshy personage into the apathetic physical embodiment and disheveled insurgent personification of all-out snot-tossin' rage (complete with the obligatory spiked Sidney 'do and decorative dogchain necklace, of course). But I'm older and drunker now, and I've considerably toned down my outward appearance due to continuous confrontations, sometimes physically violent altercations, and reac-



tionary redneck insinuations ("Hey, boy, what are yoooouuu?!? Some kinda faygit?!?" To which I'd invariably reply, "If I were, you'd be my bitch, sweetcheeks!" BangBamBoom, oops another black eye, bloody nose, and busted knuckles for poor ol' pitiful Rog!). Plus it's extremely unarguably difficult to attain gainful employment in these here parts when a person uncannily resembles an alien hooligan from another universe. Anyway, punk is an attitude, an unfaltering rebellion against socially acceptable norms, a flagrant disregard of puritanically correct morals, and a belligerently outspoken protestation against the oppressive powers that be... it's substance over appearance and mind over matter, certainly not a fashion-oriented trend of the moment nor a stylish homogenized fad to be who-riously incorporated into mainstream society's slick plastic-coated money-makin' machine. Yep, I've had plenty of time to dwell on such truth-in-progress thoughts way down here in these redundantly rural environs, so I occasionally sometimes almost know what the hell I'm espousin' (even when I'm obnoxiously sober!).

In closing, I'd just like to state the obvious: Texas ain't all bad, but it sure as hell ain't all good either (I love Texas; I just utterly detest certain segments of its population.). Buddy Holly tearin' outta the flat emotionless plains of Lubbock like a frenetically turbulent tornado hell-bent on an awe-inspiring path of destruction; crimson freezeframed reminders of JFK forever frozen in time on the blood-splattered autumn-splashed streets of downtown Dallas; a handful of students and citizens unknowingly stepping into full glaring range of an ex-marine psycho sniper's field of view and systematically cut down in a slaughterhouse hail of unrelenting gunfire on the UT campus in Austin; Roky Erickson's wild acid-drenched audial dementia; a blood-bath butchershop of horrors in "Texas Chainsaw Massacre"; Dicks Hate The Police (who unrepentantly kill niggers and Mexicans in the hot Texas desert sand); atrociously animalistic hate-motivated dragging deaths in Jasper and Amarillo; seven escaped cons unwittingly terrorizing the entire Southwest for several weeks during the Christmas season of festivity, joy, and brotherly love; a fascistic totalitarian mindless mannequin of a president appointed to serve his very own self-aggrandizing purposes at the expense of our so-called democracy! Damn straight, Texas is the reason...

Roger Moser, Jr.

-Roger Moser, Jr.

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Money

# Pog Mo Thon



*It was not an IRA demonstration. It was a march for civil rights, a defiant, yet peaceful protest.*

## BLOODY SUNDAY

*Is there any one amongst you  
Dare to blame it on the kids?  
Not a soldier boy was bleeding  
When they nailed the coffin lids!*

--John Lennon

When you hear the words Bloody Sunday, do you think of Bono, waving the tricolor in a snarky sleeveless t-shirt at Boulder, Colorado's Red Rock Amphitheater? Do you think of the song John Lennon wrote with Yoko Ono and recorded on his solo album "Some Time in New York City?" Or do you think of thirteen Derry Catholics gunned down like dogs in the street by British Paratroopers?

To speak of Bloody Sunday is to invoke dispute. Very little of what transpired on January 29, 1972 is in agreement. Here are the facts: British soldiers shot and killed thirteen Catholics at an illegal march in the city of Derry to protest the practice of internment. The massacre outraged Catholic communities in Northern Ireland and around the world, for photographs taken by numerous foreign journalists clearly show that the protestors were unarmed.

Lord Widgery, who was instructed to conduct a full investigation, exonerated the soldiers and implicated the civilians in their own deaths, claiming many of them either to have been armed or in proximity to someone armed, and

thus were legitimate targets. The indictment stunned the people of Derry.

Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, puts it more bluntly: "Bloody Sunday was an ambush. It was the application, premeditated and unadulterated, of counterinsurgency measures to pacify a popular struggle and to subdue an insurrection. It was conceived at the highest level of British military command and authorized at the highest level of the British political system."

In 1998 Tony Blair, Prime Minister of England, agreed to reopen the investigation into Bloody Sunday and impartially weigh all of the evidence. Today, many feel that if the peace currently enjoyed in Northern Ireland is to last, the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday, which continues as of this writing, must right the wrongs committed by British soldiers and exacerbated by Lord Widgery's Report.

## THE TROUBLES

*How long?*

--Bono

Although the North of Ireland has been a trouble-spot since Viking raiders used the Irish coast as a commando training ground, the generation of violence that is generally known as "The Troubles" officially kicked off with a civil rights march in Derry in autumn of 1968. Roughly 500 men and women took

to the streets, and the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) broke up the party with their batons, leaving many protestors battered and bloodied. This enthusiastic show of force was televised, and as Irish Catholics throughout Northern Ireland watched their countrymen get their asses handed to them, they experienced something similar to what their American cousins were feeling on the other side of the Atlantic when they sat down to watch *Laugh In* and got execution-style murder served up from the steaming jungles of Da Nang instead, or watched National Guardsmen shoot down college students in Kent State. In an instant, the image of systematic suppression of a peaceful rally catalyzed public opinion, particularly in the Catholic sector. Rioting broke out in Derry and continued unabated for two days. Although Belfast would emerge as the symbol for The Troubles, the place where violence erupted as faithfully as a geyser, its epicenter would always be Derry. The Troubles had begun.

The following summer in 1969, violence erupted when a Loyalist parade route passed dangerously close to a predominantly Catholic Derry neighborhood known as the Bogside. When the parade deteriorated into street fighting, the RUC attempted to break it up with armored cars and water cannons, but the Bogside held their ground and successfully turned both the Loyalist mob and the RUC back. As news of The Battle of Bogside spread, sectarian violence erupted throughout Northern Ireland. Catholic vs. Protestant. Nationalist vs. Loyalist. Taig vs. Prod.

After two days of street skirmishes and running gun battles, the Stormont government requested that British troops be deployed to Northern Ireland to help solve their "Irish problem." By mid-afternoon troops were rolling through the streets of Derry. Later that day The Troubles notched its first casualty when a Catholic civilian named John Gallagher was killed in the streets. The troops came under the guise as protectors of peace, but were actually an armed extension of

the police and immediately began to make wholesale arrests in Catholic communities.

With the body count beginning to escalate, Catholic Nationalists, who were feeling beset from all sides by Loyalist aggressors, the RUC and British soldiers, were divided over which methods should be used to stand up for their rights and advance the Republican cause; to wit, whether armed resistance should be part of their methodology. The result was a split in the IRA and Sinn Fein -- the IRA's political wing -- between advocates of violence and nonviolence. Meanwhile the situation grew increasingly tense. In the summer of 1970, the British Army imposed martial law on the Falls Road area of Belfast. A strictly enforced curfew was imposed as soldiers went house to house, looking for members of the IRA. Homes were sacked. Valuables destroyed. Civil rights violated. The worst result was the near total erosion of good will between the British Army and the Catholic community. Soon after, rubber bullets were introduced as a means of crowd control. More often than not, however, the bullets, which were designed to be fired at the feet of rioters so that they would bounce and lose much of their velocity before striking, were fired point blank at their targets, often at innocent civilians. Thousands were maimed in these state-sanctioned attacks on the public.

The proverbial straw that broke the camel's back was the re-introduction of internment in the summer of 1971. The British Army broke into houses, rounded up suspected IRA members and placed them in makeshift camps like Long Kesh (a.k.a. The Maze) and the Maidenstone Prison ship in Belfast Harbour without trial. The results were disastrous. Not only did violence escalate in hot spots across Northern Ireland (in the 48 hours after internment, 17 people were killed, including a Catholic priest), but the practice of internment created political martyrs for the Nationalist cause. It was against this practice that the several thousand people (just how many has always

Money



Photo obtained from the CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) Web service at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/posters>



Photo obtained from the CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) Web service at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/posters>

been a point of contention) who congregated at the Creggan shops in Derry gathered to peacefully protest on a Sunday afternoon in January.

### THE BOGSIDE FUSILIERS

*After they shot dead*

*The thirteen men in Derry*

*PARAS THIRTEEN, the walls said*  
*BOGSIDE NIL.*

--Seamus Heaney

In all likelihood, stones thrown by angry youths touched off the riot that was suppressed with such murderous force that it left thirteen men dead at the barricade, in the car park and on the street (a fourteenth man died of his wounds some time later). Growing up Catholic in Derry meant shaving your head so the soldiers couldn't pull your hair. It meant knowing which neighborhoods were safe to walk in, and which were not. It meant openly antagonizing the soldiers who had beaten your brother or interned your dad. It meant throwing stones. It meant starting riots.

A fusillade of stones clattering against a Saracen Armoured Personnel Carrier was a common sight in those days. On that fateful day in Derry stones were thrown and a small riot broke out, though participants in the march said it was neither intense nor enthusiastic. After all, many of the marchers were old men, women who had their wee ones with them, children of all ages. It was not an IRA demonstration. It was a march for civil rights, a defiant, yet peaceful protest. It has been estimated that as many as 20,000 and as few as 3,000 were in attendance that day.

The shooting began shortly before 4:00 when two soldiers shot and injured a young boy of 15 and

an older man of 59 from the cover of a derelict building on William Street. (The soldiers involved in this and other attacks are anonymous. They are known only as Soldier A and B, etc. As protection against reprisals, the names of the soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday have never been disclosed.) Later, these soldiers would claim that they had seen someone lighting a nail bomb, but this claim was refuted vigorously by the wounded Catholics and has never been corroborated by eyewitnesses. Twenty-nine years later, the boy, no longer young, admits to throwing stones. The British Army admits to nothing.

The majority of the marchers, however, did not know shots had been fired, though those that heard the crack of the SLRs (Self Loading Rifle) knew instantly that live rounds, and not rubber bullets, had been fired. Stewards with megaphones ushered the marchers down Rossville Street toward Free Derry Corner for the rally. Moving east on Rossville Street, they encountered a barricade of wire and rubble. This is where they were ambushed.

The First Battalion Parachute Regiment moved in to arrest rioters, with Saracens rumbling from the rear. The soldiers claim they were fired upon first, either from a gun or a bomb, they couldn't say. The marchers contend it was the soldiers who opened fire. The shooting was most intense at the barricade. Seven Catholics were killed here, several more were felled as they dashed across the Glenfada car park seeking cover. They must have felt like rats trapped in a cage. These are the names of the dead. This is how they died:

**Jack Duddy**, age 17, shot in the back while running from soldiers.

**Pat Doherty**, age 31, shot in the back while attempting to crawl to safety. A photograph of Patrick taken mere moments before he was gunned down shows that he is not armed, yet his killer, Soldier F, claims in Lord Widgery's Report that he carried a pistol.

**Barney McGuigan**, age 41, shot in the back of the head while going to the aid of Pat Doherty. He was waving a white handkerchief. He died alone. His photo, taken by Gilles Perres, is perhaps the most famous image to emerge from Bloody Sunday.

**Hugh Gilmore**, age 17, shot while running from soldiers.

**Kevin McElhinney**, age 17, shot while attempting to crawl to safety.

**Michael Kelly**, age 17, shot in the abdomen.

**John Young**, age 17, shot in the head.

**William Nash**, age 19, shot in the chest while going to the aid of another.

**Michael McDaid**, age 20, shot in the face. A photograph, taken just before he was killed, shows Michael unarmed and walking away from the violence.

**James Wray**, age 22, shot twice: once in the chest/abdomen area, and then again, from close range, in the back. "I can't move my legs!" he cried.

**Gerald Donaghy**, age 17, shot once in the abdomen. Four nail bombs were found on Donaghy's body (who, coincidentally, was a member of the youth wing of the IRA and died in British custody) even though he had first been examined by a Catholic doctor and his clothing was searched for identifica-

◀ A Republican poster from the 1970s calling on Nationalists to resist British control of Northern Ireland

*The average age of the Derry 13 was 22.*

*Nearly half of the victims were under the age of 18.*

*The British soldiers used SLR rifles, capable of piercing a tree at 100 paces.*

*Foreign journalists were shot at, as was a member of the Knights of Malta -- a volunteer organization.*

*Approximately one out of ten eyewitnesses attest to the presence of sharpshooters on the ancient Derry walls.*

tion before he came into British custody.

**Gerald McKinney**, age 35, shot in the chest with his arms above his heads, shouting "Don't shoot! Don't shoot!"

**William McKinney**, age 26, shot from behind while attending to Gerald McKinney (no relation).

A total of 25 men and one woman were felled, 14 of which died of their injuries.

No soldiers were injured. No bombs were detonated. No guns recovered from the scene of the massacre.

Those who were injured have their God and the kindness of those who rushed them to safety to thank.

The thousands who were there but escaped unscathed will always wonder but never know why they had been spared.

The families of the dead, particularly the mothers and the wives, have less to comfort them: sorrow, a useless ache, a hole that can be filled by hatred, hope for justice, forgiveness.

The names of the soldiers are not known. Their instructions can only be guessed at, their murderous motives intuited. All that can be known for certain are the names of the dead, a few details about their lives, the paths the bullets took as they tore through their bodies. Whether the British government will continue to profane their memories, or seek absolution by ceasing to interfere with the mechanics of justice, remains to be seen.

(Next issue: The Aftermath of Bloody Sunday)

-Money

\*A full list of works cited will be included at the end of this article.

Money



# **Hair-Brained Scheme Addict**

*Allison Discount was sitting downstream writing something, probably some poem about my ass.*

**Davey Tiltwheel**

Rosswheel turned me on to D4. He gave me a tape of the 7" and the split with The Strike. Every show the Tiltwheel would play you'd find us accosting some poor bastard's cassette player with the tape and if you listened close enough you'd hear one or the both of us screaming into said bastard's ear, "ISN'T THIS GREAT! AAAAAAAHHHH!!!"

Ross told me a story of the brief time he had a radio show at Local College station KCR. He spent 2 or 3 hours playing D4 non-stop justifying his actions with periodical spurts of "We are getting request after request for this damn D4 band!" I believe he was asked not to come back after that one. Larry Harmon, of Genetic Disorder fame, fared much better with his "All Venom All The Time" radio show. Evil never dies.

Fast forward about 6 months to yet another disastour with Everready. We were broke and showless in the middle of nowhere

calling frantically every band, zine and distro person we had a number for. When Brad Rhetoric picked up the phone he seemed somewhat elated to know we were in his area of the country, though he didn't have a show for us, he told us to stop by and he'd buy records and get us drunk in the snow. That's what's so great about the DIY thang: that people will open up their homes to any old asshole with nothing more than an email between us.

We pulled up to Brad's house with a couple cases of Madison's finest cheap beer and were relieved to see a group of folks already enjoying the same hops and barley refreshments we were looking forward to. I'm a one-track mind most of the time, my main loves in life are going to shows and drinking cheap beer, in either order or combination. I asked Brad what was going on this evening in Madison, and he told us about a show with Zoinks! and a band called Dillinger

4 a short drive away in Milwaukee. Just then the carbohydrate-fueled adrenaline rush to my brain switched me into "persuasive mode" and I threatened people with violence if we didn't drive to Milwaukee that instant. Turns out we were supposed to meet up with Zoinks! for a couple of weeks tour in a day or two anyway and I'm fairly sure I had spent many a driving hour up until then spewing forth stories of Dillinger Four's amazing barrage of bombastic rock n roll antics. In the quick turnover world of punk rock, this could have been my only chance to see them. If people had to bleed, we were going.

We pulled up to the club at about 5:00pm. Sold out. Not a problem. Where there's a roof or a back door, there's a way. It's much easier to sneak beer into a club if you go in through the unguarded areas anyway, so I was all ready to scale a fence when this bright idea came over me. See we had our equipment, we were early enough, a band

we were about to tour with and we had a local celebrity punk in tow who could easily persuade the promoters of the show to let a lowly 3 piece band from San Diego start the show early. That's the one good thing about being in a band: if you play, you get into the show for free, even if it's sold out. It's the only fringe benefit I've ever gladly taken advantage of. This usually includes a few guests, who tonight would be a few punk kids outside who were also ticketless. You take something you give something back. It's that easy.

We set up our equipment and do a quick line check and are informed it's 30 minutes til start time. I wander outside for more boozy refreshment. The show is at a bar, but the bar is closed to allow an all ages crowd in. We don't have this in San Diego. I am impressed. I walk past this nice white van and I comment on "rich punks taking daddy's weekend wagon for a spin" when out of the side door comes this sweaty, seemingly cross-eyed drunk, a red-nosed being half falling out, half stumbling. I say, "whoa nellie" and it replies, "I'm Paddy wanna drink some whisky?" I reply with a hearty and surprised, "Fuck yeah" and the being tells me to grab a seat.

It's funny how drunks find each other... "BeerDar" I guess the college jock types would call it. We sit in the van and drink what's left of the Beam.

Fast forward an hour or two. I'm sure we played a set in there somewhere, and I'm shitting myself watching Dillinger Four play one of the most inspiring punk rock sets I've seen in almost a decade. It was like a new lease on life. After countless "naa naa poo poo" bands masquerading as punk, including my own, I had seen the future and it was 3 fat cunts and this guy who looked like a villain from a Murnau film.

We spent the rest of the evening in the Everready van with Billy, who was very nice to talk to and seemed to be drinking beer as fast as we were, perhaps fearing we'd run out before we had a chance to drink it all. Can't remember what we talked about. It didn't matter since we enjoyed each other's com-





pany. That's another great thing about punk rock: meet so many similar people who aren't raging assholes like yourself.

Fast forward again, a couple of years later to Los Angeles, California. Discount and D4 are on their way to Japan and get bumped from their flight. They are given a few rooms at the Airport Hilton, a very fancy hotel by anyone's standards, but for a group of punks from Florida and the Midwest, it's like oscar night. Turns out the same flight was occupied by Mustard Plug, also heading for a Japan tour, but not touring with D4. Just a few months earlier, Everready and Mustard Plug played a handful of shows together on unrelated tours. I believe it was somewhere in New Jersey that the club gave us and the Plug a 12 pack of Corona to split. Now you have 12 beers, 3 alcoholics and a big fuck off ska band. It doesn't add up. We were broke as usual but for some reason, somehow, we offered to replenish the beer supply with what is known in certain circles as a "Beer Run". Needless to say, I was glad to see Mustard Plug as well as we shared 4 cases of beer with our horns held high at the headlining bands that evening.

We walk into the Hotel lobby, smelly, hungover and loud when I spot Eric and Lane, who recognize me before I do them. I said hi and bee-lined for the bar while they got their rooms. Billy was next and didn't remember who I was, I didn't remember him too much either since we consumed a lot of beer sitting in the van outside that show in Milwaukee. I just remember he had glasses and a beer in his hand. He seemed much taller now. Luckily we were introduced. Paddy and I start in on the whiskeys and shoot the shit about everything from Leatherface to shitting in Japanese toilets. I think it was the Japanese

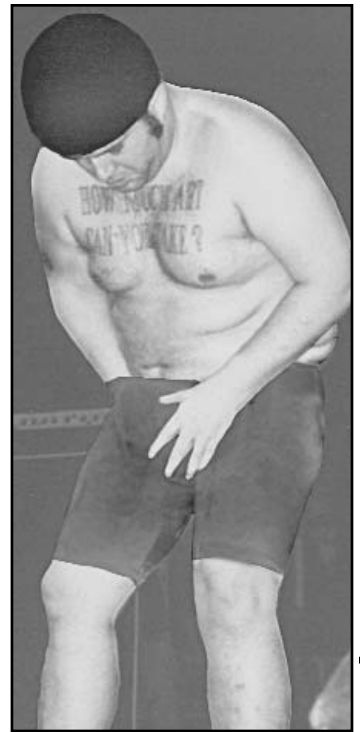
toilets that stuck in our minds as the evening went on. Japanese toilets are similar to ours except they are buried in the ground and you squat over a small canal as you evacuate your half-eaten meal from the night before. Shitting is easy, it's the wiping that's hard. Do you stand to wipe risking a dirty ass as your cheeks squeeze together residual grease and turtletail or do you continue to squat and risk the dragging your knuckle through your mall-cookie-warm peanutty pile. I've shit in a few Japanese toilets and I still don't have it right. Once while shitting in a parking garage bathroom in Osaka, the only place I found after a 20 minute clenched ass journey/prayer session, my unbalanced equilibrium sent me face first into the door of the tiny stall. As I settled in the small indentation my head left on the door, I remember seeing through my legs, my balls hanging upside down in the foreground of a greasy and rather large stew of rest stop soba, Malt Liquor and Izakawa finger foods. Later that night, a young Japanese skate punk traded me my D4 pin for a spike on his wristband(that spike is on my jacket that just happens to be in Lane's kick drum as i write this. Funny how things work out). Maybe it was the way he screamed "DIYINYA POAH" in my ear and bounced off my shoulders but it made me happy to know that someone else in this world tends to walk up to strangers and scream their name in earnest. I told Patrick these stories to ward him off of falling into the same predicament as I had been. I care a lot about my friends, especially the ones who aren't too uptight to share funny tour shit stories.

Paddy's ass hurt. So did mine. It happens. You know the stories of the all grl bands and roommates whose periods synch up. Well with the Genus "Irish Largicus

Alcoholicus" Our hemorrhoids tend to rear their ugly heads at similar times. It's true! Probably about as true as the menstruation tales anyway. By this time, I had already consumed a lot of Airport Bar Whiskey, Paddy's Bottle and a case of some hippy's beer in the van outside. The rest is sort of a blur but somehow, in the midst of greasy shit, chaffed ass and bloated hemorrhoid tales Paddy and I dropped our drawers and soothed our beaten bungles in the nice fountain adorning the patio bar area. I do remember noticing Allison Discount was sitting downstream writing something, probably some poem about my ass. Be warned next time you see your kids playing in a fountain. We've both toured fairly extensively, and this is probably not the first time we've floated our sacks at cupid's feet.

I know most of this is supposed to be remembrances and stories about D4, but fuck you. I tend to ramble. I have a few more, like the time we were in Vegas at the bowling tourney. Paddy bowled on team asswheel while I signed, "fuck you, signed paddy" autographs for kids. When I think about those guys, this is what I think of. When I listen to them or see someone wearing their shirt, I just lose myself in thoughts of great drunken episodes with four of the most obnoxious people you'd ever speak highly of. I love those guys and I see them about once a year to catch up on old times and reopen new wounds and bruises. In the midst of most of my own drunken adventures, I look to my left, and I look to my right and I hope to see one of them sitting beside me trying to get me to use beerdar to convince some record label person or college jock guy to buy us a 12 pack.

-Davey Tiltwheel



**Davey Tiltwheel**



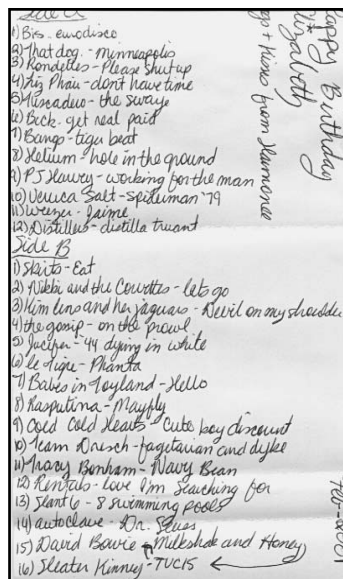
*Davey  
Tiltwheel  
and Paddy  
D4, Irish  
Largicus  
Alcoholicus  
in their  
natural  
habitat*





The magic of the mix tape was introduced to me in the 10th grade. I had just changed schools, and amongst greeting some new kids, mixed tapes were exchanged. It was to become the tape that changed my life, an experience many have encountered but most have yet to discover. To receive a mix tape is to be offered the pages of your friend's hidden diary. The music one chooses to listen to explains a great deal of a person's personality. A group of songs formatted and restricted by time and order reveals more than a verbal expression of one's emotions and ideas at time of recording. And of course, recording a mix tape of your own, in return, is displaying yourself in musical form for whoever the cassette is decided upon. I decided to write up a sort of making of a mix tape as an example of the sort of steps and strategy that go in to the mix-tape process. Reminder: I am simply displaying an example and am in no way proclaiming to be the end all, say all in mix tapes.

Part of the charm is making a tape that is a signature all of your own. First of all, before mixing, I like to prepare a small bunch of supplies including (but not limited to); chocolate, lip gloss, water or juice (usually apple for me) and writing utensils for the documentation. Now, do I want to start the tape off with a bang, or ease into the rock slowly? I think a fun, poppy intro will start things off right. "Eurodisco" by Bis gets it all started. The fun continues with That Dog's "Minneapolis." (This song's great because it builds, so you stay interested in what's coming up next). I decide to keep up the flow with The Rondelles' "Please Shut Up" (no matter where I am or who I'm with, I always play air guitar when I hear this song). The tape has been pretty up-beat until now, so I decide to ease up a little with Liz Phair singing "Don't Have Time" from the Higher Learning soundtrack. What's great about this song is it has a nice buzz. It won't put you to sleep and it won't drive you crazy, so it makes for a good transitional song. I feel like "Words and Guitar" by Sleater Kinney would follow Liz perfectly, but my copy of "Dig Me Out" is on vinyl and I haven't yet gotten my hook ups



for that kind of recording (much to my dismay) but Tuscadero with "The Swaye" fills in quite nicely for the SK.

Right now you're probably asking yourself, "What's up with all the girl bands? Does she hate men?" The answer to this is simple. No, I do not hate boy bands, I'm just very selective about who I invite into my music collection. Beck, being one of

the selected few, makes it on as song number six with "Get Real Paid." The Bangs bite back with "Tiger Beat" followed by Helium "Digging a Hole in the Ground." PJ Harvey brings her expertise to the mix with "Working for the Man." One of the styles of mix tapes that I'm starting to display here is a tape that goes in waves. A nice transition from light to heavy grooves. Mix taping can be

described as a form of editing, and, like any good film, the cuts and splices should seem natural and go nearly undetected. With that in mind, I'd like to add that PJ ends with this smokey room fuzz sound that precedes "Spiderman '79" by Veruca Salt just sweetly. I have a special place in my heart that I hold for Veruca. Veruca Salt was one of my high school bands. She crept into a lot of emotional soundtrack time for me during my "troubled teens," so I am very nostalgic for that musical time in my life - which brings me to the next musical diary entry, Weezer, with one of their sticky love songs, "Jaime." I was going to continue with my nostalgic kick and end on some Nirvana, but I've already done that once before on a different mix, so I decided to just end with a punch supplied by The Distillers raging "Distilla Truant." Thus ends side A.

I like to treat this time as a sort of intermission. A time to stretch, smoke another hit, or in this case, reapply the lip gloss rubbed off by the half-a-bag of chocolate chips I just devoured. Onto side B. The same question posted for the first side also applies to side two. Do I want to take it up slowly, or start right in? Not wanting to fall asleep just quite yet, I decide to keep the party going with "Eat" by The Skirts. I love my music collection. Anyone who's had the patience (or the intrigue) to go through all my shit knows that I enjoy a very well rounded assortment of music. Having a lot to choose from does make it easier to pick the perfect songs out, but just like a painter has a certain palate, it's fun to create a new and exciting mix tape using the same colors as before. This mix has been a blend of mostly turquoises and blues. It's time to rinse off my brush and douse my bristles into red.

Nikki and her red hot Corvettes peel on with "Let's Go." Kim Lenz and her Jaguars twing and twang with the "Devil on My Shoulder." And if those two didn't get things hot enough, The Gossip shake their stuff while they're "On the Prowl." Moving on to a little orange now is Jucifer, "44: dying in White," continuing to Le Tigre and "Phanta" (yel-

low). It's normally around now (about a quarter ways through side B) that I start to figure out where this tape is heading and what it has become - kind of like nurturing a flower from seed to blossom. My head is starting to clear (or maybe that's just the drugs wearing off...). Babes in Toyland say "Hello" and bring back the fury. Rasputina sings some tales of old times about a buzzing "Mayfly," but their humming cellos and purring vibratos melt into The Cold Cold Hearts' "Cute Boy Discount." Team Dresch's "Fagetarian and Dyke" break some glass with Tracy Bonham and her "Navy Bean." (Hey boys! Come and play with us!). Matt Sharp brings The Rentals over with "The Love I'm Searching For." Slant 6 dive into "Eight Swimming Pools" and Autoclave run through the land of "Dr. Seuss."

Here we are introduced to a major mix tape faux pas. (I wasn't aware of this until after reviewing the finished product later in the evening). Two different bands, same lead singer, but it works out fine because the songs compliment each other quite nicely. Fourteen songs down, only a few more to go. It's kinda tricky to end a mix. You want to leave something the listener will remember and that will make a nice impact, but without overshadowing those previously listed. I was going

to lay down some Bjork and then some Bowie, but decided that both are too strong in character to bring together side by side. By already outnumbering the boys twenty-three to three, I went with David Bowie and his "TVC15." Guiltiness still lingering from the prior Sleater Kinney mishap, I bring this story to an end with the sugar and spice of "Milkshake 'N Honey."

Having listened to (and re-listened to) the finished product, I am happy to reveal that this tape rocks! Now comes the tricky part - letting go of the mix and picking the hands of the tape's final resting place. For me, a mix tape is more than just music. It's a collection of ideas and feelings created by different people (or bands) who you choose to represent those of your own. I feel more comfortable choosing someone who I know will acknowledge and enjoy what music I have to offer. After serious thought (and much internal argument), I've decided to give this tape to one of my friends for her birthday. We haven't exchanged mix tapes in well over two years now, so this will make for the perfect occasion. I made a cover that I'm happy with, so all I have left is to pass it on... which I will be as soon as I finish listening to it in my car...

-Harmonee



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"I don't want to sound  
 pretentious or anything,  
 but it reminded me of  
 "Tortilla Flat"  
 - Bob Tiltwheel

"My wife loved that  
 book"  
 -Erik Dillinger 4

"It's the best book I've  
 read in a long time."  
 -Harmonee

"You can have a drink  
 from my little guy."  
 -Money

## Drinks for the Little Guy

A NOVEL BY  
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## Complete, Utter ReTODDnation

*He then asked for his camera bag back. I asked for the \$24,000 he owed me.  
Neither of us got what we asked for.*

Sean was telling me about monkeys the other day. How some people kill them. He wasn't talking about vivisection, medical experiments, or the Animal Liberation Front.

"Tribesmen would make a hole in a rock. At the end of the hole, a little less deep than a monkey's arm, they'd place some salt. Monkeys love salt. They smell it, crave it, and their instinct locks their paws around it. When that happens, they can't get their paws out. They're stuck. They won't let go of the salt."

I thought of the Simpsons episode where Homer gets his hand stuck in the vending machine. I think he's got a candy bar and the machine falls down on him. Homer wants the free candy bar really bad, enough to suffer some cranial damage in the process. He won't let go.

"All the villagers do is go beat the monkeys to death. The monkeys won't let go of the salt. They're easy prey, an arm stuck in a rock... don't you see?" Sean said. "We're all monkeys going after the salt. For some people, it's kids and a house."

As with most things that change my perspective on life, I had to pause, reflect, and down a couple of beers to get the right frame of mind. Sean wasn't just talking about monkeys, he was talking about humans. He was talking about you. He was talking about me. I know what a big hunk of salt in my life was. Flipside Fanzine. I gave everything I had to it for five years straight with too many fourteen hour days and six day weeks to count. Although I'll do my share of blaming in what follows, know this: I blame myself. Nobody else forced me to keep a hold of the salt. For better or worse, one of my enduring talents in life is being able to sustain severe beatings.

Let's start at where this all began and where it'll all end. Music. I love it. I don't have any musical talent, and haven't lamented the fact since my fifth music teacher wouldn't even let me play the recorder (I got stuck on block duty).

**RAZORCAKE** [14] Never wanted to be

in a band. Don't like crowds. Don't like people I don't know recognizing me. But I love listening to music, writing about it, filtering the world through it. Flipside helped tons. I no longer had to buy used cassettes to affordably discover new music. I worked a lot. I learned a lot. Al Flipside seemed nice enough - kind of a hybrid between Charlie Brown and Spock - but we didn't have much in common. I think we hung out, outside of Flipside, a grand total of five times in as many years.

Music was the salt. It's what kept me there. I mistook Flipside for my passion. I mistook my job for my life. As with any type of drug, what made me feel superhuman was also my wrecking ball. It's what made

ly a quarter.). I don't want this to sound like an emo song, but music and the very real culture it's steeped in kept me fixed, resolute. At twenty-eight, I was sure that Flipside was my life - and that it would remain so for literally decades more. I could see no alternative. I'd finished school. I'd worked enough jobs to know that being a tow truck driver and a coffee roaster had their limitations. I'd just as soon slit my wrists than punch a clock but I didn't mind working so much I was literally getting sunburn from the rays coming out of the computer monitor. The rock of salt got bigger. I squeezed that fucker harder and harder, trying to make it crumble, or compress it like coal to a diamond. Like some middle-eastern

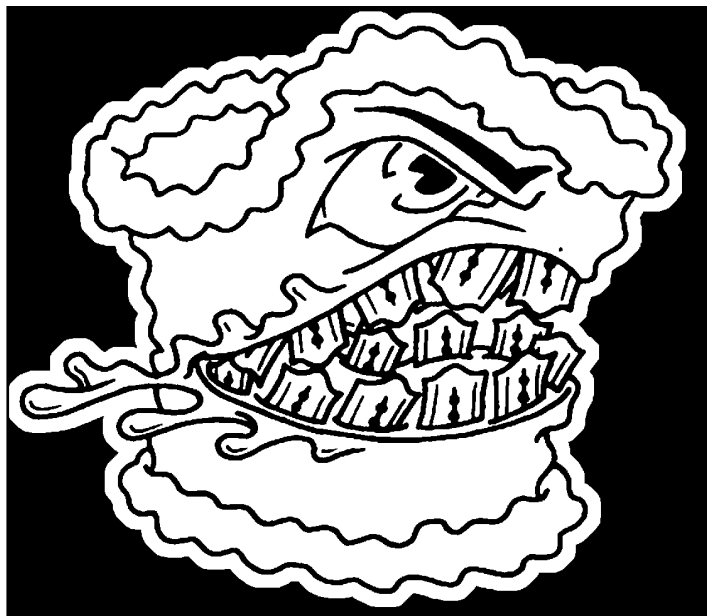
Flipside's stuff and didn't want to pay us. We took them to court after they failed to cough up a dime in eight months. We won the settlement, and someone's lawyers ended up getting all the money. I have no idea if Flipside saw a dime. I know I didn't and won't see a cent from the settlement.

When this started going down, Al and I would have long talks and I finally mustered up the courage to ask him for an equal partnership; to essentially start Flipside again as two people, not the good ship Alyosius Kowalewski. I guess it should be noted here that Al didn't pay me for the better part of the last two years I worked there in the hopes that we'd stay afloat. (Fuck, I'm no martyr, but I live simply. I walked to work. I lived in a basement. All of my entertainment was paid for. I wrote tons. All I had to do was cover minimal rent and pay for gas to get to gigs. I saved what little money I made for three years at \$6/hour.) My thinking was simple. Show Al that I was serious and that I wanted to make Flipside the best magazine we could. I didn't want anything more in the world. It felt like my whole life - by little steps over a decade - was leading up to what I was doing with that magazine.

It wasn't about scene cred or respectability or a name. It was because I knew I could do it, that I loved it, and I was getting pretty good at it.

A digression. On a personal level, the preceding couple of years had been deep fried in a batter of shit. My grandma, the main reason I moved to California in the first place, died. My mom got cancer, the exact same type that killed Tim Yohannon of Maximum Rock'n'roll. Two of my favorite ladies on the planet were either suffering or dead. The Dillinger Four are right. "If there is a god, he's either a bully or a dick."

As a matter of fact, Dillinger Four became my favorite band of all time in there somewhere. They always make me think. One of their song titles is "It's a Fine Line Between the Monkey and the



*The alternate Razorcake logo. Designed by David Guthrie <tat2dog@postoffice.pacbell.net>*

me impervious to repeated beatings - financial (I was on a dirt poor, tuna fish diet for the last two years) and emotional (lost a girlfriend because she forced me to choose between her and the magazine. Come to think of it, if I had a nickel for every time a girl who gave me the speech that punk rock's not a way to grow up, I'd have... exact-

tantric thingamajig I've yet to learn about, I found out that I was really crushing myself, not the salt.

Rotz distribution (RIP, fuckers) put Flipside through the ringer. No doubt about that. Rotz's owners, Kai and Agnes, rammed the flag pole into us while waving the punk banner high and furious. To make it real simple - they sold a bunch of

Robot." There's no monkeys or robots in the song itself, but damned if I didn't start feeling like a monkey made out of nuts and bolts. I was working like a machine. I was beginning to feel like someone else's pet. The worst of it was that I had done it to myself, had given Al the leash.

I laid it all on the table with Al last October. Equal partnership with full financial disclosure or I'd get another job. Al didn't bat a lash and told me it would be better if I got a job until things blew over. I asked him point blank if there were any hard feelings and he said there weren't. I went to Tucson for a week to work on a computer. When I got back, the Flipside locks had been changed. When I went to his house and asked him why, he said, "I don't trust you." When I pressed him as to how or why, he replied, "It's just a feeling." He then asked for his camera bag back. I asked for the \$24,000 he owed me. Neither of us got what we asked for.

In my head, I freaked. I felt bolts loosen and sheer off. I felt like I was falling down. I couldn't distinguish very well when I was awake and when I was asleep. This lasted about eight weeks.

To say I don't harbor resentment would be a lie. To say that I don't feel like he used me would also be a lie. The guy's going to use my interviews and columns for the next two issues of Flipside (if they come out.). I wrote Al three times to have him send me back my material, to have him sign over a music release that legally wasn't his. Nothing. Not a call, not a letter (and I'd even sent a SASE). The last I've "heard" from him is that he cashed a check made out to my name for freelancing work I do that a label mistakenly sent to the Flipside address.

I seethed. I skated. I wrote. I didn't sleep well. 12 packs would disappear from the fridge nightly. I was so lazy, I'd pee in bottles instead of walking upstairs to piss. I watched TV without muting the commercials. I'd hit a low.

In effect, I was a monkey that had just gotten beaten by a villager in a monkey suit. I thought he was a fellow monkey, someone just like me; in the same predicament. I couldn't let go - the salt. The fucking salt. Why'd they make music so tasty? Why do I need it for a soundtrack from the time I make my coffee in the morning until I fall asleep reading a book at night?

The resentment to Al was sinking me. I had to get salt of my own. I had to stick Al's salt up Al's ass and get along with my life.

Shortly after, due to low finan-

cial overhead, I started working on a website with a long time, real smart friend, Skinny Dan. Now, he and his wife kt, are the brains behind the code and organization of <razorcake.com>. It's coming along pretty well. There's stuff on there that won't be in this magazine and visa versa.

My loving parents (still married after almost 40 years) asked me along to fly out to visit my brother. When I was in the South, I hooked up with another longtime friend, Sean. We hung out for a week. We watched large tankers filled with sand dump their cargo along the eroding shoreline from a port that the navy made so they could launch their Trident nuclear submarines (and which Disney leased so their cruise ships could visit the island that the mousketeers own) up the way a bit from his house. We found out that a stripper used the monkey bars at her kid's preschool to practice her pole moves, which were very impressive. One of the many things I like about Sean is that he's easy going yet defiant. He's low key but he's also one of the most articulate and militant people I know, just by the fact that he'll tell you from so many directions how popular culture is little more than a huge shit on the head. And he'll make you laugh when he does it. He brought it up that he'd move all the way from Florida to Los Angeles to start a print magazine up with me.

Two months later, even after his transmission failed in Alabama and he read about bow hunting because his books were in his truck on a lift, we moved in together and started on Razorcake Fanzine.

Beaten within an inch of his life, this little monkey let go his grip of his salt. It's kind of opposite to the ending of "SLC Punk" (where a future lawyer with a funny haircut mistakes being an asshole for a form of rebellion, sees the errors of his childish ways, and eagerly slips on the shackles that society has slated for him because he "tested its boundaries.") . I love music, more every day. Barring severe head injury, I doubt there's going to be a day when I wake up and say, "what the fuck have I been doing? I need to get a 'real' job." I just mistook Flipside as the only job I could have.

Shit, for all I know, I might have just picked up another piece of salt and am waiting to get macheted by some more villagers. The big difference?

I gave Al back his piece of salt. This time I own some outright.

**-ReTodd**







**Nardwuar:** Like, are you afraid he may rub cum all over the dressing room walls like you did to Kiss, causing Motley Crue to get kicked off a Kiss tour?

**Nardwuar:** Who are you?

**Tommy Lee:** Hooah! Haha! [laughs] Who am I? Oh my god, I am many, many things, my friend!

**Nardwuar:** You are Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem!

**Tommy Lee:** Yes, uh, I am many, many things!

**Nardwuar:** And Tommy, who else is in Methods of Mayhem?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, we got, oh my god, are you ready for this?

**Nardwuar:** Bring it on! Bring it on!

**Tommy Lee:** Are you sitting down, brother!?

**Nardwuar:** I sure am! With my pen in my hand!

**Tommy Lee:** Okay! Uh, obviously, myself.

**Nardwuar:** Tommy Lee.

**Tommy Lee:** Yes. Um, my fucking crazy fucking redheaded, dreaded, fucking hip-hop motherfucker, Tilo. Uh, Stephen Perkins from Jane's Addiction on drums. Ummm, Chris Cheney, who was in Alanis Morissette's touring band.

**Nardwuar:** A Canadian connection!

**Tommy Lee:** Yes sir! Um, and also another fellow Canadian, Kai, is on guitar. He was from a band called Noise Therapy...

**Nardwuar:** From Vancouver, BC, Canada!

**Tommy Lee:** Yes sir! And also, um, Mixmaster Mike from the Beastie Boys!

**Nardwuar:** You didn't even give a drumroll for that one!

**Tommy Lee:** Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r! Shhhhhh-crash! And, also, we've sort of got like an opening revolving DJ door. It's DJ Shortcut who's also, uh, a Scratch Pickle, so it will be, yeah! A couple of DJs, you know.

**Nardwuar:** So, Tommy, a few years ago, there was a quote from the Motley Crue camp - I don't know if it was you or not, but, "Keyboards and porno soundtracks should be thrown in the garbage."

**Tommy Lee:** Oooh.

**Nardwuar:** But now your doing it in Methods of Mayhem!

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah, but those aren't keyboards. These are



## Nardwuar the Human Serviette vs. Tommy Lee



synthesizers!

**Nardwuar:** But you had Scott Kirkland of the Crystal Method on doing vintage keyboards!

**Tommy Lee:** Yes sir!

**Nardwuar:** And you had the "Get Naked" video!

**Tommy Lee:** Mm hmm.

**Nardwuar:** Now, with Stephen Perkins on drums there, are you going to be drumming *with* him? Is it going to be like dual drums right up front?

**Tommy Lee:** Mmm, yeah, it's fucking insane! Like, it's not your typical, like, "Okay, here's your..." - it's not like your typical two drum-sets sort of uh, you know, split apart, like we've all seen before. This is one toxic-looking, fucking insane, uh - it's a very large drum-set, one large drumset that two guys sit inside this pod, if you will.

**Nardwuar:** Tommy, where do you come up with this stuff? Like in Motley Crue you had that caged rotating drumset. Was that thing

made by NASA?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, no it wasn't. It was made by some people at a company called Show Staging, but it was my idea, and me and this sort of hydraulics specialist called Chris Peters, we just sort of started dreaming about what it would be like to fuckin' have the drums spin around upside down, and we did it! **Nardwuar:** From the hard streets of Covina, California to Methods of Mayhem! "Wassup G!" Snoop! Snoop! I can't believe it! Snoop Doggy Dogg. Tell me about Snoop! Snoop! Like, recording with Snoop! That's incredible!

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah!

**Nardwuar:** What's that like, Tommy!? What - was there any Snoop moment that you remember?

**Tommy Lee:** Mmm mmm.

**Nardwuar:** Like when you first came into the studio there!? Did he tell you any good Dre stories?

**Tommy Lee:** Um, any deranged stories? Uh, well, other than the

fact that Snoop Dog smokes more fucking weed than I have ever seen on the planet. Uh, pretty mellow, like nothing, I couldn't really recall any crazy moments. Really like a lot of fun, creative, like, you know, we were getting high on the fucking music, you know what I mean? More like that, more than anything, really.

**Nardwuar:** Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem, [the song] Anger Management: "I don't believe in the Public Eye/ Seems like 24/7 being watched by a spy. They're not news reporters/ They are full of bullshit/ Being watched by a spy." Now, I was wondering, it was reported a couple days ago that you got kicked out of your house with Pam, but you have said you were not. Then yesterday, there was a news story on the newswire. I don't know if you saw this or not, "Tommy Lee and Wife Face Dog-Bite Lawsuit."

**Tommy Lee:** I know! I saw that!

**Nardwuar:** "Tommy Lee and his wife Pamela Anderson are headed back to court, this time over their pet Rottweiler. A woman is suing the couple, claiming she was bitten by the dog during a 1997 visit to the couple's home near Malibu." Like, a dog bite lawsuit! What the hell is going on here!?

**Tommy Lee:** I don't know.

**Nardwuar:** I was curious, Tommy Lee, were you unknowingly - unknowingly!? - set up, perhaps by a record company, to help generate publicity for the upcoming Methods of Mayhem tour? Like, are they pulling these people.

**Label Rep:** Absolutely not!

**Tommy Lee:** [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** Are they pulling - hey, how the hell are you?! How the hell are you?! **Label Rep:** Good, how are you!?

**Nardwuar:** It's the record company rep, listening on in our conversation! But, um, I was just curious there, Tommy...

**Tommy Lee:** Noooo.

**Nardwuar:** But isn't it just crazy; Tommy and wife face dog bite lawsuit?

**Tommy Lee:** I know, this fucking

lady, I mean, like, a year and a half or so after the fact, she decides to sue us and it's like, uh, dude, you know what, that's why I call my new band Methods of Mayhem because it's always fucking like this. It's a fucking nuisance, you know? One day I hope, you know, I can just fucking come and go as I please, and, uh, every time I fart, it's not in the fucking newspaper, you know. I just fucking yearn for that day. It's not to mean that, you know, I mean, I would like it, certainly now. I'm not saying that I don't like the exposure and the fans and all that shit. I love all that, but god, if it was music driven it would be so much more fun than fucking every time you know someone gets bit or someone farts it's in the paper. It's fucking stupid.

**Nardwuar:** Tommy, are you gonna teach Tilo the ways of the touring with Tommy Lee? Like, are you going to teach Tilo? Like he's your main man there with Methods of Mayhem. Will there ever be another "spaghetti incident," do you think?

**Tommy Lee:** Ha ha ha! [laughs] Oh, lord, you know, I just know we're going to have... probably one of the best times ever, you know? That's, that, we're not here for a long time; we're here for a good time. That's my fuckin', basically, you know, the lyrics that I live by, so...

**Nardwuar:** But Tilo must have, like, thousands of questions! Like you've done twenty years of touring, and he's, I don't know, he's pretty new on the block. Does he ever come up to you and ask you about... stuff, like, one thing I'm curious about, that Motley Crue sex contest, where you and Nikki Sixx had a contest to see how many groupies you could "have" without bathing, and the only way you won was because Nikki had spaghetti barfed on him while having sex with a groupie, and, after making her eat it all up, he had to take a shower? Is that the "spaghetti incident," Tommy Lee?

**Tommy Lee:** Yes, that was. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** What, can you, I've, I've only heard bits of it. That sounds incredible!

**Tommy Lee:** It's, uh, it's a nice and disgusting, filthy road story. No more, no less. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** What's Tilo, your co-conspirator in Methods of Mayhem, like? Is he going to live up to that? My god?!

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, this kid is fucking - uh [laughs] I don't know if I should say this! [laughs] Uh...

**Nardwuar:** Does he need to be taught any manners? Is he a young Tommy Lee? Like, are you afraid

he may rub cum all over the dressing room walls like you did to Kiss, causing Motley Crue to get kicked off a Kiss tour?

**Tommy Lee:** [laughs] You know what, I just let him be himself, you know. He's a fucking, he's a great guy. He's definitely, he's got his own style, and, uh, yeah he's a fucking wildman, that's why I love him. That's the kind of energy you



**Nardwuar:** *The best part of that video, Tommy Lee, is - I mean, sure there's Pam, and there's all that other excitement - but I think the best part is when you "honk the horn!" of the speedboat! When you take your cock out there, and you push the horn of the speedboat. Do you remember that?*

need on stage, you know. That's the kind of energy people come to see, so yeah, you know, I basically just let him do his thing, you know? I'm not going to be his dad. I'm not going to be anything but his friend. You know, we're just going to have a good time, and take Methods of Mayhem around the world, and fucking tear it up.

**Nardwuar:** Well, Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem, have you heard of the band The Donnas at all, from San Francisco? They covered "Too Fast For Love."

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah, I heard about that.

**Nardwuar:** And they spotted you driving the Methods of Mayhem tour bus. Now hold on! Why isn't Tilo driving. Make him work there,

Tommy Lee!

**Tommy Lee:** [laughs] I'm driving this ship, baby!

**Nardwuar:** [the song] "Get Naked" - "77 million made from watching me cum under the sun on my vacation." But you didn't make one penny off that?

**Tommy Lee:** Nope. Not one. Zero. Zilch. Fuckin' nada.

**Nardwuar:** The best part of that video, Tommy Lee, is - I mean, sure there's Pam, and there's all that other excitement - but I think the best part is when you "honk the horn!" of the speedboat! When you take your cock out there, and you push the horn of the speedboat. Do you remember that?

**Tommy Lee:** Of course.

**Nardwuar:** Did you rent or buy that speedboat?

**Tommy Lee:** Um, that was a rental.

**Nardwuar:** So did you, like, tell them that your cock-print was left on the horn?

**Label Rep:** Nardwuar!?

**Tommy Lee:** [laughs] God damn it! I would imagine they would know by now if they've seen the video!

**Nardwuar:** Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem, further on the video there is a "Mayhem" tattoo prominently displayed on you in the video, and there is totally wild music going on in the background which is complete foreshadowing, now that you have Methods of Mayhem with wild, crazy toons! What was the music going in the background there? It was some craaaazy stuff! It was like "It's all good." Like, "It's all good."

**Tommy Lee:** That's MC Hammer, actually. That's one of my favorite songs that he ever did. Because it is all good. Because every time, uh, Pamela and I would go anywhere and do anything, that was like our theme song, man. It was like, we would both, you know, look at each other and just fuckin' be like "it's all good." You know what I mean?

**Nardwuar:** It's all Hammer Time!

**Tommy Lee:** Well, I don't know about Hammer Time, but it's definitely all good, that's for sure.

**Nardwuar:** Now, Tommy Lee, was this whole video fiasco all Bret Michaels of Poison's fault? Because since he started flogging his sex tape with Pamela, and it like sold for 5 million dollars, the people who stole yer tape wanted to make bucks too? Was it Bret Michaels' fault, Tommy Lee?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, you know, I don't know too much about that. I've sort of kept my... distance. I know nothing about that. That was before my time, man...

**Nardwuar:** Because they put 3 million dollars into marketing your video tape. That's pretty good! That

would be great to put 3 million into promoting your record!

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah! [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** And you are Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem. Now, Tommy, [the song] "Narcotic": "Are you ready? Are you ready for the weekend?" Is that a reference to "Workin' for the Weekend" by Loverboy, Tommy Lee?

**Tommy Lee:** No. [laughs] Mine is actually "Are You Ready for the Tweak End." Don't confuse me with the Loverboy guys!

**Nardwuar:** Well, Loverboy was from Vancouver, and you do sort of have some Vancouver connections. Like you have your guitarist from Noise Therapy, from Vancouver. And wasn't your first wife - before Pam and Heather - Candice, from Surrey, BC?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, yeah, we used to go out for a little bit.

**Nardwuar:** So she was your wife?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, for like about 30 days.

**Nardwuar:** Wow, another Canadian connection. So Canadians can be proud. And, do you know the name of the Canadian brand of the beer that launched the career of your third wife, Pamela Lee?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, Labatt's, I think.

**Nardwuar:** Labatt's Blue! Tommy Lee of Methods of Mayhem, so what's yer fascination with Vancouver girls? Like there's the song "Girls Girls Girls" that mentions the Vancouver club, The Body Shop. What is the fascination?

**Tommy Lee:** Um, I don't know, I think at that time it was a time in our life and I just decided to write about it, you know?

**Nardwuar:** But you like the Comox/Courteney area where Pamela is from? You know, here in the Vancouver area... on Vancouver Island? The Comox Valley?

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah, you know, I spent a, a good day or two out in the gardens. I think it was Butchart Gardens?

**Nardwuar:** Butchart Gardens!

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah, I just walked around the checked out all these beautiful trees and plants and water features. It was beautiful. I thought it was a really beautiful part of the country.

**Nardwuar:** That was totally amazing. The one time I interviewed Kurt Cobain, he actually mentioned he went to Butchart Gardens as a small kid! Kurt Cobain and Tommy Lee having something in common! That's incredible!

**Tommy Lee:** [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** [the song] "New Skin": "Now I'm shedding my skin... you gotta listen." Now, Tommy Lee, will Mick Mars ever shed his skin and reveal his Canadian roots? Isn't



he from Newfoundland?

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, actually, you know what? No, he's not. That was just like a big trip, a big press facade. Like, I think he's from Indiana. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** Oh no!

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** Well, how much of this was a facade? I mean, Methods of Mayhem is totally real here, but with Motley Crue, on the Shout At The Devil tour and parts of Theater of Pain tour there was a rumor that Nikki Sixx, Nikki Sixx! - Nikki was replaced with a double! Like some guy from Erie, Pennsylvania from a band called Sixx Pack dressed up as Nikki, cuz Nikki was too fucked up to go on tour.

**Tommy Lee:** Uh, god, fuck, you know what, dude? I don't really want to talk about all that shit. It's all so old. I'm into, I'm onto some new shit right now. Like those stories are all so old and tired.

**Nardwuar:** [the song] "Hypocritical": "We Protest against their negative stress."

**Tommy Lee:** Yes.

**Nardwuar:** Now you have this record with Methods of Mayhem, Tommy, and we kinda got to refer to the Crue here slightly, but did they "blackmail you" into anything, saying to you if you "talk any shit about us, we'll let the world know, that Tommy Lee, uh, kicked my dog," etc., because there weren't too many biting lyrics into your past relationships with the Crue on this particular release?

**Tommy Lee:** Yeah. Yeah. Um. I don't know. I just set out to do this record for me. It's all about truth, you know? And I will always speak the truth, you know? And some people might not like to hear it, but I'm going to fucking say it, you know. I just don't like the way, um, I just don't like the way things are reported. I think everything is sensationalized just to get fucking ratings...

**Nardwuar:** But how about Motley Crue on this record? Were there any references to them? I looked closely, just wondering if there were any, and if the Crue did indeed tell you, "Hey, Tommy, you'd better not do this or we're gonna, you know"?

**Tommy Lee:** No, there's no references whatsoever.

**Nardwuar:** What do you think of the rock'n'roll form know as "punk," Tommy Lee? What do you think of punk? Because you were in the LA area. Did you ever see the Germs?

**Tommy Lee:** [Silence. Line goes dead]

[Three minutes later on Nardwuar's voicemail]

**Label Rep:** Hey Nardwuar, I think Tommy's on his cell phone, and the battery died. Um, so let me see if i can get him back on the phone. Ok, call me back. Thanks, bye.

**Check out**

<[www.nardwuar.com](http://www.nardwuar.com)> for more interviews!





Designated Dale

# I'm Against It

*...unless one of these "evangelists" has holes in the palms of his hands,  
he needs to worry about his own fuckin' life, not mine or anyone else's...*

If it's one thing I learned growing up as a little kid, it's to carefully give the once over twice to things that reek of bullshit or seem just a little too far-fetched. Not to be overtly cautious or paranoid; just a bit more aware of the jive that floated (and still floats) around me. Over the years, I've often found this practice to exist in quite a few of fellow family members in the punk/underground culture, so I soon learned that I wasn't the only one. The main topic of this here column touches on that area of keeping your eyes open - the slick trickery of subliminal practices in advertising and, supposedly in some cases, some of the world's best known music. Even some motion pictures have been found to be involved in this same practice of getting the audience's brain juice pumping. I'd like to firmly remind any of ya reading that there's some of these findings that I strongly believe in, like the advertising embedding because it's so damn obvious and has been discussed about with the folks directly involved, yet I honestly believe some of the "professional" findings on the subliminal music monkeyshines are, well, just a little bit too fuckin' far out there; i.e., FULL OF SHIT.

Add to that that the majority of the salvation brigade squeezing the turds of "truth" out of their mouths stinking up the air about the hidden evils in "rock music" are Christian snake oil salesmen to begin with, so you can see how they can take the ball and run like crazy with it (and I stress the word CRAZY, here, people). Anyhow, my fascination with subliminal uses in the many forms of media slapped me upside the head while I was starting early on in high school. I liked to check out and learn about things that weren't the norm and this seemed to strike me as one of them. In one of my photo classes, our teacher had brought in some slides and a few books that would forever change the way I looked at ads in magazines or the commercials I had been watching for years on television.

The books are  
**RAZORCAKE** 20 called "Subliminal

Seduction" and "Media Sexploitation" written by Wilson Bryan Key, a very much accredited university professor who has been studying this subject for years (the first book of his came out in 1973, I believe) and I strongly recommend his books to any of ya who might want to read up on the subject, as he has become one of THE leaders in this field. The first book mainly deals with magazine ads and how tons of them, mainly liquor and cig-

self... "Media Sexploitation" (the second book) deals more with commercials, magazines, even MORE ads, and some newspapers as well as a whole chapter on one of my favorite films of all time, "The Exorcist." I had constantly heard in the past that there was in fact a lot going on behind the scenes in the making of "The Exorcist" and had always felt a lot of the findings to have some truth being that some of the people who worked on the film,

because you want everyone to know why it tastes the way it does, ya know what I mean? I actually began to understand some of the reasons why "The Exorcist" made my bowels run cold to this day after reading his findings on the movie. VERY interesting read, folks, even if you aren't a fanfuck like me of the film. And if you ain't an Exorcist fan, then I'm sorry - you just plain suck - that's the way it is. I'm always rattling on explaining to folks that what "The Exorcist" did for the future of horror filmmaking is what the Ramones did for the future of rock and roll - they both set the new standard for the 100s to follow them. Any of Professor Key's books can be found in most bookstores or, as most people find things these days, online. Way worth the purchase price, folks - I can't emphasize this enough.

Another interesting (and almost ALWAYS entertaining) facet to this phenomenon are the accounts of backward masking done on records to "get evil into the minds of the innocent and unsuspecting" and the hidden artwork sighted on certain record covers as well as in artists logos that are "just simply the work of Satan." Hee hee hee... I'm already starting to get all fuckin' giggly just thinkin' about it. If anyone who grew up in the '70s & '80s on rock music, you'll remember the scads of religious organization\$ on television who had those night-long specials on the "evils of rock music" and how they would go on to "prove that the devil is afoot in your children's records - right in your own home!" Man, I used to love and watch them pick apart everyone from Led Zeppelin, AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Kiss, Iron Maiden, and The Doors to bands like The Eagles, The Police, Prince and even the soundtrack to the musical "Hair"! The funniest parts of those specials were how they would single out a particular instance and overanalyze the shit out of it. (by the way, if any of ya out there have access to copies of any of those shows, I'd gladly pay for video copies - get in touch with me through Razorcake - I need to piss my pants laughing while



arette ads, have had the master touch-up jobs within the photographs to entice the unconscious reader's stimuli to pick the advertiser's brand of product when faced with a purchase selection. It all sounds WAY fucking out there, and that's exactly what I had thought at first when initially getting into his books and findings, but after thoroughly reading chapter after chapter, some of the findings within these ad photographs stick out like a neon sign, really.

Doubting Thomas himself would have had the fucking rug pulled right out from under him if he had a chance to read these books him-

like director William Friedkin, openly admit that there was a lot of visual as well as audio tooling going on during the film's making - they never make no bones about it. His chapter on "The Exorcist" confirmed a lot of the rumors that had been circling it for so long. While reading the chapter, Prof. Key noted that while he was free to write anything he wanted about his findings on "The Exorcist," he was in no way to reproduce any photos or stills from the film itself. You really can't blame Warner Bros. for giving Key the legal warning - it's like doing an article on Coke or Pepsi and asking to print the secret recipe

showing these shows to some friends.)

One of these instances that sticks with me to this day is how they showed a short clip of Jim Morrison getting down and taking control on stage while belting out some vocal wailing and droning, like he was often noted for doing live. These fucking idiots on the show said that Jim was "being inhabited by unholy demons live onstage" and that he did this to "beckon the evil spirits that be to gain attention and minds of his audience." The clincher of this clip was after they explained what you were "witnessing" Jim doing, they cut to a snippet of an interview with Ray Manzerek, The Doors' keyboardist, and Ray went on to explain how "Jim was possessed, man - he was a shamen." Then they cut back to these people on the show and they're shaking their heads, sobbing that Morrison's own band member admits his singer was in cahoots with Satan himself. If those assholes would have played the WHOLE interview clip with Ray (and it's a popular interview that has been shown quite a lot), they would have seen that Ray was talking about how Jim would work himself up into a psychotic frenzy onstage when the band would build up a roaring wall of sound and just let it blast and also how Jim would groove himself into a trance-like state while performing impromptu vocal jams onstage as the rest of the band played on during an extended bridge of a song or whatnot... It really DOES make a difference

when you tell the whole story - just like anything else.

I ain't completely denying the fact that some of the backwards masking instances don't exist, but when they'd get on a roll with 'em, especially the notorious ones like Led Zeppelin (their fourth LP w/ "Stairway To Heaven") and The Beatles ("The White Album" with the "Number 9" buzz), suddenly EVERYTHING that looks or sounds remotely devilish to these people contains evil messages hidden backwards in the grooves of the LPs... two words to these people-fuck off.

Why don't we talk about some GENUINE evils - like how much money is made through these Christi\$ian television networks - where is all that money going? I sure as shit don't see it helping out the REAL unfortunate people in this country, like the seriously disabled, the war vets or retired folks who can't even afford to buy some fucking groceries, unless you count the "unfortunate" fucks from these organizations who have yet experience the pleasure of hillside mansions or garages filled with hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of cars (and let's not forget the cocaine in some instances) thanks to their networks "spreading the word and saving the non-believers." Did God tell these "unfortunate" network wads to spend like kings and do so? They'd probably tell you that to yer face. To me, brother, THAT is fucking evil as all hell. And what about these evangelists who

are knocking boots with the likes of women that resemble strippers? And, no - they ain't married to 'em, by the way. Hmmm, I guess that would be considered just as much a sin as us "heathens" who haven't been "born again." Come to think of it, a lot of these "evangelists" live life pretty close to the likes of the same rock bands they are so desperately trying to "save." Kinda makes one wonder, ya know? To me, unless one of these "evangelists" has holes in the palms of his hands, he needs to worry about his own fuckin' life, not mine or anyone else's...

Sorry to go off on a tangent, but it always seems to be these bible-thumpin' types that are the ringleaders of righteousness when it comes to crusading against the so-called "evils of rock." The thing I find even more interesting (and funny) is that these people or any other of the organizations never go after bands like The Candy Snatchers (fucking RULE), The Humpers (RIP), or even the older, past punk prototypes like the Ramones or the Dead Boys. I think the main reason they won't (and can't) go after bands of this caliber is 'cause these groups ain't got a damn thing to hide - and these outfits would tell anyone straight out that they have nothing to hide before burying a foot in the accusing party's ass. Besides, why would some parents try and go after a band like The Candy Snatchers with a lawsuit for their kid's suicide when they can shoot for the big bucks by taking bands like Judas Priest, Ozzy, or AC/DC into court? What's

even more amusing is that all who have tried have been denied court awards every time. I can picture it now - Larry May (Candy Snatchers' vox) telling the judge on the witness stand - "Well, your honor, we told the idiot out in the audience to come party with us during our tune, "Drunken Blur," but we didn't force any booze or drugs into his mouth - he croaked it on his own will - the fuck you want me to do about it?...or how about this - Joey Ramone up on the witness stand explaining to the judge about the song "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue" - "Look, yer honor, when we wrote this song, it was about us and our stupid experimentation with sniffing glue - the kid we're talking about here today who died doing the same glue huffin' happened to be as stupid as we were, but not as lucky to live, ya know?" Man, now THAT would be a laugh riot to watch on the evening news - "Drug-crazed band of punks claim the life of innocent young teen... more on this late-breaking story at 10."

Well, I hope the first installment of this here column has been of interest to some of you readers. Feel free to drop me a line here at Razorcake or email me directly at <RmonesNYC@aol.com>. New and existing bands that RAWK are encouraged to let me know what they've been up to. 'Till then, keep asking all the questions that make the people with the answers squirm...

-Designated Dale  
<RmonesNYC@aol.com>



Designated Dale



Exclusive Razorcake shot of Linda Blair getting twisted with The Ramones.





*The fact that there have supposedly been two attempts on his life in his first month in office, it becomes patently clear that we may have elected the right man*

### Greetings, Salutations and Related Silliness

First of all, I'd like to personally welcome you all to the premiere issue of "Swedish Fish Erotica," the only mag in the world that caters to those of us with truly "specialized" tastes, if you know what I mean. I hope you are all as excited as I about the features that have been jam-packed, sans Vaseline, into these soon-to-be very sticky pages. Might I suggest you skip all the usual drivel associated with publications of this ilk and head straight for the spread on page 17, entitled "Leprechaun Lust," which features a couple of handsome dwarfs in green suits gettin' jiggy with some prime, grade-A sea bass on the moonlit shores of Pacoima...

Okay, some guy named Todd has just informed me that the name of the magazine this will be in is Razorcake, that its focus is on music, and that is not intended to satiate the fetid, fetishistic fantasies of all the pathetic poisson pervers residing outside of France's borders. In other words, we're all shit outta luck, kiddies. You can all go back to reading this rag with both hands, 'cause it looks to be like another lonely night.

### Hail to the Chief

In a not-so-recent column for another magazine, I recounted a vision I had in which the spirit of Jimmy Stewart instructed me to relay a personal message from the God of Punk to his legion of followers.

Assuming that the majority of you didn't read it, it boiled down to this: The reason punk rock has become the dung heap that it is is because of a considerable lack of noticeable oppression in this country. Sure, things are really not that much better than they were back in punk's "golden years," but, thanks to the amassing of considerable amounts of "stuff" by the typical Joe, the co-opting of the media by corporate interests and the abhorrent

"don't worry, be happy" attitude of the general public during the Clinton era, the average punker has turned his sights away from the things that adversely affect the world around him and, instead, has opted to focus on how rad his plastic personality girlfriend is, how partying is cool, and essentially adopted the very value system that punks were supposedly rejecting all those years ago. The only way punk rock can truly be saved from the black depths in which it currently resides is a good, hard look at how lousy life is behind the television nipple at which its acolytes so frequently feed. To achieve this, the God of Punk called upon his followers over the age of 18 to vote for the most racist, war mongering, queer bashing, gun toting, true gem among sons of bitches that they could find to serve as this country's president.

Well, he has since sent word to me (via email) that he would like to thank you all for your efforts. He understands that the choice for outright bigoted freaks was dismally small (although he does acknowledge the efforts of his Florida disciples and their votes for Pat Buchanan. Hey, we all know that they weren't really taking Gore into consideration), but, given the choice between a Disney animatronic nightmare with a penchant for lying through his teeth and a low-grade moron who happens to be a member of one of the most dangerous families in American history, you have chosen the better (or worse, depending on your point of view) of the two.

The greatest thing about Dubya (as his supporters like to call him) is that he's living, breathing proof that the jocks and frat boys always win, primarily because they've got the deck stacked in their favor. The man was, by most accounts I've heard, an average student who preferred to drink the night away and allegedly shovel Colombia's primary export into that upturned nose with his fraternity brothers.

His father, once a president himself and former director of the CIA, has had the word "murderer" occasionally mentioned in the same breath as his name, thanks to his involvement in efforts to fund right wing "freedom fighters" in Nicaragua by selling arms to other "hostile" countries (not to mention rumored drug sales to his country's own people), among other things. Both can credit their privilege and wealth to their involvement in the oil business. According to a recent segment on "World News for Public Television," George Jr. did fuckall for the state of Texas during his tenure as its Governor, except to back legislation that favored supporters and friends in some way or another. He also fried his fair share of convicted felons with astonishing regularity.

It's almost surreal that a person of such high caliber could be elected as a member of the Hank Williams, Jr. fan club let alone leader of the free world. Yet, when you've got a daddy as powerful as his, a résumé that includes one of America's most prestigious schools, money coming out of your ears, corporate media backing and a brother who, in what has to be one of history's most suspect examples of coincidence, happens to be the governor of the one state you need to put you over the top, you could probably be named emperor of the universe if that was your bag.

As of this writing, Junior's been in office a total of one month and he's already been a busy little bee. He's filled his cabinet with a bunch of daddy's old buddies, many of whom were the architects of the Gulf War, particularly of note being the naming of a retired general (who once denied that there were any atrocities being committed by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam two months after that little shindig in My Lai) as Secretary of State. He's named an alleged racist Jesus freak as his Attorney General. He's aggressively backing a tax cut that will most benefit

the nation's richest citizens, promised to open one of the last virgin pieces of land on the planet in Alaska to oil drilling (being an oil man, anyone wanna bet on who stands to gain most from this move?), cut abortion funding to foreign countries and, in an apparent attempt to show the world who's boss, bombed Iraq again. He also seems to have some difficulty formulating a coherent thought without the use of a teleprompter.

When you add to the equation the fact that there have supposedly been two attempts on his life in his first month in office, it becomes patently clear that we may have elected the right man. We could very well have the makings of the perfect asshole we need to tighten enough screws to give the nation's (not to mention the world's) great unwashed punk rock hordes enough truly meaningful things to bitch about that they will no longer need to sing nauseating, ska-tinged odes to their girlfriends or the healing powers of the herb.

I'm personally sweating in gleeful anticipation at how good music, art, magazines and books are going to get. If all goes well during Dubya's tenure with regards to war, police abuse, assaults on anyone who is not white, heterosexual and god-fearing, increased amounts of crippling drugs into inner-city, primarily minority neighborhoods and other general naughtiness, I just may vote to reelect the guy. Considering all the increasing tension that's been going down in the Middle East lately and the fact that U.S. just has to stick its hypocritical nose into the fray when its corporate interests are even remotely threatened, I wouldn't be surprised if we found ourselves out in the middle of some other continent killing off the native population by the early 2002.

The future looks very bright for punk rock, kiddies, at least for the next four years.

The God of Punk is pleased.

### Blah Blah Blah

Rapper Eminem has been in a maelstrom of controversy for a while now, mainly due to lyrics considered by some to be homophobic and misogynistic. As I write this, protests are being planned for the Grammy Awards, where he is nominated for various awards and is scheduled to perform with Elton John. Other artists, including Madonna, Stevie Wonder and Elton, defend Eminem, saying that he is free to say whatever he wants. You know, free speech and all that. Now, I'm am by no means Mr. PC and I wholeheartedly embrace the rights of Eminem, or any other person for that matter, to say whatever they feel like saying (I just personally wish the guy could at least make his music somewhat interesting), but I am curious as to where Eminem's high-profile defenders would draw the line. What if he made derogatory remarks toward specific ethnic groups, replacing his liberal use of the word "fag" with "nigger," or "kike?" What if, instead of fantasizing in his music about blowing his wife's brains out, he gleefully sang about tying a black man to a truck, dragging him around and then setting his body on fire? How many of these defenders of free speech would then jump to his defense? If David Duke or some other outspoken member of the Ku Klux Kiddie Klub could hold a decent tune, would Elton or Gloria Estefan sing a duet of Skrewdriver's "White Power" with them? What makes a violently anti-homosexual or anti-woman song any different from one that is violently anti-Swede or anti-midget? I'm just wondering...

In recent graffiti news: The city of Los Angeles has been plagued recently by the work of a person going by the name of the "Mustache Bandit." This individual is allegedly responsible for putting mustaches on the city's advertisements and brazenly tags his/her nom de guerre to his/her work. Witnesses have testified that this scoundrel's greatest achievement thus far has been to mustachio a supermodel's image on a huge billboard overlooking the Sunset Strip. Authorities are stumped as to what sort of maniac could be behind such heinous crimes. We here at Razorcake would like to say that anyone with information regarding who this person could be should go fuck themselves.

A warm welcome to sunny California is extended to Mr. Sean Carswell. If you need help accli-

mating to your new surroundings, I'll be happy to lend you my pyramid-shaped tent, patchouli scented crystals, personal list of the city's best plastic surgeons and my .45-caliber "freeway problem solver" until you get your bearings, mate.

Thanks to Todd for being Todd. Sorry we missed your birthday soiree.

I would like the world to know

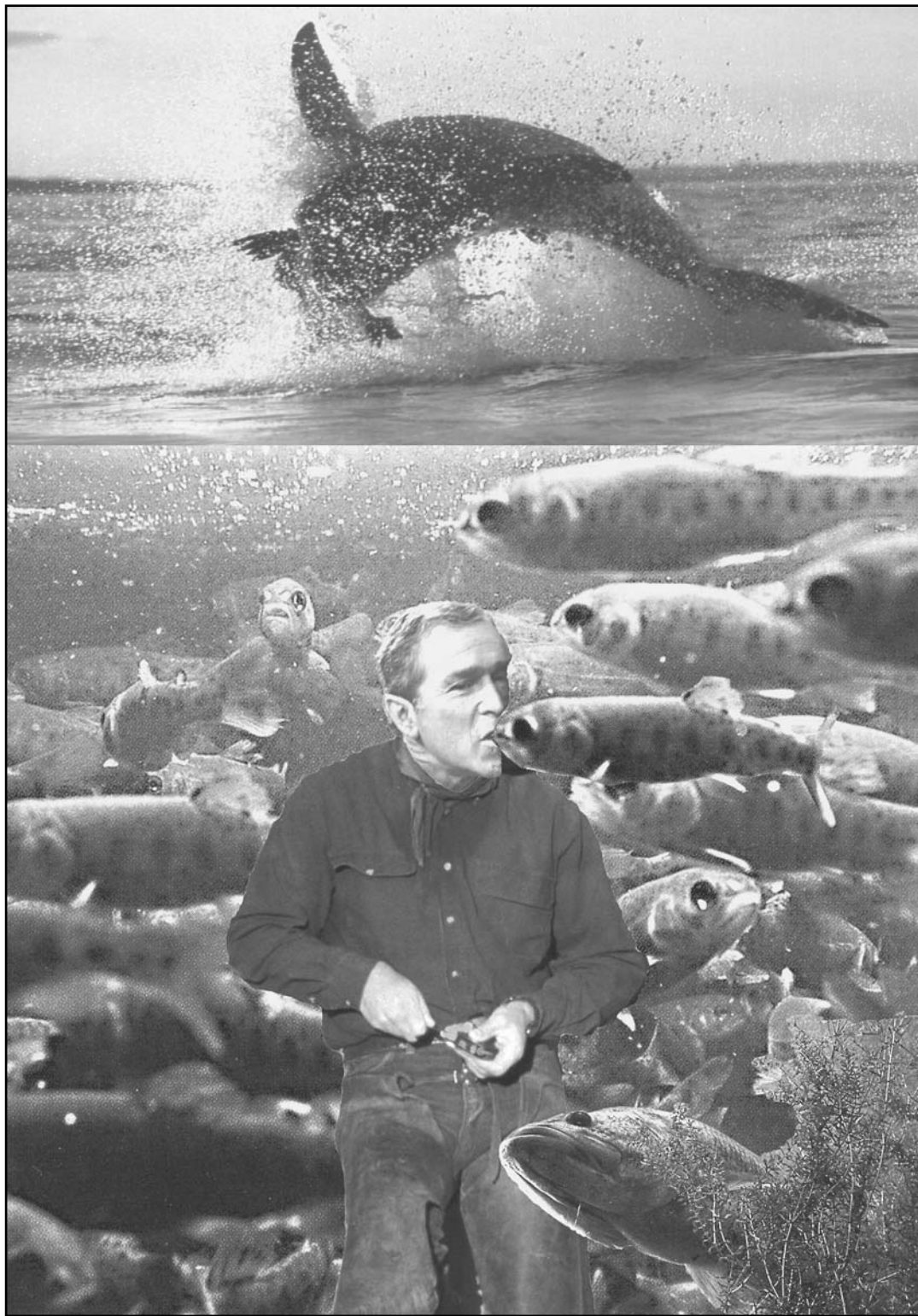
that my girlfriend, Karla Perez-Villalta, bestowed upon me that most sacred of objects, Speed Racer's Mach 5. I know of no greater indicator of true love. No longer will I have to jump onto the couch in emulation every time I watch his exploits. Now, I merely have to place the "Speed" doll into the driver's seat as the theme blares from the television. Chim-Chim rides shotgun, watching

Speed's back. Spridle sits in the trunk, where he belongs.

That should about do it for now. Tune in next issue, when my column will consist of the word "bitch" printed 12,000 times so that none of my more prudish and/or politically correct friends will be able to read it.

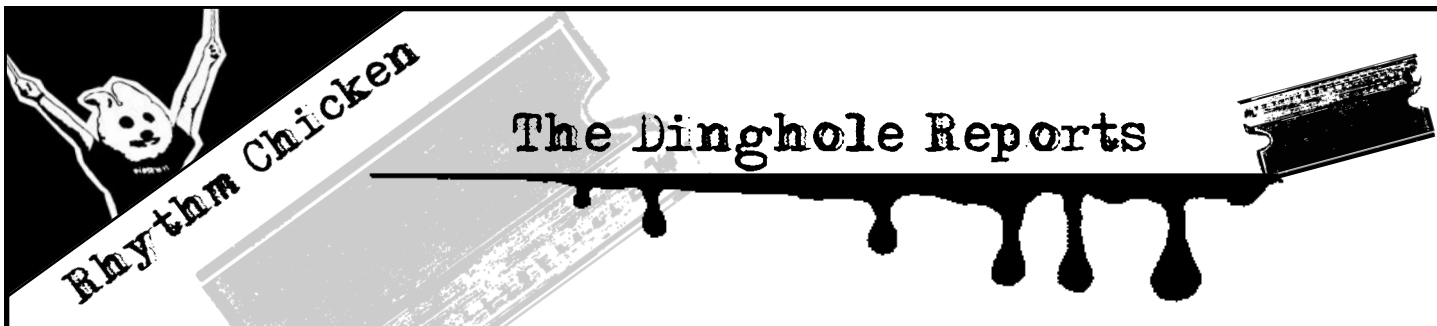
I'm a little airplane,

-Jimmy Alvarado



Jimmy Alvarado

*Soon as that camera goes off, he gonna fuck that fish.*



*From this point on, Earth has been a whole new rock*

**The Dinghole Reports**  
by the Rhythm Chicken  
(commentary by Francis Funyuns  
edited by Dr. Sicnarf)

Ruckus. Plain and simple. 6 letters, 2 syllables, my mission statement compressed into one ding-tweaking word, ruckus. As the Happy Schnapps Combo would say, "Raise it!" Raise a ruckus! All your Manic Panic and all your neo-political ideologies don't mean turd if you don't act on instinct on a guttural level. Shove that metaphorical wire brush up the dinghole of society! Cosmetic impalings and

drinkin' shit shakes are about as shocking as the rest of that counter-culture you blindly propagate. Grab a carret and pull up a chair! Stretch out your dinghole and Coleman beware! I have found one true way to celebrate ruckus in all of its forms. In my quest to raise a ruckus I have embraced sheer organic lunacy in the form of mankind's final superhero, the Rhythm Chicken. Here you can keep up to date with my "Boycott Cadbury" campaign, my direct philosophical contrast to the words and actions of Gary Coleman, my lifelong quest to fit larger and spici-

er objects into my dinghole, and, above all, victorious tales from the battlefield. These are the Dinghole Reports.

(Alright, Chicken. You're boring them. Get to the reports already! - F.F.)

Fine! That Mr. Funyuns, I tell ya. He puts out seven meager Rhythm Chicken newsletters and he thinks he can tell ME what to do!..... So ON TO THE REPORTS! Dinghole Report #1: the hatching of ruckus.

(Rhythm Chicken Sightings #1

& #2)

While passing through Tittletown, USA, I remembered that evening's big rock show and thought Green Bay would be the perfect place to nest for the night. That night Face to Face and the Alkaline Trio were performing at the Concert Cafe. I anticipated a line of ticket holders around the block come door time, a captive audience to witness the hatching of the Rhythm Chicken. The drumset (herein referred to as the Chicken Kit) was untrunked and set up on the sidewalk across Main Street from the anxious concert line. They observed the set-up and scratched their heads reading the bass drums "Rhythm Chicken" logo. I sat at the thrown and took a deep breath before pulling on the chicken head. The happy-hour Pabst in my gullet was bubbling in tingly anticipation. The head went on and, already, people cheered. Then it began, the first ever opening drumroll! Like a call-to-arms, it heralded the other happy-hour drunks out of the Speakeasy Tavern next door, and the gay bar, and the Mexican restaurant, and Jake's Pizza, and the porno shop, and the strip club (God, I love Green Bay!), and the sidewalks filled with Americans of all walks, awe-stricken at the sight of lunatic ruckus. Soon began the rhythms, the drumbeats born from Pabst, cheap gin, social absurdity, and an undying urge for mayhem. Traffic stopped. Concert-goers danced. Cars honked. And, above all, the crowd went ape! The bands trickled out of the venue to see for themselves and realized that the show had been stolen. From this point on, Earth has been a whole new rock. After that monumental debut gig, I found my way back to the free happy-hour pizzas and Pabst on tap. Later, during the post-concert tavern social, I was befriended (out of pity, I'm sure) by the Alkeline Trio. They talked me into one more gig. It was now raining out, but the needle on my Pabst-o-meter was in the red! Terminal ruckus ensued as the drunks poured out once again to witness the Rhythm Chicken, only

Rhythm Chicken



this time he was playing on the island in the middle of Main Street with honking traffic whizzing by him on both sides! He was...

(Hey Chicken! You're talking about yourself in the 3rd person! What's with that? - F.F.)

What the hell are you, the grammar cops? Jeez! Ok, Ok, onward and downward. Dinghole Report #2: the Francis Creek incident

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #7)

Two days after the hatching I was heading north after Milwaukee's "Count Your Eggs Tour" and saw the highway exit sign for Francis Creek. I figured that they deserve ruckus rhythms just as much as those Green Bay and Milwaukee scum. Upon entering town I saw the sign "Francis Creek population 263". About 5 blocks later I found myself in cow fields again and turned around back into town. The sign on THAT side of town said "Francis Creek population 252!" I knew I was in the right town! After finding the town park I set up the Chicken Kit and looked around. Not one person was to be seen in any direction. Oh why the hell not! The head went on, the opening drumroll rumbled, the beats were pounded out, and still I saw no one. I considered it a practice session until I started to tear down and saw about 10 kids BEHIND me on dirtbikes! They backed away once realized and had a look of immense bewilderment. They had just witnessed a grown out-of-town stranger playing the drums in their park wearing a big chicken head...

....TO NO ONE! One little tyke mustered up enough courage to inquire, "Who are you?" I paused and then answered him, "I am the R h y t h m Chicken.....uh.....Don't do drugs!" Seconds later, the Chicken Kit was trunked and I was northbound on I-43.

(And you thought BIG BIRD was corrupting our youth! - F.F.)

Hey, Funyuns! Don't you dare bring up that big stupid ass-fuck in my presence ever again!

(Oh, you're just jealous because he's got a bigger dinghole than you! - F.F.)

Yeah, well if I had Snuffy's trunk to do my dingstuffing with it would be a different story!

Dinghole Report #3: Winter Games 2001

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #174)

Two weeks ago I found myself at my favorite Wisconsin festival, the Fish Creek Winter Games. Way

pensed (God, I love Wisconsin!). Since my road crew declined from working this tour, I recruited a sled to pull around the Chicken Kit on the ice and snow, calling it the Rhythm Chicken Sin Sleigh of Ruckus! The final tourstop was, of course, the BEER TENT!

I set up just outside the tent opening, right next to the snowmobile raffle! As the opening drumroll commenced, beergutted festival-goers poured out of the tent and just waited! A Rhythm Chicken chant began as I was showered with frozen beer and wool panties! This was my 2nd annual Winter Games performance and the fans knew the ruckus to be had! Dancing, yelling, photo-taking, chanting, taunting, dinghole stretching, sheer ruckus! After the Chicken Kit was trunked I found my way to Fish Creek's Bayside Tavern for some complimentary beer and brat-burgers. It was a cold tour, but the pay was good!

(Well, kids, it looks like the Rhythm Chicken has left it up to me, Francis Funyuns, to close his debut installment of the Dinghole Reports. Remember to boycott Cadbury, reject Gary Coleman, fuck the Sheppard Express, fuck Big Bird, and keep them dingholes a stretchin'! If you would like to receive free issues of "Follow that Bird", the 1st pseudo-official Rhythm Chicken newsletter, or just wanna say "hey, what the fuck ARE you?", just drop an electronic insult by [rhythmchicken@hotmail.com](mailto:rhythmchicken@hotmail.com). Submit your postal address to the mailing list. Join the hundred! Till next time (yes, nest time), this is Francis Funyuns saying CAR-RITS TO YOU! -F.F.)

[Did this make sense to ANYONE? What the hell am I supposed to do with THIS?!!! Dr. S.]

-Rhythm Chicken

(Come on, Chicken! You're wasting Todd's valuable text space here! Next report! - F.F.)

Funyuns, I'll deal with you later.....you AND Gary Coleman!

out on the frozen bay, drunken Wisconsinites compete at ice volleyball, ice bowling, the bike toss, the ol' "icicle up the dinghole" contest, and other various twisted events, between visits to the bigtop where beer and bratwurst are dis-



Rhythm Chicken





# The Twisted Balloon

*My cranky, aging punk side brought up that while some co-workers would not have dared to enter "the pit," this bouncing crowd was to me a friendly party, not holding a candle to the late '80s frenzies of New York hardcore and thrash, or the jock core dork kick dancing I have to deal with back home.*

My day job since April has been working for "The Truth" (the anti-big-tobacco campaign). It's a good job that gives me all the advantages of selling out without selling out, a decent paying job with excellent benefits, and encouragement to give a few companies hell. I was sent with a bunch of my coworkers to Seattle for a youth summit that Truth was putting on. I specifically was going to teach kids how to put together a zine. Here is a brief run-down of the trip...

I wrote this on a lined pad. I was a bit excited. At the last minute I realized that a lined pad would provide much needed order to my messy handwriting and I would be able to get more writing on each page.

It is maybe 3:30. I am an hour and a half early to check in for my flight to Seattle. I expect to have lots of down time to write on this trip. Of five summer trips, this looks like it will be the least exciting.

Logan airport, Boston. Looks and feels and acts like an airport. Everyone seems to have a hand-rolled suitcase and a cell phone, and I wish I could say I wasn't one of them.

The guy in front of me at the ATM (I had the typical last minute "maybe I should have more cash on me" thought) was wearing a blue polo, a white baseball cap, and Gap khakis. He had a Niketown bag in one hand and a Starbucks frap-pachino in the other. As if to shout to the world "I am lame and proud! I support the whitebread generic lifestyle of the American Empire!" Does he really know that it is his fault that the world is in such a bad state?

It just hit me that most people have these hand wheeled-suitcase things as their carry-on luggage. My wheeled thing was my luggage luggage. My carry on is my courier bag. This pleases me as it makes me feel somehow



more rugged of a traveler.

I have decided almost immediately that Virgin Airlines kicks American Airlines' ass. American

has one movie you pay to hear, crappy food, and pay for drinks. Virgin had six channels of movies and shows ("Simpsons," "King of the Hill," weird indie stuff) on personal TVs, and liquored us up. Flying over the Great Lakes. I don't care what anyone says, these things are oceans.

With Seattle being considerably north of Boston, and it being close to the summer solstice, the sun was setting at the unthinkable hour of 10:30 pm. Which was 1:30 am to me. Bizarre.

I woke up Friday Morning around 8ish? 9ish? I don't know. Don't remember. The morning shower, which I usually don't take except for hot summer days, being a before-bed man myself, was easily the best shower I have ever taken in terms of water pressure and quality. Afterwards, I had seen that I had a message, from Bill Hollister, another copywriter on the Truth campaign. He had secured better accommodations and suggested that I do as well.

The thing was that there were three hotels our group was staying at. Most were downtown at the "W," some were at the Edmond Meany across from the University of Washington, and a few of us were at the Aljoya Conference Center: a nice place to stay if you were on a quiet retreat and wanted to meditate or write a book, but not where you want to stay if you were going to attempt to enjoy Seattle for the city. It also was some ways away from the actual summit, which is what the whole point of being in Seattle was, so we felt somewhat banished to the wasteland.

With a quick phone call, I wound up getting a room at the Edwin Meany Hotel, a really nice art nouveau building in the cool used record store part of town, across from the university, where the summit was. I would endorse the place if it wasn't for the fact that it was a good 80 bucks more

per night than any place I would normally stay (and even with that, my 40 motel experiences were only if I couldn't find a couch or floor to crash on.).

Having already talked with Bill about how strange it was that a 40 dollar Best Western would have a pool and breakfast bar and a 120 dollar fancy place doesn't, Bill informed me that there was indeed a breakfast buffet.

I was in the hall, I had eaten two slices of cantaloupe, had cream cheesed my bagel and was getting my coffee together when a well dressed man, probably my age, came out of the adjoining conference room. (Seems the place was mostly a set of meeting rooms with a dozen overnight rooms for convenience). We exchanged pleasantries, and he asked if I was going to help out with his meeting.

"Huh?" I asked

"Well, you are eating the food for our seminar, so maybe you'd want to contribute."

I could have argued that serving food in front of the room I slept in means I get to eat it, but he wasn't trying to, and I doubt he would want it if he did try to take away my light sweet coffee and half eaten bagel, but still, I felt stupid (and proud - score one for the working man!).

Bill and I split a cab to our hotels. The Aljoya had a nice locale, but the Meany had a skyscraper view and in-room Nintendo! I unpacked for the second time in twelve hours and went down to the summit. It took maybe ten minutes room to room.

I was later to find out that my hotel room was only booked for two days. I called the Aljoya to see if I could have my room back in two days, but it turned out that they only had me booked for two days when I was there. Between our thing and the Experience Music Project opening and a few other things, all the hotels were booked. I wound up being able to stay in



my room no problem at all, but I had two days of having no idea where I was going to stay.

As the zine track teacher, being there for a specific point, I didn't apparently need to be at the orientation meeting thing for the kids, but I was glad I could help out where I could and it helped get me in the correct mind set. For the most part, I helped do stuff like insert t-shirts and stickers into the courier bags we were giving out to the kids. Wow, I never had anything like this when I was a kid. Not only did they get a free weekend, but they also got courier bags, a few t-shirts, bracelets, travel alarm clocks that look like imacs or something out of Star Trek, comics... so much cool stuff.

Lunch was provided; picnic type stuff. Make your own sandwich, salad, stuff like that. Not too much emphasis on catering to the vegetarians, but enough for anyone to get a good meal without eating meat. I thought vegans would be doomed, but heard no complaints. There were a few types of brownies, and at least two of them made the trip worthwhile in and of themselves.

After I was done doing shitwork (which is very tolerable when it is what you are asked to do for a few hours, not what you have to do for a living) I was set free, as there was really nothing for me to do. I went back to the hotel, exchanged stuff for other stuff, and wandered the area. A few decent thrift shops - nothing so great I needed to buy anything, but places I would have shopped a lot had I lived in Seattle. Between two record stores I spent several hundred bucks but got every single thing I had been looking for for months - including Apocalyptica (the all-cello Metallica cover band), Choking Victim, Daisy Chainsaw (which was lost in the divorce), and a bunch of Boston band CDs that are impossible to find locally, but were in dollar bins out there. Having scored everything I had been craving, I vowed to stop CD shopping lest I return to an empty bank account.

I did check out the cool stores for flyers and cool people, seeing what I could do in Seattle besides work stuff. I saw that Bloodhag was playing, which made me happy. I had heard they were great, and one opening band was called Raft of Dead Monkeys, which worked on my "Worth Seeing by Name Alone" rule. The club was called Graceland - a good sign for someone who wears a "Taking Care of Business in a Flash" cap.

So far, I had seen Big Ass Moustache based solely on name, and they were an amazing



Rockabilly-before-the-big-rockabilly-revival band. You Will Know Us By The Trail Of The Dead also lived up to expectation. So Raft of Dead Monkeys were promising.

Most people, or at least the punkish, artsy cool store employees I talked with were friendly and without attitude. Oddly, most had no idea of where anything was since they all were new to the city, usually having been there a year or less. One punk girl saw my Truth Summit wristband and made the connection and asked if she could hold a sign in the ad.

I returned to my hotel, I think

mostly because it was nice to have some sense of a home base, and went back to the summit. We were then shuttled to "the hangar," which was a former airplane hangar (heck, maybe it still is one). This was the entertainment HQ for the event. We had dinner (BBQ) in a tent outside while Truth people gave speeches. We then went in for the multimedia extravaganza and some words from Chuck D. Then came the headliner.

So I am sitting on bleachers watching Blink 182. My options are to sit with a bunch of grownup office workers who think that Blink 182 is too loud or go dance with punk activist kids who think that they are too poppy. Basically it comes down to dancing being more fun than not dancing, and I was able to crowd ride in a group of people without a single cigarette or glass object to damage me. On one level, I felt old, being about ten years older than anyone else, but young that I still would do this. My cranky, aging punk side brought up that while some co-workers would not have dared to enter "the pit," this bouncing crowd was to me a friendly party, not holding a candle to the late '80s frenzies of New York hardcore and thrash, or the jock core dork kick dancing I have to deal with back home.

Later, I found myself being the most sloppily dressed person at the W Bar with many of my cooler coworkers and new boss, Roger (who looks older than me, but not by much, certainly not looking like a boss.). Most of the other patrons were expensively (not tastefully, just wearing major label crap) dressed and acting drunk and stupid and exhibitionistic. They reminded me of high school kids who take limos to concerts or the prom.

Saturday it rained for about ten minutes - just enough for me to bring a raincoat that gave me something bulky to deal with the rest of the hot humid day.

Strangely, despite Seattle's coffee reputation, it is almost impossible to find coffee when you actually need it.

I met Ian from a partner company. He and I would work together the whole weekend to the extent that by the time I left I felt like I had known the guy for years. He made a zine mockup that made me feel redundant, but he kept telling me that he knew nothing and I was the expert. He, Kevin (a similar minded coworker of mine), and some journalism people were handed a group of eighty kids who we were going to put a zine together with. The problem was, these were teenagers that had all been flown to Seattle the day before, put

in rooms filled with 1,000 other kids and given a free Blink 182 show before putting them in dorms together. Many of them were away from home for the first time, and many of them were several time zones away. I doubt if any of them got any sleep at all. So at 10 am or so, there wasn't much hope for a tentative audience, except for a few kids that were obviously the ones who needed the track the least because they were already doing stuff like that.

One girl already had a column in the LA Times. What do I teach someone who has a column in the LA Times?

Basically, we set the kids on various art and writing projects and I mostly helped them when they had questions. I was exhausted myself and wasn't in the most constructive mood, but I think I played it off. Ian was amazing with the kids and helped inspire me. A few kids - 18-year-old punkish artists and writers - identified with me and I with them, but it was weird, since I had to remain professionally distant, even though I have similar friends back home.

Dinner was another huge group event. I had fish. I haven't eaten fish much in my life, but have been eating it more this year since I am having the worst time going vegetarian. I am aware of why I should be, and would like to be, but just can't get that excited about it. Eating fish seems a good compromise. The meal as a whole was more of a social event than yesterday's dinner - people had made friends and there wasn't that clumsy "who to sit with?" awkward feeling.

Some time after dinner, I left to walk to the show. The directions were simple, a few turns near my hotel and get onto Eastlake. The club was at the other end of Eastlake. I gave myself an hour to make it (and I had busses passing if I changed my mind and worst case, I miss part of the opener). Some thought me mad to go for an hour walk, but I know others (my old friend Mike Mullarkey, of "It's Not Hot Enough!" zine and other stuff) would be proud.

I was so happy I walked. I saw things that I don't think even the locals reflect on. It was a beautiful street; mountains on one side, the river on the other. While crossing a bridge, I could see snow-capped mountains on the horizon, lit by the sunset so it looked like the white tops were floating off in the air. I was impressed by Seattle's set up - the roads and buildings seemed more integrated into the landscape than Northeastern cities.

Early into the walk, I passed a good omen of a stat-

ue of a child holding an origami crane or swan. The statue itself was covered with a lei of paper cranes, which looked in good enough condition that they must be fairly recent. I was awed. The sidewalk had pictures of pond life, mostly microscopic organisms, set into each corner. Each bus stop was painted, either by students or professional artists. Halfway through, I passed a view of downtown, including the famous Space Needle landmark. I was a bit tired of walking by the time I got there, not exhausted physically so much as emotionally drained, almost overstimulated by the sights. I got to the club just fine. I was on time clockwise, but early in terms of the show. Like many cities, a nine o'clock on the flyer means show up at 9:30, but I didn't want to take that chance. In some cities, if a flyer says 9:00, the band better be on stage ready to play at 9:00 sharp.

At first I was a bit apprehensive - normally if I am the new guy, I am also performing or at a place like a zine fair where everyone is new - this was the first time in a long time that I was very by myself, and I didn't want to just sit in the corner until the bands played. But, boy oh boy, was I in luck. It wasn't just a show, it was a fundraiser for the "Hi-Score Arcade," an independent video game arcade that, if I have my facts straight, has TV sets with old Coleco, Intellivision and Atari sets instead of arcade style games. They had two TVs and games set up, so I not only could play, but I had great conversation starter. There was also a great food spread - pita and hummous and chips and salsa, the sort of thing most art openings have, but also with homemade Pac-Man cookies!

The first band was Vandemonium, an all girl sorta punk sorta just plain rock band. They actually reminded me a bit of Broadzilla from Detroit, but I doubt too many people in the world know enough about both bands to compare. A very short band I must say. It was Courtney, the singer's, birthday. She apparently gets a lot of crap about being a singer named Courtney from Seattle, what considering that other Seattle Courtney singing lady. Her and I talked enough by the end of the night that I would feel comfortable calling her a friend.

Between bands and hosting the evening were Jackie Hell and Ursula Android, a pair of over the top drag queens (Which is to say that they were over the top, even for drag queens). Ursula was at least 90 feet tall in heels. I have never really gotten the concept of



drag queens lip synching as entertainment, but one can understand my enjoyment of their performance of "If I close my eyes forever" by Lita Ford and Ozzy.

Raft of Dead Monkeys were the hard rocking noisy sort of band I expected them to be, but the real treat for the night was Bloodhag.

The deal with Bloodhag is that they are "educore": they write songs about books- specifically science fiction books. Their set list is a list of sci-fi authors. They hand out Seattle Public Library applications and throw out paperbacks from the stage. Even if they sucked, I would consider this worth seeing. But they don't suck. Very talented loud noisy, skirting

the edge of death metal. I know very few people talk of the band GWAR in terms of music, but I could hear similarities between the two, especially in the vocals. I don't know if Bloodhag will ever be a huge touring act, but I can hope, I want to see this act again. If you live anywhere near Seattle, see these guys, even if you don't like them, you'll have a story worth telling.

I briefly chatted with Bloodhag and Vandemonium members before leaving- nice people all. I think I won points by being from Boston, and thus having traveled the farthest to come to the club (a wary Bloodhag member had to confirm first hand that I didn't travel JUST to attend the show.)

The walk home was actually about a half-hour. I was walking fast and deliberate, this time just trying to get back instead of exploring with wonder. I slept well.

I woke up early again and resumed zine coaching. We had accumulated a huge pile of writing and material, much of it impressive in skill, and it became the job of a few of us adults to sort through it and compile it into an actual zine. We started on Sunday afternoon and needed 1000 finished collated folded stapled zines by 8am Monday.

Now, anyone who has ever done a zine knows how hard it is to get a zine done in a month, so imagine what we had to do in a period of HOURS. Granted, we had 4 people working together (and impressively, we were working TOGETHER) but we also had to check with various administrative personnel for other reasons.

This brings up something that I am not used to in my world. Cell Phones. Having traveled extensively, and having almost died in a car crash in New Jersey, I saw the logic of getting a cell phone for travel emergencies. For two months I had a cell phone on me when I traveled, using it only a few scant times to clear up directions. Suddenly I am in a situation where I am carrying my phone with me all weekend, surrounded by others in the same boat. Every 15 minutes or so, a phone would ring and we each would scramble in our pockets and bags until someone held the phone that actually had a call.

The advantage of a cell phone is than people can reach you anywhere, anytime. The problem with having a cell phone is than people can reach you anywhere, anytime. I find myself having parts of the day like this. Ring ring ring "Hello" "Hey Rich, this is M-----(best not to speak ill of coworkers too much) is the zine ready?" "No, we have a while to go, I will call you when it

is." 15 minutes later...

Ring ring ring "Hello" "Hey Rich, this is M---- is the zine ready?" "Did I call you? Well, then, it can't be ready yet, can it?"

Of course, people that keep calling you to see how you are doing never understand that it takes time to stop what you are doing in order to get the phone every 15 minutes. Another lesson I learned is that someone who is a graphic designer for a living should not be entrusted to put together a zine by kids with a day turnaround deadline. The end product was beautiful, but I rather would have had it look a bit rougher and gotten more sleep. At around 6, I took a quick break to call the club that Screaming Trees was playing at. On an unrelated note, I was going to Interview Krist Novoselic for Flipside magazine. He was hosting the show, which was part of the big Experience Music Project events. I had called him on Friday and set up the interview. I was going to be on the guest list and meet one of the most important people in rock music today. Digress paragraph- I always liked Nirvana. I never disliked Nirvana. Nirvana never was my favorite band, but I am happy they existed. Even if you hate them, you have to admit that they were important. Specifically, I had always been interested in Krist, both for things I know he has done and even more so because of rumors I had heard about him. Besides, he's famous, and famous must mean cool, right? When I talked to Krist on the phone, he was friendly and funny. Unfortunately, we miscommunicated the time of the show. I had asked about his plans for the evening, but it seems the show was at 2pm, and completely over by then. DAMN! I missed out entirely, but my fellows were happy I could stay and help. Ian, Carlea, and I spent some time driving from Kinko's to Kinko's (the smaller places were too small and closed by the time we would be done) to negotiate who could handle what. I used my insider know-how to figure out what obstacles were minor. "You can't do 1000 copies overnight? Why not? Suppose the cover was the same color paper? Oh, Okay then." "You can't do that many copies? Why not? Are you sure, let me speak to the manager" In many ways I was the idiot customer I had always hated. At least I admitted it. One place I even started with " Sorry, but you will hate me for this." Kevin meanwhile was chained to the computer, laying the whole thing out for its final form.

-Rich Mackin

<[www.richmackin.org](http://www.richmackin.org)>





Sean Carswell

## A Monkey to Ride the Dog



*It made me feel better to see their fan base dwindle a thousandfold in just one week.*

### NAME DROPPING

I saw the Georgia Satellites three times in one month, but give me a chance to explain myself.

First off, it wasn't the Georgia Satellites exactly. It was all the members of the Georgia Satellites except the singer. And I didn't go voluntarily, exactly. I worked in a rock'n'roll bar in Atlanta and my boss hired the Georgia Satellites (minus the singer) to play Sunday nights for a month. I worked Sunday nights. Hence, I saw them three times.

The first time, I kind of liked it. A bunch of people showed up. I was busy as hell. The Georgia Satellite (minus the singer) fans drank heavily and tipped well and it looked like I might finally be able to pay my rent on time one month. I learned all kinds of interesting things from the fans. They would come up to the bar and order a beer and pay me and say, "Did you know that the Georgia Satellites had the number two song

in 1986?" And I did not know that. With the next beer, the fans would tell me that the Georgia Satellites (with the singer, of course) were still huge in Sweden. The fans would order more beers and tell me, "Damn, these guys rock." And that, too, I did not know. Not that they completely sucked. In all honesty, they didn't. Without the singer, there were no hokey dokeys there. They didn't play any Georgia Satellites songs at all. Instead, they covered old Chuck Berry and Link Wray and Eddie Cochran songs, and they are professional musicians, and those are good songs. So it wasn't terrible and I made some money.

The second Sunday, the fanbase was cut in half. I wasn't nearly as busy. For a lot of the set, I sat on one of the coolers and drank beer and watched three fifty-year-old men with big hair play Buddy Holly tunes with a glam rock pose. I also ran out of Budweiser halfway through the night and had to go into

the storage room to get another case. That's when I got to see the shrapnel of the backstage big time rock'n'roll lifestyle at close range.

When the Georgia Satellites (minus the singer) worked out the agreement with my boss, they asked for a personal dressing room. The bar I worked in was more of an old warehouse converted into a punk club converted into a semi-legitimate restaurant/rock'n'roll bar, so we didn't have a dressing room. What we did have was a run-down storefront adjacent to the warehouse that we also rented so that we had a place for an office and a storage closet and an extra room for one of our cooks to sleep in. A lot of times, we'd rent the storefront out to ravers (which pissed off the cook to no end), but on Sunday nights that month, it was the Georgia Satellites' dressing room. I went back to the storage room on the second Sunday to pick up another case of beer and walked smack into the two girlfriends and one wife of the three Georgia Satellites chopping out huge rails of cocaine on the one table in that part of the restaurant. I'd like to say that the women were bleached blond glam metal floozies, but they weren't. They were actually very nice to me, and they looked more like women who drove SUVs to soccer games in Marietta than like groupies. And the recreational drug use didn't bother me. Hell, I was a bartender. Alcohol is a drug. I made my living off of recreational drug use. In fact nothing about the scene bothered me that night. I just grabbed a case of Budweiser and headed back out to the half-full bar.

The third Sunday of the month, the Georgia Satellites played a Monsters of Rock festival in Stockholm. We had a bunch of suburban punk bands play an afternoon show. I charged a buck a glass for water and considered the buck my tip. The singer of one of the punk bands called me a greedy bastard. He bitched about me to his friends as he drove to his upper middle class home in the car his mom bought for him. I worked an eight hour shift for twenty dollars.

The last Sunday, about fifteen

people showed up to see the Georgia Satellites (minus the singer). Only the three guys on stage and their two girlfriends and wife drank heavily. One girlfriend asked me for a Jack and coke. We didn't have a liquor license, but being the good guy I am, I ran down to the liquor store, bought a bottle of Jack, and started serving her a string of doubles. The set droned on. The crowd, small as it was, dwindled. I poured myself a Molson draft (a real Molson draft, not the Meister Brau I usually sold as Molson), sat on the beer cooler, and thought real hard about my life. I'd made rent that month, but only because I worked every single shift that we were open that month. My boss hadn't paid me in three weeks. I thought about how bad that sucked and how bad February sucked because you had to pay the same amount of rent as any other month but you only had twenty-eight days to earn it in. I thought about how bad the Georgia Satellites (minus the singer) sounded when they moved into drunken Beatles covers. A guy came up and ordered a Bud. As I opened it, he said to me, "This is lame. Last week, these guys played in front of fifteen thousand people."

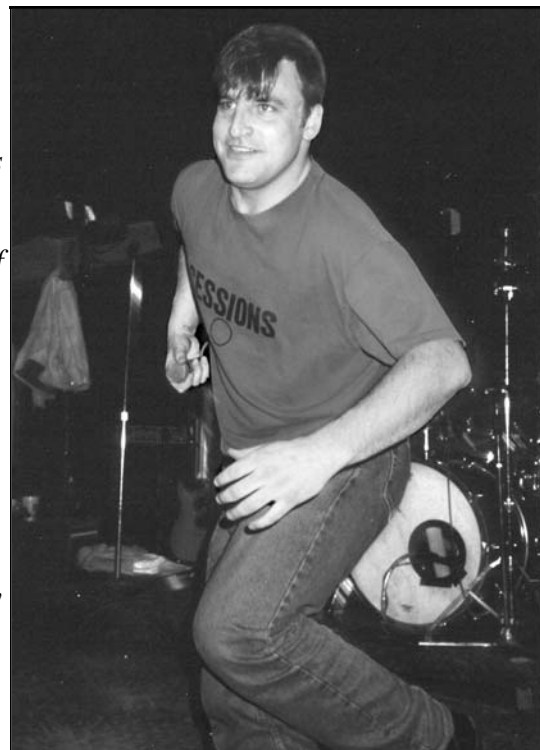
That cheered me up. It made me feel better to see their fan base dwindle a thousandfold in just one week. I quit thinking about things that sucked and remembered the Sunday one month earlier when Jon Cougar Concentration Camp and the Blanks 77 had the stage, about how we all tied a healthy buzz on before the show, about how Suzy Blank finally had to drag her bands' drunken asses out of there so they could make the next show in Memphis. I thought about hanging out with the JCCC guys after the show, eventually closing the Little Five Pub. I drank more Molson. I got to feeling so good I almost didn't notice the scab Georgia Satellite singer making fun of my Dead End Kids work-shirt. Almost. I did snap out of it in time to hear him tell the two drinkers his sorry ass band drew to tip me well so that I could quit my day job at Jiffy Lube. Their one thousandth of an audience laughed



*Shawn Stern of Youth Brigade  
Rock God or Drunk Guy?*



◀ *Pierre and Larry* ▶  
*of Pegboy are two of the coolest sort-of-famous guys I've met. Within an hour, we'd each downed a couple of shots and a couple of beers, and they'd filled me full of hilarious stories about getting naked in a North Carolina brew pub and various things that I promised to keep under my hat. I wouldn't let Larry buy another round of shots because I didn't want him to get too fucked up to play his set. It was one in the afternoon.*



at my expense. I was so stunned that I didn't even think to yell out something like, "Why don't you guys write a song this decade?"

Then, after the set, I handed the drummer the bill for all his bottles of Corona and all his girlfriend's double Jack and cokes that I was nice enough to serve illegally. First, he refused to pay the bill with all the money he'd made off of having the number two song of 1986. He attacked me with a string of obscenities. He even cursed my mother, who he's never even met. When I finally convinced him that paying the bill was better than going to jail, he stiffed me. I thought, fuck this guy, fuck his monsters of rock, fuck his number two song, fuck his soccer mom girlfriend, and fuck his Chuck Berry covers. I suddenly hated everything about him and his dying rock'n'roll lifestyle. I hated that he got paid even if he didn't draw a crowd. I hated that he got paid and I didn't. I hated that he demanded a dressing room. I hated that his girlfriend snorted coke off the same wobbly table that I'd once seen the crack addict who we hired to clean the place sleep on. I hated this one-hit wonder's one hit and the fact that I had to listen to it over a thousand times while I worked construction through the late eighties and early nineties. I hated that his fall from stardom landed in my front yard. Most of all, I hated that I had to serve him all night. I decided that he was about to feel what happens when I don't keep my hands to myself. Then, his girlfriend handed me a twenty dollar tip and called him an asshole. Like I said, she was

actually very nice. I let go of the hate.

The next day, I told my boss that he had to choose between me and the Georgia Satellites. One or the other of us would be there the next Sunday. He fired them. That same morning, actually. I'm sure it had more to do with the fact that no one wanted to pay to see the Georgia Satellites in 1998 (outside of Sweden, anyway) than with my ultimatum, but let's ignore that.

The whole experience made me think about fame. No matter how badly the Georgia Satellites sucked, they were famous. There's no getting around that. There was a time when they packed arenas. They did world tours. They were on television all the time. Every reader of this magazine who's old enough to remember Night Flight saw the Georgia Satellites singing bad classic rock in the bed of a truck. Most remember it. I probably put that terrible song in some poor reader's head. I apologize.

But back to fame. As I said, the whole experience made me think about fame. When those guys first showed up to play, I was somewhat intimidated by them. Up until they started making fun of my Dead End Kids shirt, I felt inferior. When I finally got around to recognizing it and thinking about it, I felt silly. Of course I shouldn't feel inferior. Those guys suck. There's no evidence to suggest they did anything of any significance in their lives. I've done a bunch of nice things. I pay my bar tabs. I tip. I'm even tolerant of old men with big hair wearing tight jeans. I have no reason to

feel like a lesser being because fifteen thousand people will never gather to hear me play bad classic rock. But fame and inferiority go hand in hand, and they manifest themselves in weird ways.

#### AND NOW FOR SOME PUNK ROCK, TOO

Last summer, again low on money, I picked up a part time job teaching English at a local community college. Occasionally (well, okay, all the time) I'd talk about punk rock during class. I figured, what the hell, I had to sit through a generation of education by hippie teachers, so why should my students be free of my pointless musical diatribes? During break time of one class, one of my students came up to talk to me about music. We chatted for a while, and I noticed a Less Than Jake patch on her backpack. "I know those guys," I said.

"You've heard of them?" she asked, and I said, "No. I know them. I interviewed them a few years ago. The woman who used to play sax is a friend of mine."

My student suddenly turned gushing. "I can't believe you know Less Than Jake. What are they like? Are they cool guys?" and so on. Part of me felt like she was being a silly kid, but part of me felt really cool for knowing Jessica from Less Than Jake (see, I'm even namedropping again). Later, when I thought about it, I decided I was cooler for knowing Jessica, but not because she was in Less Than Jake. Because she's such a good person. She's open and friendly and seems to be in a good mood every time I see her. If a little of her coolness rubs off on me, then

I am cooler. Also, she named her beautiful little girl after Emma Goldman, and my coolness level raises at least a couple of notches for knowing someone who named her daughter after Emma Goldman. The fact that she quit a band that went on to record a handful of crappy albums and a radio mix version of "Dopeman" on top of that does nothing to make me cooler, though.

To continue the namedropping here, I met Shawn Stern not too long ago. I'm a huge Youth Brigade fan from "The Sound and Fury" all the way up to the latest split with the Swingin' Utters. Hell, I even listened to "Happy Hour" in the past month (and it's a safe bet that that statement will hold true no matter when you read this). For the month between the time I set up the interview and the time the interview finally occurred, I was stoked that I was going to meet him. When he and I finally sat down to do the interview, I was nervous. I stuttered through the first few questions. I guess something about the dozens of times I watched him in "Another State of Mind" on TV, the thousands of times I heard his voice scream through my stereo, and the intensity of watching him play all those songs a half hour before sitting down with me all conspired to make me a little star struck. Then, the absurdity of it all hit me. Shawn Stern's a guy just like me. Hero worship is bullshit. Enjoy the music but don't deify the musician.

Of course, that thought had occurred to me before. It occurred to me all the time as various musicians with various degrees

Sean Carswell

of fame came through the rock'n'roll bar I worked in. It occurred to me during the tons of interviews I've done with bands, but usually, the sense of fame and inferiority didn't creep up on me during those times. Perhaps just because I'd listened to Youth Brigade for longer than I've listened to most bands or perhaps because I started listening to them when I was pretty young and still susceptible to hero worship, it hit me during that interview. Perhaps because Shawn Stern acted like less of a star than the singer of Less Than Jake had acted when I interviewed them after their first album, I was able to dismiss it and move on. With the Georgia Satellites, it was completely different. Their fame came from no actions of my own. Though I've heard what they call music hundreds of times, I've never voluntarily listened to them. I never bought their album. I had nothing to do with their number two hit. And I couldn't dismiss their fame because they were guys just like me. They're not guys like me. They're nothing like me. They're assholes. Not that I'm not an asshole. I'm just a better breed of asshole.

So this brought me back to thinking about how strange fame is, how we know that it's absurd to feel inferior around someone who's famous, but we do anyway. How this sense of inferiority is so ingrained in us

that we have to consciously get around to abandoning it any time we meet anyone famous. That's when it occurred to me that there is no such thing as fame. It's a completely manufactured concept that exists in society solely for advertising purposes.

Think about fame as a historical concept. Who was a famous Souix? Crazy Horse? Sure he was famous to us, but do you think the Souix were lining up to get his autograph? Were Souix photographers outside his teepee waiting to take his picture and put it in a magazine that was dedicated solely to reporting what fashion designer put together his buffalo skin robe ensemble? And what about other societies? Who was famous in Greek society? Achilles? Sure, but he was a character in a poem. He wasn't a human. Humans don't die when you stab them in the heel. I know a guy whose heel was blown off in Vietnam. He's still alive. And he wasn't even the greatest fighter in the war. So who was famous? Socrates? Hell no. He was just a teacher. The only thing that made Socrates famous was that Plato had a bunch of ideas that were too controversial for his time, so he blamed them all on Socrates, who was dead anyway (it's true, but don't tell your teacher that. You'll get an F). So who was a famous Greek person? I'll tell you who. Sophocles. Sophocles was

the hack who wrote the trilogy about Oedipus (again, don't tell your teacher Sophocles is a hack. You'll get an F). At the time he wrote it, everyone knew the story of Oedipus. It was ancient. He didn't make up a goddamn thing. All he did was write it down and get a bunch of people to act it out during a festival in Athens. Then, suddenly, because everyone knew the story and associated Sophocles's name with it, he was famous. And that's pretty much how fame has gone historically. Shakespeare didn't come up with the story of Romeo and Juliet, he just made it a subtle form of kiddie porn, threw in a bunch of archaic words, and made a name for himself out of it. And even now, the Georgia Satellites recycle old classic rock riffs and next thing you know, you've got the number two song of 1986. A rich guy makes a movie about a ship that sank a hundred years ago and suddenly he's a star. The next generation Annette Funicello bleaches her hair blond, buys new boobs, strips off her mousekateer uniform, and suddenly you have Brittany Spears. And so on. How does any of that have any significance in your life? Does it matter at all? If you closed your eyes to it, would it go away?

So, of course, you know what I think, and I'm not saying anything too groundbreaking here. Fame is

bullshit. Who doesn't know that? But going a little deeper, it is interesting to understand that fame is a form of bullshit that is so deeply ingrained in us that we have to consciously battle it to erase that feeling of inferiority. It's interesting to notice how often we're bombarded with those artificial notions of fame and how often some of it slides right into our unconscious solely because we don't have the time or inclination to battle it consciously. It's interesting to notice that it's getting worse with time. At least Sophocles battled with deeper themes related to the human condition. What deeper theme surfaces in Titanic?

So, in the end, that leaves us with Crazy Horse and Shawn Stern and Jessica who was smart enough to leave Less Than Jake. I can only speak for myself, but I definitely prefer people who can only get as famous as their day jobs allow them to be. I'd much rather abandon the concept of heroes and replace it with people from my community who I admire and who challenge me. And I think it's great that that community exists below the radar of mainstream society and that I get to be a part of it. I know it's not utopia, but it beats the hell out of arena rock with fifteen thousand screaming Swedes.

**-Sean Carswell**







# Squeeze My Horn

*The Red Star should do well - they spent more on the press pack than I did on my car*

Gary Hornberger

Hello everyone and let me say welcome to Razorcake. I'm Gary, and comics are what I do, yeah kinda like the guy on the Simpson's just not as fat and I don't have the voice down yet. What we do here is review independent comics, though every once in while I'll give my turn on what the big guys have done exceptionally well or what they've done so bad we had to dig them a hole and arrange flowers. Another month and another eclectic collection of books for your sampling. Comics have ups and downs, like any other industry, and hopefully I can let you know what's out there both big and small. Often you will disagree with my assessment - that's okay - I don't care what you think. For instance, let's take McFarlane toys. They've outdone themselves on the "Where the Wild Things Are" figures, these figures look like Sendak created them himself; good thing.

Bad things? Well just read the review on DC's Spectre. I am a Tick fan - a big Tick fan - but why do they do so damn many alternative covers of the same book? Why I ask? I will tell you why. To get more money! It's like the way that the record company repackages the same ten Sex Pistols songs and puts a new title on it. It's still the same ten songs. This is a trend that we should all revolt against. So, while you're at the shop not picking up alternative Tick covers, you might look at these titles. To update you on what I know (probably very little), though I did debate the lack of fondness I had for the new Tick live TV show with a clerk at the local comic shop. I mean, they're using the guy from the M&M commercials, and we all know that John Tesh has a bigger jaw. Enough said.

Also out are the new Simpson characters, so everyone that enjoys the ever-loving softies Moe and Nelson, go get 'em. One thing about all comic media that does confuse me is supply and demand. I frequent a comic show in Walnut - now this isn't to complain about the **RAZORCAKE** [34] show itself - hell, any

show that is open two days a week and has no cover to get in is great. My problem is that I can go there and if I want a comic, I can get it for far cheaper than a shop, but a figurine is almost double than if I

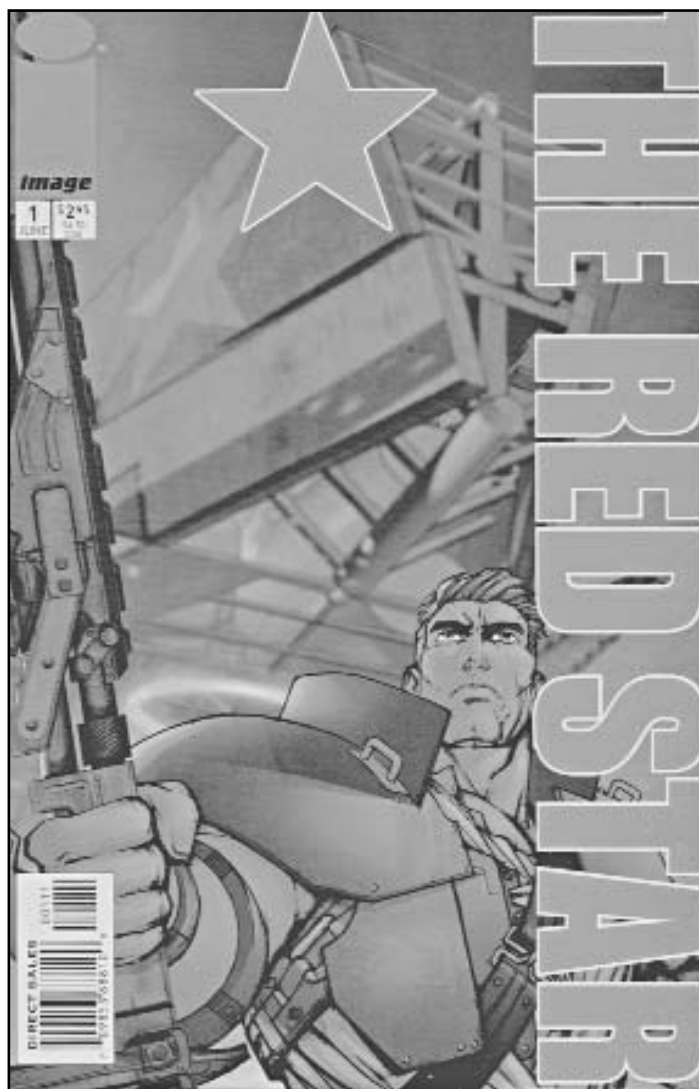
You will most likely find my horn being squeezed by "The Tick" and my favorite dude in spandex, "The Green Lantern", though less on the latter because, well, he's not an indie.

before the reviews just a bit about what has pissed me off lately. On the item of golf, I had tickets to the LA Open this weekend yet was unable to go due to the weather, so if any of the reviews seem harsh that is my bailout. So, once again, welcome to Razorcake's comic reviews and enjoy all the tasty reading.

## FUTURAMA COMICS

#1, Bongo Entertainment, \$2.50 U.S., \$3.50 Can.

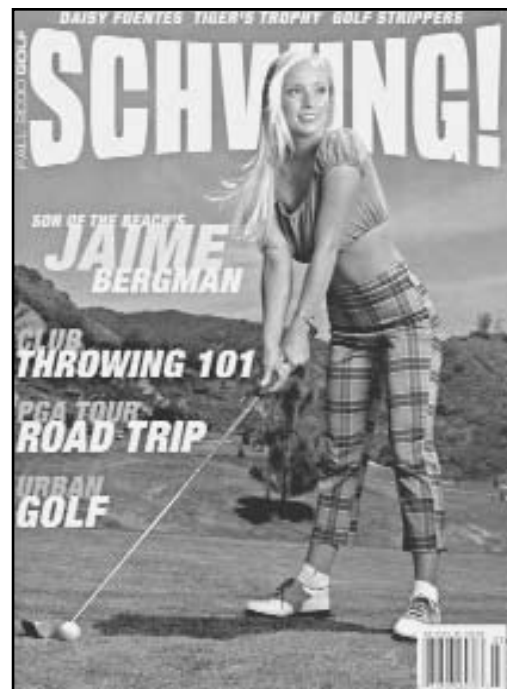
If watching the television show weren't enough, well bongo (just like with the Simpsons) has brought new adventures to pulp. How much money can Matt Groening make? Good question, since Futurama seems to be selling like hula hoops or mood rings, there are even toys out there now. So lets dig into this comic. One nice thing about Bongo comics is that there is no deviation in the characters. They're the same as they are on the glow bowl and as you read, you can pretty much hear the voices of each character. I'm going to assume that most are familiar with the cast and well, hell, that should make the review go a little more lickity split. It seems that while digging in the basement of express delivery, the crew happens on a time capsule from the seventies. I'm going with this due to the references to beta and eight tracks. It seems Fry needs something to prove that his time period was cool, so he finds an ad for sea monkeys (yea, brine shrimp and, no, they don't wear crowns). Through some vintage emporium, Fry manages to acquire some and, well, just like the rest of us, everyone presumes them to be dead. But the professor throws them into a can of radioactive waste. You see where this is going right? That's right. They grow into giant monsters. The solution ends up being the fine print, "If not satisfied, 100% refund" which gets them temporarily out of the jam. Of course, they get stuck with the clean-up bill, but this is easily remedied by the starving Zoidberg.



go to a store. Isn't everyone basically getting there stuff wholesale?

To tell you about what I review, well it's anything that has been sent to my editor or myself directly. If nothing comes my way and I have to go looking, it will usually be something with catchy art or title.

Also I'm a golf nut and I'm seriously looking for any medium that exploits the less stuffy side of the sport. Luckily, I have found a mag that does just that. Look for it in this review. Take these reviews at face value - some days things are just plain funnier than others. But



Gary Hornberger

I must say that the comic has more than my shortened review. Just like Groening's team does with TV, there are pokes and prods at everything from advertising to the philosophical. If you're a collector or a leisure reader, get your mitts on this rag. Well, go on get it. (Bongo Entertainment, 1440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., 3rd Floor, LA, CA 90025)

#### THE PLOT THICKENS

#2, Armchair Comics and Slab-O-Concrete, 1.75 Pounds

I liked the cover - the devil with a martini and goatee. I even liked the threat to potential reviews that Satan would strike me down if I gave it a bad review but my liking it ended there. I am taking the chance of the Infernal One casting his evil spell upon me to tell you not to spend your hard-earned British pound. This comic was a good idea - make fun of peace punk bands and hell. But it wasn't sarcastic enough to be funny. A couple of good lines do not a comic make. A vampire comes to bite a girl in her bedroom and is disturbed by his cell phone - a call from the coffin lid repairman who, by the way, doesn't work nights. Yea, a nice hit on the cell phone culture that we (collective meaning alive, dead, and undead) have become. But that's a little passe. Wasn't cell phone use out of control in the mid 1990's? The artwork looks like XXX(Strip)Burger, for those of you who that means anything to. It's black and white, odd-shaped faces

with lots of detail (i.e. eyebrows and sculptured cheeks). Not my scene. So decide for yourself if a cool cover is worth the "concealed US currency" that you have to send. I would say no and if you don't hear from me it's because Bezelbub has cursed me for this bad review. (Slab-O-Concrete Publications, PO Box 148, Hovem BN3 3DQ, UK; <mail@slab-o-concrete.demon.co.uk>)



#### THE RED STAR

#1, Image Comics, \$2.95 US, \$4.70 Canada

This book is great - it is not often that I look forward to a #2 of a

new title. This actually came out in June 2000 and is a monthly, but I want to bring you in at the beginning. This book should do well - they spent more on the press pack than I did on my car and it has an interesting team behind it. To set you straight, I am not a Star Wars junkie. Sure, during the seventies it was a good movie, but "The Phantom Menace" - ehh. But the creator/writer/illustrator of this book was the guy who came up

with the idea of Darth Maul having a double edged light saber - so he's got some history. The "environmental engineer" - what the hell does that have to do with a comic? - is a guy who does 3D animation. That is significant because he gives this the look of watching a scene taken from a movie not drawn - because it isn't really. It is 3D backgrounds with character drawings in the foreground. Stylistically, it looks like Kingdom Come, which is good. You get sucked in by the drawings and the story is written in a very compelling way. It is a series of flashbacks by Maya as she rides the metro to the cemetery to put flowers on her husband's grave. She talks of the war in which he was killed and, despite the odds, she survived. The story is based in the Soviet Republic (hence the name), but with a magical twist. I get the Russian references, but you don't have to. This could be the story of

any superpower that believes its military is unstoppable. You do have to learn the terminology - a glossary at the back helps. After a few issues, you will know immediately what a skyfurnace is and why a sorceress is tired after a transformation protocol. The language doesn't put you off, like in so many books that try to do the "Clockwork Orange" thing. It really flows well. I don't want to give too much away, but definitely get this book and read it - you'll have some catching up to do but it'll be good for you. (Image Comics, 1071 N. Batavia St. Suite A, Orange, CA, 92867; <www.theredstar.com> or <theredstar\_hq@hotmail.com>)

#### SCHWING!

Fall 2000, \$3.95 US, \$5.50 CAN Golf is a changin' and this magazine proves it. From cover to finish, this one rocks. We all know that golf is filled with tradition and etiquette, so much that it tends to overflow and make it stuffy. This mag throws all that out the window. Just check out some of the article titles off the cover: "Daisy Fuentes," "Golf Strippers," "Club Throwing 101," and "Urban Golf." One article even gives you specific rules to use while playing to ensure victory called "5 ways to beat your buddy by the book," though he or she probably won't be your buddy by the end of the round. The photography is excellent. There are so many pics of scantily clothed women modeling golf equipment, that by this fact alone you want to keep turning the pages. Just like traditional golf magazines, this one will help you find out about cours-

es, new products, and reference other golf media. They even have a section on golf apparel and the vendors that advertise have some pretty cool stuff. Hell, I even saw a pair of golf shoes I'd like to get my feet into. Music is also reviewed inside the pages of this mag. I saw a review of NOFX's "Pump up the Valium" and an ad for ALL and the Vandals. This magazine is a alternative golfer's delight and is a must subscription for any of you club wielders out there, so check it out. ( Schwing Magazine, PO Box 884570, SF, CA 94188-4570)

### THE SPECTRE

#1 - fourth edition (I believe), \$2.50 US, \$4.25 Can.

Alright, let me tell you why I picked a DC title. Yeah, I know it's not an independent, but what with their rearrangement of characters, DC has really pissed people off. This one in particular got me. I knew what I was getting when I pulled this one off the rack. Remembering that I'm a huge Green Lantern fan, especially one of Hal Jordan, the original silver age Green Lantern and the guy they killed off a couple years ago to make room for their "upgraded youth movement" in an attempt to sell a few more issues. Anyway, it seems after killing him off there



was such an outcry that they decided to bring him back in one of their other good selling titles, the Spectre, a being that seeks God's vengeance on evil mortals' souls. The problem is that the original Spectre was using the body of Jim Corrigan and, well, they did a pretty kick ass job in their editions, so why are these guys destroying these titles? Hal Jordan is a Green Lantern so leave him being one. This is like seeing Craig T. Nelson as a police commissioner. He's not. He's "Coach" along with that funny Van Dyke guy. You guys at DC should have another big bang,



timeline-crossing, media event - seven issues made into a hardback - and put the DC universe back the way you had it. Well, that's off my chest.

### THE TICK ( THE PSEUDO EDITION )

#13, New England Comics, \$3.50 US, \$4.95 Can.

After waiting years and years, it seems NEC lost its corporate patience with big Ben Edlund ever coming back to continue his original story. So they decided to let someone else give it a try. Let me tell you where #12 left off. There

were many loose ends. First it looked like we were going to be introduced to Carmelita, Arthur's significant other and owner of the other moth suit. We know this because of the TV cartoon. Also waiting to ambush The Tick are The Terror and his gang who turn out to be more villains from the TV show. All in all, this comic was a big let down. Even though there were side-cramping funny parts, it lacked the originality and was oh so predictable that we know Edlund didn't write it. It seems that New England Comics is going to milk the Tick until even the original 12 comics, which are probably some of the best comedic writings out there, lose their value. I can't really say don't go get this one because when I saw it I had high hopes and it does deliver comedy. It just didn't have that ziplock freshness. I've pretty much given up on the "Tick and Arthur" and "Heros of the City" titles and their dual covers, so I beg of NEC to stop the maddening rape of the beloved Tick title. There, I said it and, well, I feel no shame. Tell you readers what, read this one and tell me what you think, that's all. (<[www.newenglandcomics.com](http://www.newenglandcomics.com))

-Gary Hornberger



# Shaking Ass With



**the**

**SELBY**

**TIGERS**

**\* Arzu: Guitar \* Dave: Drums \* Nathan: Guitar \* Sammy: Bass \***

**\* Interview & photos by Todd Taylor \* Emotional Support by Skinny Dan \***

I'd heard the Selby Tigers' first Hopeless 7" ("Sidewalk" b/w "Gene Pool") and was duly impressed. The band popped off the vinyl with paranoid fun - like a nervous tic that itches just right. They were manic enough to have energy spasm out of them, yet adroit in keeping the ever-important rhythm and making strong, separable songs. In other words, they made me want to shake some ass and sing along, much like a couple of late '70s heroes of mine, The Undertones (think buzzsaws and melody) and X-Ray Spex (think female-fronted power drive getting hit by a fire engine). When I saw their LP, "Charm City," on the racks, I snapped it up

at The Wayward Council, a great collective record store in Gainesville. Juan Bastos said the cover looked a little - shall we say - fruity (or was it arty?). To Juan's credit, we spun it when we got home and both of us have been hooked ever since. It's one of those records that lets out quiet discoveries on repeat listens but was great right when the stylus contacted the groove the first time.

By pure happenstance, when I was in Tucson on official Razorcake business, the Selby Tigers were playing. I got a hold of guitarist Nathan forty-five minutes before the show.

"What is this? A swinger convention?" Razorcake co-conspirator, Skinny Dan,

asked after we got into the club. Scanning, I double took and soaked it in. A lady in calf-high silver platform boots and a beehive hair-do sat on the stool to our right. A guy in a full-body, Smurf-blue jumpsuit - collar flipped up jauntily - with an orange and white checkered scarf around his neck walked by with a razor-thin moustache caterpillaring his upper lip. Across the room, another was another guy, in horn-rimmed glasses, snappy orange shirt and black tie matching a black suit. Together, we composed half an audience that watched an opening band do a Tool impersonation.

After the chonka-chonka waaaah (insert vivisection cat sound) band got off, the

"swingers" turned out to be The Selby Tigers. Without fucking around, they plugged in and jammed out; tightly raw, barely-contained, high-kicking, and fun to watch. Crystalline and dirty pop.

By another pure circumstance, there happened to be a tiki bar nearby that served drinks in fish-bowl sized glasses and had a cage with real parrots. That seemed an appropriate place as any for an interview. The rest is captured on tape, except that beyond any reasonable doubt, the Selby Tigers were some of the nicest people in a band I've never met before.

**Todd:** Isn't your name really Dave?

**Sammy:** Yeah, my name's really Dave Gardner but he's Dave Gatchel and we're both Dave G.'s, so I just became Sammy to make it easier when we meet people.

**Todd:** What bands have you recorded?

**Sammy:** Dillinger Four, The Cows, The Strike, Unsane, The Hidden Chord, Lollipop, Nashville Pussy, Lifter Puller.

**Todd:** What was the craziest band to record?

**Sammy:** A hardcore band that will go nameless who - well, let's just put it this way - they came in, they recorded a single with me and they later recommended me to another band by saying I was really professional... because I didn't do all of their speed. It was pretty sweet. I was tuning the drums and the drummer came up and said, "Hey man, do you mind if we do some drugs?" I was like, "Well, what are you going to do?" And he's like, "You know, just some speed." I was like, "You seem like someone who that's your modus operandi. I'm going to go with the flow here."

**Todd:** What do you do Nathan, besides play guitar?

**Nathan:** I am a letter press printer. I was a printer at a place called Luna Lux for awhile but now I do it for myself. I mostly print posters with old fashioned type; type-set stuff. Kind of like Hatch Show Prints. It's a place in Nashville that did all of the old Sun Studios posters and stuff like that. That's the kind of style of printing I like.

**Todd:** Did you used to work at Amphetamine Reptile?

**Nathan:** I did direct sales for about two or three years. It was fun.

**Todd:** Arzu, how true to detail have been the Wonder Woman outfits you've worn in the past?

**Arzu:** How did you know about that? That was an old band, actually.

**Todd:** Do you have a golden lariat?

**Arzu:** Well, I had a little, crappy lasso, yeah. It was from some sort of craft store. She's my favorite superhero. I used to be really, really into her and then I'm sort of out of it. I collected toys for a long time but now I've stopped. Everyone's always giving me Wonder Woman presents.

**Todd:** Dave, why did you get to keep your name and not Sammy?

**Dave:** I have no clue.

**Todd:** What do you do besides play drums?

**Dave:** I'm a connoisseur of mini golf. I'm a militant left hander.

**Todd:** Do you drill holes in cups - like a dribble glass, near the rim - so you they can only be used lefty?

**Dave:** I should. That's a good idea, dude.

**Todd:** Can you find left-handed scissors easily enough?

**Dave:** Yes and hate them.

**Todd:** Why's that?

**Dave:** 'Cause they suck. Rounded points, rubber handles. Why? Oppression.

**Todd:** And you two are married, correct?

**Arzu and Nathan:** Yes. Three and a half years.

**Nathan:** In Vegas, no less, where we'll be tomorrow.

**Todd:** Have any of you gone to the Museum of Questionable Medical Devices in Minneapolis? (<[www.mtn.org/quack](http://www.mtn.org/quack)>)

**All:** Yes.

**Todd:** Name your favorite questionable medical device.

**Dave:** The head bump counter.

**Todd:** Oh, the phrenology helmet. (Phrenology was a "science" that believed that by examining the shape and unevenness of the skull, one could discover the development of the particular cerebral "organs" responsible for different intellectual aptitudes and character traits. For example, if you had a knot in your skull in a specific position, it would mean that you were more "benevolent," or "angry" or "prone to over-eating," depending where the bump was. -Todd)

**Dave:** Yeah, yeah.

**Todd:** Did you test it on yourself?

**Dave:** No.

**Arzu:** I can't remember the names of all of them. They were all really good. The one that surprised me the most were those ear candles things and they were telling people not to do them because they're really dangerous, actually. (Ear candles are still sold on the net. -Todd)

**Nathan:** My favorite one was this shocking wrist massager that my friend Frank Bevin actually ended up possessing somehow. He was working at a convention and they moved all of the stuff from the museum there to show it off and then left this device behind and he was cleaning up and found it and started playing with it. And he just kind of obsessively... it uses ten D cell batteries. It could be lethal.

**Dave:** It's like a taser.

**Sammy:** I'm getting confused because there's another really weird museum in Minnesota which is the Greatbatch Museum -- the museum of electricity and life, because Medtronic, which is the company which invented the Pacemaker, is from Minneapolis, and the owner of that is completely out of his mind. And when he died, he turned his house into a museum and they have tons of electrical medical devices so I can't remember if it was The Questionable Medical Devices that had all of what were, essentially, vibrators that used to be prescribed to women who had nervous conditions and they were these truly bizarre looking - vaguely like modern vibrators but they're really big and metal. (Historical aside: Greatbatch had earned 140 patents by the time of his death. Every year, the implantable cardiac pacemaker is used in half million people worldwide to

there's a raw sexual energy... did you feel it, dude?





keep their hearts pumping in time.)

**Todd:** Give me a short timeframe. When was the band formed? When was the first demo done? When did you sign to Hopeless?

**Arzu:** Dave Drummer and I started playing in April in '97. Then Nate and I went and got married. Nate was playing in another band. They broke up in October.

**Todd:** [to Nathan] You played in Arm?

**Nathan:** Yes.

**Arzu:** And then he joined our band in October or November and started playing guitar. We had another bass player at that time. We actually played one show as a three-piece. We played with Dark-Faced Player for about a year...

**Sammy:** ...recorded with me.

**Arzu:** Yeah, recorded with Dave, err, Sammy. The first thing we did was a CDEP. March '98. Did a couple tours with Nicole. Parted ways. And Sammy came in in February of '99.

**Nathan:** That month, we recorded a new EP. Sammy was in the band less than a month. I've got to hand it to the guy. Then signed to Hopeless the next February.

**Todd:** I think one problem people are having is classifying you guys - which I really don't really worry about - but I would like to know which bands you wouldn't mind rubbing some chromosomes off of. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you guys are dealing with music from the late '70s, early '80s. So, I'm thinking Zero Boys, Undertones, B-52s, Xray Spex. Instead of, like, The Queers. I'm not harshing on the Queers, I'm harshing on bands that do bad imitations of them.

**Nathan:** Sure.

**Todd:** Could you name some other bands that you would be genetically similar to?

**Arzu:** Just that you mentioned The

Undertones in the same breath as us... I love The Undertones.

**Todd:** They're great.

**Arzu:** We always get Buzzcocks, X.

**Todd:** I don't quite get the X part. Is it because of the male/female voice interchange?

**Arzu:** That and the husband and wife thing. A lot of people are like, "X is so obvious." I don't think that we sound like

**Todd:** You don't have to be mean... OK. I'll answer my own question. Mariah Carey. That's an easy one.

**Arzu:** Real obvious ones - Korn. Those bands. It's not what we're into.

**Sammy:** I even think that bands that do stuff really well, I think, like emo - there are people that who do it great. I want absolutely nothing to do with it. I want none of whatever is touching Braid, Rainer

Maria - so many bands that can be nice people or in the case of Rainer Maria, can be pieces of shit. But I don't want whatever is touching them to be anywhere near me. Nothing's going on with them that I think is relevant to us.

**Todd:** My aside to Braid is that, live, they were Nyquil rock: "I think I'm going to pass out cold. You guys are still fucking playing?"

**Sammy:** And they do it better than anybody else.

**Todd:** In one sentence, name your philosophy for the band. [Long pause. Tape is filled with drunken frat boys and blown-speaker tiki music. Heavy thinking.]

**Arzu:** Just to do it as long as we can and have a lot of fun. Meet a lot of great people. Is that right?

**Todd:** There's no wrong answer to this one.

**Nathan:** To always have fun up on stage and try to include the entire audience and a live experience is very much important to me.

**Sammy:** The space between notes is as important - if not more important - than the notes themselves.

**Todd:** Sammy, name another swinger that wears a neckerchief.

**Sammy:** Mr. Furley of "Three's Company."

**Todd:** And another one. What cartoon character?

**Nathan:** It's a dog, right? Hanna Barbera...

**Todd:** I'm thinking of Fred from "Scooby Doo."



them. I mean, I like them, but I like all that '70s stuff.

**Sammy:** Devo I'd be fine with rubbing some chromosomes off of. Booker T and the MGs.

**Dave:** Alley Cats.

**Sammy:** Dillinger Four.

**Arzu:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Who's musical DNA evidence do you want far away from you?

**Arzu:** It's so hard to mean.

**Sammy:** Aahh, yes. I never thought about that.

**Todd:** And your color scheme sorta matches - the blue jumpsuit with the orange neckerchief.

**Sammy:** Arizona's treating me well. I got some great stuff today. Arizona's where the jumpsuit started for me. The first tour I was on out west, we, of all places, stayed in Sun City [a retirement city], because it was the cheapest off-season place to stay. So we stayed in Sun City for three days because we had some days off and Dave got really sick, so we hit all these thrift stores and I'd been talking about how I really wanted the leisure wear jump suit to play shows in and I found my first and second one there... and some really embarrassing tennis shorts that I wish I'd bought. I couldn't have played in them but they were pretty amazing. They were brown.

**Arzu:** I can picture it still.

**Todd:** What's the last random thought on stage that almost blew your concentration?

**Dave:** If I think I'm doing five things at once, then I blow it every time. If I'm thinking "left foot, right foot, right hand, left hand, voice..." I fall apart.

**Arzu:** It's probably if I'm hungry and I start thinking about food or something. "What am I going to eat... oh shit" - chord change.

**Nathan:** I think the last one I had, when we were in Chicago, and this girl Ruth came up and she was about to take my picture and I turned around and looked right into her camera and just like a deer in the head lights, I fell apart, and stopped playing for thirty seconds. I don't know why that had an effect on me but that's the last time I completely train wrecked.

**Sammy:** I think the random thought, and it wasn't completely random, was when we played in Fayetteville, Arkansas. I looked down at one point and there was this girl who was probably thirteen or fourteen who was grabbing my leg. And it's Arkansas, so you're like, this is kind of crazy. And at one point, she grabbed pretty far up on my thigh and I had this pause in my brain - because I'm a really visual person - I could see myself, oh no. I'm in the South. There's a thirteen-year-old girl who's extremely close to touching... to getting it and I was completely freaked out and Dave looked over and later said, "I wasn't quite sure what happened." I had this sudden chain of the worst possibility of what could come out of this if I don't move now and I just stopped playing.

**Todd:** Has anybody compared you to a band, and you just disagree with the comparison because you just don't see it?

**Dave:** Metallica.

**Arzu:** Someone compared us to Metallica?

**Dave:** Someone said, "You're as sweet as Metallica."... She'd only seen one other band and that was Metallica. She had super fun. She said, "It's not even right, but you guys were as fun as Metallica."

**Nathan:** I think I'd have to back to Sammy

on that one, kinda of what he said when we get compared to certain emo bands.

**Arzu:** They're not comparing us to a particular band, but they just say, "emo-influenced" or "emo-something" and I think it's because we're from the Midwest. That's the only thing I can think of. And we did a bunch of emo shows at first.

**Sammy:** [heavy sarcasm] Those went over really well. Whoo.

**Todd:** To somebody who's never listened to you guys, what are your themes lyrically?

**Nathan:** I think we always try, regardless of the situation of the show, no matter where it is, to have fun with the crowd and fun with the show.

**Dave:** I think there's a raw, sexual energy... did you feel it, dude?

**Todd:** I felt some tension that you weren't getting everything you wanted out of the monitors.

**Arzu:** Those vocals were cranking. It felt kind of weird. It was way too loud.

**Nathan:** It felt like karaoke.

**Sammy:** I think that we're all products of the suburbs who probably won't return there. I think that growing up in the suburbs has effected all of our views on the world.

**Todd:** From what I'm getting today, you guys seem very collaborative. Am I correct in saying that?

**Arzu:** Yep.

**Todd:** What role has fires played in shaping this band?

**Dave:** I'm a fire sign. Everyone except Sammy's a fire sign.

**Todd:** Has anything caught on fire?

**Nathan:** One time I broke a high E string and it popped off from the bridge. It was still connected to my guitar and actually landed perfectly in a light socket. It looked like total fireworks. Like a Kiss concert. It lighted up, exploded, then disappeared. I just kept playing. People were looking at me.

**Todd:** Rad.

**Dave:** A couple weeks ago, I had this dream - it doesn't have to do with the band, though. I never remember dreams but I remembered my apartment burned. We all live in the same building. Mine was the only one that was burnt. So I called my roommate to tell him, I don't know why, and then two weeks later he told me that another apartment in the building had burned and he was too scared to tell me for two weeks. He was like, "Fuck, it just happened, and he called me to tell me watch out for it."

**Todd:** Arzu, what's the number one karaoke song that you have to deal with?

**Arzu:** I've just dealt with parties so far, I haven't done bars yet. When I get home, I'm going to be doing bars and stuff. Well, me and my friend would always argue over who was

going to do "99 Red Balloons" because I've been doing it for six years and all of a sudden she decided that she really liked that song. Usually, now, it'll be a party so nobody wants to do the same one that someone already did.

**Nathan:** You do "99 Red Balloons" better.

**Arzu:** I do it differently.

**Todd:** You're so polite... What's the best insult that's been hurled towards you guys?

**Sammy:** It hasn't necessarily been the best ones, but who it's come from. We appear to have, at least in The Twin Cities, among like the teen and slightly preteen punk rock crowd, who are huge Dillinger Four fans, apparently the girls of that crowd don't like us. It was right after the Hopeless thing came out and I was like, "Fuck, there's a lot of people here. We're doing all right." And I walked out and I heard this thirteen-year-old punk rock girl look at the set list and go, "Fuck, I hate the fucking Selby Tigers." I was like "Oooohhh." It was a serious reality.

**Arzu:** It's kind of sorry for me because there just aren't as many girls at our shows. Usually it's all guys and when I'm sitting at the merch, it's all guys that usually buy stuff. I mean it's fine, it's nice if anybody does, but it makes me a little sad sometimes when there aren't as many girls that are into it. When I grew up, it was all through that riot grl thing and I was all "wooo." And I still really think those bands were important to me, like Bikini Kill. So, I had such a different mentality growing up. "Yes women can play." And when a woman can play, I'm going to be there, even if I'm not necessarily into it or like it, I'm going to be supportive and be "that's cool that they're just doing it." So, it's sorta sad sometimes when girls are just not into it and are kind of snotty about it sometimes, even. I feel like, "Aww, you didn't grow up when I did."



# SMOGTOWN

Interview by Julia • Photos by Todd & Rick Bain

I managed to round up three of the four members of Smogtown after their show at Club Mesa in Costa Mesa, CA. These guys are my favorite band to see and listen to. You should go see them in your town if you get the chance. Buy them lots of beer and give them lots of weed. I crawled into the van as they smoked some pot and told me the story behind their CD, "Führers Of The New Wave."

Ray (vocals)

Guitardo a.k.a. Guido a.k.a. Chris (guitar)

Jo Jo (joint roller)

Tim (drums)

**Ray:** You wanna go from the start?

**Julia:** Yeah.

**Ray:** It all starts with the Führers, right. What the Führers are, are these teenage kids that are in high school, and they decide to start a band. Once their band plays around, you know, the cops, the neighborhood watch, the parents of the kids that have come in contact with the kids in the band, all become suspicious and they don't like the band because it's a bad element in their suburban surf city.

**Guitardo:** Yeah, yeah.

**Ray:** Surf city's just basically "any town" Orange County, "any town"...

**Jo Jo:** Sounds too HB for me.

**Ray:** Even fucking, Western L.A. County, you know, up there when you're on that west coast part of it.

**Guitardo:** All those posers.

**Ray:** All that suburban area that just has too many police, policing kids. That's basically what their job is. Their job is to police kids. There is no real crime in their neighborhoods, like, where we live there's no crime down there. So their job is to...

**Jo Jo:** Look where you guys grew up... that's all the police did was fuck with everyone there.

**Ray:** That's what I'm trying

to say right now. So you have this constant police overbearing, parental overbearing from other kids and yourself and the neighborhood watch to add to the top of that. The neighborhood watch is big. So, what they do is, there's this vigilante group for hire, so to say, called Bodie 601. Bodie 601 is a real fucking thing from the late 1800's, early 1900's in this town Bodie in Northern California. They're like a vigilante group. Someone would do a crime, or didn't do a crime and go to court and say they were innocent. Well, Bodie 601 would decide whether or not you were innocent once you got out of court. They would fucking beat you down and kill you.

**Guitardo:** Yeah, yeah.

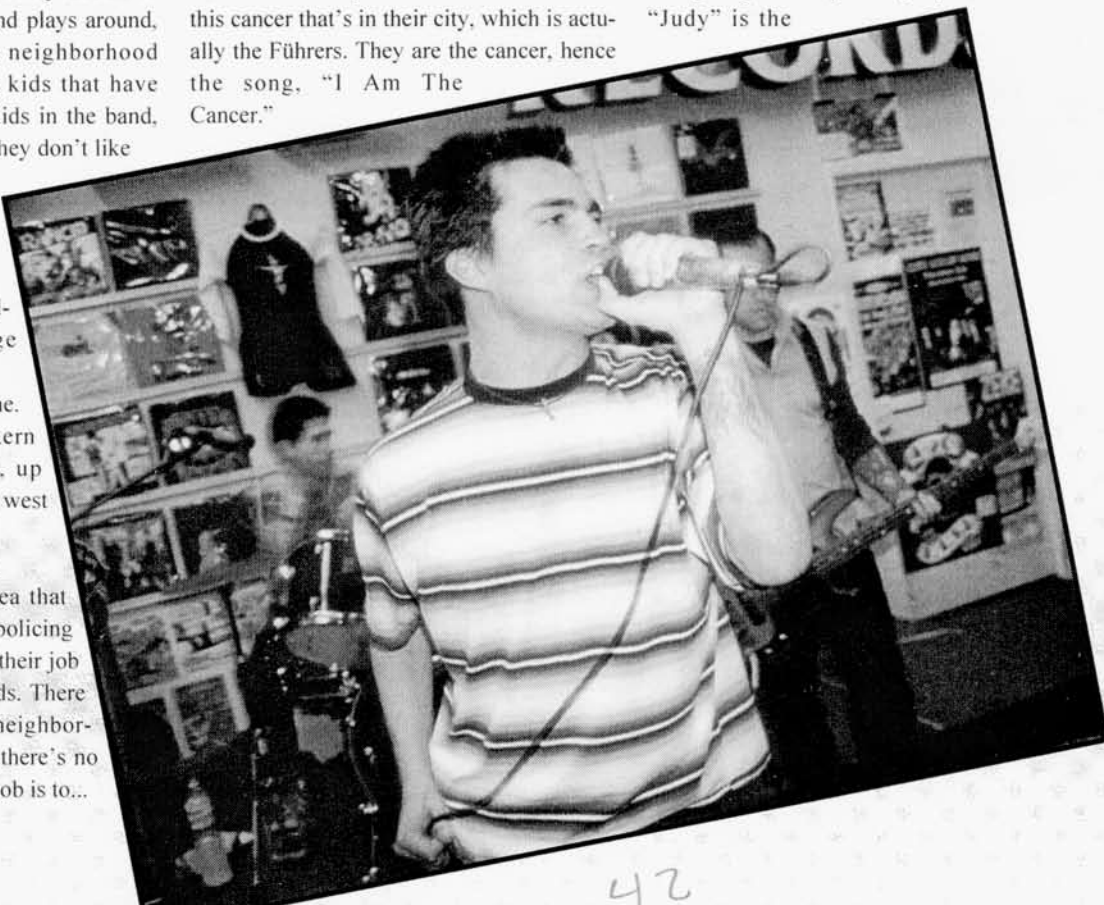
**Ray** [inhaling deeply]: So, anyway Bodie 601 basically represents this vigilante group that's in Surf City that uses radiation to kill this cancer that's in their city, which is actually the Führers. They are the cancer, hence the song, "I Am The Cancer."

**Guitardo:** YEAH!

**Ray:** That's the realization that they are the cancer and they're going to be using radiation on them to kill them like a cancer. That's where the whole radiation thing comes into play in this album. Radiation is a key part in the story, because not only does the radiation slow down the Führers, but it eventually destroys the Führers. The Führers' destruction is also a main part of the story because you see it happen everyday. The kids that reach a certain age, once they're eighteen, nineteen, they get caught by the police and they start to destruct themselves, and get taken down. But in the song, "Ode To Street Violence," which is the Führers' last stand basically, is their "we're just gonna fight 'till we die" attitude. It says "we'll lose, you'll win, but you'll deal with teenage psychos even long after we're gone." You know...

**Guitardo:** Yeah!

**Ray:** The police can bust the kids as long as they want, but as long as there's a fifteen-year-old getting busted, there's a fourteen-year-old that's gonna turn fifteen in a matter of weeks. You have the whole Führers going again. It's an ongoing cycle in suburbia. As long as the police keep fighting it, it's going to keep rising up. "Judy" is the



last stand for the Führers in the story. Judy is this “nice” girl, that comes from a so-called “nice” background, but in reality, she’s upset with her background just like every other fucking suburban teenage girl is when you meet them. They have a lot of fuckin’ issues on whether her dad paid attention to her or not, the way her mom

acid, did the same thing only our clothes are fucking different.

**Jo Jo:** I don’t know, the neighborhood I grew up in... it’s fucked up now. You’re fucking thirteen, you got a fucking gun. Before, when I was young you’d be able to walk the streets without one, now it’s out of control. Kids aren’t the same.

going on for a long time, only now it’s reaching different neighborhoods, because different neighborhoods are being abandoned while other new ones are being built. It’s kinda like snail shells, or what’s that fucking crab shells.... when a crab gets too big for his shell he fucking moves out of it and gets a new one.

**We hung out in parks, drank beer, smoked weed, took acid, did the same thing only our clothes are fucking different.**

treats her, and I think there’s just so much of a non-bad element that they find bad in everything. So there’s a bad element even when you’re living in fucking four bedroom paradise. There’s Judys everywhere in the world. Judy is just a pseudonym for those stuck up chicks that think they’re too great for everyone else, but in secret they’re hanging out with the punkers. Do you know what I mean? In real life they’re really stuck up and opinionated about the fuckin’ whole thing.

**Guitardo:** Yeah.

**Tim:** They’re fucking spoiled suburbanites.

**Ray:** Exactly, they’re spoiled. Their fucking parents don’t pay any attention to them, they’re out running around raising hell, and they don’t fucking pay attention until their daughter winds up floating face down in the Santa Ana River, after overdosing on pills with some dudes in a van.

**Tim:** That’s the bottom line there.

**Jo Jo:** There’s all that going on and all I hear is you screaming up there on stage. Jesus...

**Julia:** Being over the teenage age, how do you view teenagers now?

**Ray:** It’s the same exact thing as when we were growing up only they wear their pants.... not as tight. It’s the same thing and as we all get older, everyone has to say that they hate what the teenagers are doing, you know what I mean? Deep down it is different from what we all did. We didn’t really do the same thing... You know what, we did do the exact same fucking things. We hung out in parks, drank beer, smoked weed, took

**Ray:** That’s true.

**Jo Jo:** Before, you know, we rebelled. Now, they don’t rebel, they just get ruthless.

**Tim:** That shit’s been happening forever.

**Jo Jo:** No. When we were young we took it down to our knuckles.

**Ray:** But in the neighborhoods that were tougher they did. My cousins in Pico Rivera were all getting shanked.

**Jo Jo:** But now they just pull up and say “where you from?” You don’t even say anything and they just shoot.

**Ray:** It’s the same thing only the neighborhoods have deteriorated and it becomes that element. It’s the same element. It’s been

**Guitardo:** Hermit crabs.

**Ray:** And these other ones come in and move into the other shell. And that’s what happens, the other fucking crabs come in and move into the shells that the other ones have left behind. You see it happening all over Orange County.

**Guitardo:** I’ve never had crabs.

**Julia:** What would you do to make things better, or would you?

**Ray:** I wouldn’t make anything better. You can’t. It’s just like in the “Ode To Street Violence” song says...

**Tim:** The fucking teenagers are the only ones that make this world interesting anyway.





**Ray:** Exactly, that's what this whole thing is about. All these people are here [at tonight's show] because that have this issue that they can't get rid of the teenage angst that they build up. So they fucking keep wearing their punk rock clothes, keep getting tattoos, until they're finally thirty-six and they're just fucking teenagers. They still collect little dolls, they still go out buying records, record shopping. They're still all fucking tripped out on what shoes they're going to fucking wear to the show. They're just pent up with all their teenage angst, and it's for the better of the music. Otherwise we'd be sitting there singing about adult shit, like, "My rent's due today and my kid threw up on the rug." You know what I mean? It's what we're after, to put across a whole teenage angst thing. That's what rock'n'roll is about in the first place. I think to lose that, to lose your teenage angst, you're really losing a lot of your rock'n'roll. Like to talk about... getting on to adult subjects that are just too adult, too responsible, too fucking... too caring. That's what I'm trying to say, too caring. When you get too caring in your music, when you're trying to solve some fucking problem, then it becomes too much for me.

...they don't fucking pay attention until their daughter winds up floating face down in the Santa Ana River, after overdosing on pills with some dudes in a van...

**Guitardo:** Beyond fun.

**Ray:** It's beyond fun. It's beyond rock'n'roll. Now it's just a platform we preach on.

**Julia:** Where do you see yourselves at 50?

**Tim:** Dead.

**Ray:** Hopefully still making music.

**Guitardo:** Single.

**Ray:** Yeah Guido, I'll still be making music. That's what it's about for me now. Before, I guess, when I was younger it was about making out with chicks, and trying to act like some kind of star or something, but now it's more than that. Now it's about making the songs. Especially after the last record. I really liked making the songs.

**Julia:** I like the way the songs on the new CD fit together like a story.

**Ray:** Yeah, it's a lot more fun to do it as a story.

**Guitardo:** We hope someone wants to buy the rights to make the movie.

**Ray:** We have the film already almost written out. The movie, "Führers Of The New Wave." That would make an excellent movie.... mutants, beach fights, a lot of drug use, a girl gets killed, thrown in a river...

**Julia:** Play a little pinball?

**Ray:** You play a lot of pinball, there's weed...

**Guitardo:** A little murder out there in the waves.

**Ray:** It's gonna be a very good movie.

**Julia:** What are your immediate future plans.... like the next six months?



**Ray:** We're gonna write another record - well, we're going to tour in April, up the coast and back. Seattle and back, then we're going to write another record.

**Guitardo:** I'm going to buy all new equipment. I promise. I won't have anymore broken down cabinets and fucking burnt out



tubes and broken strings. I'm going to have my stuff in top shape. It's going to look tits up there on stage.

**Julia:** No more falling into the drums?

**Tim:** Yeah, no more of that!

**Ray:** We're very proficient now. Because of my health problems I can't drink a lot.

**Julia:** What health problems?

**Ray:** I throw up after I drink.

**Julia:** The first show I saw you at, you threw up, I think you [pointing at Guitardo] threw up.

**Guitardo:** Yeah.

**Ray:** Oh yeah, and he didn't miss a beat.

**Julia:** I thought "these guys are good!"

**Guitardo:** Sometimes I don't drink enough, I guess. Throwing up on stage always gets the crowd to like you. The people just look at that and think "that was disgusting and he didn't fucking stop playing. He just played and puked."

**Ray:** I like that.

**Julia:** How do you feel about skateboarding?

**Tim:** We like it.

**Guitardo:** The older you get...

**Julia:** The further away the ground is?

**Guitardo:** Yeah and it hurts so bad.

**Ray:** We started our own company called

Smogtown Pool Service.

**Guitardo:** Finally they started building some skateparks around us for free, so you just show up and skateboard. I wish we had that when we were younger.

**Ray:** We didn't.

**Tim:** But the wheels don't leave the ground.

**Ray:** Yeah, the wheels don't leave the ground anymore, or there's a serious injury involved. I wish I could still skateboard, I mean I still can, but...

**Tim:** You're a puss.

**Ray:** I like going surfing now.

**Julia:** What about Porno Beach?

**Ray:** Porno Beach is Guitardo. It's actually any beach where the girls go down in bikinis and wanna act like superstars.

**Guitardo:** I was on mushrooms that day and everyone was like fat and ugly. I was and Ray goes, "Does this lead me to Porno Beach?" I was laughing and he's all, "Come on, let's get out of here." I was all, "Look at that fat lady!" She was all butt-white and fat and her kids resembled her. They had everything down on the beach except for the kitchen sink. Bodyboards, shovels, pails...

**Ray:** Umbrellas, sandy sandwiches...

**Guitardo:** A hibachi, she had it all going on.

**Ray:** Thermoses with different color Kool-Aid in them. Like, "God she just poured blue!" That's how it turned into Porno Beach. We were just like "dude, get us off this fucking beach."


**Julia:** Have you all known each other forever?

**Ray:** Since high school, like fifteen, sixteen. But the second I met Chris, we knew we were going to start a band. He was going to call it the Blue Coolers.

**Guitardo:** Ray said he wanted to be in a band as good as the Ramones. I said "I could be in that band."

**Julia:** Any parting comments?

**Guitardo:** Legalize weed.

**Ray:** What could we say that would be very interesting? 



# THE CAUSEYWAY

"WE'RE THE CHEAP SCIENTOLOGY"



Life's a conundrum. It's a deep, black pit most of the time. Some of us use our own philosophic flashlights to see through this darkness and steer our way through, bumping into some scary shit, pretty much alone. Other people need the light furnished for them; for guidance, for salvation, for attainment of bliss.

Enter Causey. To many - and a growing more - he is a soft-spoken, penetrating beacon. A safe haven. A lighthouse of which to avoid smashing on a craggy shore of a confusing existence.

To others, he's a sham, a man who's been accused of letting the Clorox bleach - which he uses on his uniform to keep it the whitest of white - seep to his brain.

I'm not concerned of where the spleen of the world tackles the ideal of religion. There are no winners in that debate. You

believe or you don't.

I'm concerned with the temple rock'n'roll and in this respect, there's no doubt that The Causey Way's minstrel salute is a mighty, healing force.

Bedecked by lovely ladies - Reign and Summer Causey on keyboards and the statuesque Truth on bass - who whisper only into his ear, and backed by Homo Causey on drums, Causey's services are rambunctious (And fucking funny. I've never seen so many audience members give dollar bills to a band when asked.). The music is the perfect pounce of new wave melody laying a seductive track for the crunch of guitar and Causey's distinctive (some claim hypnotic) high-end wail and swoon.

Believe and it will heal. Don't believe and walk away mighty entertained.

**Todd:** Let's begin at the beginning. Where did the name Causey come from?

**Causey:** The name came from my parents, who named me Causey. I've had that name since I was born. Causey was actually a judge in Putnam County, Florida. That's my Uncle Causey. So I took on his name. But The Causey Way came from, obviously, my name, and when we started The Causey Way, it started out as a way of life. There was no music or band or anything. It was a group of us, about ten at the time, that lived on a little area outside of Gainesville, Florida. We called ourselves The Causey Way. It wasn't solely on my name. We thought, "Hey, it went pretty smooth."

**Todd:** Sean was saying that it sounds like "causeway."

**Causey:** Right, right. A causeway takes you to a better place.

**Todd:** It takes you there rapidly.

**Causey:** Right, right. It's grown to be much more than that, the way it was years back. Now we have about 498 people that are in The Causey Way. ACE - which is the Aural Communication and Entertainment division - that's who you'll see tonight. We're the entertainment program on the actual Causey compound. There's five of us here tonight. That's about it with The Causey Way. My name's Causey.

**Todd:** Who's the person named Scott Stanton?

**Causey:** I used to be Scott Stanton. That was back in my secular days of being the typical punk. I was a skateboarder. I did the typical things. I busted heads. I dropped reds.

**Todd:** You ran with the wild ones.

**Causey:** I did, I did. I slashed tires. I set fires. I did all that stuff, but one day skateboarding, I just busted my head. I was getting too extreme. So I just came to the realization who I really was and what was there for me in The Way. So, that's it.

**Todd:** So asphalt/head/light?

**Causey:** Severe head injury/lights. So, it was a good thing.

**Todd:** How long were you a skater?

**Causey:** I skateboarded most of my life. I can't remember not skateboarding - when I was a skateboarder. And I was a pro skateboarder from around '89-'92 and before I took my headfall, kids were getting crazy and I just didn't like what was going on in the skateboard industry. It was very extreme, to sum it up. It did take me all over the world. I got to see a lot of land and a lot of areas. It kind of helps now because I've been able to find out different areas for international compounds that The Causey Way is looking for.

**Todd:** Has The Causey Way ever been sued by the economic tigress Chanel for the appropriation of her crossed "C"s that you have as your logo?

**Causey:** Well, someone brought that up to us a while back, and we thanked them because we realized Chanel was ripping us

off, so we contacted Coco's lawyers. Unfortunately, she was able to get a much better marketing plan and made a lot more money before we got out with ours. We're not about money. We're the cheap Scientology. So, we had to change our logo, which now has the little fish symbol (little fish fins) on the bottom of the CC. It's all cleared up now. We settled out of court.

**Todd:** Your epiphany came after a severe

## THE TRUTH AND BUTTON



head injury. What were the signs? I don't know many people who start ministries after bonking their noggins.

**Causey:** Well, it started 'cause I was laying in the hospital bed and the woman next to me had a spider bite. She was just screaming to her cousin. I believe it was her husband, actually. It's in the South, so I don't know. But, she's yelling, "There's got to be a better way." She was just really upset. It all hit me there and then I realized - I actually reached out from my bed to

hers and our hands touched and she was better and it amazed me then and I knew I had to get out there and help the people, especially the punk rockers and the skateboarders and all of the people that are basically lost in life and I don't like to say losers, but I mean, they're pretty much derelicts, you know? It's harder to be better than everybody, basically, but we're trying to help.

**Todd:** What do The Causey Way and Sonic Youth have in common?

**Causey:** A woman playing the bass. I would believe that's about it.

**Todd:** Didn't you both get your equipment ripped off?

**Causey:** We did get our equipment ripped off, but no one was as nice as to help us and send out world-wide emails to try to get our equipment back. It's as if we weren't important, as if no one cared. But this indie rock band, everyone seemed to care and everyone knew about it. But I will tell you this, when our equipment got ripped off, I switched to playing Peavey amplifiers and I believe that some of the Sonic Youthers use the Peavey equipment. A lot of churches have Peavey equipment.

**Todd:** Who does Causey think he looks like?

**Causey:** I know where you're going with this one... You can't really see an ass kicking in print, but for the readers, when they come to a Causey Way service, if they bring that one up, they can get an ass kicking in real life.

**Todd:** I asked with the utmost respect.

**Causey:** Right, right. A lot of people bring up the David Koresh thing. I know where you're going with that. I guess I can just simply say that he was a mentor of mine at one point. He helped me out with some guitar playing. He tore an axe up. He could shred.

It's coincidence. Today, we were in the Guitar Center in LA on Sunset and that's where he saw a man in there and asked if he wanted to play drums in the band. Dave was just like a lot of us musicians. He needs a drummer, too. He needs to find musicians. He picked his drummer up at the Guitar Center when he was out in LA trying to make it as a musician, but then he gave that up and things didn't work out so well, so he moved back to Texas and got involved with the church and started his band with that. But, yeah, a lot of people at our services have learned not to bring up David Koresh because Causey gets a little upset.

**Todd:** How does Causey keep his whites so white on tour?

**Causey:** That is a great, great question and also a question we ask ourselves while on tour. "Why white?" It's hard. We've got laundromat cards and certain laundromats around the country sponsor us and welcome us in. So, we've got laundry stops every other night and that's what the ladies are good for. They're good

for a lot of things but they sure know to do the wash. And as you can smell the "Care-a-van," it smells really great and we bring in a lot of homeless people and punks with puppies, et cetera, to come into the Care-a-van and have a good life.

**Todd:** How is The Causey Way like Spinal Tap?

## REIGN



Right now we have about ten drummers. This drummer just started (from the secular band Mooney Suzuki), and I think by the time we get to Seattle, which we're heading up North from here in LA, I'm wondering if he'll be around still.

**Todd:** Is that Summer?

**Causey:** No, Summer is the new organ player, who is just taking the place of The Button while The Button - The Button's in drug rehab right now. The secular world and the rock'n'roll lifestyle kind of got to



the band, because it brings people in, conversion and such, and that's a way to get to the kids with rock'n'roll or whatever. I mean, we are going to build a chain of skateboard parks around the world at some point, probably within the next year, simply called The Causey Way, too.

**Todd:** What was little Causey's favorite toy?

**Causey:** Little Causey was never able to play with toys, unfortunately. But at the age of fifteen, I got a Curious George doll and I think that was my favorite. [Causey reaches his hand inside of shirt, underneath his arm.]

**Todd:** I thought you were going to pull it out.

**Causey:** No, no. I was just... That sounded dirty.

**Todd:** Curious George - from your armpit.

**Causey:** OK. Oh, "it." People refer to "it" as a sexual organ or the sexual intercourse. People say, "Were they doing 'it'?" Yes.

**Todd:** What were some of the discarded titles of albums?

**Causey:** That we were going to maybe have? "CIA - Causey Is Awesome," "Glossolalia."

**Todd:** Tell me what Glossolalia is.

**Causey:** Speaking in tongues. [Homo Causey whispers into Causey's ear.] No Homo Causey, we were never going to use that. Homo Causey, which is one of the things why we're wondering if he might be Causey or The Will of Causey or Homo Causey, he wanted to name an album "Causeyfornication." And we just didn't think that was very Causey and we thought it was quite kind of homosexual, and that kind of leads to other things. Reign Causey kind of has a shaded past with a rock trio - they're not even a rock trio and I don't even think they're rock - a secular band called The Red Hot Chili

**I SLASHED TIRES. I SET FIRES. I DID ALL THAT STUFF, BUT ONE DAY SKATEBOARDING, I JUST BUSTED MY HEAD... I JUST CAME TO THE REALIZATION WHO I REALLY WAS AND WHAT WAS THERE FOR ME IN THE WAY.**

**Causey:** Mmm. Well, and just to clear things up, the only reason I know about Spinal Tap is because I did a lot of research on the secular world, so I know what you're talking about. Actually made The Causey Way members - the ACE members - watch "The Spinal Tap" before we went out in our rock concerts and such. A lot of times we feel very Spinal Tap-ish when, say, we get through a set and feel that our amplifiers aren't working and we realize they were on "standby." Or a cable's not attached. We're not really up there in the electronics. Sometimes we've been known to get lost backstage, walking around.

**Todd:** What about your drummer situation? Drummer number one was Birdstuff of Man or Astroman? and Servotron.

**Causey:** That's evident and that's obvious.

Causey whispers into Causey's ear.] Exactly. We've been know to ask the question, "What is this life for?" And that's about it. That's it. Pull quote.

**Todd:** I've read in print many times that you say that The Causey Way is not a band. I can understand if you were the Backstreet Boys making that claim, but are you not playing instruments?

**Causey:** That goes back to earlier. The Causey Way is a way of life: The Causey Way. It's not a band. It's much bigger than that.

**Todd:** Can you name your band something different, then?

**Causey:** The band is the ACE, which is the entertainment on the compound. When we go out into the secular world to build the CCC - the Causey Conversion Count - we go under the name, The Causey Way,

Peppers.

**Todd:** What's the scariest movie Causey's ever seen?

**Causey:** I think it was "The Gladiator" because one of The Causey Way members went into that movie and he wasn't going - first of all, I read all of the scripts before a Causey member can perform in a movie. Some of the Causey people are in movies and such. I just didn't really agree with the script at all. He went against my word and went into this movie and I have to see that damn movie everywhere I go - the billboards and this and that - and to me, it's just a sign of one of the Causeys leaving me astray.

**Todd:** And we're talking about Joaquim Phoenix, right?

**Causey:** Joaquim Causey, mmm hmm. He was called [phonetically] "Wa King"

Causey.

**Todd:** Which has two meanings. "Walking," as in the right path, and "Wa King," royalty.

**Causey:** I don't think we should talk about him any more.

**Todd:** Is Causey a poppa?

**Causey:** No, but I do like to think of all of my Causey Way congregation members as children of mine and I try to take care of them.

**Todd:** Besides joining the Causey Way, what's the second easiest way of obtaining salvation?

**Causey:** All I can say is that if you don't know, you don't believe.

**Todd:** How's your compound coming along and how long's the water slide going to be?

**Causey:** All I can say, simply, is it's something about the 1920s and women and film. I didn't agree with her because I don't agree with the academics of the world. Basically, because most of the academic colleges don't allow Causey into their schools.

**Todd:** It's like Germany's position on Scientology.

**Causey:** So, I'm kind of uptight with that whole situation, but I am glad to let you know that Dr. St. Causey is in Kalamazoo, Michigan, teaching at the Kalamazoo college. She's actually turned out about fifty percent of the CCC from some of her students. She's back on track and doing really well. She's brought Causey into that Kalamazoo college. She's just done six interviews with different colleges around

pound, the south fifty acres, and all of the belongings go into there. And then we have a whole group - there's about fifty of them - that actually refurbish all the old furniture, clothes, and a lot of the clothes, if they're not too dark, we bleach them and try to clean them up a bit. Whatever we can't use, we give to the Goodwill or The Salvation Army. We're all about people doing better business and we know the Goodwill and The Salvation Army are doing good business now. They're marking up. They're charging people a good amount of money. They're getting successful. The Causey Way has a little bit to do with that; thrift store prices going up. That

## SUMMER



**Causey:** How'd you hear about the water slide? Did you get that on the web? Well, the compound is basically finished at this point. We are building a pool. We were going to build two pools. One was going to be full of water and one was going to be empty for the skateboard kids on the compound, but I don't think we're going to do that anymore. Plus, the fact we're questioning the pool in general because some of the women are going to be wearing bikinis and the men might be getting crazy too, and I can see a potential problem, so I've got to think about that one for a little while. It is awfully hot in Florida, though, and the demons come out and we've got to drown those bastards. The water slide, at the moment, the template's drawn out and it's going to be, probably, five hundred and thirty feet. It's a damn long slide. Pretty much slides around the compound. It's just a bitch to walk up those steps.

**Todd:** The EP, "Testimony," was put out by Fueled By Ramen. Are those people in Less Than Jake?

**Causey:** The drummer has a tie with that label. Those are some good folks. They're from the Gainesville area as well.

**Todd:** Dr. St. Causey got her Ph.D. in what?

**Causey:** English. Film studies. Film studies in English.

**Todd:** Do you know what her dissertation was?

the country and she's brought up Causeyhood and Causey-ness to them and they seemed to want to bring that into their academic schedules. She'll probably be teaching Causey.

**Todd:** Was she in the Robert Palmer video "Addicted to Love"?

**Causey:** No. At that time she was still in middle school. I think her and her brother, they actually got their parents to take them around the country touring with Blondie. She really likes music from that perspective.

**Todd:** The Truth, she sang backup for R.E.M. Is that correct?

**Causey:** She did. And so did Reign Causey. On the "Monster" album.

**Todd:** Do you know of any other work they've done prior to The Causey Way?

**Causey:** They don't really want anyone to know about that past either, because, just like all of us - I told you a little bit about skateboarding - but we just try to forget all of that and just focus on Causey. But we can say a thing or two about the R.E.M. because they've helped out with some tithes and such for The Causey Way. They're all right folks.

**Todd:** When somebody joins The Causey Way and becomes a full-fledged Causey, do you have yard sales of all their earthly belongings?

**Causey:** Actually, there's a big ol' warehouse we have on the left side of the com-

was kind of our plan. You can sell that stuff for a lot more when people find out that it was a Causey Way member's couch or toilet seat cover.

**Todd:** Causey, have you ever been beat up while preaching the gospel?

**Causey:** It hasn't happened lately and it's not going to happen 'cause I've been training. And I'm sure if you've seen our services, you see that I have whipped ass in my time. I just challenge anyone to come up and punch me in the nose.

**Todd:** Kind of like Houdini challenged anyone to punch him in the stomach. (Which actually got him killed.)... Button. What's with Button's helmet?

**Causey:** It goes back to a couple different things we've touched tonight. My head injury. That was the helmet that I should have been wearing. Well, it's a good thing I had that head injury, right, because the whole Causey Way took off. That was my helmet at the time. I wasn't wearing it, so that was good. So Button wears it now. For that reason and for the reason in Chapel Hill, North Carolina at one of our first services, he was gay bashed by some really upset folks. Button has an eggshell-thin skull. He wears the helmet 24 hours, which doesn't make him so popular some times, I guess.

**Todd:** Who's on the top of Causey's shit list right now?

**Causey:** That's more of the department of



# THE CAUSEYWAY

The Truth, Reign Causey, and Summer Causey. They seem to have the angst in the ACE. Causey's all about love. He's good to everyone. Even that man who beat me up that time is not on my shit list. I forgave him. If I got down and thought about it, there would probably be a couple people. You were a little bit ago. You didn't even bring it up but it got me pretty worked up - about David Koresh - and you didn't even have to say anything. But I know how you can get on my good list. It's by filling out the judgement form and becoming a Causey member. Otherwise, there is no shit list. You're either Causey or you're not Causey.

**Todd:** What's your next step in world domination?

**Causey:** Well, "world domination" would scare folks and make it sound like a Hitler type movement. My next step, though, is to get on out there and build a really nice garden. That's my personal goal. As far as The Causey Way and all the people that are counting on me to have a better life, when I get back, I'm in touch with this electrical engineer and we're building a frickin' rocket. Basically, it's



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**YOU CAN'T REALLY SEE AN ASS KICKING IN PRINT, BUT FOR THE READERS, WHEN THEY COME TO A CAUSEY WAY SERVICE, IF THEY BRING UP WHO I LOOK LIKE, THEY CAN GET AN ASS KICKING IN REAL LIFE.**

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going to hold about 2,000 people. The paperwork's going to be out really soon. Whoever wants to go to a better place - this is about 300 pages of paperwork and red tape and stuff - but that's kind of way out there and I haven't really discussed that, which I can't believe I'm going to let your readers know about. I haven't discussed with my chosen six at the moment, but I'm going to get working on that damned rocket.

#### *Discography:*

**"Causey Is Everything"** and **"With Loving and Open Arms"** CDs/LPs on Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141-9092; <alternativetentacles.com>

**"WWCD - What Would Causey Do"** CDEP on Put It On a Cracker Records, PO Box 2944, Gainesville, FL 32602; <putitonacracker@hotmail.com>

**"Testimony"** CDEP on Fueled By Ramen Records, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604; <www.fueledbyramen.com>

...HAVE YOU HEARD?...

# THE GOSSIP

I love The Gossip. They rule. I have no qualms putting that statement right out there. They grooved hardcore for L.A. tonight, and everyone packed into Spaceland tonight took their brand of Southern, swamp, slither-rock. Nathan [guitar,] Kathy [drums,] Beth [vocals,] and Sassu Lassu [dancer, of course,] love what they do. Their excitement and energy for their audience, music and each other is apparent. They're a charming bunch of youngins that'll literally rock your shirts off. I got a chance to talk to the very sleepy and hungry Kathy and Beth after the swarm of adoring fans left for the night.

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY KAT JETSON



**Kat:** In your CD sleeve you mention that you'd like people to send you mix tapes, which I thought was a genius idea. I know your CD has only been out for a couple of weeks, but have you received any yet?

**Beth:** I actually stole that idea from The Bangs.

**Kat:** My friend said she'd make a mix CD, but I told her they probably need...

**Kathy:** No, we need tapes for the van.

**Beth:** We haven't gotten any yet.

**Kat:** You went on tour opening for Sleater-Kinney this past summer. Was that your first tour?

**Beth:** Yeah.

**Kat:** How did you get on that tour?

**Kathy:** Carrie (Brownstein - guitarist for Sleater-Kinney) saw us play at a party and I guess she saw us a couple of other times after that, and (she) just asked us to play.

**Kat:** I have to tell you, before your show I was dancing to "Hott Date." I had it on repeat and got funky for you from home.

**Beth:** [laughs]

**Kat:** I knew I wouldn't be able to dance much with my camera tonight.

**Beth:** Awesome! That's awesome.

**Kat:** What did you learn on tour? I mean, seeing as your first tour was with such an established band, it had to have been a good experience.

**Beth:** I learned about getting along with people in the band. And how hard it can be. Not like you're like "Goddamn it!", it's just nice when you get to be alone. Just being patient. For me, touring with Sleater-Kinney... they're great. They took us because they liked us. I just think that was really awesome. They took a band that they wanted to see, maybe?

**Kathy:** Me, too. Just getting along with people and being patient.

**Kat:** Well, you're in a van with each other every day.

**Beth & Kathy** [said wearily]: Yeah.

**Kat:** What do you do with your down time?

**Beth:** We shop a lot.

**Kathy:** We spent a lot of money.

**Kat:** So they give you the money each night and you're like, "Let's shop!"

**Beth:** Yeah, I came home broke last time. Paid my rent, bought some groceries and that was it. I was broke.

**Kat:** But it must have been so cool to get out there and just play for the kids.

**Beth** [so enthusiastically]: It was amazing!

**Kat:** I mean, I can't believe how you got the audience going when I saw you on the Sleater-Kinney tour. I've never seen anything like that.

**Beth:** It's great when people actually like us, and they feel comfortable enough to dance. It doesn't happen a lot.

**Kat:** And take off their shirts, at that!

**Beth:** I know!

**Kat:** You had chicks taking off their shirts tonight.

**Beth:** Even this fat boy took off his shirt



and it was really amazing, 'cause, like... I dunno, it was a big deal to me because people don't think boys deal with body issues, like it being a problem. But that was a really brave guy. I thought "This is good. This is what I wanna do."

[Toast comes by and offers her place to stay for the night, but they've got a place in Whittier already. They contemplate going to a party, but agree that they are too tired. And then wonder if they should stay at Toast's. But then realize they have to talk to Nathan, but he's off getting some food. With all this confusion and uncertainty, Beth slaps her hands to tops of her thighs and questions whoever will listen, "God! Why are we never all together?" It's very cute.

Your interviewer seems to have lost

their attention. Beth wonders if they got paid. Kathy looks ready to get some shut eye, and rests on Beth's legs. Beth runs her fingers through her friend's hair and says, "Your hair is so thick. I want it on my head." They seem so genuinely close with each other. It's a rare, sweet moment in rock and roll.

More people come up and thank them for a great show. Almost as if they really want them to know that tonight's show was special to them.]

**Kat:** Do you remember the first song you wrote? I mean, it could even be a song you wrote when you were a kid.

**Beth:** Ok, first grade, I wanted to have a band called "Star," and I would write all the songs. I used to write songs all the time. I wanna say the first song I wrote





was when I was six. Together, as a band... "And You Know" was probably the first.

Most of the songs we have, are like... we used to be the Rock and Roll Babies before we were The Gossip. We were the Rock and Roll Babies for like a month. So our songs now are mostly songs from that band taken apart and put back together.

**Kat:** And you all met in Arkansas?

**Kathy:** Yeah.

**Kat:** It's amazing that you found three cool people in Arkansas!

**Beth:** There's a fourth person from Searcy. I have a picture of him on my bag.

**Kat:** I saw the button on your bag.

**Beth:** All four of us were the Searcy Babies. His name's Jerry. It really, seriously amazes me. I think everything happens for a reason. We lived in this shitty town. We were smart kids; we saw through people's bullshit, in this really fucked up, Christian town. The fact that all four of us noticed each other, and started to become friends with each other and get along so well amazes me. It was totally meant to be. I know that even if the band is not together forever, that we will always be friends.

**Kat:** Did you actually play shows in Arkansas? Or not until you moved to Olympia?

**Kathy:** No, we never played together (in Arkansas).

**Kat:** I would think that would be near impossible. To find places to play there. You don't ever hear of bands

coming out of Arkansas. I don't mean that in a band way, it's just...

**Kathy:** No, it's true.

**Beth:** We didn't have any intentions to moving to Olympia. I had no idea that was where I was gonna end up after I graduated. That's what's so great about The Gossip, I think. Is that we didn't plan to play together, we just all ended up moving to Olympia and got together. Nothing was prefabricated. There was no, "We're gonna be in a band, and it's gonna sound like this." Everything just happened, from putting out a record, to touring with Sleater-Kinney, to getting together in Olympia.

**Kat:** Have you ever called into a radio station and dedicated a song to someone?

**Beth:** Like for love?

**Kat:** I think I dedicated "Let's Get Physical" by Olivia Newton John to someone when I was in fourth grade.

**Beth:** [laughs.]

**Kat:** And I didn't even know what it meant.

**Beth:** I don't think I ever did. There's this country radio station in Arkansas and you could call in dedications, but I really didn't have anyone to dedicate anything to. [Dancer Sassy Lassy is there, just hanging out, and I wonder...]

**Kat:** Does Sassy Lassy dance with you all the time?

**Beth:** Well, no. She's not a big Olympia dancer.

**Kat:** That must be a cool job, just getting up there and dancing all night.

**Sassy Lassy:** It's the best. I would dance with any of my friends that asked me.

**Kat:** Are you from Olympia, too?

**Beth** [answering for Sassy]: She was born and raised in Olympia. She's one of the few people FROM Olympia, that LIVES IN Olympia.

**Kat:** There was this band Hazel that had a dancer, too.

**Kathy:** I remember Hazel. They had a dancer?

**Kat:** Yeah. There was this guy, with a beard, and he would just go crazy.

**Beth:** For Hazel? How weird.

**Kathy:** Is this the band with Pete Krebs?

**Kat:** Yeah, and Jody Bleyle. Speaking of dancing. What makes you get up and dance?

**Kathy:** The White Stripes.

**Kat:** They wear tight clothing.

**Beth:** Oh my God, he wears the tightest clothing in the world.

**Kat:** So do you dance to anything?

**Beth:** I dance to EVERYTHING. Bikini Kill really makes me dance. I know this because I was watching this video that we made. Me and some friends were making breakfast and Bikini Kill was playing, and everybody, without even looking up at each other, they were kinda just moving around, and before you know it we're all over the place.

**Kat:** If you were in a convenience store right now, what would you buy?

**Beth:** I would buy one of those sandwiches that come in a bag, and it's really soggy. And a Mountain Dew, because Mountain

Dew is my drink of choice. And some Cheetos.

**Kat:** Right on!

**Kathy:** Oh God. [pause for some think time] Band-Aids.

**Kat:** Would they have cool characters on them, or would they be just plain-ole Band-Aids.

**Kathy:** Plain Band-Aids.

**Beth:** Because she's responsible and I'm the hungry one.

**Kat:** You were talking on stage about inspiration for some of your lyrics, and I was wondering, you have a song with the lyric, "Mama always warned me about girls dressed in black," and I was curious if your mom really did?

**Beth:** No, never. Mama's beautiful. Amazing. I couldn't ask for a better mom.

**Kat:** And you even have MAMA tattooed on your arm. (It's actually a tattoo of an anchor with "MAMA" written in a banner.)

**Beth:** Yeah! She hasn't seen it yet, and we're going home to Arkansas. I'm so excited for her to see it. I took a picture of it to send to her.



# YOUTH BRIGADE



Interview and Photos by Sean and Todd



I found out that you don't interview Shawn Stern of Youth Brigade, you play his straight man. It's been eighteen years since the "Someone Got Their Head Kicked In" comp and the "Another State of Mind" tour. Eighteen years of tours, broken down buses, shows, punks, beers, drunks, shady businessmen, and cheating club owners. Eighteen years watching some friends become famous and some fade into obscurity. All the while, Youth Brigade has been pretty consistent about holding their ground, writing and playing great songs. On top of that, Mark and Shawn Stern have spent eighteen years with BYO, putting out cool records that span, musically, from the early eighties Nard-core days to the upcoming new Leatherface album.

After a few beers and a great live show, Shawn was pumped up to talk about the whole eighteen years of Youth Brigade and BYO. All I had to do was give him a topic and hold the tape recorder.

**Sean:** Where does Youth Brigade end and BYO begin? Are you both the same entity?

**Shawn:** No. Youth Brigade's a band. It's me, Mark, and Adam whereas BYO's a label that's me and Mark. Adam has nothing really to do with it other than the band he plays in happens to be on BYO, and he gets a lot of advantages that way. And he's in Royal Crown Review. Our little affiliate label, Big Daddy, put their record out as well.

**Sean:** It's been eighteen years since "Another State of Mind" came out, and at that time, no one was really putting together record labels on their own. I mean, there were punk rock record labels, but it was you and Dischord who started...

**Shawn:** Yeah, and Epitaph had started around that time but they didn't put much out. Well, they pretty much just put out Bad Religion. And Frontier, although, personally, I think what Lisa Fancher did was good. She got some classic bands. Same thing with Posh Boy. But I personally look at the labels that were part of the scene, the labels started by people in bands like Dischord, ourselves, Epitaph, Alternative Tentacles, Touch and Go, and there's some other smaller ones that didn't survive, but those are the ones that survived, and of course Fat Mike started Fat way later, in the nineties. And there were some other early ones that were mostly started by business people who may have been fans, but they weren't really.

**Sean:** Like Mystic.

**Shawn:** Yeah, Mistake. That's what I call them. And Dangerhouse was a good label, but that was like the early scene, so they were more about - well, Dangerhouse was cool, and it was people in bands, but they were more about putting seven inches out. And then it became Slash. And Slash were more business people. They did the magazine, and they split and started to deal with the majors, and that was the end of that.

**Sean:** When you first started to do BYO,

what were some of your apprehensions? What did you fear as a musician?

**Shawn:** You know, the thing is, we never really thought about what we were doing. Everything came out of necessity. If we needed to play a show, it wasn't a matter of options. If we wanted to do a show, we needed to do it ourselves, because there weren't any other possibilities. Same thing with putting out a record. We didn't think, "Should we try to get on a major? Should we check out some of these other labels," 'cause there really weren't any other small labels. We never really thought of doing anything except doing it ourselves.

**Todd:** Why did you guys release "The Sound and Fury" twice with different remixes and different songs so close to each other, and a different cover on each?

**Shawn:** Yeah, actually, what happened is we decided to start the label, and we knew a lot of bands and were friends with a lot of bands. So between the money that we stole from Godzilla's (an early eighties LA club) and the money that we made from the Youth Movement '82 show, we got the bus and decided to start the label. We decided to do a comp to start it off. It was a good idea to get bands that weren't really popular or were just sort of up and coming and to get them known by doing something with more popular bands or bands that had a bigger name. And then we decided to do the tour. That was the Someone Got His Head Kicked In tour and... 'cause we'd gotten this bus... I don't know, that was Mark's crazy thing. "Check out the schoolbus. Mark bought a schoolbus for fifteen hundred bucks." So we figure, all right, it would be smart to put out an album out before we did a tour. So we ran into the studio and rushed out an album. We recorded it at Mystic. After we had recorded it, we pressed out a thousand copies or eight hundred copies, I think. We went on the road and by the third show, we had a copy of it and we sat down and listened to it and it sounded like shit. Just the quality of the recording sounded bad and we thought the production was really bad. We liked the songs, but when we listened to it, we said, "Fuck, this is lame." We called back to LA where we'd made the stupid deal with Mystic to distribute the first thousand copies. We said, "Stop. Don't press any more of this Youth Brigade album. Don't sell any more." So most of the stuff we sold on the road on that tour, only a couple of hundred copies and the rest of it, you know, we had a bunch of it at our place and some of it was distributed.

So when we got back, we just said, fuck, we've written a bunch of new songs. Let's go in and record the album again. We've taken some time. We know what works and what doesn't. So we re-recorded it. We recorded it with Thom Wilson and we recorded a bunch of new songs, and we liked the new songs better. And people kept bugging us to re-release that thing. And

when we actually pulled it out and went in and Mark remastered it, we found out that it wasn't the recording that was bad, it was just the master. And if you listen to "Out of Print," which is basically that album with some outtakes from over the years, it sounds fine and the songs are good, we like the songs, but they're just different songs that we never bothered to re-record because, by that point, we were just so sick of those songs and we'd written a bunch of new ones. We'd written "Sink with California" and "Men in Blue" which weren't on that first album. We kept the ones we liked, we dumped the ones we were sick of, and that's how it happened.

**Sean:** I was thinking before the show that you had that song about Ronnie and his merry men...

**Shawn:** "Jump Back"

**Sean:** Have you thought about redoing that, modernizing it, making it appropriate for the next president?

**Shawn:** No, I never thought about it. I used to love playing that song live but Mark hates it. He's a big baby so... You know, the thing I loved about that second version of "Sound and Fury" is that it had a sense of humor. There were a lot of fun moments on it that we captured. It was very spontaneous. We would be recording a song and I would say, "I got this idea. Let's just do this." And Mark would, Mark's kind of... Mark's kind of just sometimes a party pooper. But we did it ("Jump Back") at the end of "What Would the Revolution Change" - "I'm an Individual" and all that sort of stuff. That was totally improvised. And I just said, "Follow me. I'm going to try this thing," like a Marines sort of thing, rah, rah, rah. We did it and it came out pretty cool. "Jump Back," I mean, we pretty much wrote that in the studio. I think I had a seed of an idea a long time ago. I don't know. That was eighteen years ago. Jesus Christ. But I kind of remember, there were a few songs where we'd do that, you know, "I've got an idea but it's not really fleshed out," and we didn't really work it out in the studio - I mean in the rehearsal studio - and then we got in the studio, and we start recording, and we just start playing with it, and it comes out great. That's the fun thing about Thom Wilson is that he was really open to that. When we went to record in the beginning, we didn't really have anything worked out. After about two days, he said, "You know what, you guys aren't ready to record this album. I don't think I can work with you on this because it's not ready." We didn't have enough songs. But that record, it was fun, really a learning process, and it worked out well. I think it's one of the best things we ever did.

**Sean:** Looking back over all this time of being independent and putting out your own stuff, what different things has that allowed you to do musically? I know you've had a number of offshoots and smaller bands that you've



each been in and put out different kinds of albums. What kind of freedom...

**Shawn:** Well, actually, Royal Crown Review, in the beginning, we couldn't give that record away. Nobody knew what the fuck it was. People would love them live and buy the records at the shows, but I couldn't get distributors to do anything with it. But then when the swing thing blew up, after my brothers weren't in the band any longer, we sold a shitload of that record. It was crazy. We made a lot of money off that record. It was cool.

All in all, it's pretty amazing that we're able to do what we love to do, which is play music, and we pretty much make a living off of it. It's pretty cool. I'm pretty happy about it.

**Sean:** There were other side bands, weren't there, like That's It?

**Shawn:** Yeah. That's It were doing okay, and then my brothers met up with me when they were on tour with Royal Crown, and they suggested, "Let's do a Youth Brigade reunion thing," and I started running the label again and they were busy doing Royal Crown, so That's It fell by the wayside.

**Todd:** Why did it become "The Brigade" after Youth Brigade, and then back to Youth Brigade after you were less youth-ful?

**Shawn:** What happened was we went to Europe in '84 and Adam decided when he got back, he said, "Look, I'm going to go back to school and finish my degree." So we got another bass player. We sort of debated back and forth, should we change the name? Mark and I both agree that we made a mistake. We thought, "Well, it's not really Youth Brigade any more but if we change the name entirely... If we keep the

Brigade then we'll keep some of our fans," but, uh, it was a dumb idea, we shouldn't have done that.

**Todd:** So it was a compromise?

**Shawn:** Yeah, we were almost a different band with what we were doing. Keeping the Brigade was kind of shitty because we kept playing Youth Brigade songs, too. We should've just changed the name entirely. And then when we got back together, yeah, well, we were Youth Brigade.

**Todd:** I have a question. Did anyone ever tell Agression (an early band on BYO) that their name was spelled wrong?

**Shawn:** Yeah, we knew it, but they were like, "It's us," you know. I don't know what the fuck it was.

**Todd:** Didn't they just have a tribute for Mark Hickey?

**Shawn:** Yeah, we went to Hawaii on the twenty-eighth of September, played a show on the thirtieth with Guttermouth and Swingin' Utters, then stayed for two weeks, surfed, surfed the fucking North Shore which is fucking humbling. The place is gnarly, crazy. Then we came back on a Thursday and played the benefit up north two days later with Dr. Know and Ill Repute and the Grim...

**Todd:** Nardcore.

**Shawn:** Yeah, nardcore. We kind of feel responsible for helping nardcore establish itself by putting out the Agression record and putting them on the comp and then putting their full lengths out, but unfortunately that introduced Doug Moody to punk rock, and he got all those bands to do records, which is a shame. I mean it's good that they got to do records but he fucking ripped them all off, blindly.

**Todd:** He's still ripping them off. He's still ripping off the Crowd.

**Shawn:** The Crowd, NOFX, and the list goes on and on and on, many, many bands.

**Sean:** Well, rather than bad-mouthing him...

**Shawn:** I'll badmouth him all day, the old fuck. I tell people they should go over to his house and kick his ass. You don't even have to kick his ass. Just go over and threaten him and he will give you money. You could take things from his house. What's he gonna do? At least take your master tapes back and say, "You can no longer make this record. And if I ever see you making another one of these records I'm gonna come over and fuck you up, old man." It never ceases to amaze me that no band ever did that.

We went in there. We made this deal. I mean, it's a long story but when we recorded the record, he gave us some credit because we didn't have enough money, then he started telling me... I mean, he did help out giving us information about how to distribute and getting paid by distributors. And he came up with the idea of pretty much what Mordam became which was, take a company that takes a bunch of labels together as an umbrella organization and deals with the distributors and takes a percentage off of the top and has more power that way. Because you're only as good as your next release. So if you want the new hot release that we've got, then you better pay us for all these other releases, and so on and so forth. Which sounded like a good idea, but we were kind of like, well, we want to do our own thing. And he said, "Well, you owe me money, I'll give you credit, you should give me a break, let me do it." So we said all right. We let him do it on a limited basis for the first couple of records. Then we came back from tour,

"Another State of Mind" and we said, "All right, what's up? How many did you sell? Where's the money?" He kept saying, "I don't know." So we said, "Okay. We're done with you. We're not working with you anymore." He was just being a jerk about paying us our money. And the pressings were in his name. All the parts were in his name. We couldn't press our own records. And we were at the Cathay de Grande because Mystic Studios was right down the street about a half a block from the Cathay de Grande. We were there at some show, and the guys from Aggression were there and some of our friends. We were sitting there drunk, talking like, "Yeah!" We marched over there like Frankenstein's mob. I beeped the buzzer. "Hey Doug, it's Shawn from Youth Brigade. Can I come up?" "Yeah, come on up." So we go up the stairs and all these guys come in and we're like, "We're gonna kick your ass. You better call the studio and tell them to give us our parts back. We don't want nothing more to do with you." "Okay. Okay. Okay." He shit his pants. And that was the end of our relationship with him.

Unfortunately, the hardcore bands did not learn from our experiences, despite what we told them.

**Sean:** So what are you guys doing next? What's the next thing after the split with the Swingin' Utters?

**Shawn:** Uh, we've been talking about making an album, so I guess I need to write some songs.

**Sean:** Or just go into the studio with Thom Wilson.

**Shawn:** Thom Wilson gets a lot of money now. He did all the early Offspring stuff. He's a millionaire. I mean, we've worked with him. He mixed our "To Sell the Truth" record. And we love working with Thom but we can't afford the guy anymore. We work with Steve Cravak. Like the split we

did with Steve. We did it in just a few days. It came out really good. We're really happy with it. We figure, if we could make a record like that, we might as well make a full-length. So we've been talking about it. Hopefully next year we'll have one. I've got to write some songs.

**Todd:** What are some bands that are inspirational now and how do they differ from the bands that inspired you in the very beginning? I mean, were you inspired by the Germs, the Eyes, the Controllers, the Skulls?

**Shawn:** No. I wasn't really inspired by them. I used to go see them. The Germs, I mean, they were groundbreaking in what they did, but the weren't a very good band. I don't think they were that amazing, but if you were really fucked up and Darby was really fucked up, they would be amazing live. But that had a lot to do with how fucked up you were. It's kind of like Iggy, but Iggy wrote better songs. But the were groundbreaking. The Eyes, the Controllers, the Skulls, they were okay bands. Personally, I was more... the first punk band I saw was the Dickies, and I was way more inspired by them. They blew me away even though they were more of a commercial band. And I loved F-word. But X was the shit. I used to go see X, and it was amazing, man. They didn't have a record out, but everybody would be singing all their songs. Them, the Screamers, even though the Screamers never put a record out, live they were one of the most amazing bands. The Bags were great. And I had a band, the Exchange. I was in the band, Mark and I were, so we played with most of these bands. And I saw a lot of bands. I saw the Dead Boys. I saw the Clash. I was very impressed by a bunch of English bands: the Clash, the Jam, Sham 69, Stiff Little Fingers, Cockney Rejects, Buzzcocks, Undertones, Magazine...

**Todd:** Cock Sparrer?

**Shawn:** Cock Sparrer I liked. They were sort of that second generation along with Vice Squad and Antipasti. But Cock Sparrer never came over here. Vice Squad and Antipasti did. So we were friends with them. I wouldn't say I was inspired by them, but I liked what they were doing.

**Todd:** So what about nowadays and what's changed between the two?

**Shawn:** Now I'm somebody who has been doing it for a long time, so it's not like I'm some kid who's checking out these bands for the first time. There are lots of good bands out there. They sound like this band. They sound like that band. They play really well. They write okay songs. Like Lagwagon. They're a good band, but they sound like NOFX. Millencolin, all of those Swedish bands sound like Bad Religion. There's tons of bands like that. But what separates the good bands from the great bands is that the good bands sound like so many bands and the great bands take all their influences and may remind me of this, or they remind me of that, but they are them, you know. Like Swingin' Utters, At the Drive In, One Man Army, Dillinger Four, Hot Water Music, Leatherface. You know, if I could have all those bands on my label, I'd be fucking very happy. Well, I got Leatherface. Anti-Flag, Bouncing Souls, their first two records. I think that they're not really... I don't know what it is, if they're trying to be more commercial or... They're still a great band, a great band live, they write okay songs, but I don't know what it is. They're not reaching the way they were in their first two records.

**Todd:** That was a pretty good list.

**Sean:** Yeah, you're listening to the same things we are.

**Shawn:** Pretty much.



**I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE WHOLE IDEA THAT, BEHIND EVERY GREAT MAN, THERE'S A GREAT WOMAN.**

Something like the stories of George Washington coming home from Valley Forge and Martha waiting there for him with a bong and a big fat bowl packed.

Then I thought of Fat Mike (who's kind of like a punk rock George Washington, if you're drunk and living in my brain) because in the last couple of years, he managed to tour with Me First and the Gimme Gimmes, tour with NOFX, and write, sing, and play a bunch of funny songs on two cool NOFX albums. And then there's Fat Wreck Chords, which has recently put out great albums by established bands like the Swingin' Utters and Avail, cool albums by new and unknown bands like Fabulous Disaster, and even rescued a few bands from major label obscurity.

I'm sure I wasn't alone in wondering how one man can do so much. Is there a great woman behind him swinging a riding crop?

Of course there is. It's Erin, his wife and partner in Fat Wreck Chords.



So that led to the next obvious question: has anyone ever interviewed them together? And, surprisingly, no one has... until now.

Todd and I got a chance to sit down with them at the DIY Bowling tournament in Vegas. Here's what they told us about good business, bad business, friends, punk rock, sex toys, and Fat Mike's dad.

**Interview by Sean and Todd  
Pictures by Todd**



**Sean:** In your relationship, who's the superhero and who's the sidekick?

**Mike:** I'd say probably I'm the superhero, but maybe in our sexual relationship, it's probably the other way.

**Todd:** Since you opened it up already, have you ever had sex in the Fat Wreck Chords office?

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Erin:** Yeah. We have.

**Todd:** On an employee's desk or on your own?

**Mike:** It wasn't on a desk, actually. It was in a chair.

**Todd:** Erin, you've been with Fat since its inception, is that correct?

**Erin:** Yeah. When it started, it started as a side project. Mike was touring and the first thing we did was a NOFX seven inch. It was just a very small little thing, and when he went on tour, I'd do all the mail order and handle everything. In the beginning, it wasn't really a business. It was kind of like a hobby.

**Mike:** Right. She was supporting us.

**Erin:** I was. I used to work in public relations.

**Mike:** And I was making my two grand a year in NOFX.

**Erin:** We got engaged and I thought, I'm gonna have to support this guy for the rest of my life, but you know what, it's okay. It's all right. I can handle it. And then look what happened. It turned out okay.

**Todd:** It turned out pretty good.

**Sean:** How broke would Fat Wreck Chords be if you weren't doing the accounting?

**Erin:** I think we'd be a lot broker. I definitely think so. That's where Mike and I - that's one of our big arguing points is about money.

**Mike:** Because I don't care.

**Erin:** He doesn't care.

**Mike:** And she cares.

**Erin:** And I care. It matters to me that we watch everything. And he just takes the path of least resistance. Whatever's easier, he just goes, "Ah, okay." And I try to look at all the numbers and the figures and budget it and go, "Well, we shouldn't really be doing this." Which is actually a good mix.

**Mike:** It is a good mix.

**Todd:** So who signs the bands? Who'll do the creative talent scouting?

**Erin:** Mike.

**Mike:** I sign and I scout. But we also have a meeting once or twice a week. An office meeting, and I'll bring up a band and ask, yes or no. And if everyone's like, "That's lame," then we pretty much don't sign them.

**Erin:** It's definitely happened before when we were interested in bands and we

had the office meeting and they were like, "No." And we didn't do it.

**Todd:** So how's the Dillinger Four coming along?

**Mike:** I don't know. We'd like to have them on our label, but you know they're talking to Epitaph. I like those guys a lot. Cool guys.

**Todd:** Great guys.

**Sean:** Great band. Is there any band you can think of that you really wanted to sign but weren't able to get?

**Mike:** That's a good question.

**Erin:** Yeah, it is a good question.

**Mike:** I don't think so.

**Erin:** Yeah, I can't think of one.

**Mike:** The one band I really wanted to sign was Snuff, and I got them.

**Todd:** How long was the courtship with Snuff, because Snuff was gone for a bit?

**Mike:** Well, we toured Guns and Wankers in England and I knew Duncan had been in Snuff and he told me, "Me and Simon are starting to jam again." He said, "But there's no money." I said, "Hey, if you guys get Snuff back together and use the name Snuff, I'll give you a big old bonus." I gave them fifty grand or something.

**Todd:** Wow.

**Mike:** He'd never made anything in the band before. So he did that and because of that, they got back together. It's been awesome.

**Sean:** Have there been any recordings that have come back from the studio and you've just flat refused to put out?

**Erin:** There have been some that we should have refused.

**Todd:** Such as?

**Erin:** I don't know if we should say that.

**Mike:** Yeah, we can't say that.

**Erin:** There have definitely been records that, once we got it, we weren't happy with it.

**Mike:** We've had a lot of bands remix.

**Todd:** Didn't Propagandhi remix a couple of times, three times?

**Mike:** We had Propagandhi remix. We had Zero Down remix. We had Strung Out remix. There are probably five or six bands.

**Erin:** Well, Propagandhi went into the studio like five times in the last four years to make this record.

**Mike:** Probably five times.

**Erin:** I think they did. They actually went in, then sometimes they would just cancel it.

**Mike:** Finished the record then said, "No, we're going back to redo guitars, to remix."

**Erin:** We gave them money for the record four years ago.

**Mike:** Four years ago, we gave them an advance for this record.

**Sean:** It came out well. It's a good record.

**Erin:** Yeah. It was actually pretty funny because Jord from Propagandhi just called me the other day and he was like, "I'm confused, you guys gave us money on this record four years ago but it never seems to show up on any of our royalty statements. Are you ever gonna charge us back for that?" And I'm like, "It took you four years to make the record. When the record comes out, I'm gonna charge you back." He said, "Wow, that's pretty cool. You just loaned us that money for four years." "We're waiting. The fans are waiting."

**Mike:** We really don't push bands at Fat, at all, to record or do tours. Like I never called up Propagandhi and said, "Hey, how about a new record?" Whenever a band's ready.

**Todd:** What's the largest change in operating Fat over the last five years?

**Mike:** Not too much. We profit-share now.

**Erin:** Yeah, we just started that. As you get more and more bands, I think the biggest thing we changed was a little bit of our sound. Like, in the very beginning, we had a real core Fat Wreck Chords sound and then, probably with what - maybe Sick of It All was the first band - do you think?

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Swingin' Utters, too?

**Erin:** Swingin' Utters were a little bit different, but Sick of It All was really the first real hard core band we signed and that was a real big departure for us.

**Todd:** Did Ryan Greene do Sick of It All, too?

**Mike:** Did he produce? No. He only does like a third of our records. But, profit-sharing is this year. It's the newest thing we've done. Everyone who works there gets a share of our profits.

**Sean:** What's the last thing you spent a heapload of money on that didn't turn out the way you wanted it to?

**Mike:** Dance Hall.

**Erin:** Dance Hall Crashers.

**Todd:** How so? What part did you lose money on?

**Erin:** We gave them too much money.

**Mike:** They asked for a real big advance and we gave it to them. We didn't really want to, but, you know, they're friends of mine and I like their records, so I gave it to them.

**Erin:** Sometimes that's a hard line because, it's really cool, most of the bands on the label, we're really good friends with. Very close personal friends with, which is great. But then sometimes there's kind of a weird balance when business gets in the way and, you know, if we get a record that maybe we're not that happy with or maybe we feel like we've overspent, it does get a little uncomfortable. Because we really love these



**Todd: What's the largest change in operating Fat over the last five years?**

**Mike: Everyone who works there gets a share of our profits.**



**Brian Archer, Fat employee, reaping the benefits**

people, but...

**Mike:** What's really cool about a lot of our bands is that they don't even ask for money up front. They're really reasonable because we give them a real good royalty rate. Half our bands, all the records are recouped, so advances don't really mean anything. It just means getting it a little sooner.

**Todd:** What about the Muffs?

**Mike:** The Muffs, too. The Muffs wasn't too special for us, either.

**Erin:** We don't even have contracts with a lot of our bands. We've never had a contract with Good Riddance or Hi-Standard. The last two Lagwagon records, no contract. A lot of our bands, it's just, we're such good friends that we come to an agreement. Everybody sticks to it, and it doesn't really have to be in writing. It's kind of cool.

**Todd:** Are there any people who were in bands who aren't anymore who are still pestering you for royalties?

**Mike:** You don't have to pester us.

**Todd:** Or do they think you're holding out on them, saying, "That record sold twice as many as you reported." Or something like that.

**Mike:** I don't think so. Like one girl was in No Use For a Name. She played on one record. She still gets a couple thousand bucks every six months.

**Todd:** Wow.

**Mike:** And she hasn't been in the band in like, eight years.

**Erin:** We've always paid our royalties on time and in full. A lot of independent labels out there have a hard time with royalties.

Like we did that hundred and one band

comp and a lot of those bands that were on other labels, they called us up afterwards. And they're like, "That's the first time I've ever gotten a royalty check. You guys actually sent us money."

**Sean:** That's great. Erin, why do you think there aren't more women in punk rock?

**Erin:** I think there aren't more women because I think it's tough. I think there aren't enough women who, well, first of all, play their instruments properly. But I don't need to say that. I mean, it's such a male-dominated industry that it's hard. For instance, last year, you know on the Warped Tour they did a Lady's Lounge. They had this idea that they wanted an all-female stage. And Kevin Lyman? called me up and asked my opinion on that. He said, "We're doing a Lady's Lounge on the Warped Tour, what do you think of that?" And I said, "I think the bands you're talking about, like maybe the Lunachicks, they don't want to be on a female-only stage. They want to compete on their own level, not because they're women, but because they're good."

**Todd:** Right. You don't want to make a ghetto.

**Erin:** Exactly.

**Mike:** I don't even think you can even ask that question because women are not a very big part of any music industry. It's not punk rock. It's any kind of music. There are good women bands here and there, but it's a male-dominated industry.

**Sean:** Why do you think that is?

**Mike:** I don't know. Maybe boys practice guitar more when they're kids.

**Erin:** Well, there is this problem that when

women become more aggressive, people think they're a bitch and a lot of women don't want to be a bitch. So it's harder to be ambitious in that way and get somewhere if you still have this insecurity thing. You want people to like you. You don't want people thinking you're a bitch or an asshole, but if you try to be ambitious and get somewhere, it's a lot harder. It's different.

**Todd:** How much has gentrification become a factor in the last couple of years, living in San Francisco? You have a pretty big warehouse and you're well-located.

**Mike:** Our rent is going to be raised from sixty-five cents to four dollars a square foot.

**Todd:** Are you going to stay in the same place?

**Mike:** Probably not, unless we can make some kind of a deal. But our landlord is trying to rent it out for four bucks a square foot in another year to a year and a half.

**Todd:** Does that scare you?

**Mike:** Sure.

**Erin:** Yeah, because we have to move out of the city and I don't want to.

**Todd:** Would you go to Oakland or would you go somewhere else?

**Mike:** Probably put a warehouse in Oakland.

**Erin:** Yeah. I think we'd have to split up the company. We'd have to have an off-site warehouse and then just have offices, which I don't really want to do. I like us all being together. First of all, I think it would suck for the warehouse people. Part of what's fun about working at our label is, even if you're just doing mail-order or even if you're just warehouse staff, you're there with everyone else. The bands come in a lot. It's more social.

**Mike:** We all play ping-pong after work. We do a lot of stuff together. Go out a lot.

**Erin:** Yeah, we do a lot of stuff. Like this Vegas trip. We're all really close, and I think if we split it up, it'd be lame.

**Mike:** When we have meetings, it's not just the higher ups. Pretty much everyone goes to the meetings.

**Sean:** What's the strangest place a Fat song has ended up?

**Mike:** I can't really think of anything.

**Erin:** "Taxi Cab Confessions"? That's not really weird.

**Mike:** Yeah, we opened up "Taxi Cab

Confessions" on HBO. Oh, this is weirder. The new Judy Garland special has a Gimme Gimmes' song.

**Todd:** What has been the largest offer for money for a song that you didn't give out?

**Mike:** I'm gonna tell you. And it's fucking ridiculous. And we turned it down. It was a hundred and fifty grand for a Gimme Gimmes song for, what was it, Lexus?

**Erin:** It was some car commercial. I don't remember what it was.

**Mike:** Yeah, I think a Lexus car commercial. We voted on it and we voted against it.

**Todd:** Wow.

**Sean:** A lot of Lexus owners Gimme Gimme fans?

**Mike:** No. Other bands may have done it, but I don't want to be involved in that kind of shit. When I think of Lenny Kravitz. I mean, you think of one car you think of Lenny Kravitz.

**Todd:** Right. Are you going my way?

**Mike:** Yeah, I don't want that. And not that we'd never do a commercial, but that sounded totally lame. Movies. Movies are fine. If it's a cool movie, that's totally fine.

**Erin:** Lagwagon had a pretty decent offer for Sprite, and they turned it down.

**Mike:** Lagwagon were offered, I think, two hundred grand for a Sprite commercial.

**Erin:** And they turned it down. It's just so cheesy.

**Todd:** Did you ever write anything nasty on the matrix area - the dead wax area - of a Face to Face record?

**Erin:** [laughs]

**Mike:** I don't know [laughs].

**Todd:** Who drew first blood between you and Dr. Strange?

**Mike:** Oh, did we? That was Face to Face that did that. We had nothing to do with that.

**Erin:** Yeah, that was the band. It wasn't Fat.

**Todd:** What did it say? Do you know? Do



**Todd:** How was it?

**Erin:** It was funny because he did it on Valentine's Day, because he thought there was no possible way that I would ever expect it. Like that's the cheesiest time to propose to somebody.

**Mike:** Like, six months earlier, I'd said, "It's so cheesy."

**Erin:** Right.

**Mike:** I gave her a ring and said, "So, will ya'?"

**Erin:** I was actually quite shocked because neither one of us really... We'd already been living together for three years when we got engaged and I already sort of felt married. I thought we'd be together forever, but I didn't really believe in marriage and I don't think he did so much, either.

**Mike:** I never really believed in marriage. I just thought it was something to do.

**Erin:** And I didn't think we'd feel any different. I felt married before I was married. Then, after we got married, I thought, it's gonna feel the same. It did feel a little bit

## Floyd : Fat activated his dental plan.

**Todd:** Excellent. To a different last name?

**Erin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Mike:** We want to go for Dagger.

**Erin:** I'll be E Dagger and he'll be Mike Dagger.

**Todd:** That's great.

**Sean:** What was the coolest illegal wedding gift you got?

**Mike:** I don't think we got anything illegal.

**Sean:** Really?

**Erin:** I don't think we did get anything illegal. You know, when we got married, we'd never done drugs. Like, we didn't do anything weird.

**Mike:** He could've meant firearms.

**Erin:** I don't know. I thought he meant a bunch a pot or whatever. We've been married eight and a half years, so that was a while ago. It's strange because we didn't go to high school together, and neither one of us did the experimentation phase in high school. We stayed away from it. And even in college, really. And then, later, we're like, might as well try it now.

**Mike:** We just tried ecstasy for the first time last year.

**Erin:** But I hated it. I'll never do it again.

**Mike:** I thought it was great.

**Erin:** I'm too much of a control freak for anything like that. I can't handle that shit.

**Mike:** Let's get off drugs.

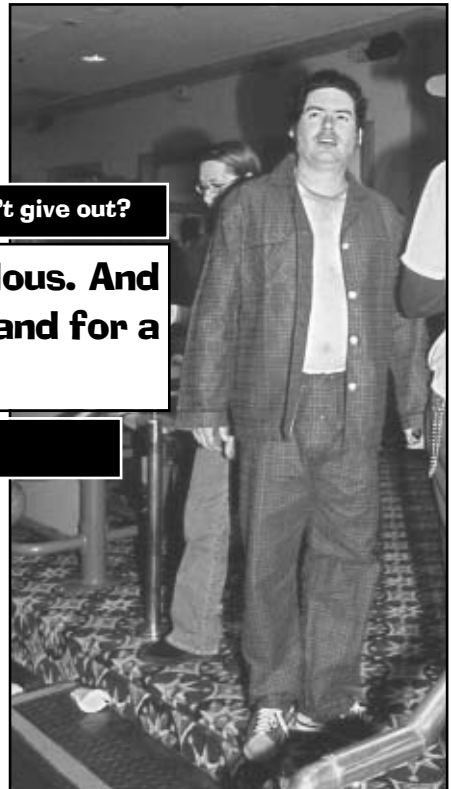
**Todd:** What ever happened to the band Slang? They were going to be the first or second release on Fat Wreck Chords.

**Mike:** Well, they turned into the Other.

**Todd:** Oh really, I didn't know that.

**Mike:** Slang was better, though.

**Todd:** Was Bommer (the drummer, who



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**Erin:** It was some car commercial. I don't remember what it was.

you remember?

**Mike:** No.

**Erin:** You know what? I don't remember.

**Mike:** We do drugs. We don't remember a lot of things.

**Todd:** That's perfect.

**Sean:** When Mike proposed to you, did he take a knee?

**Erin:** Did he take a knee? No. No, but it was very romantic.

different.

**Mike:** It did feel a little different.

**Todd:** Did you take his last name?

**Erin:** You know, I did. I hyphenated, which was stupid. I shouldn't have hyphenated. It's nothing but problems. No one can figure it out. They don't know how to alphabetize it.

**Mike:** We're gonna change our last name, anyway.

was also in RKL) in the Other?

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Todd:** So do you think the people on Honest Don's feel like they're on the Fat farm team?

**Mike:** It's not supposed to be that. It's just supposed to be bands that... Yeah.

**Todd:** What's the separation or at least the intent?

**Mike:** It's just supposed to be bands that we liked but didn't really put on the label.

**Erin:** It's supposed to be a little different sound.

**Mike:** It is. It's way poppier. Different styles of music. I like Fat Wreck Chords to be pretty much just a hardcore punk label, but everything is just watered down.

**Todd:** Is there any separation at the label itself?

**Mike:** No. It used to be.

**Erin:** We brought it back together.

**Todd:** Didn't Marc used to work separately?

**Mike:** He used to, but now everyone gets the same everything.

**Erin:** We have the same staff working for both.

**Todd:** So why the name Pink and Black? [Erin tugs at her hair. It's died pink and black.]

**Erin:** I don't know. I was having a really hard time coming up with a name. And pink's my favorite color but I didn't want it to be too girly. I don't know. There's really not much significance. Actually, Mike thought it up. I couldn't think of a name and Mike goes, "How about Pink and Black Records?" And I was like, "Yeah, I like that."

**Sean:** Have you two ever died your hair the same color at the same time?

**Mike and Erin:** No.

**Todd:** Unintentionally? Come home and go, "Look, honey."

**Erin:** No.

**Mike:** I'm not gonna go pink and she's not gonna go green.

**Erin:** I've had pink for like five years now. I only dabble in the girl colors: pink and purple.

**Todd:** Do you guys ever worry that you're gonna be kind of like, I mean no offense, but kind of like the backwash for the majors? You have the Muffs, Sick of It All... Do you have a feeling that people will say that you're not bringing in new talent; you're just taking established bands?

**Mike:** People won't say that because, for every band we take from the majors, we sign four bands that are new. But yeah, we have picked up some major label bands. We signed Less Than Jake and that's awesome. They're stoked. They're seeing money.

**Erin:** Yeah, and you know, if we don't do that, where are those bands gonna go? Because all those bands, they're great bands and they're getting shit deals on majors. They're getting treated like crap. So it's not fair to them for us to not take them.

**Mike:** It's a perfect situation

for a band that's built up a good fan base but isn't making any money.

**Todd:** Has any band on Fat gone gold?

**Mike:** We don't have any gold records on Fat.

**Erin:** No.

**Sean:** What do you consider a hit song or a hit for Fat?

**Mike:** We don't have hit songs. I always thought, just make a good record.

**Todd:** What is the time frame from when "Punk in Drublic" (on Epitaph) came out and when it went gold?

**Mike:** It came out in '92, never hit the charts anywhere, and it went gold in 2000. Eight years to go gold.

**Todd:** And it still sells pretty well?

**Mike:** It still weekly. Every week it sells more than any other NOFX record. Even our new record.

**Todd:** Really?

**Mike:** It still sells a thousand a week.

**Sean:** When's the new Dickies album gonna come out?

**Mike:** May. It's done.

**Erin:** Yeah, that was a labor of love because we love the Dickies and it's like pulling teeth to get them to finish a record. They're not terribly organized.

**Mike:** They've been drugged for eighteen years. They're a little slow, now.

**Todd:** Yeah, they're great but their noodles are cooked.

**Erin:** It's literally like every day that Marc Tamo has to call them and go, "Okay guys, you got the studio time. Are you guys ready?" But it's done.

**Todd:** Where and how did you guys meet?

**Mike:** In college.

**Erin:** I left a note on his van to ask for a ride to Santa Barbara.

**Mike:** Because I had NOFX spray painted on the side of my van and she knew we were playing Santa Barbara. We were friends for about two years before we... we did it.

**Todd:** Do you have nicknames for one another?

**Erin:** Yeah, but I don't want to say.

**Mike:** Shmoopy.

**Erin:** Not Shmoopy.

**Mike:** No, that's "Seinfeld."

**Sean:** If Mike has a sex change, will you turn lesbian?

**Erin:** Yeah.

**Sean:** That's a good answer. Where does he keep his pornos?

**Erin:** Can I answer that?

**Mike:** Sure.

**Erin:** In a locked chest.

**Todd:** When's the last time that Mike's been terribly embarrassed?

**Mike:** Oh, shit. The most embarrassed I've ever been in my life was a while ago?

**Erin:** How long ago? A few weeks ago?

**Mike:** At my mom's house. No, like eight years ago.

**Erin:** Oh. That was bad. You don't want to tell that, though. Do you want to tell that?

**Mike:** It's not that big of a deal.

**Erin:** If you have to say what it is, shoot.

**Mike:** It's not that big of a deal.

**Erin:** She found a sex toy.

**Mike:** She said, "You need a jacket," and she grabbed one of mine. When she opened it up, she found a riding crop in the pocket.

**Erin:** It was really awful. And she didn't say anything.

**Mike:** She just like, lifted it out, looked at it, put it back in.

**Todd:** Does your mom live in San Francisco?

**Mike:** No. Laguna.

**Todd:** Does she really have Misfits records?

**Mike:** No, but my dad met me at the airport once. He spray painted his hair orange and he had punk clothes on. That was pretty fucking embarrassing.

**Erin:** So awful. Then he calls me up like a month later. It was Mike's birthday and he goes, "I have this great idea what to do for Mike's birthday. Remember when I met you at the airport and I was dressed punk? Well, they have these life-sized cardboard cutouts. I'm gonna get one of those made and he'll put it in his office."

**Mike:** Then she's like, "I don't think that's the best idea."

**Erin:** "I don't think he'd like that."

**Sean:** Damn. I should've asked you about your parents right from the beginning.

**Todd:** Erin, who was your teen idol?

**Erin:** My teen idol. I don't think I had a teen idol, but my favorite band was 7 Seconds. I don't know if I'd say that Kevin Seconds was my idol, but I was a big fan.

**Todd:** Mike?

**Mike:** Darby Crash.

**Erin:** I think what's weird now is, like, now meeting people who, when I was fifteen, I used to think were just it. This is so lame, but when I was fifteen and I went to see Social Distortion, I was just like this geeky kid or whatever. Then, as an adult now, having a label and actually meeting them and having a purpose and an identity and a reason to talk to them. It's weird shit.

**Mike:** It's so weird. Like when Jerry Only yelled, "Mike, come on out here and sing 'Halloween.'" I was like, hell yeah. Because when I was a kid, I used to think being in the Misfits would be the greatest shit ever. When shit like that happens, it's so weird.

**Erin:** And having bands like that call and go, "Are you interested in our..."

**Mike:** I have a little list in my office, like, Lee Ving, Jerry Only. All these people called. Joey Shithead. Oh my God.

**Erin:** It's just weird.

**Todd:** Have you ever been completely starstruck? Have you ever just wanted to meet that person, then you just blanked out?

**Mike:** No, but I think meeting the Misfits was really cool. There's only two people I really wanted to meet in my life, and haven't. Madonna and Kurt Cobain. And I

**Todd: Have you ever had sex in the Fat Wreck Chords office?**

**Mike: Yeah.**

**Erin: Yeah. We have.**



**Todd: On an employee's desk or on your own?**

**Mike: It wasn't on a desk, actually. It was in a chair.**

never met those people. And I don't even want to meet Madonna anymore. That was just like, sex.

**Todd:** The riding crop comes into play once again.

**Erin:** When I met the Misfits, I was nervous.

**Todd:** Was it the original line up?

**Mike:** No. I actually met the Misfits in '82. But it wasn't meeting them, it was like, "Hi. I like your band." That was original members. No Bobby Steel.

**Erin:** The first time I met Brian Baker, I was a little nervous. I thought that was pretty cool.

**Sean:** Was that before or after he was in Junkyard?

**Erin:** That was actually before he was in Junkyard.

**Mike:** No, no. It wasn't before Junkyard.

**Erin:** No, the first time I met him it was before that, but I didn't know him as a person. Like, now I know him.

**Mike:** We met him socially during late Dag Nasty.

**Todd:** More sober thought. How many of your friends have died since you began?

**Mike:** I'd say only like...

**Erin:** Three or four.

**Mike:** Close ones, like three or four. I know tons of old Hollywood punkers who've died, but no one who meant anything to me.

**Todd:** Is it true that, when rumors were flying around that Epitaph was being bought out by Interscope, you went down there and said, "I want to buy all my stuff back so that you can't sell it."?

**Mike:** No. We'd made some kind of agreement during a record that we can buy back a lot of our stuff if they sell to a major, but we have to pay a lot of money for it. So I don't know if that'll ever happen.

**Erin:** [To Todd] That's partially true what you said. [To Mike] It's definitely true that you negotiated that you never wanted to be on a major and that, if they sold, you had the option to buy it back.

**Mike:** Right. We got kind of screwed, anyway, because my publishing got sold.

**Todd:** Really? You had no say in it?

**Mike:** No. It got sold to MCA?

**Sean:** And that's why your song is at the end of "The Chase"?

**Mike:** No.

**Todd:** What day is it today, Mike?

**Mike:** Sunday.

**Sean:** Erin, do you make him shower more often than Wednesdays and Saturdays now?

**Mike:** Less.

**Erin:** You know what? I gave up. That song is actually true.

**Mike:** She's lucky if I go one a week.

**Erin:** It sucks. You know, I got tired of it. There's so many more important things for me to nag him about. Like this is really not that important. But in the beginning, there actually was a calendar posted on the inside of the bathroom with Wednesdays and Saturdays marked off so he wouldn't forget. Because I'm like a clean freak. I shower like twice a day. When we first started dating, I was like, eww. But he never smells. He's not a smelly guy. I got over it. It's okay.



## @PATIA NO/JABARA

### Split 7" EP

@patia: Venezuelan political punk with that classic Latino hardcore sound, the closest comparison being early Atoxxxio. Jabara: Discharge-y hardcore with that patented Japanese over-the-top nudge. This is one great 7 inch. -Jimmy Alvarado (HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yaho-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013 Japan)

### 324

#### "Boutokunotaiyao" CD

After the "Soulwinter" 7" and the "Customized Circle" CD comes this absolute beast of a release. That is the only history I know of this band and that is all I own. This three piece from Japan has gotten plenty of references to Terrorizer (Earache Records, 1980s) for their pounding grindcore meets hardcore. The two releases that I got prior were almost exactly reminiscent of that band. This one carries on the same tradition but comes off heavier with added influence, in my ears, of Entombed and Hellchild. Manic and excruciating in their madness while the energy thrusts upon bleeding ars. -Donofthedeat (HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013, Japan)

### 324

#### "Boutokunotaiyo" CD

I was really apprehensive putting this thing on. I see sun flares on CD covers and my first (usually correct) assumption is that I'm gonna be lambasted by a bunch of emo crybabies pouring their poor, wounded hearts into some of the worst songs ever conceived. Thankfully, I was wrong in this case. 324 play some punishing metallic Japanese hardcore that could easily have been recorded in the mid-'80s. There's nary a slow song here and lots of guttural "rooaaar" in the vocal department. Damn if this ain't some kickass stuff. I'm willing to bet that a double bill featuring these guys and Gehenna would be a very dangerous place, indeed. Yes, I recommend this bad boy. -Jimmy Alvarado (HG Fact)

## ALL NATURAL LEMON & LIME FLAVORS

### "Straight Blue Line" CD

The "Loveless" -era My Bloody Valentine influence is painfully obvious, yet this stands pretty well on its own. While not a sonically overwhelming or as densely lush as "Loveless," this group manages to effectively channel MBV's poppiness and wobbly, hypnotic repetitiveness through a sound not unlike Os Mutantes' psychedelic bossa nova experiments and come out sounding less like a rip off than extension of an idea. Shoegazers all over the world can rejoice. With this release, the total number of bands playing that style that are worth a piss has now been upped to five. -Jimmy Alvarado (Gern Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661)

## ANDRE WILLIAMS

### "The Black Godfather" CD

Although dirty old man Andre's still growlin' and howlin' about the good things in life - pussy, ass, dope and pussy - his rug burn voice no longer resonates visions of



Critics are like eunuchs at a gang bang.  
-George Burns

orange-juice soaked BBQ ribs and Bonneville joyrides. Distracted by far less than 36-24-38 these days, the gritty "Pass the biscuits, please" signature voice now inertly punctuates the fuzzed-out guitars of the Countdowns, Blues Explosion, Cheater Slicks and Compulsive Gamblers - Andre's never had so much competition from a bunch of white-boys-gone-black. Ol' Andre, senior citizen, was done plucked plumb outta his weekly-rate hotel room on Detroit's notorious Cass Corridor and re-branded as the Pimp of all Pimps, injected with the trademark Jon Spencer sound. A good idea in theory, but much to my chagrin, "Shut the gate Sally, and don't let me in." -RumbleStripper (In The Red, 2627 E. Strong Pl., Anaheim, CA 92706)

## ANTHEM EIGHTY EIGHT

### "Q: And Progress A: And Progress" CD EP

Hardcore that was loud, fast and really pissed off, just as it should be. For some reason, they reminded me a little of Articles of Faith, had Vic Bondi been stricken with throat cancer. -Jimmy Alvarado (No Idea, PO Box 14636 Gainesville, FL 32604)

## ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE

### "Redefining Music" CD

If you've never heard of Atom, it's a hard sell. "Uhm, it's this Jewish guy who tours the land solely with his synthesizer and his wits to protect him. He got threatened to be doused with a bucket of blood in Wyoming." But he's much more than that. Live, he rocks the house. Serious. Although not quite a redefinition, Atom's surely exploring some fun stuff. Think of an extremely warm-sounding Devo crossed with the gleeful abandon of Masters of the Obvious (if you've never listened to MOTO, do yourself a favor and get the "Bolt" LP - \$8 to Box 578912, Chicago, IL 60657) with some Weird Al Yankovic poking its nose in here and there. What makes the kitsch/ joke value almost

irrelevant is fact that Atom makes Grade A, excellent songs; little poisonous capsules that sound like simple sugar until you realize how damn catchy they are. No matter how hard you shake your head, those little ditties stick. They're layered, catchy, structured really well, and thoughtful. Songs range from whatever happens to be on his mind: "I'm going on a shopping spree," to a work-mate being "undercover funny," to a plea for the Washington Redskins to change their name, to "Oh, I get it. Anarchy means you can litter." If you're already familiar with Atom, this album's a natural extension of "Making Love." He's definitely developed a steadier music and a tighter album as a whole. Parting shot: if the popular '80s new wave had a sense a humor and more balls than hairspray, distilled through thousands of van miles, you'd get Atom. -Todd (Hopeless)

## BELLRAYS, THE

### "Grand Fury" CD

The Bellrays once again brazenly blast out a spirit-stirrin' hypnotic concoction of sizzlin' soulful rock'n'roll and sonic voodoopunk sultriness. Man, this is aurally IT! Nothin' else compares, or even comes close! The guitar grinds and growls with distorted over-amped jungle-swamp ferociousness... the spell-binding nicotine-charred hoochie-enchanted vocals are the intoxicating aural equivalent of a female James Brown/Bon Scott hootin'-and-hollerin' at a holyroller revival down in the impoverished shanty-towns of a "Deep South" Mississippi delta (man, this gorgeous gal's voice is more passionate, more sensuous, and sexier than any sweet sound in existence that's ever seductively caressed my ears, I kid you not!)... the bass raucously rumbles along like the earthmoving clamor of a filled-to-capacity subway train clattering along an over-used track on a one-way destination to nowhere... the dinosaur-stomp drums dissonantly crash, bang and boom with such frightful fullforce fury, I just peed myself

silly, folks! Indeed, this ain't no air-wave-ready "Soul Train" rehash; this is an atomic-powered punkrock "Soul Locomotive" cacophonously careening out-of-control with salaciously smooth wild abandon. It's sensually smokin', for your ears only... -Roger Moser, Jr. (Upper Cut, 4470 Sunset Blvd. #195, LA, CA 90027; <uppercutrecords.com> or The Bellrays, PO Box 1532, Riverside, CA 92502; <thebellrays.com> or \$10 ppd to Vital Gesture, PO Box 46100, LA, CA 90046)

## BELLRAYS, THE

### "Grand Fury" CD

The mighty BellRays have once again reared their collective heads and let fly 13 tracks of some bombastic, scathing rock'n'roll. Let me tell you, kids, this is a pretty welcome addition to the playlist at the Alvarado/Perez-Villalta household. Karla (my girlfriend) is not especially punk-friendly, but the Bell Rays is one of few bands that she not only tolerates but actively encourages the listening of on a regular basis (the Descendents and early Bad Brains being a couple of others). Of course, we still have our disagreements about who we hear traces of in their music (she says either a meeting of Jimi Hendrix and Tina Turner, or Angela Davis set to music, but I think she's high, because it's patently clear that what she's hearing is an MC5/Artha Franklin hybrid, but I digress), and these discussions usually get pretty heated when they're coupled with a game of Scrabble (I do not make up words! "Git" does exist! Sod the dictionary!). While we may disagree on the irrelevant particulars, we do agree that the Bell Rays are one of the best groups that rock'n'roll in the new millennium has to offer, even if listening to them at excessive volumes causes your ears to bleed. I hear through the grapevine that they're going through a bad patch right now, and I hope that they are able to come through it relatively unscathed, 'cause losing this band would be the equivalent of losing a lung for any fan of loud music. -Jimmy Alvarado

## BELTONES, THE

"Shitty in Pink" b/w "Nobody to Love" 7" The good news is, the Beltones are still getting better. The vocals vibrate out of the speakers at a dizzying speed, sounding like something between a snarl and a growl and, if you can decipher the lyrics, they're funny and angry and pretty damn good. The music keeps up with the speed and, like the lyrics, it's pretty complex once you separate it from the fuzz. I really like this band. I like these two new songs. I even like the cover with its trashy, shitty-in-pink punk rock broad on the cover and the crazy collage in the back. The bad news, though, is that you get, what, four minutes of music and then it's done. Just like their eighteen minute full-length and twenty minute shows. It's good to be left wanting more, but it's better to fill up the vinyl and get, like four two-minute songs instead of two. -Sean (Radio, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476)

## BLACK JAX

### Self-titled CD

Look, the fact that I was a member of a later version of this band is of no consequence because A) That version of the



band was completely different from the version presented here and B) I was a fan long before I was a participant in any of their shenanigans. So there. All of you screaming "conflict of interest" can kiss my ass. Now, on with our story. I first saw the Black Jax in late '85/early '86 at a party in Montebello, if I'm not mistaken. I was a little, bald, hardcore shithead who thought that you had to play fast and hard to be considered a good punk band. They proved that particular belief of mine was ridiculous. The band was hard, up-tempo and (gasp) melodic at the same time. The fact that Pogo was a fuckin' madman didn't hurt much either. We later got chased out of the party 'cause a drunk Vietnamese kid who was with us was claiming to be a "Suicidal" in a party filled with skinheads (Suicidals and skins didn't get along back then, mind you) and he ended up jumping into the swimming pool. I left that party humming the song I later learned was called "Fooled By a Pretty Face" and considered myself a fan from that day forward. Over the next year, I saw them many times and, each time, I stood awed at how utterly goddamned good they were. They could pull hooks out of thin air. They laid waste to almost any band dumb enough to play with them. They were, to sound like a high school geek, fucking awesome. Sadly, though, they never got their moment in the sun or the chance to put their amazing set on vinyl. This release, which consists of two demos, will hopefully rectify that injustice. The first nine songs were recorded in 1986 and later (coupled with a live show from Raji's that ain't on here on

the other side of the tape) became the band's official demo. The sound is what is now referred to "77 punk" with a good dose of old So Cal punk for good measure, yet, 14 years later, they don't sound dated at all. The recording is excellent (which is amazing considering that it was recorded on a four-track in a bedroom) and the tracks are tight and fat with instantly hummable hooks. Their finest moment, the song "Growing Pains," which begins with a quiet guitar intro and quickly kicks into overdrive, still gives me chills. The remaining three tracks are from an earlier demo that I've never heard (dammit, Gary, you were holding out on me!). The sound on these are a little rawer, but the songs shine through and transcend the primitive recording limitations. A note of gratitude goes out to Steve Stiph for finally giving this great, long-gone band their due. Now those of us who have been listening to shitty, worn out cassette copies of the demo all these years can give them a decent Christian burial and rock out once again to one of the best punk bands East LA/San Gabriel ever produced. -Jimmy Alvarado (Wankin' Stiphs, PO Box 6480, Mesa, AZ 85216)

#### **BORIS THE SPRINKLER**

##### **"...Is Gay" CD**

What I like about Boris the Sprinkler is that they put out new albums often enough so that a newish Boris the Sprinkler record is always on high rotation in my life. And all their albums are really good. "...Is Gay" keeps SweetTart-blood-level high. It's fast, bouncy, Ramones-distorted, Norb-

twisted rock'n'roll. The monologue is back at the beginning, thanks to a little pre-planning (they stuck Paul #1 in a soundproof booth while Rev. Norb delivered his sermon [though not without having to monologue duel with the computer from the "Group Sex" album]). But I don't want to give away too many secrets. Suffice it to say that the schtick is still funny, and the songs around the schtick are still great. -Sean Carswell (Go Kart, PO Box 20 Prince St. Station, NY, NY 10012)

#### **BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE**

##### **"Zero" CD**

Mellow late '60s-tinged rock. For some reason, every song on this reminds me of Love's "Signed DC." I liked it. -Jimmy Alvarado (Bomp, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

#### **BRIEFS, THE/THE SPITS**

##### **Split 7" EP**

Briefs: Their side of the cover is a total bite of the first Child Molesters' single. More engaging than their CD. I can hear a Voidoids influence in there somewhere on "(I Think) My Baby is a Communist." "Silver Bullet" calls for the death of Bob Seger, and I sure ain't gonna argue against that. Pretty fucking good stuff. Spits: Sound quality is as bad as the Misfits' "Cough/Cool" single. The first song is a punk'n'roll ditty and the second reminded me of the Normal. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

#### **BRIGHT EYES**

##### **"Letting Off the Happiness" CD**

I saw these boys play at the Silverlake Lounge a while back and they were nice enough to give me a CD to review. I think these guys are great, and I think they are going to continue to grow with their music and their popularity. First of all, this band is huge (or at least bigger than your average 4 piece). They have enough instruments to incorporate into a small jazz band, but without losing their indie rock sound and charm. Whether or not this band is as young as they look is questionable on behalf of the emotions and situations represented in their music. I hate to drop the reference, but lyrically they remind me of Belle and Sebastian, using stories rather than sentences to portray their ideas and songs. I discover something new every time I listen to this album; whether it be a softer lyric, or a new digital pulse or putter that somehow went unnoticed the time before. "Letting Off the Happiness" is only one of many CDs they have released that you probably haven't heard, but are recommended to listen to. Their newest release, "Fevers and Mirrors," is equally enchanting and exceptional. -Harmonee (Saddle Creek, Box 8554, Omaha, NE 68108-0554)

#### **BURNMAN**

##### **"Notes for a Catalogue for an Exhibition" CD**

It's no secret by now that I hate emo in all its sickly hues, cacophonous tones and pretentious intents. A good day for me would be one in which all the little emo lemmings took a flying fuck off the nearest cliff, taking every one of their putrid CDs along for the ride. That said, I liked this disc. Sure, it has its share of

overblown artistic reach, soaring guitars and stream of consciousness lyrics, but it also has one hell of an edge, and that alone allows it to pull itself out of the dung heap. Behind all the usual trappings is one mother of a rhythm section, notably a drummer who lays a solid foundation by gleefully wailing on his skins in wild abandon, giving the whole thing an almost early Die Kreuzen intensity, albeit sans the thrash beats. No faggy boo hoo cry in my Fugazi backpack swill here, boyo. This stuff is as anything remotely related to punk rock should be: a pure emotional purging of anger, desperation, rage, tragedy and every other negative adjective you can think of. Fuck, I could probably stomach all the whiny crybaby shit all those other bands force-feed the masses if they at least sounded the least bit upset about the whole thing, you know? Despite all the annoying genre trappings to be found here, these guys sound pissed off and that makes all the difference. -Jimmy Alvarado (No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville FL 32604)

#### **BUSTED LIVES, THE** "The Winner's Circle" CD

Not as crazed as their last album, but that doesn't mean that this isn't up to its eyeballs in bad drug-induced psychosis. As I listened to this, I pictured Black Randy fronting an early incarnation of the Flesh Eaters writing desperate love songs to The Reatards. Then again, I could be way off the mark with that description. It wouldn't be the first time. Look, just send 'em your fuckin' money. You won't be disappointed. -Jimmy Alvarado (Blueball, 6517 Faralton Way, Oakland, CA 94611)

#### **CANDY SNATCHERS**

"Ugly on the Inside" b/w  
"Party Girl - Cocaine County" 7"  
If Chuck Berry was a bunch of much paler guys, hopped-up, drugged-to-the-gills, and bleeding, he'd be the Snatchers. These guys are the anti-venom to pre-manufactured teleprompter and dance instructor pop. Two fast, drunk and plunder songs. The only question I have is why did someone Photoshop a can of cat food on the cover? -Todd (Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

#### **CANNANES AND STEWARD**

"Communicating  
At An Unknown Rate" CD  
Nope, I won't be needing any downers tonight. -Jimmy Alvarado (Yoyo, PO Box 2462, Olympia, WA 98507)

#### **CAUSEY WAY, THE**

"Causey Vs. Everything" CD  
A lot more sultry than previous releases, it seems that Causey is personalizing his message to each and everyone of us. The more blatant new wave trappings have been updated to something I can't exactly place, but enjoy immensely ("Newest Wave," perhaps). All I know is that their sound is slithery, bouncy, and saturated with space-reverb guitar that borders on a rapture of sorts. This time out, Causey's high-pitched voice is augmented by the smoky female esophagus of The Truth Causey (I believe. Scant details are on the CD packaging itself) that develops yet another dimension to Causey's already considerable musical arsenal. There

are also quite a few slower and mid tempo songs on "Vs. Everything," that bip, bop and bounce around in really intriguing ways, avoiding the continual trap of boring the audience with mere repetitious masturbation. My sole quibble is that there are no sermon transcriptions to the songs accompanying the release; instead there's a picture of a shirtless Causey frolicking in a field of yellow flowers that's so funny I want to get the LP version so it's bigger. All in all, a fantastic release that'll be sure to swell the minions converting to The Causey Way. -Todd (Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141-9092; <www.alternativetentacles.com>)

#### **CHUBBIES, THE** "American Swagger" CD

The Chubbies is just one girl, Jeannette, and she is DIY. This album is a collection of demos written, recorded, mixed, produced and starring her. After 22 other releases as The Chubbies, Jeannette decided to go back to basics for this one. This album was recorded on an 8-track in her bedroom. The booklet is very Storytellers with a short description of what the songs are about before the lyrics are given. A recommended listen for anyone who owns a virgin 8-track who needs to hear how it's done. -Harmonee (Filthy's, 31736 Mission Tr. #D, Lake Elsinore, CA 92530)

#### **COCK SPARRER** "England Belongs to Me" CD

A compendium of their early singles, this release also serves as an interesting document of the evolution of this long-running band. The earlier tracks owe more than a little to the pub rock sound that was prevalent when the band started back in the '70s and, as the disc progresses, you can hear the development of the hard, yet very poppy sound for which they are known. Toward the end, the listener is also treated to a lesson that plagued many English punk bands (Adicts, SLF, Angelic Upstarts) during the '80s: overproduction can ruin even the best song. Still, this is more than worth the price of admission just to hear early versions of classics like "Running Riot," "Argy Bargey," "Working," and a great live cover of the Clash's "White Riot." -Jimmy Alvarado (Taang, 706 Pismo Ct., San Diego, CA 92109)

#### **COCK SPARRER** "Live: Runnin' Riot Across the USA" CD

You can't really say that Cock Sparrer is breaking any new ground these days. This is a recording of their show in San Francisco last February. They played most of their hits: "Runnin' Riot," "Where Are They Now?" "Riot Squad," "Argy Bargey," "England Belongs to Me," and so on. The recording quality is high. It sounds great, and the songs are really good songs. The only problem I have is that I've heard them all so many times now that I wish they'd write some new fucking songs. They also have kind of a rock star way of putting on a show: they say the name of the city the same way Spinal Tap would, they tell the crowd that they're great audience, they encourage you to sing along with the hits, etc. So if you're a Cock Sparrer nut

(no pun intended), if you want to relive the last time you saw Cock Sparrer, or if you've never heard them, this would be a great album. Otherwise, well, you've heard it. -Sean Carswell (TKO, 4104 24th St. #103, SF, CA 94114)

#### **CONCRETES, THE** "Boy, You Better Run Now" CD

This band is from Stockholm. If they don't play here soon, I might have to save money to search for them in Sweden. The Concretes are made up of six steady members and two more loosely involved members. This is kind of mellow pop - kinda jumpy with some harmonicas and trumpets adding sparks. Victoria's vocals are very soft and sweet, almost paralleling the emotion of the keyboard. Sometimes they remind me of Mazzy Star, sometimes they remind me of Devics. Good music to bake to (and by that I mean cakes, cookies, dinner party action, etc.). Yummy. -Harmonee (Up, Box 21328, Seattle, WA 98111)

#### **CONDORS, THE** "Tales of Drunkenness & Cruelty" CDEP

The powerpop punkiness of The Condors is dynamically delicious, jubilantly jumpy, and melodiously spirited with a spine-tingling plethora of happy-go-lucky hook-laden harmonics! This is the swirling sound of The Byrds if they had been energetically infused with a high-octane dose of snarl'n' rock-'n'roll belligerence and rabid badboy bite... this is the booty-twistin' sound of hot fun in the summertime sun, of sloppy juvenilistic sex in the backseat of a souped-up turbo-charged '81 Camaro, of wide-eyed youthful innocence soon to be corrupted by mind-altering stomach-churning amounts of the devil's drink and other illicit intoxicants... yes, this is the rambunctiously sparkling sound of vibrantly frenzied life itself! Man, The Condors are sonically cooler than cool, so aurally impress yourself and all of your cliquish lil' friends with this powerfully rousing platter of poprock perfection now, tomorrow and always... -Roger Moser, Jr. (\$6 ppd to Vital Gesture, PO Box 46100, LA, CA 90046 or The Condors, PO Box 6673, Alhambra, CA 91802-6673)

#### **COOKIE** "All Hell Can't Stop Us" CD

For those of you dismayed by the unfortunate termination of the Gits or who mused that 7 Year Bitch would be, well, musical, or plain just can't get enough of the eclectic NW scene, rejoice! Cookie is here. Vocally strong chick singer and some punk rock guys. It's the Automatics. It's Poison Idea. It's Elmer. It's the Nuns. It's Patsy Cline. -RumbleStripper (Last Chance; <lastchancerecs@excite.com>)

#### **CORVUS CORAX** "The Atavistic Triad" CD

Big, blustery black metal that was interesting for approximately two and one-half minutes of the first 15 minute track, then I found myself thinking about my new socks. They're very nice socks, by the way. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dark Symphonies, Box 457, Billerica, MA 01821)

#### **CRUXSHADOWS, THE**

"The Mystery of the Whisper" CD  
If there is one truth that becomes more apparent with the passing years, it is that the goth scene just won't stay dead. For every kid who trades in their Specimen collection for the latest Bis album, it seems that two new adolescents are drafted into the legion of darkness. While many people will agree that "Darkwave" grows more tedious with age, some seem to find solace in stagnation. We can always count on a band of teenage night-creatures (and their middle-aged admirers) to take the look and sound of 1980's post-punk and drive it further into the realm of self-parody. "The Mystery of the Whisper," the latest disc from the Cruxshadows, more than aptly proves this point. Upon first glance, it's obvious that the Cruxshadows are the poster children for all that is spooky. The packaging embodies every cliché of the scene (or is that "lifestyle"? - spiky hair mixed with too much black eyeliner, bell-sleeved dresses, ankhs, computer-generated infernos, etc. As the album begins to play, the uber-gothness of the Cruxshadows becomes even more obvious. Opening with the track "Isis & Osiris (Life/Death)," the band conjures up the spirit of Dead Can Dance. Lead singer Rogue does his best to capture the Middle Eastern-vibe that sends all of the corset-clad girls running to the dancefloor. Eventually, the Cruxshadows settle into the sound that dominates this lengthy release - overly dramatic synthpop set off by flat vocals and lyrics that could have been lifted from SNL's "Goth Talk." Throughout seventeen tracks, listeners succumb to such profound statements as "everywhere I go they all stare/I don't understand why they care/ They stare at me all in black/ And when I turn they stare at my back." Needless to say, the Cruxshadows prove that we need to seriously consider driving the stake through goth's tortured heart once and for all. -Liz O (Dancing Ferret Discs, 4939 Catharine St. #3f, Philadelphia, PA 19143; <www.ferret.com/discs/>)

#### **DAGONS, THE** "Make Us Old" CD

This San Francisco band transplanted itself to LA in the fall of 2000, hot off the heels of recording their second full length. SF's loss is definitely LA's gain. The Dagons mine literary references, gothic imagery and Grimm's Fairy Tales all the while avoiding the trappings of goth in favor of a straight-up rock approach. Singer/guitarist Karie Jacobson (who also played bass on this album) lulls you in with sweet, ethereal vocals as drummer Drew Kowalski sneaks up with menacing, pounding drum work on songs like "Grinder" and "As Close As You May Ever Get." Spooky in a good way. -Bob (Dead Sea Captain, 4470 Sunset Blvd. #163, LA, CA 90027)

**DECALS**  
"You (That's All We Ever Talk About)" 7"  
Tight, female-fronted punk rock'n'roll. The songs are well written and poppy in a good way. I think I'm keepin' this puppy. -Jimmy Alvarado (Fan Attic, PO Box 391494, Cambridge, MA 02139)  
**DHARMAKAYA**

"Analbum: The New Indie Rock Standard" **CD-R EP**  
Dharmakaya skillfully churn out melancholy musical madness raucously reminiscent of the lo-fi grungey gruffness that statically strutted across the college-radio airwaves everywhere in the early '90s (a complimentary comparison of sorts: Black Sabbath maniacally muttering with Pavement, vocally led by a gargoyle Kurt Cobain character!). The noggin-thumpin' numbers cacophonously contained herein screech and scream with scathing sonic emotion... delicately soft and cuddly at times (albeit briefly!), and then turbulently tumbling into all-out frenzied fierceness at the spontaneous shift of a chord. Indeed, a heady dose of anger-rock is robustly served on this appealing platter of mind-twistin' tunesmithing, so I'll give it a hearty thumbs-up and a playful poke in the eye... -Roger Moser, Jr. (\$5.00 ppd. to Spat, 1113 Forrest Ave. Apt. A, Nashville, TN 37206)

#### **DIESTO**

##### **"Outland" CD**

Dude, Soundgarden sucks. -Jimmy Alvarado (Elastic, PO Box 17598, Anaheim, CA 92817)

#### **DISCONTENT**

##### **"Who Killed Vinyl?" 7"**

What's more authentic than a street punk band whose been around awhile but took several years to get to vinyl due to members being in prison? Hoosgow aside, imagine the less fat Cock Sparrer, the Cock Sparrer that actually wrote new songs - their anthemic, powerful, perfectly timed

choruses - and you'll get a taste of Discontent. Although firmly entrenched in a genre that's notoriously narrow and stifling, I'd go as far to say that Discontent is like a 12 pack of beer. You know what you're getting from the packaging, it takes you to where you want to go pretty quickly, but when it's done, you're pissing and a little sad that it's gone. Good shit. -Todd (Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)

#### **DOLICIOUS**

##### **"Cold Cinder" 7"**

This is wondrously wild distorted aural depravation at its most mindwarping and disruptive best. Dollicious are clamorously comparable to a cranked-to-the-max over-amped Who frantically fronted by Theo Lunachick (and toss in the occasional spooky strains of a theremin's wavy-gravy eeriness for added incendiary effect). Man, this is deliciously decadent, aurally belligerent, and nefariously noisy beyond belief... I've repeatedly rotated it until I can no longer hear myself think (it's that damn addictive, folks!). Please, Dollicious, tell me there's gonna be more... -Roger Moser, Jr. (Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317; <<http://www.gethip.com>> or Dollicious, 39 Newcourt House, Pott St, Bethnal Green, London E2 0EG, UK)

#### **DUANE PETERS**

##### **AND THE HUNNS**

##### **"Tickets to Heaven" CD**

Quick on the rebound from the seemingly just released "Unity" LP, it can be said that the ink-filled, tooth-deprived,

Beer City pro skater main man with two bands, Duane Peters, can put together two great albums quicker than it takes a normal band to put out a shitty one. What's alarming is how essentially flawless the spirit of mid-tempo '77 punk spins into the '00s without it smelling like rotting meat or another tired dance around a grave. Broken hearts, broken bottles, broken dreams, broken streets, broken unions, and broken lives are the song themes, all told with conviction, all told in pirating, street riot vein of poetry.

Maybe because I stood on his side of the stage when I recently saw them live, and his monitor was under my arm, but Mark "Anarchy" Lee (ex-Humpers, ex-Crowd) is probably one of the most underrated rhythm guitarists playing punk these days, providing a huge amount of swagger, hum, and melody that would probably just sound like a rehash of popular favorites in lesser hands into huge, dense, vital songs. -Todd (Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

#### **ELF POWER**

##### **"The Winter is Coming" CD**

This is a pretty weird one here. Take some jangly pop, sprinkle in some Kinks, dollop some Savage Republic/Middle Eastern drone on the top and voila! It's not exactly what most people would call "rockin' tuneage," but it is definitely a nice, mostly successful attempt to find some new ground by mixing some seemingly disparate influences. -Jimmy Alvarado (Sugar Free, PO Box 14166, Chicago, IL 60614)

#### **EX-GIRL**

#### **"Kero! Kero! Kero!" CD**

I'm so happy I intercepted this CD. This is a female Japanese trio and what Shonen Knife did to pop, eX-Girl could do for experimental/indie rock. All songs but two are sung in English (one is in Japanese and one is in Spanish). My favorites are "Tofu Song" (which is styled after, or even mocking maybe, those Bulgarian Women's Choir chants) and "The Revenge of Kero," which is all about frogs... lots of them. If you're into Japanese pop culture at all, you might be interested in this album. Reminiscent of The Raincoats here and there, just as much fun as its packaging. The question left to answer is not if you should go find this album, but rather which eX-Girl is your favorite. -Harmonee (<[kobashin@bekkoame.ne.jp](mailto:kobashin@bekkoame.ne.jp)>, <[EXG@aol.com](mailto:EXG@aol.com)>)

#### **EXPLODERS, THE**

##### **"What's What and Who's Who" 7" EP**

Apparently, Larry May of The Candy Snatchers has opened a school or released the patent to his "How To Scream Like Punk Rock Opera." And if you think I speak ill of such things, you're mistaken. The band follows suit - solid snap, crunch, and twists to straight forward, guitar-driven rock'n'roll. What keeps it from being a clone are the hints of psych, pockets of nerve, and the fact that it's easier and more fun to understand than basic math. In my humble opinion, Crime sucked, but The Exploders' cover of "Rockabilly Drugstore" gave it a nice shank in the balls and made it real, real listenable. The Exploders also follow a good rule of thumb: if your cover has a cartoon of

a pretty lady with lightning bolts over her boobs, chances are that more people will buy your record. Good listen. -Todd (Teenage USA, PO Box 91, 689 Queen St. W., Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1X6, Canada; <teenageusarecordings.com>)

#### **FABULOUS DISASTER**

##### **"Put Out Or Get Out!" CD-R**

Man! Retodd knows my preferences and what I might enjoy. After a long layoff on the review front, he picks a winner for the first thing he sends me. This is the pre-release for this band's release on the Fat Wreck subsidiary Pink and Black. This is the label's second signing, joining the Dance Hall Crashers on the roster. What a great choice! If you like or love DHC, you will love this band. This has been a regular play in my CD changer in the car now for weeks. I can't get over the great harmonies over great melodies. At the same time, the band packs a punch. I have no idea what the songs are titled or what the band members look like, all I know is that track five is my favorite. The intro reminded me of The Cure and bolts forward with a mid tempo punk riff and goes into an almost dream-like chorus of beautiful harmony. The moods on that song jerk back and forth from regret to pure anger. An absolute gem! I can't wait 'til the actual release comes out to see the lyric sheet and see if all my curiosities can be answered. It reminded me of the Teen Idols (not the DC band, Teen Idles) mixed with the great elements of all the female-led punk bands from the past. -Donofthedeath (Pink & Black, PO Box 190516, SF, CA 94119)

#### **FAKES, THE**

##### **"So Fashionable It Hurts" 7"**

Orange County punk bands seem to re-congeal, re-form, and get sicker all of the time. It's the opposite of incest - these bands' blood seems to be getting thicker. The Fakes are no exception, having recruited Skibbs Barker (ex-Stitches drummer) and Steve Reynolds (ex-US Bombs bassist) into their fold. The sound? This oscillates between hard-nosed and snot-nosed with a slurring vocalist who phrases his words into short punches. At best, there's a strong undercurrent of '90s power pop (a la The Gain), in the song "Sometimes," yet with the song "Grey Matter," they slip into late-US Bombs territory where the mid tempo plods a little too much and the repetition gets the better of the song. On the whole, it's definitely not bad and I'd keep an eye out for them, but they're no unexpected taser to the nuts, either. -Todd (Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)

#### **FATAL FLYIN' GUILLOTINES /SCARED OF CHAKA**

##### **Split 7" EP**

FFG: Trashy punk, but not in the '60s sense. It has a certain charm. Scared: Hyped up, lo-fi punk with

a smidgen of pop. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

#### **FEATHERLY DECADENCE**

##### **"pre'ego" CD**

This CD is so weird. Is it synth? Is it rock? Is it spoken word? Whatever it is, it's a small square of art. It's curious and intriguing. It's one of those CDs where none of the tracks have breaks between them, so they all kind of just string along, each one adding something to the next. If you read the back cover, it sounds like a small story, when in fact it is the song titles. The music itself (stories), vibrations, whatever, is a journey through an obviously complex imagination, supplied by Christopher Deckard (I think. Everything about this little package keeps me guessing). It is a definite experience, but in reference to what, I am unable to define as of now. -Harmonee (Muzak, 3000 Lemp Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118)

#### **FILTHY THIEVING**

##### **BASTARDS**

##### **"Our Fathers Sent Us" CD**

This is what I always wished the Pogues sounded like when I listened to their albums: songs born of Irish ballads that fill in the sound; songs that maintain the sense of self-loathing and downtroddenness, but add some chunks of Chuck Berry style rock'n'roll along with whiskey and gravel and hope from the hopeless. The Filthy Thieving Bastards are a side project for Johnny Bonnel and Darius Koski from the Swingin' Utters (along with various musicians filling in on drums, mandolin, banjo, bass, and percussion). Musically, it's a pretty big departure from the Swingin' Utters, but they retain the spot-on lyrics ("So deep in debt I just might get the bends"), the catchy melodies, and the general sense of "how do they make this sound so good?" And, on a personal note, I have to love an album with pictures of James Joyce, Jack Kerouac, and Charles Bukowski on the back cover. This is definitely one of the records we're all wrestling for here at Razorcake HQ. -Sean Carswell (TKO, 4104 24th St. #103, SF, CA 94114)

#### **FUCK YOU UPS**

##### **"Fuck City Baby" 7" EP**

A living, breathing TV punk rock stereotype. You guys must be beaming with pride. -Jimmy Alvarado (Formula 13, PO Box 7385, Tempe, AZ 85281-0013)

#### **GEHENNA**

##### **"Negotium Perambulans In Tenebris" CD**

Fast, punishing hardcore rage, reminiscent of long-gone DC greats United Mutation. I can't understand a fuckin' word he's sayin', and the lack of a lyric sheet doesn't help matters much, but he sure sounds pissed about whatever it is he's singin'. This is well worth whatever you pay for it, and I suggest you seek it out. Now. -Jimmy

Alvarado (Crawlspace, PO Box 41031, Long Beach, CA 90853)

#### **GODDAMNED**

##### **DITCHDIGGERS, THE**

##### **"Never Mind The Goddamned, Here's The Ditchdiggers" CD**

The GDDs brazenly belt-out a cacophonous conflagration of rough'n'ready, rude'n'rowdy backwoods punkrock belligerence! Beer-fuelled and whiskey-saturated beyond belief, these demon-spawned rural reprobates immorally epitomize a new jaw-crackin' genre of rock'n'roll which is more vile, vulgar, demented, disgusting and rambunctiously primitive than anything else ever recorded... indeed, I'll fittingly call it "hickcore"! On such deviantly divine ditties as "Vengeance of the Damned," "Allez Dupont," "Blow Up Longview," "My Friend Misery," "Rather Stay Home and Fuck," "I Was a Teenage Ditchdigger," "Let's Have a Beer," "Modern Day Frankenstein," "I Wanna Get Drunk/Ditchdiggers" and so many more, the savagely frenzied instrumentation and snotty razor-slashed vocals violently roar like an atomic terroristic attack on the central nervous system (spontaneously causing a person's body to spastically leap around the room, destructively bounce off the walls, and then lifelessly collapse on the floor in a heap of smoldering remains). Ah yes, this is anarchic aural insurrection at its brainbruising best! -Roger Moser, Jr. (\$5 ppd to Ditchdiggin' Recs., 106 Horaney St., Longview, TX 75601; <http://www.angelfire.com/tx2/ditchdiggin>)

#### **HEADGRENADE**

##### **Self-titled CD**

Gallop-tempo hardcore with a sound circa 1986. Whoever wrote the lyrics is pretty fond of alliteration. Pretty good. -Jimmy Alvarado (702, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

#### **HEX, THE**

##### **"No Car" CD EP**

Minimalist art damage. Gimme a second to put on my Dieter one-piece. Now we dance... -Jimmy Alvarado (Troubleman Unlimited, 16 Willow Street, Bayonne, NJ 07002)

#### **I HATE MYSELF**

##### **Self-titled CD**

Emo CDs make for good skeet shootin'. -Jimmy Alvarado (No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville FL 32604)

#### **INFLUENTS, THE**

##### **"Check Please" CD**

Plop pop, fizz fizz, what a piece of shit this is... -Jimmy Alvarado (Adeline, 5337 College Ave. #318, Oakland, CA 94618)

#### **IRVING KLAWS, THE**

##### **"Pajama Party" CD**

The inimitable infectiously evil Irving Klaws have once again defiled my ears with another deca-

dent dose of sleazy sonic sordidness, and I couldn't be happier even if I were inescapably ensconced in a roomful of submissive nubile nymphs in the nude at this very moment (okay, well perhaps, that's a slight exaggeration of truth there on my part, folks!). Anyway, The Irving Klawns can aurally do no wrong when it comes to their hedonistic hellfire blend of raunchably rowdiness, garagerock rambunctiousness, and primal wildman rock'n'roll madness... on this musically pristine platter of demonically rockin' revelry, they rule supreme with such maniacal melodies as the punky-spunky "Not Me Not Now," the psychosonic "Wiggin' & Jiggin'," the rompin' boppin' "Put 'Em On," the ghoulishly sinister "Return Of Dr. Spook," the rabid drum-driven "It's Pervasonic!," the spastically devilish "I'm So Ugly," the booby-bouncin' butt-jiggin' "BestForm," the robustly belligerent "Dig My Six," the psychotically spooky "Moon Has Measles" and more, motherfucker, more! Yep, my unsolicited advice for all of you rock'n'roll raunchcats out there: get down'n'dirty, and "do the Klaw"! -Roger Moser, Jr. (Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317; <<http://www.gethip.com>> or The Irving Klawns, PO Box 1231, Buffalo, NY 14213-1231; <[www.irvingklaws.com](http://www.irvingklaws.com)>)

#### JOHNNY CASH

"American III: Solitary Man" **CD**  
It's a cold dreary rain-drenched day outside the frost-tinted windows of this inner sanctum I call home. And it effortlessly reflects a drab colorless world of bleak black-and-white motionless imagery that seems all-at-once uninspired, semi-detached, fragmented, and none-too-eager to greet any hapless wayward individual wandering the desolate trash-strewn streets of this tired old town on such a miserable winter afternoon. So I restlessly cradle a can of lukewarm beer while intently listening to these solemn spirit-enriching songs of solitude, the sometimes disquieting loneliness of life, and eventual redemptive hope via the proverbial effervescently shining light at the end of salvation's tunnel. "American III: Solitary Man" is an all-acoustic slice of rural Americana, a stark somber soundscape of haunting melodies that indelibly touches a man deep in the furthestmost recesses of his soul. It aurally conjures rustic images of simplistic domesticity in a pastoral countryside sprawl, beat-up old run-down pick-up trucks, festive Sunday picnics spent euphorically indulging in the soothing sun-splashed splendor of a gentle Spring breeze, history and heritage and unrelenting pride, native tribal Indian spirits ghost-dancing in the tall sinewy grass of the windswept High Plains region, a burnt-orange sun slowly setting on the barbed wire-ridden rugged terrain of the wild untamed West, and solitary frontiersmen

tombstones basking in the ominous snow-speckled shadows of a moonlit winter's night. The sparse instrumentation (acoustic guitars and an occasional accordion, fiddle, piano, and organ) flawlessly complements the swaggering unfaltering voice (haggard, time-worn, and aged to perfection) of Mr. Cash, a picturesque voice as deep and dark as the bottomless depths of a coal mine and as rich and textured as freshly plowed fertile Tennessee soil. As always, his original compositions are pristinely saturated with down-to-earth country charm that's as idealistically inspirational as it is unique and entertaining. And he reverently takes a diverse assortment of songs from a vastly differentiating array of notable composers (Tom Petty, Neil Diamond, Bono, Nick Cave, and others) and skillfully crafts them into his own with an elegant touch of expertly chiselled clarity. Indeed, his innate aural ability to speak to and for the common man (no matter what race, color, or creed) has become his true lasting legacy, an indelible essence forever imprinted in the hearts and minds of those who recognize the message in his music. Ladies and gentlemen, the inimitable legendary Man In Black, Mr. Johnny Cash... -Roger Moser, Jr. (American)

#### JUDGEMENT

##### "Just Be..." **CDEP**

Every time I get a release by this prolific Japanese band I always feel short changed. I'm guessing that this is their fourth release and this one was released on CD. There are only four songs! The two previous releases (and the first, I assume, but I never have seen a copy) was on 7" and only had two songs each. What you do get every time is quality old school Japan-core. The songs are mid-tempo and pack a lot of punch; manic vocals over powerful guitar chords. Under all the rage is a fine line of melody. The songs just have a hook that carries it over the edge and keeps things interesting. Something new in the mix from their previous releases is some background vocals from the female bass player. I don't know her name. I can't read Japanese anymore. Consistent, as always, and brought to you from a label everybody should check out. -Donofthedeath (HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013, Japan)

#### KOJACK

##### "Crash Motherfucker" **CD**

I remember hearing their 7" a while back and not being enthused about it, but this is lots better. They still play noisy-as-hell mid-tempo hardcore reminiscent of the time when mid-tempo didn't mean metal moshing madness, but they seem a little more focused than before. It gave me a nasty headache, and that's always a good sign that what I'm listening to is pretty good. -Jimmy Alvarado (CNP, PO Box 14555, Richmond, VA 23221)

#### LAND OF THE LOOPS

##### "Puttering About a Small Land"

#### CD

Land of the Loops is an excellent artist's description because that's exactly what it is. I believe he does have a couple of female vocalists, but for the most part, this album is simply layer upon layer of samples and electronic ecstasy. It has enough beats to supply a teenage boy under his covers and rhythms to send your soul a shiver. Nothing too bass heavy. Simply seismic enjoyment of the lava lamp and black light kind. -Harmonee (Up, Box 21328, Seattle, WA 98111)

#### LAST STAND

##### "Any Battle Won" **CD**

Anthemic punk rock with the occasional nod to hardcore and reggae. I really wasn't too enthused with this disc upon first listen. Although it's catchy and some of the hooks are nice, there really isn't any new ground being broken musically. Then I read the lyrics. There's a level of intelligent introspection and a deceptive simplicity to them that makes them easy to understand yet surprisingly deep on a variety of levels. Most effective is the song "Amarillo's Shame," which is about the punk rock kid intentionally run over by a classmate during a fight. While one might feel the band's delivery of the song lacks an appropriate level of anger, the sarcasm, outrage and moral indignation they feel towards those responsible for letting the driver of the car off literally drips from every line of the lyrics. I went back and listened to the whole disc again, lyric sheet in hand, and have come to the conclusion that this is some damn fine work. Sorry it took me so long to notice. -Jimmy Alvarado (One Way, 324 Broadway, Somerville, MA 02145)

#### LOS LOBOS

##### "Just Another Band from East LA"

#### CD

Back before "La Bamba," before their Grammy nominations, even before their association with Los Angeles' early '80s punk scene, Los Lobos were following their own muse. While all the bands in the neighborhood were playing Top 40 and bad disco (which were, more often than not, the same thing), Los Lobos delved deep into their parents' record collections, gleaming musical gems from the worlds of the son jarocho, son huasteco, guajira, bolero and plena, to name a few. After playing a few weddings and other such gigs for beer and gas money, they pressed and sold 1,000 copies of this, the "yellow album," in 1977, and since that time, it has become a hot collector's item among the band's more avid followers. Listening to this album so many years after its initial release, it seems almost inevitable that the band would eventually gravitate toward Los Angeles' underground. Although already highly accomplished musicians, there is a very informal, "party" feel to the recording and their approach to the songs themselves



seems fueled by much of the same intensity and speed that would give their nortenos that punk edge a few years later. When they take on a jarocho like "Maria Chuchena," they don't merely cover it so much as devour it and spit it back out in a rush of flying fingers at tempos that rival the masters of the form, which, anyone who has heard Lino Chavez or some of the other Veracruzano purveyors of the son jarocho can tell you, is some feat. It is no small favor that Hollywood Records has done. By re-releasing this unassuming little gem, they have not only given us a peek at the genesis of one of America's greatest, most provocative bands, they have also provided another generation of would-be and will-be musicians a new avenue to explore, one that the average American music aficionado has no idea exists. In short, this is essential listening for anyone who claims to have even a passing interest in music. -Jimmy Alvarado (Hollywood)

## LOS LOBOS

"El Cancionero Mas y Mas" Boxed Set 4X CD

We all know the story of Los Lobos, don't we? Band from East LA lands an opening slot for Public Image's debut Los Angeles gig at the Olympic Auditorium. Outraged punks pelt band with debris. Band signs with punk label and develops a strong local following that includes many of the same punks who hated them at the aforementioned gig. Band later has a fluke number one hit with a cover from a movie soundtrack and eventually becomes one of the most respected bands on the planet. Well, this four-disc retrospective covers virtually all of Los Lobos' career, starting with tracks from their 1977 "yellow" album (see other review), and snaking its way through assorted albums, early singles, collaborations with other artists and assorted unreleased tracks, making for a total of 86 tunes in all. While some might view CD sets this large as overkill, in the case of Los Lobos it seems to merely scratch the surface. So varied are the band's sounds and styles that it often seems that one is listening to a compilation of many bands rather than just one. For example, on just the first disc in this set, the listener is treated to a musical palette consisting of guajiras, boleros, punk-propelled rockabilly, nortenos, waltzes, blues, country and ballads, to name a few. Over the course of the remaining discs, new sounds are added to the pot: weird hybrids of traditional Mexican rhythms coupled with English lyrics, psychedelia, cumbia Colombiana, swing, soul, art damage, rock'n'roll and beyond. By the end of the ride, it becomes painfully clear why Los Lobos is one of the most respected groups of musicians in music today: they are damn good at what they do. Not only have they consistently produced some of the most exciting music ever to come out of the United States, they have done so over a span of time that has seen literally thousands of lesser bands hit that "Number One" lottery jackpot and quickly fade back into obscurity. They've done it on their own terms to boot, which is more than most of the biggie "punk" bands can say for themselves. Sure,

there's some disappointments for the more dedicated fan, such as the glaring omission of their crowd-pleasing renditions of Los Pinguinos del Norte's "Mexico Americano" and Andres Huesca's "Canto a Veracruz," an early single version of "Under the Boardwalk," tracks from the "Si Se Puede" soundtrack, or any of their early '80s collaborations with the legendary Lalo Guerrero. Yet what is included almost makes up for such slights: covers of Fats Domino's "I'm Gonna Be a Wheel Someday," a reworking of Los Aventureros' "Panchita" (titled here as "Los Ojos de Pancha"), Little Richard's "Rip It Up," and demo versions of some of their originals, not to mention Los Super Seven's interpretation of Valerio Longoria's "El Canoero," which nearly surpasses the original in quality. Sure, CD sets this big can be overkill. In this case, though, the band is more than deserving. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rhino, 10635 Santa Monica Blvd., LA, CA 90025-4900)

## LOUDMOUTHS/ ROCKS

Split 7" EP

Loudmouths: A couple o' helpings of their patented ranting. Rocks: If this were the only band on the disc, they would probably sound pretty decent. Following the Loudmouths was a big mistake, though, 'cause they sound really tame in comparison. -Jimmy Alvarado (702, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

## MICHELLE GUN ELEPHANT, THEE

"Gear Blues" CD

Extremely LOUD Japanese trash rock. The press materials allude to Billy Childish as an influence, but I don't hear it as much I do the Cramps and others I can't quite think of right now. Hell, I gotta lay off of them there allergy pills, 'cause they seem to be messin' up my short term.... Whatever. Either way, this is some screamin' mad shit here, all sludgy, dirty and fuckin' loud, man. I think they're singin' in English, but it's damn hard to tell. I'm recommending this disc for two reasons: 1) The songs are mighty nice, and 2) Playin' it at excessive volume levels is sure to kill all rats, insects and small dogs in a square mile radius around the speakers. Oh, wait.... Silly me, I accidentally had the stereo runnin' through my guitar amp. Well, I still like it, even if it ain't as loud as I thought it was. -Jimmy Alvarado (Alive/Total Energy, PO Box 7712, Burbank, CA 91510)

## MICHELLE GUN ELEPHANT, THEE

"Gear Blues" CD

Just as Guitar Wolf re-interpreted Gene Vincent style cool and MC5 flash in a kitschy, fun way, thee Michelle Gun Elephant, in a strange new twist, crosses the animalistic passion of the Stooges with the rigid NYC composure of the Ramones to produce this furious blend of rockin' sukiyaki. On CD, anyway, this made in Japan quartet howls, writhes and rolls like demon possessed samurai for fourteen tracks and the syntax of the lyrics isn't nearly as bizarre as you might expect. -Bob (Alive/Total Energy)

MIRAH

## "You Think It's Like This But Really It's Like This" CD

I love Mirah. I saw her play two summers back at Olympia's Yo-Yo A Go-Go and after watching her play I jumped up and bought all the merchandise she had to offer (one 12" and one cassette). Now she has released a full length album (16 songs) and I can't keep my ears free from listening to it. It's happy. It's sad. It's fast. It's slow. It's love revealing what's real by scratching away all the skin and pink with its own slightly chipped glitter-coated fingernails. I can picture Mirah opening up her journal to write her latest emotional update and as soon as the pages are cracked, all sorts of crazy cartoon bubble notes and hearts come flying out in between words like in those old "Reading Rainbow" episodes. This is a personal yet confident listen into the broad emotional - as well as musical - spectrum that is Mirah. Mirah has clever usage of vocal harmonies, ukulele, guitar, organ and distorted bass (to name a few from this instrument collage). Mirah's purity and light is like a new star's who has yet to reach eyes from its own place in the sky. -Harmonee (K, Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507)

## MORNING SHAKES, THE

"Piss Off Daddy" 7"

This is down'n'dirty wildly demented garagerock rambunctiousness with a turbulent twist of frenzied face-slappin' punkiness that'll assuredly knock ya upside the noggin somethin' fierce! The petulant snottiness of the two enclosed sardonic songs (includin' a catastrophically clamorous cover of The Zero Boys "Civilization's Dying") saturated my ears with highly flammable levels of pure rock'n'roll resonance. I just can't ask for anything more aurally earth-shattering than the smokin' sounds of The Morning Shakes on this here lil' 7-inch sizzler... -Roger Moser, Jr. (Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317; <<http://www.gethip.com>>)

## NARCOLEPTIC YOUTH/ THE VOIDS

Split 7" EP

NY: A cool musical melding of Sick Pleasure and early Freeze. The lyrics are well written and the songs are catchy as hell. Good stuff. Voids: catchy, female-fronted hardcore that's similar in sound and attack to Spain's Aerobitch. One damn good slab o' vinyl here. -Jimmy Alvarado (Straight Jacket, PO Box PO Box 136, Fullerton, CA 92836-0136)

## NATION OF ULYSSES

"The Embassy Tapes" CD

Noisy, lo-fi, Birthday Party-ish chaos from this long gone DC band. Having never heard them before, I'm in no position to compare this with their other work, but I will say that I think I missed out on a lot back then, 'cause I really liked this a lot. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dischord, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007)

## NEW BOMB TURKS

"The Blind Run" swirled purple vinyl 10"

This sonically turbulent 10-incher beligerently blazes with all-out rough'n'-tumble rock'n'roll crunch! The four siz-

zle-fried songs cacophonously contained herein are evil, vile, and tumultuously trashy... venomous and snotty razor-slashed vocals; high-tension crank-crazed straight-outta-the-gutter guitar savagery that violently grabs ya by the balls; skull-pummelling rumble'n'roar flesh-scorchin' bass detonations of frenzied low-end aural bite; and speedfreak thundergod boom-boom drumming madness. Hot damn hellfire for sure, the New Bomb Turks aurally rampage with dangerously bad-ass bowery punk sleaziness! -Roger Moser, Jr. ( New Bomb Turks, PO Box 82192, Columbus, OH 43202; <[www.newbombturks.com](http://www.newbombturks.com)>)

## NOVEMBER'S DOOM

"The Knowing" CD

Heavy metal prom ballads for suicidal Dungeons and Dragons geeks. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dark Symphonies, Box 457, Billerica, MA 01821)

## NUMBERS, THE

"Music Design" 10"

Shit, now I'm not so upset that the Mono Men broke up. Though there's no overlap in band members, this ten inch seems to pick up right where the Mono Men's "Have a Nice Day, Motherfucker" left off. It's six high-energy, nothing-to-lose, two-minute rock'n'roll songs, that, if they were stripped down to their core, would have something to do with Johnny Cash and Sun Records, but they've pushed that sound to its edges, dragged it through a hard life, and come out punk rock. My only complaint is that the record is so short that I don't feel fulfilled unless I play it twice in a row. I guess I know how my girlfriend feels now. -Sean Carswell (Dead Beat, PO Box 283, LA, CA 90078)

## SAFETY PINS

"Invite Us to Your Funeral" CD

This is real trashy punk'n'roll from Spain. It doesn't really sound like garage music, but it sounds like it was recorded in a garage. You can almost hear the big door rattling and the neighbors calling to complain. You can literally hear the singer hock a loogie. I point all this out by way of complimenting the band, of course. They sing in English, but judging from songs like "Suburban Twat," "Kill the Hippies," and the title track, lyrics aren't what these guys are all about. What they are about is playing fast and loud punk that falls somewhere between Turbonegro and the Smut Peddlers. It's good stuff. -Sean Carswell (Dead Beat, PO Box 283, LA, CA 90078)

## OXYMORON

"Best Before 2000" CD

This is a compilation of this German band's tracks from various 7-inchers, splits and comps. They play "street punk," but thankfully, they do it well. The singer sounds a little like Wattie. Hell, he looks a little like Wattie. I'm really glad that they didn't include a lyric sheet, 'cause I probably woulda liked this less if I knew what they were ranting on about. As it stands, I liked this a lot. -Jimmy Alvarado (Cyclone, 24 Pheasant Run, Merrimack, NH 03054)

## PAINTBOX

"Earth Ball Sports Tournament" **CD**  
Here is a band that gets better and better. Starting with their self-titled 7" to their CD titled "Singing Shouting Crying" to the earth-shattering "The Door" / "Provided Railroad" 7". The progression from the first to the current amazes me on how much a band can improve and continue to grow while not staying within their formula. The last 7", including the current release, has moments of a spaghetti western mixed with a blend of old school Japancore with some metal overtones. An absolute enjoyable listen. The songs have melody and rage while they continue to search to find new elements to introduce. They bring in horns, acoustic guitar and harmonica at moments to add more texture to their music. If you have been following the Japanese music scene, you know that these guys are heavy hitters. -Donofthedeath (HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo164-0013, Japan)

#### **PATRIOT**

##### **"We the People" CD**

Pretty decent American bald boy stuff. Judging from the name of the band, I expected a lot of stupid lyrics brimming with blind patriotism, but that doesn't seem to be the case. There's the usual praising of "street punk" music, drinking, yadda yadda, but the lyrics as a whole are not bad enough to make you cringe. The music itself is well executed and pretty catchy. Not bad. -Jimmy Alvarado (GMM, PO Box 15234, Atlanta, GA 30333)

#### **POPDEFECT**

##### **"R.I.P." CD**

A surfy/thrashy/pop band for twenty debauchorous years, PopDefect takes its final bows with a little pathos, a little bathos and a dash of self-deprecating humor on this full-length album. This release contains new recordings of "Drunken Sailor," "Vena's Revenge," and "Rock in My Hand" that aren't too different from the previously available versions, but it's nice to have them all in one place on what might be the band's finest collection of songs ever. The CD's final cut, "Dirge Overkill," is a song lamenting the last beer at a party that has long run its course as the band finds itself "far from the greatest show on earth" and serves as a moving coda to the band's lengthy career. The keg may have run dry but the memories will last a lunch time. -Bob (Heart Murmur, PO Box 50602, LA, CA 90050)

#### **PROJECT K**

##### **"Testing Underway" CD**

When PopDefect's demise became inevitable a couple of years ago, drummer Nick Scott said that he would probably fill the void by "joining the Paper Tulips or something." From that notion sprung Project K, a power trio featuring Scott, Tulips' guitarist Greg Kay and bassist Io Perry. As he did with the Tulips, Kay brings a delightfully quirky lilt and skewed poetic vision to the material that makes songs like "Little Things" and "Just One Kiss" darn catchy. Hopefully, this collaboration will last a good long while, too. -Bob (Bong Load)

#### **PROPAGANDHI**

##### **"Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes" CD**

Up to this album, I'd never fully gotten into Propagandhi. Basically, you could read their covers and know exactly what the album was about: gay-positive, animal-friendly, etc. These are views that I essentially agree with, but sentiments I'd heard much more compellingly by the political heavy hitters like Noam Chomsky, Emma Goldman, and Howard Zinn. And when I listened to their albums, Propagandhi was okay. Definitely not as banal lyrically as Face to Face, but the music itself - essentially pop punk - left me neither a fan nor an antagonist of the band. I liked 'em more than Fifteen. Hell, at least they didn't treat their fans like idiots and talk down to them. But I think Moral Crux did a better job asking for a riot while chewing through bubblegum pop songs. Well, with "Today's Empires," that's all changed. This album is fantastic; the lyrics are hyper intelligent, cogent, and literate. The attacks are focused. Their previously ham-fisted platitudes are pocketed for syringe attacks filled with acid that burns onto the small patches of exposed neck of corporate and governmental graft, providing small windows into Propagandhi's very real world of active, perpetual rebellion. The music matches the cacophony and gets about as fast as you can get while retaining a melody. Seething of speedmetal, the entire album sounds like it's surrounded by barbed wire, like these ideas were made in an internment camp or they're already illegal by committing the crime of thought contrary to popularized Disney-fied belief. Whatever happened to them in the last five years since "Less Talk, More Rock," has made me an unabashed fan. -Todd (Fat, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119-3690)

#### **Q AND NOT U**

##### **"No Kill No Beep Beep" CD**

Kinda heavy on the college rock at times, this disc nevertheless has an edginess that manages to transcend any wimpy pretentiousness that the dreaded "C" word might evoke. Pretty good. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dischord, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007)

#### **RAGGITY ANNE**

##### **"Only Square People Think It's Cool to be Cool" CD**

Bland pop punk disguised as '60s trash rock. Bastards. -Jimmy Alvarado (Boss Tuneage, PO Box 19550, London, SW1 1FG, UK)

#### **RAW POWER**

##### **"Trust Me" CD**

It's been nigh on 15 years since I last heard anything from this Italian institution and, judging from this release, things haven't changed much. The formula is still metallic guitars married to over-the-top, punishing hardcore. The only noticeable difference I'm able to detect is that Mauro's voice has gotten a little raspier over the years. If you like your hardcore pretty mean, you can't go wrong with Raw Power. A word of caution, though. Don't expect eloquent lyrics, because it is sometimes painfully obvious that, although they are able to get their basic point across, their native language is not English. -Jimmy

Alvarado (Hello, 100 E. Vine St., Suite 809, Lexington, KY 40507)

#### **ROCKET 455**

##### **"Cross-Eyed" 7"**

Rocket 455 raucously roar with robust bowery garagerock trashiness which sent me into a spastic state of all-out foot-stompin' insanity. The duo of deviant ditties contained on this skull-pummelling platter of psychotic sounds fiercely rage with murderous musical madness like there just ain't no tomorrow. It knocked me upside the head with such full-force seething intensity. I'm now permanently brain-damaged, cross-eyed, and imbecilically slobberin' all over myself... wheeeee, what fun! -Roger Moser, Jr. (Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317; <<http://www.gethip.com>> or Rocket 455, 5299 Tarnow, Detroit, MI 48210)

#### **RONDELLES, THE**

##### **"The Fox" CD**

I was a little bit disturbed when I first listened to this CD, for it's a bit different from their last and first (self-titled) album. The first album reminded me of rollerskating rings and comic book reading. It was a little more pop-y and the keyboards were a little more prominent. "The Fox" sounds a little harder, a little more mature. Here's where I have torn feelings. I respect a band who finds maturity with their music, but part of the charm of the Rondelles are their teenage rebelliousness. This album still gives you plenty of room to dance and play your electric air guitar. I guess these CDs are the difference between chocolate cake and brownies. I like one for its light and airy sweetness, but I like another for it's thick, stick-to-the-roof-of-my-mouth goopy goodness. Both are equally as exciting and good, served up fresh and with love by the band we all crave. -Harmonee (Teen Beat, PO Box 3265, Arlington, VA 22203; <[www.teenbeatrecords.com](http://www.teenbeatrecords.com)>)

#### **RUMBLESEAT**

##### **"Trestles" b/w "Restless" 7"**

This is the country side project of Chris and Chuck of Hot Water Music, along with Samantha Jones, that heavily reminds me of Johnny Cash's "Rock Island Line" LP (mostly because it's chock-full of railroad references). It's replete with solemn echoes, poetic vagrants, and souls who have been beaten but not broken accompanied by plaintive vocals and a warm-toned, hollow-body guitar. What keeps it far from sucking is that it's cliché-free, and it trembles out of the speakers as heart-felt. A welcome change of pace. -Todd (\$3 ppd. to No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604-4636. Rumbleseat, 116 NW 13th St. #141, Gainesville, FL 32604)

#### **SAIBON**

##### **"Number Two" 7" EP**

Who the fuck are these guys? This is some righteous fast punkrockdon't-giveashittearthefuckinghousedown genius! Eight brilliant tracks on this piece of shit disc, every one of them crucial listening matter for anyone even pretending to have a clue. I suggest you buy out the pressing of this and give 'em to all those Blink fans at your school so that they'll know what real

punk rock sounds like. -Jimmy Alvarado (Hard On, Jarntorgsgatan 10, 703 61, Orebro, Sweden)

#### **SCARED OF CHAKA**

##### **"Seven Stories Tall" CD**

An anthology of sorts, compiling various singles, B-sides, comp tracks and a live set. If you've heard 'em before, you know what you're getting yourself into. If you haven't, picture the Supercharger with a tad more hardcore sensibilities playing pop punk. Pretty good stuff. -Jimmy Alvarado (702, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

#### **SHORT FUSES**

##### **"Get the Hell Down" CD**

Sounds like the BellRays with more restraint. A pinch less soul and a dab more metal. Either way, the formula's still the same but the ingredients aren't quite right. Maybe the oven wasn't at the right temp. A few listens and I'm disappointed. -RumbleStripper (Sympathy for the Record Industry)

#### **SICK BEES**

##### **"My Pleasure" CD**

This was kind of a harsh listen at first, but I worked it in like a pair of Docs. Sick Bees are a duo (guitar and drums) but they do have bass and some keyboards on the album. This album experiences many attitude changes throughout its entirety. Songs go from light and twangy to harsh and heavy. A clarinet gets some good use. Overall a good listen. -Harmonee (Up, Box 21328, Seattle, WA 98111)

#### **SLIGHT SLAPPERS**

##### **"A Selfish World Called Freedom" CD**

The band's name is a misnomer, for there is nothing slight about what they do. Their music is the aural equivalent of being repeatedly bitch-slapped with a studded metal fly swatter. This is a seein' stars, turn all the lights off, no relief in sight migraine that no amount of aspirin is gonna help. It's all hyper-speed tempos, over-the-top screeching and a "let's go in, kill 'em all and get the fuck out" plan of attack. The title of their opening salvo says it all: "Tokyo Power Violence." -Jimmy Alvarado (HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013 Japan)

#### **SLIGHT SLAPPERS**

##### **"A Selfish World Called Freedom" CD**

My band did a split with these guys and it was one of our more popular releases. Fastcore at its finest - manic rage that feels like a power drill is being forced against your temple while you are overdosing on amphetamines. Screaming vocals are flowing over guitar riffs that are so fast that you wonder if it is possible. The drum beats are pounded so fast you wonder if the tape machine was sped up. I sometimes think the bass player must have calluses the size of quarters on his fingers. It's a full release with 20 tracks that barely clocks in just under 21 minutes; short bursts of intense energy that peaks your adrenaline meter to the point of a heart attack and you survive with no side effects. This is the first thing you need to listen to after leaving that shitty job you got stuck in. -Donofthedeath (HG Fact)

#### **SMALL BROWN**

## BIKE

### "Dead Reckoning" CD

Small Brown Bike is touring with Leatherface and Hot Water Music now, and that line-up sounds just about right because Small Brown Bike is definitely in the same vein, musically. There's a sense of racing towards the edge of chaos without going off. The sound is very full, and everyone seems to be doing something interesting. The bass guitar is more prevalent in this album than in most rock'n'roll records, but not in a wanking way. Ben Reed has a way of playing bass like it's a drum, filling in spaces between beats. It's very cool and it matches well with the rest of the songs, which all rock. Lyrically, it comes across as the poetry of a melancholy guy in his twenties, which I don't really dig, but when you don't read the lyric sheet, you catch only snippets of pretty poetic lines, and I do dig that. No Idea found a real gem in this band. I'm looking forward to catching them live when they come around. -Sean Carswell (No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

## SMOGTOWN

### "Audiophile" 7" EP

The question I find myself presented with is this: How or what makes Smogtown the best at what they do - surf punk? The title track fucking kills and plays along like an air raid siren blasting over a bong-toking beach party. It's the fun, nervous tension that they capture which is so addictive. I can hear echoes of the past of Orange County punk, but those echoes are distant compared to the absolutely fresh scree Smogtown continues to provide. They even tackle and champion an instrumental on this one: "Blackout in Beach City." As with anything that has Smogtown on the cover, you'll be a better person if you buy it. That all said, the cover blows. Sorry, but it looks like someone just learned computer layout, found the emboss filter and had a 45 spool to play with. My only qualm with the band? Tour, you fuckers, tour and the world will be yours. -Todd (Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)

## SMUT PEDDLERS

### "Bipolar Girl" 7" EP

Tickle me pink and tattoo a skull on my throat. This is good. When I'd cordoned off the Smut Peddlers to the playground of The Dwarves and GG Allin camp of white trash punk, comes this slab of wax. The playing has always been powerful (shit, with Roger Ramjet (X-Members, Pushers, ADZ) skinning his guitar, leading the attack) and with Julia's drumming and Gish's bass, the music's been as tight as a liposuctioned thigh on a soccer mom, but the lyrics seemed - well - a bit dumb. I'm not asking for "Masterpiece Theatre" or anything, but it seemed they were gonna get as complex and deep as shooting speed. Maybe I wasn't listening closely enough before. For example, with the song and main chorus "Let's Get (Fucked Up)" is the inverse of what you're thinking. It's about the travails of a sober guy drinking fizzy apple cider on New Years Eve. And the other two songs complete Polaroid snapshots of Orange County in decline - surfers with Hepatitis C, washed-up construction

worker surfers, and being in love with a girl with a bona fide psychological disorder. I'd even go far to say that "Surfer's Grave" is an epic. A surprise. What separates this release from the rest of the Hostage pack? The band's actually smiling on the picture on the insert. -Todd (Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)

## SOLAR SATURDAY, THE

### "The Solar Saturday" EP

Kinda garage/lounge/indie. The keyboardist from Papas Fritas is in the band so it does sound a bit like them. Definitely Silverlake lounge-able for those of you in the LA area and know where I'm talking about. If you're not fond of bands who bear tambourines, then you might not like Solar Saturday. -Harmonee (Nearby Music, PO Box 441448, Somerville, MA 02144)

## STRAIGHTFACED

### "Pulling Teeth" CD

If I were in Helmet, I'd sue these guys back into the Stone Age. -Jimmy Alvarado (Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90026)

## STRIKE ANYWHERE

### "Chorus of One" CDEP

Fuck me, this is great. Ever listen to bands that burn fast and hot just like gasoline, that make you want to start fires the first time you put them on? They've got the supercharged posi-core anthems for tomorrow dynamics down to a tee. I hear a lot of Good Riddance, only if Russ was cloned three times and did backup vocals. I hear a lot of Avail. Super tight, uber-force Richmond, Virginia songs of rebellion. (Lyrics proclaim "resist infiltration," "we are at war" and "leave their power unfilled." And the conviction is so believable that it's far from laughable.) I hear a lot of Hot Water Music. The guitarists are twining the same strands of rope into a double-tight musical noose and although the songs are powerful, they're not simple, wanky, nor fearful of slowing down on occasion. Most importantly, I hear a band that believes in themselves. Impressive first volley across the bow. I think Jade Tree's going to re-release this. -Todd (Red Leader, PO Box 20836 - Park West Finance Station, NY, NY 10025; <www.redleaderrecords.com>)

## SWALLOWING SHIT

### Self-titled CD

As you may have deduced by the band name, these guys play(ed) crushing, super-fast hardcore with throat-shredding vocals. This is supposedly an anthology of their recorded work. There's 16 tracks, but the last one actually consists of four or five little tracks, bringing the total to 20-21 tracks clocking in at 18 minutes total. One of the guys is now in Propagandi, if that means anything to anyone. Pretty mean shit. -Jimmy Alvarado (G7 Welcoming Committee, PO Box 27006, 360 Main Street Concourse, Winnipeg, MB R3C, 4T3 Canada)

## TIGER ARMY

### Self-titled CD

With such "powerhouse" affiliations (A.F.L., Tim Armstrong, Rob Peltier of the Quakes, nourishment from the Hellbillys and across-the-board refer-

ences to early Misfits and the Rev), only the most bored and bitter of devotees could wonder why this shouldn't be the American psychobilly "IT" band of the millennium. Although the album gets off to a rollicking good start like any great Klingonz album would, Nick 13's (insert hysterical bobby soxer screams here) mellifluous voice, albeit strong and unwavering, doesn't always convince or make a concave impression through the blistering muck of a nimble-played stand-up and rip-roarin' guitar, all done up in proper style. But there is redemption - Nick's voice shines like a Gibbous moon late for Halloween on the more country-oriented material (akin to Ness sans battle scars) and may send chills through the spines of any pretty-boy lovin' Bang Bang sissy. Caveat emptor: proceed with caution and a grain of salt. The hoodoo-voodoo setting may bore you to death and that ain't how the properly evil die. -RumbleStripper (Hellcat; <www.hell-cat.com>, <www.tigerarmy.com>)

## TILTWHEEL/ OVAL split 7"

This 7" has two three-piece bands who approach music similarly. Tiltwheel: unsung, virtually unknown, and usually hands-down favorites of mine, don't play poorly, but Davey's vocals on this 7" sound like a hybrid between Alvin Chipmunk and a prostate cancer'd Bob Mould - tight, high, and uncomfortable. It think it's the mastering or Davey lost a testicle and didn't tell anyone. Anyway, if you're willing to be netted into songs instead of going for a "professional," bright hook, Tiltwheel will grab a toe and take you down slowly. (Well, except the second song is a cover of Cher's "Believe.") Their last LP, "Hair-Brained Scheme Addicts" is well worth seeking out. Oval: hyper-proficient, super-tight Japanese rock, much in the vein of Leatherface's instrumentation (i.e. they build this thing called tension instead of doing a bar chord). If you give your ears the time to unspool what's being played, you realize how lazy most other pop bands are. The only drawback is, once again, the vocals, which are scratchy and stuck in mid-screch all the way through - but maybe that's how they always sound. Last word: hard to fully endorse because of the vocals, but wouldn't hurt to snap up if you see it in the bin. -Todd (Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201, Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, Japan)

## TRASH BRATS, THEE

### "Rocket To Heaven" 7"

The two tumultuous topsy-turvy tunes on this here vicious lil' piece of vinyl are twisted, crazed, and raucously turbulent; the frenzied epitome of trashy rock'n'roll wickedness! Imagine an amped-out faster-paced New York Dolls cacophonously crossbred with a louder more frantic Lazy Cowgirls, and there ya have the sleazy sonic aggression of Thee Trash Brats. My ears are now a smoldering mound of mush, and I just couldn't be any happier! - Roger Moser, Jr. (Law Less, PO Box 689, Hingham, MA 02043-0689) or Thee Trash Brats, PO Box 05387, Detroit, MI 48205; <www.trashbrats.com>)

## TRASH BRATS

### "Songs in the Key of F U" CD

Glam punk, meant in the best sense of the term. These guys have apparently been around forever, but they don't seem to be lacking in the Hanoi Rocks/Electric Chairs-inspired hooks department. Yeah, there's more bands doing this shit these days than is probably good, and most of them do suck pretty fucking hard, but these guys appear to be one of those rare exceptions, that hidden ruby in a putrid dung heap. The fact that they also have a healthy sense of humor doesn't hurt matters much. Thumbs up. P.S.: Thanks for not including the cover of "Civilization's Dying." You have no idea how many cover versions of that fucking song I've been subjected to these last few months. -Jimmy Alvarado

## TRUE NORTH

### "We Speak in Code" CD

I saw these guys open up for Fugazi a while ago. They weren't the band that Fugazi took on tour with them to open, just the local band that gets to open for the band that gets to tour with Fugazi. Pretty far down on the totem pole, is what I'm getting at. Anyway, they left me with the strange sensation of wanting the opening band's set to last longer and the even stranger sensation of wanting the band opening for Fugazi's set to last longer. Then, I didn't hear anything from them again for over a year, so when I saw this album, I was stoked. The first time I listened to it, I liked it, but it didn't strike me as anything that special. I may have even passed on it if I hadn't enjoyed their set so much. With each listen, though, this album gets better. True North is definitely a Fugazi progeny. They have that edge and that sense of disjointedness. The singer even sounds a little bit like Guy. The music isn't quite as complex or polished as Fugazi, but the songs tend to carry a higher rockin' factor. And now that this album has spent some time in my high rotation, I'm starting to like everything about it from the tempo changes and methodic nuances to the photos in the CD booklet (including one photo of the killer Gainesville record collective, the Wayward Council). Highly recommended. -Sean Carswell (No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

## TRUE NORTH

### "We Speak in Code" CD

Take a blender. Add equal parts early Minutemen, hardcore and arty pretentiousness. Set controls for puree. Ingest. Relax, it's better than it sounds. -Jimmy Alvarado (No Idea)

## TUULI

### "Rockstar Potential" CD

This six-song CD is a virtual re-release of the Toronto band's "Hotrods & Honeysuckle" six song debut which was pretty much available only in Canada previously. The only difference is the substitution of the Go-Gos-like "Who's The Fool Now" for the song "So Glad" on the old release. A wise decision as "Who's the Fool Now" is the superior song. And, also wisely, they chose to retain their delicious cover of the Vibrators "Baby, Baby" which alone makes this EP worth getting. -Bob (Sympathy)

## TWO TON BOA

### Self-titled CD

This band is fascinating to say the least. Supported by drums, two electric bass and the acidic voice and lyrics of Sherry Fraser, Two Ton Boa does in fact supply that much weight. They're kind of like watching a collision on the highway, a body lay there rotting in the sun near the center divider, but you apply your brakes, compelled to observe the gore spread out before you and you give a crack to the window just enough to inhale the stench. This CD glows with the sounds and spirits invoked from early carnival, circus and freak shows. To become enthralled is only the beginning. Go ahead and try to not listen to this CD first note to last. It's hard to press the stop button when your eyes are glazed over and your body's bathed in sweat. -Harmonee (Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State Ave., Olympia, WA 98501)

## URKO

"Fast3chordhardcoremotherfuckingthrasherpunkshit" 7" EP

The title of this sweet little piece of wax says it all. -Jimmy Alvarado (Disintegration, PMB 419, 1442A Walnut St., Berkeley, CA 94709)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "0 to 60 in 73 Bands" CD

The title says it all, zero to 60, as in seconds. Most of the bands are probably not too well known, but there are a couple o' "names" here (Oi Polloi, the Vapids). The music is startlingly diverse, from pop punk to hardcore to grind to hip-hop to noise to acoustic and anywhere in between. As expected, there are some tracks that are dubious at best, but the majority of them are pretty good and the disc as a whole is worth your time. -Jimmy Alvarado (No!No!, 1862 Virnankay, Ann Arbor, MI 48103)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "H.E.A.R. This" CD

A pretty good sampling of punk old and new, featuring the Lewd, Avengers, Suicide King N.Y., Shonen Knife, Damnation, Scared of Chaka, Texas Terri, VKTMS, Tongue, Mary Monday, The Bellrays and many more. This was better than I expected. Proceeds benefit Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers. -Jimmy Alvarado (Sub City, PO Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7495)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### Hostage Situation" CD

An absolutely amazing comp of what's been happening on Southern California's beaches the past few years. Included are tracks from Smogtown, The Bleeders, The Numbers, Smut Peddlers, Bonecrusher, The Negatives, The Spooky, The Crowd, The Bodies, Instagram, Discontent, The Fakes, The Pushers, Curb, and The Decline, all of which are previously unreleased and all of which are crucial. Even bands that did little for me before clock in here with some amazing tracks. Fuck, there's even quality readin' material on the inside that has nothin' to do with how to contact the band. When's the last time anyone had the courtesy to provide you with something worthwhile to read with a comp?!? Rick Bain has outdone himself with this puppy. Look at me, I'm gushing over a fucking punk comp. I

haven't done that since I bought my first "Rodney" comp back in 81! Mark my words: this disc will go down in the annals of punk rock history as one of the most important musical documents of a scene ever released, right next to "Flex Your Head," "This is Boston, Not L.A.," "Not So Quiet on the Western Front," "Beach Blvd." and "Lawrence Welk Presents: the Sound of Andorra." Trust me, you NEED this. -Jimmy Alvarado (Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615; <www.hostagerecords.net>)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Hostage Situation" CD

Anything less would simply be a disappointment from Hostage Records. I was truly blown away by the power and emotions spewed out by these bands. The variety in styles also helped shape the sound of the true underground scene we've managed to keep alive over the years. With music like this, I wonder how many can possibly stand to listen to the radio these days. Before I forget, there's a secret photo which I discovered while finding a place to hide my dope (just kidding). If you pop out the plastic disc holder inside, you'll find a photo consisting of many of the band members at a beach party, which I thought was a cool idea. Songs that stand out above the rest include: The Spooky's "Highway 39," Bonecrusher's "Warriors," Discontent's "The Shakes," Smut Peddlers, "Hoosgow." The Numbers, "I'm #1," The Crowd (doing an excellent job of covering the Weirdos') "Solitary Confinement," The Bleeders, "Elvis & Edie," and The Pushers, "You're Not," (along with an outstanding cover of the Stones') "Respectable." The accompanying booklet is basically a history of Hostage Records including all the bands that gave inspiration to the birth of Hostage, including The Stitches and their own release of the "Sixteen" 7". Once again, Rick Bain has proven himself to be an unselfish asset to the "only music" philosophy that matters. -Pete Hucklebuck (Hostage)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Internationally Yours Volume 2" 7"

Ditchdiggin' Records once again unleashes seven inches of ear-searing punkrock insurgency and "old school" audial anarchy from around the world. It's a mayhem musical melange seductively swirling with riot-inciting urgency and balls-out badboy belligerence! Seven cacophonously chaotic combos blast their skin-blistering brand of aural revolt on this here gut-pummelling platter of pure barbaric punkrock viciousness: The Goddamn Ditchdiggers (Texas), Planet Trash (Sweden), The Stillborns (Indiana), Unfortunate Sons (Texas), Aaargh! (France), Skurvy The Clown (Florida), and Billy Boy E La Sua Banda (Italy). Yep, this is the savage sound of all-out indefatigable insurrection runnin' crazed and rabidly rampant in the streets and alleys of anytown and everytown all over this godforsaken globe... -Roger Moser, Jr. (Ditchdiggin' Recs., 106 Horaney Street, Longview, TX 75601; <www.angelfire.com/tx2/ditchdiggin> or The OldSchool zine, 4621 El Campo, Ft. Worth, TX 76132; <www.spinkle.com>)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Live at the Starlight, Fort Collins, CO" 7"

This is a four-way split 7", recorded live on the same night. Tanger: they've got the dissonant, jagged musical edge of Black Flag without the internal bite and damage index. Fair but not necessarily rad. Good Riddance: realizing they're becoming a fine hardcore band while retaining what they learned playing pop punk is one of the best moves Russ and company have made. "Yesterday Died, Tomorrow Won't Be Born" is the fastest - and my favorite - song of the bunch: terror with melody. Wretch Like Me: they write good songs but are still playing in the shadow of their mentors, All. All: play an art punk jazz metal remix of "Educated Idiot" that'll definitely stretch the ears (and perhaps the patience) of first-time listeners. A nice audio document, kinda like a punk diary entry. -Todd (O and O, PO Box 36, Fort Collins, CO 80522; <www.oandorecords.com>)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Quarters Vol. 1" 7"

Four-way split 7". Small Brown Bike: fantastic, ecstatic, run-down-hill-screaming power with bottle rockets launching out of their pockets. They're a listen akin to a melody assault - kinda like firearms and open arms. Lovesick: thrashy, screamy, acerbic, and grating self-professed Midwest "heartcore." Well-intentioned but not so enjoyable. Keleton DMD: Helmet meets Jawbox. Band plays stop-start, heavy poetic jams. I shrug. Quixote: slowish and herky jerky, so much so, I figure ways to rig the turntable so Small Brown Bike can launch from the other side and do some ass whooping. Song ends. I get beer. -Todd (Salinger Press, #06 180 Rosetta, Auburn Hills, MI 48326; <salingerpress@hotmail.com>)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Songs for the Jetset 2000" CD

This CD is fabulous. Imagine yourself sitting in one of those wobbly, double-cubbed, black science desks with the bunsen burner hookup in the middle of it, back in the seventh grade, watching a cheezy mid-'70s educational video about wind or the movement of human muscles. While watching neon outlines of someone doing a cartwheel, an x-ray of someone chewing and swallowing, or a girl with a blonde feather hairdo blowing the seeds off a dandelion in the sunshine, this music is playing. It's kind of an April March meets Air sort of thing, with maybe a few Atari game ditties thrown in for fun. Exciting in an early episode of Sesame Street kind of way. This CD makes me want to eat cereal, and that's a good thing. -Harmonee (Jetset, 67 Vestry St., NY, NY 10013)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "South America In Decline" CD

First, my obligatory bitch: Why is it that people insist on including Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and other countries in that area with South America? The majority of Mexico rests on the North American plate, which makes it part of North America, NOT South America. The other countries I mentioned are part of Central America. I won't even get into the fact that Puerto Rico is a Caribbean Island. That said,

this disc has 30 absolutely smoking punk/hardcore/grind tracks from a variety of American countries where some dialect of Latin is spoken and being a punk is not a fashion statement but an act of rebellion that could very likely get you killed. I would imagine that, aside from Brazil's Ratos de Porao, the average U.S. punker would have no idea who any of the bands on here are, so I won't bother listing them. If you dig your hardcore loud, fast, and pissed off, though, you'd be a fool not to pick this up. International comps this good don't come along too often. -Jimmy Alvarado (Six Weeks, no visible address)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### "Tomorrow Will Be Worse Volume 2" CD

Full-throttle, punishing hardcore here, courtesy of Real Reggae, Krigshot, MK Ultra, Mukeka di Rato, 9 Shocks Terror, Uncurbed, Scalplock and Ruido. The tunes are fast, hard, unrelenting and there ain't a bad one in the lot. Excuse me while I stagedive offa this here desk... -Jimmy Alvarado (Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)

## WARLOCKS, THE

### Self-titled CD

The Kinks and the Velvet Underground go to see Pink Floyd, who are trying to channel the spirit of the Monkees covering Ravi Shankar through a lava lamp that has apparently been force-fed to Jim Morrison's belly button. -Jimmy Alvarado (Bomp, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

## WILD SAMMY & THE ROYALTONES

### "Speed Crazy" CD

Wild is right. This is some Grade-A, smokin' surf music from a top-notch Japanese trio. The rhythm section provides a solid backbeat for a guitarist who has all the chops to put him up in league with Dick Dale himself. No bull-shittin' here, kid, this is some seriously good music. -Jimmy Alvarado (One Million Dollar, address cut off by some asshole at the label trying to prevent this from being resold. Your loss in the end, moron)

## X

### "Home is Where the Floor is" 7" EP

Not to be confused with the LA band, this is a collection of late-'70s recordings by this long-gone Aussie band. What it sounds like is raw, rude punk slop with virtually no discernable Ramones influence whatsoever. Classic, to say the least. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rocknroll Blitzkrieg, PO Box 11906, Berkeley, CA 94712)





Send all zines for review to Razorcake, PO Box 42129, LA, CA 90042. Please include the a contact address, the number of pages, the price, and whether or not you accept trades.



**BOOK OF LETTERS** #14, \$3 ppd., 5 1/2 X 8 1/2, copied, 48 pgs. There's no getting around the fact that Rich Mackin is a funny motherfucker. I've read his first thirteen books of letters and number fourteen still had me laughing to beat the band. Parts anyway. Mackin's letters to corporations are sharp, witty, and occasionally pretty deep. Some corporations are still taking the bait. A few consumer reps took the time to respond to Mackin personally, and no matter how lame a personal response comes across, I still admire it ten times more than the always lame form letters Mackin seems to get reams of. Kellogg's responded to a Mackin haiku. I thought that was pretty cool. After I got done laughing, I spent a lot of time thinking about the founder of Kellogg's and what a health nut he was (and I do mean nut) and how ironic it is that the company making a fortune off his name is doing it by using genetically engineered flakes. I bet that puts tabasco in the ghost of Dr. Kellogg's colostomy bag. And so it goes. Good for hours of entertainment. -Sean Carswell (Rich Mackin, PO Box 890, Allston, MA 02134)

**CLAMOR** #6, \$4 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset glossy, 90pgs. I think Clamor is trying to take the place of left leaning mags like Harper's and The Nation by not pulling any punches and covering issues from a punk rock perspective. The news isn't as timely as the larger magazines, but in most cases, it's more thorough. Word on the street has it that Clamor was even voted best new magazine by Utne Reader. So it's definitely respectable. This issue has articles on the police strategies surrounding the protest of the Democratic National Convention, an interview with Spitting Image author Jerry Lembcke, a history of skate parks, and a bunch of articles covering different political, economic, and cultural issues. Some kook even wrote an article about the newest Star Wars movie and how it's a metaphor for American society. Geez, where'd they find that guy? Anyway, the quality of the articles varies, but there are definitely some gems in here. -Sean Carswell (Clamor, PO Box 1225, Bowling Green, OH 43402)

**ENGINE** #6, \$3 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, 60 pgs. This is another cool issue of Matt Average's hardcore and punk zine. There's a great drunken interview with Smogtown; an equally great if less drunken interview with the Stitches; a lengthy, Santaria-

drenched interview with former Feederz frontman Frank Discussion; and pretty thorough coverage of various hardcore bands. Matt does a lot of interesting things graphically that aid to your reading rather than disrupt it. There's also a handful of columns and a bunch of record reviews. I like this zine a lot. -Sean Carswell (Engine, PO Box 64666, LA, CA 90064)

**EXTREME CONFORMITY** #3, \$3 ppd., 4 1/4 X 11, copied, 60 pgs. This is a fiction zine from Larry Nocella of QECE. It's a hilarious story about an art exhibit gone awry, and in a tongue and cheek manner, Nocella attacks mob mentality, censorship, the media, protests, and pretentious art fucks. I laughed all the way through reading this. Nocella also did something really cool by posting this issue of this zine on the web and letting you download it for free. Send me three dollars and I'll give you the web address. Or skip the middleman and check out Larry's stuff at: <[www.geocities.com/qece/](http://www.geocities.com/qece/)>. -Sean Carswell (QECE, 406 Main St. #3c, Collegeville, PA 19426)

**GARAGE AND BEAT** #1, \$3.50 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, 46 pgs. I always liked Edwin's column, No Car Garage, in Flipside. He knows so much about music and has a real talent for sharing that knowledge with you without pulling the typical record collector bullshit of making you feel stupid for not knowing about, say, a Japanese garage rock album that went out of print five years before you were born. The premier issue of Garage and Beat reads like an extended Edwin column, with the common Edwin homage to Dionysus Records and the Dave Clark Five, plus a down-to-earth story about his passion for record collecting; interviews with Les Sexareenos and the Bobbyteens; and bunch of record reviews. All in all, it's a good read. -Sean Carswell (P. Edwin Letcher, 2754 Prewitt St., Los Angeles, CA 90031)

**JERSEY BEAT** #67, \$3.00 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, over a hundred pages. The title helps you out - lots of music that's from or coming through New Jersey. Literally thousands of reviews. (Quite a few of the columns are just more reviews, separated by critic.) This issue's coverage leans toward the less aggro and more to the introspective and "musically crafting" bands. Interviews with Saves The

Day, Rainer Maria, The Anniversary, Radar Mercury, The Lapse, Rusty Nails, and Novena. I do have a question for Jim Testa, the editor, though. Why so low a line screen on all your photos? It looks like all of the in-house graphics are viewed through miniature chain link fences. You can bump those bad boys to 85 lines per inch, and it'll print nice. All in all, a real solid musical resource that's definitely keeping its ears to the ground and hearing the future shocks of the music world. -Todd (Jersey Beat, 418 Gregory Ave., Weehawken, NY 07087)

**MICRO-FILM** #3, \$3.50 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset glossy, 38 pgs. Reading Micro-Film is pleasant torture for me. It's full of interesting articles about independent films that I know I'll never get to see, but I love to read about them and think how cool it would be if the movie theater down the street showed them instead of fucking Hannibal. But even knowing that I can't get my hands on most of the movies covered in Micro-Film, I appreciate knowing that independent filmmaking is still alive, vital, and only a couple of years of technological advancements and price reductions away from being accessible. I always dig Jason Pankoke's editorials, too. He has a way of starting with what appears to be a simple story about being a movie fan, then transcending into a subtly philosophical diatribe that relates to my life and things I've been thinking about. And as for the films I'll never see, this issue covers two indie punk rock flicks, Godass and Threat; the latest Troma film (Troma is the team that made Toxic Avenger); a new movie funded by Kevin Smith and written and directed by one of his filmmaking buddies, Vincent Pereira; and a bunch more really cool looking movies. -Sean Carswell (Opteryx Press, PO Box 45, Champaign, IL 61824)

**OFF-LINE** #15, \$1 by mail, free to low-income, 5 1/2 X 8 1/2, copied, 63 pgs. Off-line's a serious political zine that doesn't shy from a fight in print. Although it borders on self-righteous indignation on occasion, there's no denying its scholarship, passion, diction, and erudition. This issue has a long piece dissecting an attack on pacifism (going to great detail to separate it from passivism), first-person accounts of the rallies against the School of the Americas, vegan recipes, and lengthy open-forum discussions from people who don't agree with



the main writer, Vincent. What's further striking is that Vincent is simultaneously a devout metal-head, Catholic, and a heavy duty peacenik activist; a unique melding of influences that all twine to an interesting, engaging perspective. The only off-putting element of the zine are the jabs and asides of condescension to people he disagrees with. Although he's well-armed with ideas - and is most often right - I think he'd benefit from keeping the soapbox home once in a while. (For example, he's flabbergasted on why someone would join the Army and not so interested in what keeps the Army such an attractive alternative to so many people. (A great resource that melds both a religious perspective to military life is the book "On Killing," by Lt. Col. David Grossman)). That all said, I can honestly say I learned more in 63 pages of Off-line than I did in a semester of high school history. -Todd (Claire E. Cocco and Vincent J. Romano, 35 Barker Ave., #4G, White Plains, NY 10601)

**PUNK #2**, \$5 PPD., 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, glossy cover, 50pgs. Hey, look, twenty-plus years between issues. It's still got lots of hand lettering. It's kind of like Mad Magazine. It's got a lot of scenster writing for it. They name Blink 182 as the 62nd top band of '99. Interviews with Murphy's Law, Niagara, Machinegun (Chris Fields of Jon Cougar Concentration Camp), futuristic novelist William Gibson, and lots of people with huge egos clawing for their glory days. It's OK, but there seems to be a Rumpelstiltskin-esque musical chasm for Punk from 1977 to 2001; almost like nothing of note happened musically besides what their contributors were involved with. -Todd (Punk, PMB 675, 200 E. 10th St., NY, NY 10003; <www.punkmagazine.com>)

**QECE #12**, \$3 ppd., 5 1/2 X 8 1/2, copied, 55 pgs., QECE - Question Everything, Challenge Everything - is a political zine from Pennsylvania. The first half of this issue discusses animal cruelty, the death penalty, and a history of milk. The second half has four different perspectives on the Unity 2000 protests in Philadelphia this past summer. What sets QECE apart from most other political zines, though, is its ability to discuss issues intelligently without taking on that all-too-familiar know-it-all tone. The writers seem to be undergoing a process of discovery rather than coming off as ill-informed authorities, and I appreciate that. And

though they take on serious issues, they don't take themselves too seriously. In some parts, it's pretty damn funny. Editor Larry Nocella is serious about taking over the media from the grassroots, and I'll take QECE over The New Republic any day. -Sean Carswell (QECE, 406 Main St. #3c, Collegeville, PA 19426)

**SHORT, FAST AND LOUD! #5**, \$2.00, 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, 56 pgs.

The name says it all. ADD thrashers unite. If you like Cookie Monster vocalists, assflaps, fork-in-garbage-disposal solos, and tack the word "core" to every possible musical style (Japancore, blurcore, grindcore), this is your bag of nails. Edited by Chris Dodge (Spazz, Slap a Ham Records), the music selection is spot on. Clean layouts, pics of people jumping really high, and a refreshing load of fanaticism, all make this pretty pleasant. Interviews and articles about Heresy, Nice View, and Blaine Cook of the Fartz. My only quibble is that some of the columnists seem so fucking bored and jaded - instead of as amped up and crazed as the music they're writing about. -Todd (Short, Fast, and Loud, PO Box 420843, SF, CA 94142-0843)

**SUBURBAN VOICE #44**, \$4.00 ppd., 8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, glossy cover, 144 pgs.

I was flipping through a book about punk rock poster art the other day, and it was full of quotes from people who had been in the scene in the late seventies/early eighties, and a bunch of the quotes were about how great the past was and how everything sucks now. It was starting to get on my nerves. Then, I came across Al Quint's passage about how punk rock was great then and it's great now and that's why he continues to put out Suburban Voice after sixteen years. That quote reminded me of what I already knew: Al Quint rocks. This issue of Suburban Voice is no exception. It has one of the most in-depth and hilarious interviews with Dillinger Four that I've ever read. He also interviews heavy hitters like Cocksparrer and Hot Water Music, as well as F-Minus, Kill the Man Who Questions, the Varukers, the Nerve Agents, and a few more. There's a cool article on the Clash, some decent columns, and tons of reviews (I should add that Quint does my favorite kind of record reviews: ones that I agree with). All in all, it's a hell of a good read. It comes with a compilation CD, too, with Toxic Narcotic, A Poor Excuse, Broken, Aus Rotten,

and twenty-two more bands. -Sean Carswell (Suburban Voice, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903)

**TILTED #1**, \$1 ppd. (?), 4 1/4 X 4 1/2, photocopied, 40 pgs.

What would be an eloquent and literate homage to a fantastic band, Lifter Puller, becomes a eulogy. The band broke up right after this little zine came out, and after reading it through, it made me all the more happy that I'd seen Lifter Puller live a couple weeks prior to their demise (to verify that the true verve of the band that Mike writes about wasn't just the well-written musings of a publicist-to-be). What separates Tilted from most of the herd of its collated and stapled brethren is the ease and fluidity of the writing without collapsing into simple cheerleading nor chastising the reader for never having heard of the band. Enthusiasm, well written. Mike also has a knack of weaving narrative, interview, observation, and correspondence into a seamless whole. His style is staccato and rhythmic; rapid bursts followed by explanation: "LFTR PLLR is Literature. It is raw emotion of mystery and suspense, true orbiting paranoia, a comedy of errors, the new world as viewed and aurally construed by the newest. LFTR PLLR is cruising the

strip and about to jump on the freeway." Fine, fine read, even if you don't know or will never listen to the band he's musing about. -Todd (Stovepiper Books, PO Box 370895, Reseda, CA 91337-0895)

**UPRISING! #9**, \$1 ppd.,

8 1/2 X 11, offset newsprint, 31 pgs. This is a pretty cool punk rock zine from Michigan. It has interviews with River City High, PT'S Revenge, and Shift-D; a column about the Warped Tour that I enjoyed until I got to the end notes and the author said, "No one should go through the day without listening to at least one song by Morrissey or The Smiths"; an interesting Maui scene report; and tons of record reviews. Best of all, though, was the book review in the back, because they reviewed the book I wrote and said really nice things about it. Rob G, the guy who puts Uprising! together, is very positive and downright gung-ho about music, and his attitude is contagious. I like this zine. You can also check out extended Uprising! punk rock enthusiasm at <www.toledopunks.com>. -Sean Carswell (Uprising!, PO Box 2251, Monroe, MI 48161)



### **BECOME THE MEDIA**

Jello Biafra, Audio Book

What I like about Jello Biafra is that he's punk rock's own well-respected intellectual. He tours college campuses and gets paid (probably pretty well) to just talk about whatever's on his mind or whatever he's been reading lately, and people outside of punk rock respect what he has to say. And the cool thing is that he's got no real credentials except that he was once in a punk band. When you really think about it and realize that Biafra went from "Too Drunk to Fuck" to the national lecture circuit, you have to admit it's pretty cool. And, once

again, his talks are released in a three CD set. "Become the Media" starts off with a campaign speech Biafra gave in response to his presidential nomination by the Green Party. It's interesting in the sense that I agree with most of his points (which is very rare in the case of a political speech) and in the sense that he actually endorses Nader as he (Biafra) accepts the nomination. The only bad thing is that it sounds like a speech. Biafra sounds like he's reading off a teleprompter, and if I wanted a presidential candidate who reads off a teleprompter, well, I don't want a presidential candidate who reads off a teleprompter. Then he goes on to outline the problems with the WTO. It's pretty one-sided, but that doesn't bother me because I can't conceive of the other side making a solid argument for reintroducing DDT on our vegetables, dolphin in our tuna, and increased monoxide in our air. But that's just me. What do I know anyway? Biafra does a good job introducing the problems that the WTO represents, though. Then he goes on to give a hilarious, sardonic examination of school shootings and overall problems with education and suburbs in "Hellburbia." The second disc takes on computer technology in "Hack the Planet," then discusses the World Bank and IMF. Again, one-sided, but again, I have trouble finding a rational argument that explains why thrusting half the globe into suffocating poverty is a good thing. The last disc discusses genetically engineered food, the Republican National Convention, and

Joe Lieberman and his extremely conservative record (including time spent on the "700 Club"). It ends with kind of a rallying cry against mainstream entertainment and media. Basically, "Become the Media" is kind of a crash course in leftist or radical politics. Biafra is admirably thorough in his research, and even when he's not, his irreverence is enough to keep me listening. At times, he's almost a cheerleader for his beliefs. At other times, he takes himself less seriously and it's more enjoyable to share his beliefs. So there are some really good parts to this and some kind of weak or redundant parts, but all in all, I'm a Jello supporter. Fuck it, at least he's one of ours. Hell, maybe he'll even become the next Ralph Nader. Remember you heard that here, first. -Sean Carswell (Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141)

### **STORIES HOLLYWOOD NEVER TELLS**

Howard Zinn, Audio Book

Howard Zinn strikes me as an amazing writer, historian, and intellectual for several reasons. He delivers very complex information with a conversational tone, and he maintains a sense of humor when speaking of things that normally inspire outrage. When he speaks of war, he speaks of it from the perspective of both a veteran of war and a veteran of anti-war movements. When he speaks of the working class, he does it from the perspective of a man who grew up in cold-water flats in Brooklyn, then went on to work in

shipyards and warehouses. And when he speaks about history, he does so from the perspective of a well-respected scholar who has spent most of his life studying history. What's most striking to me is that, despite his tendency to return most conversations back to how unjust war is or back to the inequities of wealth, every time I read (or listen to) Howard Zinn, I learn something new. "Stories Hollywood Never Tells" keeps up that trend. This CD was recorded during a lecture Zinn gave at the Taos Talking Film Festival. Zinn begins by speaking of Hollywood movies that glorify war, like "Saving Private Ryan," but then he expands his focus to cover the Mexican War, the Phillipino War, Mother Jones, the Ludlow Massacre, and the New England textile strikes. It's a dazzling tour through not only films that are rarely made (I won't say never because John Sayles made "Matewan," which is a great movie about the Wobblies helping miners in West Virginia form a union), but also through events in history that public schools gloss over or ignore completely. If you've never heard of Howard Zinn and are maybe a little intimidated by the terms that float around him like "radical historian" or "intellectual," this CD is a warm, non-threatening introduction to Zinn's scholarship, his subtle sarcasm, and his point of view. If you've read everything Howard Zinn has ever written, you'll probably still find something new and interesting in this CD. -Sean Carswell (Alternative Tentacles)