

BIG WHEEL

California's Premier Preview Magazine

January 2006

FINDING B.M. FRANKLIN'S
G-SPOT

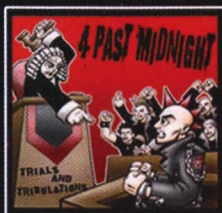
WANT TO SEE A SHOW TONIGHT?
**PULL OUT THE CALENDAR,
SEE WHO'S PLAYING**

SHAWN STERN
SAYS THIS, SHAWN STERN SAYS THAT
THE "WHY" OF DEAD KENNEDYS
PHILLIPE DUHART ASKS:
**WHY ARE THERE DEAD KENNEDYS
STILL DEMOCRATS?**

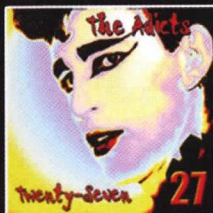
**THE
BRONX**
WILL KILL US ALL

**SOS
RECORDS**

good stuff



4 Past Midnight
Trials and Tribulations



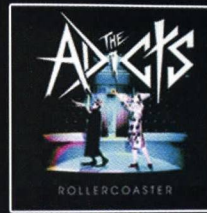
The Adicts
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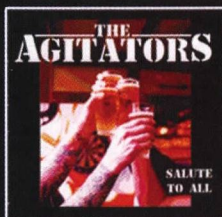
The Adicts
Made in England



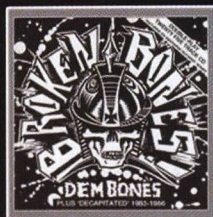
The Adicts
Rise and Shine



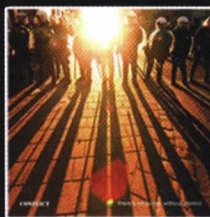
The Adicts
Rollercoaster



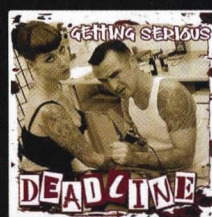
The Agitators
Salute to All



Broken Bones
Dem Bones
& Decapitated



Conflict
There's No Power Without Control



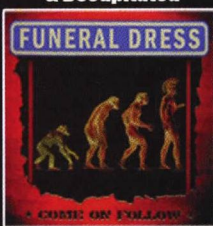
Deadline
Getting Serious



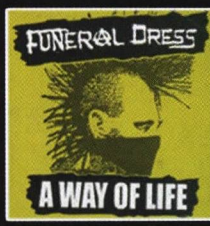
The Diffs
Self-Titled



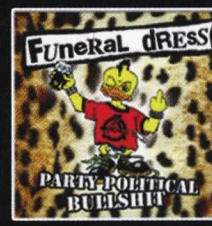
So Unloved
"Pink, Black & Broken"



Funeral Dress
Come on Follow



Funeral Dress
A Way of Life



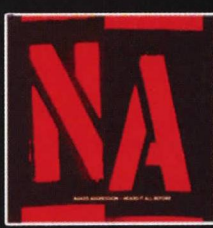
Funeral Dress
Party Political Bullshit



Bang Sugar Bang
Thwak Thwak Go Crazy



Mike Blanx and the SDABs
Starting Them Off Young



Naked Aggression
Heard it all Before



Resilience
Sound of Strength



The Vibrators
Buzzin'



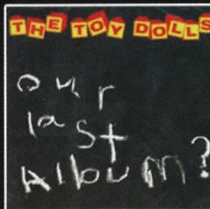
Final Conflict
Ashes to Ashes



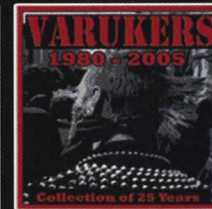
Total Chaos
Freedom Kills



Red Alert
Blazin' thru the Years



The Toy Dolls
Our Last Album?



Varukers
1980 - 2005
Collection of 25 Years



British Invasion 2K4
Double DVD

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THU JAN 5



A FALL FAREWELL
TEN FALLS FORTH
NAME FOLLOWED
BY A NUMBER

SAT JAN 7

**SHOWCASE
SHOWDOWN**
SEMI FINAL
BOTTLES FOR NIKKI
MIXBRED
MANKIND IS OBSOLETE
ECHOES OF EDEN
BLUSH
POISON JULIET
LAKEBOTTOM
AC SLATER

FRI JAN 13

Suffokate
PLAGUE OF SHEOL
INTAKEN
TAKE THIS HAND

SUN JAN 15



ion | DISSONANCE

WED JAN 18

LORENE DRIVE
APHASIA
Days Like These
Dear Whoever
SLOW COMING DAY

FRI JAN 20

3 Inches of Blood
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
20cents

FRI JAN 6

ELSEWORTH
Who Rides
The Tiger
No Bragging Rights
THE SILENCE
THE STRANGERS SIX

SUN JAN 8

BATTALION
of
SAINTS
DeKoiZ
Media Blitz
the Tuberculosis boys

SAT JAN 14

PLAY 9
COFFIN
DRAGGERS
THE HENCHMAN
MORE THAN NEVER
THE SKUNK

SUN JAN 15

**SUICIDE
SILENCE**
**WINDS
OF PLAGUE**
fate thirteen
To Something Beautiful

THU JAN 19

**AGAINST
EMPIRE**
MEAT OF MANKIND
LIFE IN EXILE

SAT JAN 21

REZUREX
NIMVIND
Shadow Reichenstein
**THE ASTOUNDING
ROY GORBISONS**

SUN JAN 22



NODES OF RANVIER

OBLIGE
BIRTH
AND
BURIAL
AUGUST
BURNS
RED

FRI JAN 27

DIMENSION PRESENTS
GREELEY*ESTATES
NEVEA TEARS
LOWER DEAFEN
SCREAMS OF SERENITY
COERCE holloway

SAT FEB 4

SCARLET
FIGHT PARIS
CALICO SYSTEM
the **esoteric**

FRI FEB 17

Burden of Guilt
SANGRE
DIVIDE THE DAY
Fall is Forgotten
SUNSET MURDERS
TO EACH HIS OWN

FRI MAR 3

**ORIGINAL
SINNERS**
FEATURING
Exene Cervenka of X
**7 SHOT
SCREAMERS**
plus special guests

SAT JAN 28

Death Before
Dishonor
RAMALLAH
BLOOD STANDS STILL

SAT FEB 11

plus special guests

SAT FEB 18

THROUGH THE
**EYES OF
THE DEAD**
THE NUMBER 12 LOOKS LIKE YOU
ED. GEIN
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

FRI MAR 31

SUB HUMAN
**PLUS
SPECIAL
GUESTS**

BRITISH INVASION 2K6
SATURDAY MARCH 4

ADICKS GBH
VICE SQUAD VARUKERS
UK SUBS **FUNERAL DRESS**

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Tickets available at the door

SHOWS

Thursday Jan 5

- Happy Fun Ball 11.00
- By All Means Necessary 10.00
- The Visitors 9.00

Friday Jan 6.

- The Hangmen 12.30 \$8 Cover
- Deadbeat Sinatra 11.30
- Anti Social 10.30
- The Beer Dogs 9.30
- Barbie and The Hookers 8.30pm

Saturday Jan 7

- The Pristines 12.30
- Gitch 11.30
- Malice of Forethought 10.30
- The Love Dolls 9.30
- Dub-8 8.30pm

Thursday Jan 12

- Stereo Chromatic 11.00
- Mothers Anger (Touring From Israel) 10.00
- Ten Count Junky 9.00
- ZEKG 8.00pm

Friday Jan 13

- Sloka 12.30
- Fatal Riot 11.00
- House Divided 9.30
- The Fratellis 8.30

Saturday Jan 14

Punk rock social-Live one Yr anniversary show!
\$10/\$8 cover with flyer.

- Dr. Know 12.30
- Smutt Peddlers 11.30
- The Skulls 10.30
- JetSex (Touring From France) 9.30
- Hit By A Semi 8.30pm

Friday Jan 20

- The Badbeats 12.30
- Jerra 11.00
- Rocking Scoundrels 9.30

Saturday Jan 21

- Truly Lover Trio 12.30 \$8 Cover
- The Volcanics 11.00
- Chuy and The Bobcats 9.30
- Pachuco Jose Y Los Diamantes 8.30pm

Sunday Jan 22

- Glory Hog 11.00
- Dirty Lenin (Touring From N.Y.) 10.00
- The Dents (Touring From Boston, MA.) 9.00
- Simmer 8.00pm

Friday Jan 27.

- The Ramonas (All female Ramones Cover) 12.30
- A Broken Heart Professional (former member of The Chubbies)

Saturday Jan 28.

Psychobilly Night with:

- Resurex 12.30 \$10 Cover
- Mad Marge and The Stonecutters 11.00
- Bamboula 9.30

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BIG WHEEL

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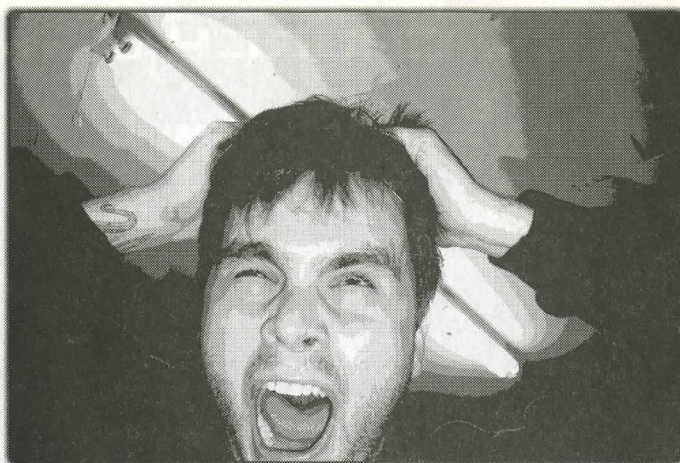
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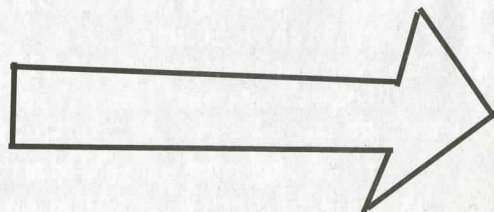
Editors Letter

Well, here it is: The Preview Mag! The monthly guide to what you're concert going desires dream of. There are tons of good shows in January to see, and while we covered just a few bands, we don't like to leave anything out. So if we left your band out, we didn't mean to. Let us know you have a show by the 15th of every month and we'll get it in the calendar fo sho. Hit us up even earlier and we'll try to get you a story in. With that said, it wouldn't be a Joey Balls editor's letter with out some personal trivial rant, would it?

I must give big shout out thanks to Mychelle, who at 8 months pregnant still finds time to handle mom duties and cook up a mean sausage. The whole crew sends her our hugest thanks for putting up with us. Especially Rafe. I'd be lying if I said this layout wasn't hell. That picture of me is from earlier today... 15 hours ago! But hey, a wise man once said you can't blame anyone else but yourself for the decisions you've made. So I can't complain, right?

With the New Year is upon us it's time for resolutions and figuring out how to better ourselves. That whole "new beginnings" thing. It's pretty sad when you signify a time to change your ways the same day you change your calendar. But I guess humans can be pretty sad, for that matter. Excuses are what we do best. I make them everyday, shit. Find a mistake in this magazine and I'll make one special just for you!

This month I came upon a few gems - The Sanke Pit Book (on Gorsky Press), the Swing Ding Amigos cd - thanks Flannel Santa! And a new found admiration for everything organized. So here it is, my New Year's resolution - Organize! Hold me to it.



THE CHURCH OF THE 8TH DAY PRESENTS

the Los Angeles murderfest VERSION 2.0



featuring performances from
(in alphabetical order)

A Dying Memory // Anal Blast // Antagony
Avoid Serious Injury // Blessing The Hogs
Blow Your Fucking Brains Out
Cephalic Carnage // Cerberus // Crematorium
Cursed // XDEATHSTARx // D.I. // Disgorge
Doomsday Device // Dr Know // Ed Gein
Embrace The End // Every Man For Himself
Exhausted Prayer // Fetus Eaters
Final Fight // Gatekeeper // Gaza
Graves At Sea // HIRAX
Horsemen Of The Apocalypse
Immolation // Impaled // Incantation
Infamy // Insatiation // Intronaut
Ive Been Shot // Job For A Cowboy
Kill The Client // Life Or Death
Light This City // Lose None // Meat Shits
Naked Aggression // Neuraxis // Phobia
Sadistic Intent // Sepsism // Severed // Shat
Sinful Bliss // Spring Break
Strong Intention // Suicide Silence
The Dolemite Project // The Faceless
Through The Eyes Of The Dead // To The Pain
Turmoil // Vital Remains // Vulgar Pigeons
Warriors // Watch Me Burn // Watch Them Die
Where Eagles Dare // With Immortality
With Passion plus more TBA

Feb 17th - 18th - 19th
At The Knitting Factory in Hollywood
For Ticket Prices Please Visit
www.LosAngelesMurderfest.com

For More Information and up to date band listings please visit www.ChurchOfThe8thDay.com

Knitting Factory - 7021 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood CA 90028 // Zen Sushi - 2609 Hyperion Ave. Silverlake CA 90027

Studio S - 5517 Satsuma Ave. North Hollywood CA 91601 // The Blvd. 2631 Whittier Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90023

Wed Jan 4th

GRAF ORLOCK - COMADRE
BAFABEGIVA - ACTS OF SEDITION
WE THINK IN CENTURIES
ASSHOLE ASSASSINATION SQUAD

At The Blvd.

\$6 - All Ages - Bar w/ID - 8pm

Thur Jan 5th

THE DOLEMITE PROJECT - REGAN SS
CARRY THE CASKET - FIGHT PRETTY
SOCIETYS DECAY - DIRTY HARRY

At The Blvd.

\$6 - All Ages - Bar w/ID - 8pm

Fri Jan 8th

RUIN THE ENDING - A LIFE IN VAIN

THE IRIS CODE

plus more TBA

At The Knitting Factory - Alt Lounge

\$8 - All Ages - Bar w/ID - 8pm

Sun Jan 8th

SCARS OF TOMORROW

THE FINAL BURDEN - STRAIGHT DOWN

DOC HOLIDAY - 357 FACELIFT

STRENGTH BEHIND TEARS

At Studio S

\$10 Adv. / \$12 Door - All Ages - 7pm

Mon Jan 16th

RIGOR MORTIS - DEPARTED

CONDEMNED TO SUFFER - GROTESQUE

plus more TBA

At Zen Sushi

\$8 adv. / \$10 door - 18 & Over - 8pm

Tue Jan 17th

FREQUENCY MURDER - BEFORE I WAKE

plus more TBA

At The Blvd.

\$6 - All Ages - Bar w/ID - 8pm

Wed Jan 25th

RAMALLAH - DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR

EMBRACE THE END - FIGHT EVERYONE

plus more TBA

At The Knitting Factory - Front Bar

\$10 adv / \$12 door - All Ages - 7:30pm

Fri Feb 3rd

Church Of The 8th Day & B.Bozz Presents

The Melting Pot - Night 2

Urban Expression Through Music

Featuring For The First Time In L.A.

THE SOCIETY OF INVISIBLES

plus more TBA

At The Knitting Factory - Alt Lounge

\$8 w/flyer / \$10 door - All Ages - 8pm

Sat Feb 4th

DORCIA - DARKWATERS

DEVOLVED - TO THE PAIN

plus more TBA

At The Knitting Factory - Alt Lounge

\$8 w/flyer / \$10 door - All Ages - 8pm

Sat Feb 4th

BUTCHER - ALTMONT

exitSTRATEGY - YEAR LONG DISASTER

At Zen Sushi

\$8 w/flyer - \$10 door - 18 & Over - 8pm

Feb 17, 18 & 19th

THE LOS ANGELES MURDERFEST

version 2.0

LosAngelesMurderfest.com

At The Knitting Factory

Sat March 4th

EYES OF FIRE - LOSA - PLATOON 13

plus more TBA

At Zen Sushi

\$8 w/flyer - \$10 door - 18 & Over - 8pm

Mon March 13th

GREEN CARNATION

- ex Emperor, Carpathian Forest

Satyricon & Blood Red Throne -

BEYOND THE EMBRACE

At Zen Sushi

\$8 adv - \$10 door - 18 & Over - 8pm

Sat June 24th

VADER - KATAKLYSM - GRAVEWORM

NUCLEAR ASSUALT - SPEED KILL HATE

THE ABSENCE - GRAVE DESECRATION

plus more TBA

At The Knitting Factory - Main

\$18 Adv / \$20 Door - All Ages - 7pm

BIG WHEEL

Content

Dead Kennedys

Three Bad Jacks

Nural

Angry Samoans

The Advantage

The Marked Men/God Awfuls

No Use For A Name

Ignorant/Hard Skin

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El Cochino Contest Series

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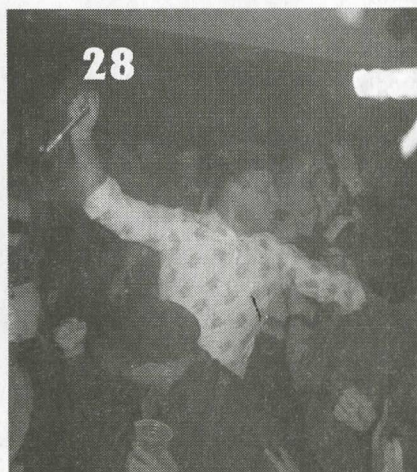
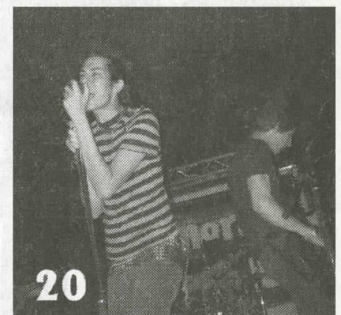
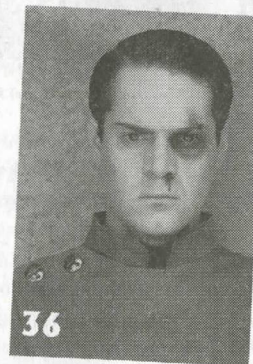
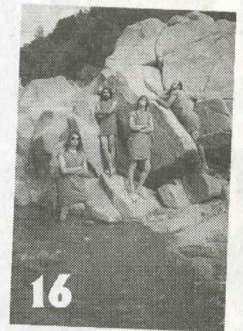
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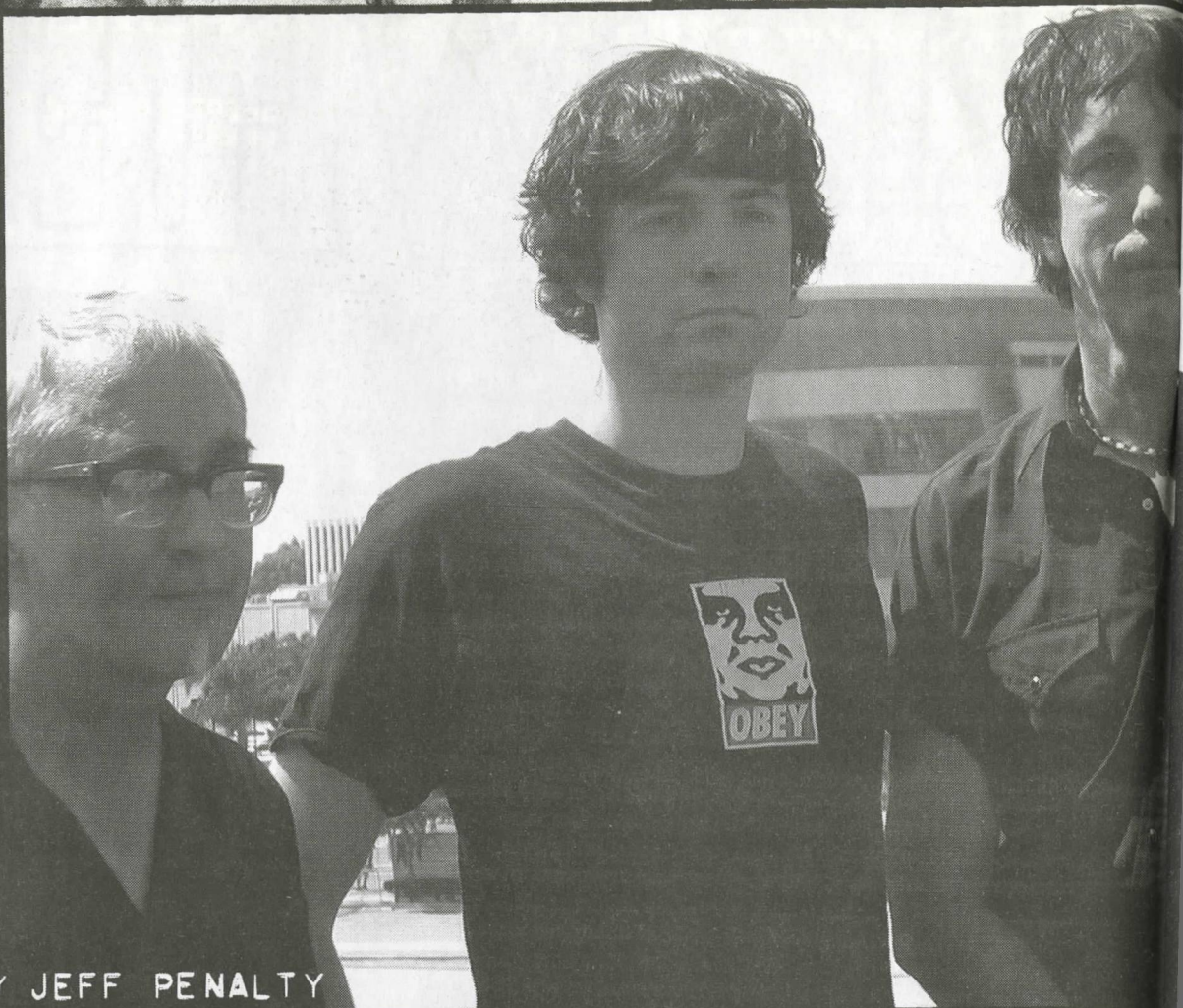
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Dead Kennedys



BY JEFF PENALTY

THE "WHY" OF DEAD KENNEDYS

"What's the point of seeing Dead Kennedys with a new singer?" It's an all-too-frequently asked question these days, and Big Wheel magazine thought I might be qualified to offer an answer.

Because I am that new singer.

I can also relate to the sentiment. When DK reunited with Brandon Cruz in 2001, I was as skeptical as anyone. Thankfully, though, my curiosity got the better of me and I went to see the band at the Key Club. I figured that at the very least I'd finally be able to have an informed opinion one way or the other about the quality of the DK reunion. Most people who were badmouthing the new lineup hadn't even seen them play (a trend which unfortunately continues to this day), and nothing seemed more opposed to the spirit of Dead Kennedys as making up one's mind without

considering all the angles.

So there I was, at the edge of the dance floor with my jaw tight and my arms folded, looking like some of the people I now play in front of. The band came out and played their first song, "Forward to Death." And I smiled. I remembered that song. I remembered that album. I remembered being in my bedroom as a teenager and screaming my guts out to it. Sure, it wasn't Jello singing the lyrics, but Jello didn't even write those particular lyrics (6025 did). Suddenly everything snapped into focus: I was watching a motherfucking Dead Kennedys show!

I made my way to the front of the stage and remained there for the rest of the set, singing along to some of the greatest punk songs ever written. The music washed over me, the same way seeing New York City or the Grand Canyon washes over

SHOW INFO

1/27 @ The Ventura Theater with
The Brigs

1/28 @ HOBLA with
Angry Samoans, Angel City Outcasts, Bullet Treatment, Action 45

The sober truth about

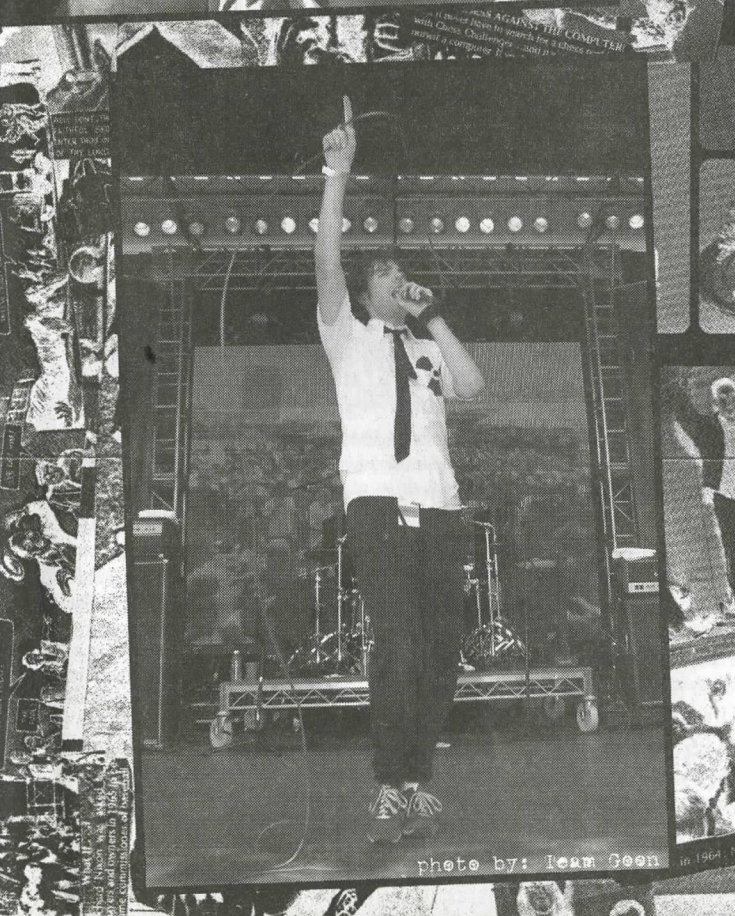
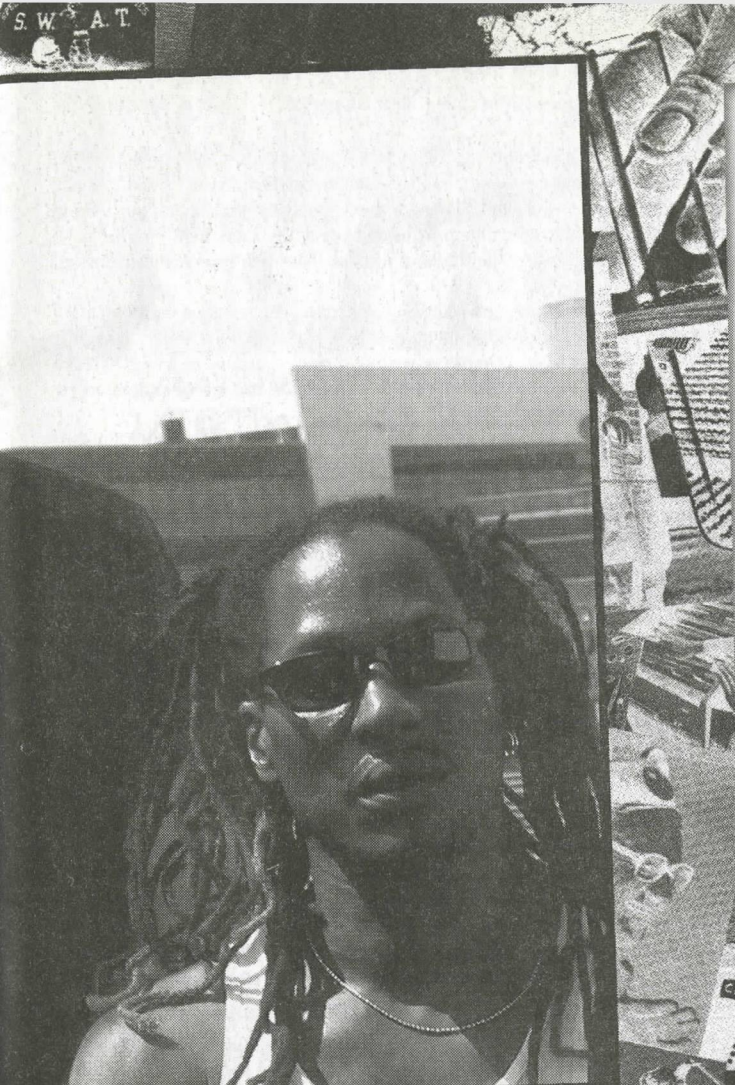


photo by: Team Green

you when you've only seen it in pictures for your whole life. It made me realize that the music itself is bigger than any of the people who made it. And it made me realize that it's important that that music lives on to similarly inspire others, and to serve as a reminder of what punk sounded like before its sound and power became diluted.

Yeah, it wasn't the same as it would've been back in the day, but hey, guess what? It's not 1981 anymore. Even WITH Jello it would've been different. The world is different. Punk rock is different. Dead Kennedys are different. But if you're a true fan of one of the most unique and important punk bands of all time, trust me: that feeling you get in your veins when you hear the opening bass line to "Holiday in Cambodia" is still the same.

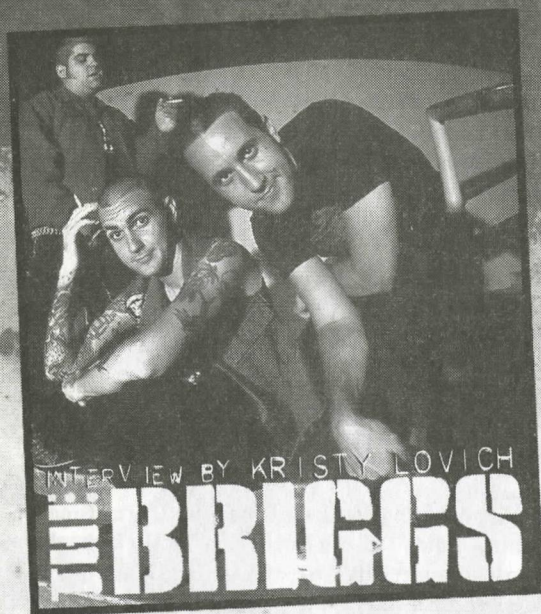
When I got the job of singing for the band in 2003 after Brandon left, believe me, I didn't take it lightly, and I still don't. I am acutely aware and appreciative of the band's legacy and message and I do everything in my power to insure that both are kept intact. No, I didn't write the lyrics.

But I've been singing them, studying them, and holding them close to my heart for years. They are a part of what shaped me as I grew up, and I have my own unique understanding of and relationship with them, and that's what I put out there when I'm on stage. And generally, once they get over the shock of a new face and a new voice, the people in the crowd can relate to that.

Of course, there's the legal garbage and all the rumors... I'd prefer not to mention that stuff at all, but any time someone starts badmouthing Dead Kennedys there's always some bit of misinformation about the trials in their arsenal. No matter what you've heard, the truth of the matter is that every member of the band (including ALL former members) is paid his fair share of royalties from every single DK release. And when you buy a t-shirt at the merch booth or at a store, I don't get any money from it, but an equal percentage goes to Ray, Klaus, D.H., and Jello. And finally, DK has yet to license any of its music for use in any commercials or TV shows, despite the fact that the band has every right (and has had plenty of opportunities) to do so. Just so you know.

Concerning my abilities as a performer, I get uncomfortable trying to sell myself, so you can go to www.deadkennedys.com if you want to read reviews of our recent shows. I would rather take this opportunity to reach out to those people who blindly write off the idea of a new DK singer faster than a Halliburton exec writes off a fur coat for his mistress. I don't have answers for them, but rather questions. For example: isn't punk rock supposed to be about questioning everything? Not just the cops or the Republicans, but EVERYTHING? And isn't the idea supposed to be that there are no pedestals, no rock stars? And isn't the whole movement founded on the concept that sacred cows are meant to be tipped? And isn't it vaguely possible that somehow, in some way, in spite of everything...you might actually have a good time at the show?

If this life has taught me one thing so far, it's that you never know. Hope to see you in the crowd.



SHOW INFO

1/27 @Ventura Theatre
with Dead Kennedys

The Briggs' Frontman Joey LaRocca on Pace Change & Horizontal Expanse

Having been privileged to spend thirty days with The Briggs during Warped Tour '04, I discovered first hand the work ethic and authenticity that drives the band. Since then, they have completed two US-Canada tours and a run through Europe, proving to be a group of musicians able to maintain focus and versatility, consistently challenging their own accomplishments, testing the limits of a scene that often recycles itself toward its own detriment.

A testament to this ability is the fact they've been able to maintain the momentum of writing and recording, while incorporating a new bass player into the band. "It's really fucking hard actually," Joey says, "On top of writing a new record we're trying to teach Ryan all our old songs and the new ones we've written on top of still trying to write more. It's proven to be quite a challenge."

Challenging as it is, they exemplify versatility. Chris X recently finished composing the score for an independent film, Joey played drums on a friend's recording, and Jason continues to record and produce. "I think it's great for the Briggs creatively because everyone has something new to bring to the table, expand our horizons. All these projects make us better musicians and give us a chance to have a change of pace."

This change of pace and the horizontal expanse speaks to a significant change we can expect on their new album. "...on a few new songs I am addressing a bit more social and political issues. By no means are we becoming a political band but there are some issues I have to address. You can't walk through life today and not have any strong feelings about the state of the world. My main point in taking a neutral stance in the past is that we are four different people. We don't have the same exact view however that didn't stop me from writing a few songs that express my view because if I didn't I'd go insane. [However] I hate bands that preach. I don't want to tell everyone how they should live their life, I just want them to know where I stand."

After extensive domestic and international touring, The Briggs' stance offers much to the creative climate in Los Angeles. "Not everyone has the chances that we get living in LA, having a lot to choose from, see every band you want to see, play a variety of venues...not every tour goes through El Paso but every tour comes through LA...You've got it all here." And Joey tells us what he looks forward to most about playing his hometown; "It's always a party. All the kids that have stuck with us over the years, all the new kids and our friends bands all just having a rowdy good time." Needless to say, Los Angeles is happy to have them home, looking forward to the release of a new album on the side of subversion and a series of shows to lead us there.



1/08 @ 418 Project
1/10 @ SLO Brewing Co.
1/11 @ HOBOC w/ Social Distortion
1/12 @ The Brigg w/Clit 45
1/14 @ Troubadour w/ Dead To Me,
Clit 45, The Ignorant
1/15 @ Jumping Turtle w/ Clit 45
Disabled Youth
1/16 @ The Ken Club w/Clit 45
1/17 @ Avalon, 1/18 @ Duarte Hall,
1/19 @ El Dorado w/Clit 45

SHOW INFO

The first time I saw them was an unforgettable experience. It was nearly four years ago in late 2001 at the 3 of Clubs on Vine just north of Melrose, back when the only marking for the bar was the old Bargain Clown Mart sign that hung outside like a beacon for weirdoes. All I knew about the band was that they'd released an album on Dirtnap Records out of Seattle called "Hit After Hit" but I hadn't heard it yet. The Briefs were touring the West Coast with The Spits, another Dirtnap band. My friend Todd at Razorcake was all over the Briefs and when I asked him what they were like he compared them to some of the more up-tempo bands in the OC scene like Le Shok. So I gassed up the truck, drove to Hollywood, and walked in right as the bands were starting.

When the Briefs took the stage I was pretty much prepared to hate them. As befuddling as the Spits had been, I warmed up to their style of barebones

Misfits meets the Ramones style of punk pretty quickly, and was disappointed when they stopped their set after a handful of songs. Then on came the Briefs: Daniel J Travanti, Steve E. Nix, Lance Romance and Chris Briefs with their skinny ties and suede shoes, look-at-me sunglasses and matching bleach blonde hair. They reminded me of the Teenage Knockouts, the band on the second half of Smogtown's split, Beach City Butchers, and I hate the Teenage Knockouts. The Briefs looked like the second coming of New Wave, the New New Wave, and I didn't want it. I was perfectly happy with the Old Wave.

But The Briefs were a revelation. From "Silver Bullet" onward I was smitten. I'd never seen a band play with such energy and passion before. They don't do anything that other punk rock bands do, but The Briefs seem to do it more frenetically and in control at the same time. It's like watching a horse race

where the longshot not only wins, but is the first out of the gate, never gives up the pace, and wins by mile. Before their set was over I realized that the punk rock game had changed. I knew that the next time I saw my favorite LA and OC bands I would see them a little differently, comparing their energy and stamina to the Briefs, wondering why they couldn't play as hard and as fast and as loud in their own hometown as The Briefs played on the road so far away from home. For a few moments I was sad, heartbroken even, because I knew that many of my favorite bands didn't measure up to this punk rock explosion I was witnessing. It's not that I was being judgmental; on the contrary, I didn't want this flashy, bratty whirling dervish of a band to be better than my hometown heroes, but they were, and let's face it: you're only good by comparison. I was looking at the Next Great Thing in punk rock and roll and my heart would never be the same.

SHOW INFO

1/6 @ The Zombie Lounge
1/7 @ The Galaxy Theater
1/13 @ Disaster @ The Vibe



When I called Elvis for our pre-arranged phone interview, he answered the phone by asking me a question. Being the interviewer, I was kind of hoping I could ask the first question but he beat me to it. Oh well, no hard feelings. What did he ask me? You don't care, trust me. Anyway, after he told me he was finishing brunch at an Arizona diner, he arranged to call me back in fifteen minutes and I toasted a bagel.

After he called me back, and took a quick sidetrack to yell at Brett about "busting his shit" and/or spilling CDs, we got down to the interview. I wanted to know what he was up to, and he told me how happy he was to finally be done with Three Bad Jacks' brand new album, *Crazy in the head*. Apparently, it's already sold 7,000 copies. I'd love to tell you all about the album, and I probably will someday, but I haven't got my hands on a copy of it yet, unfortunately. I can tell you that the Chicago Metro-Times said it's pretty damn close to the best new CD to buy. Of course, not having listened to it yet, unfortunately I can only be 99% sure I'll agree when I do hear it. I have Three Bad Jacks' other releases, "Made of Stone" and the "Hellbound Train" 3-song EP.

I like this band a lot, especially live. It's full of raw energy. Side note: I always assumed "It's the Cadillac" off "Hellbound Train" had to be a Little Richard cover, but Elvis set me straight: it's an Elvis Suissa original. What do you know? On the suggestion of our editor Joe, I asked him "What's it like to light stuff on fire all the time?" He took the question more seriously than I expected and said, "its unbelievable." He went on to regale me with stories of lighting his jacket on fire while he was playing, lighting people in the audience on fire, and a few other stories about how fire just makes everything that much better. I was curious about what kind of lighter fluid he likes to use, meaning like charcoal lighter

fluid, kerosene, naphtha, etc. He made it clear he was not currently endorsing any particular brand or specific type of lighter fluid, but hinted that he might be open to negotiations. I only asked because I'm somewhat of a lighter fluid aficionado, he'd reminded me of the days I used to spit fire with my friends in San Diego for our own entertainment, kind of like those guys at the circus. Anyway, not long after the interview I lit something on fire, for the first time in years. It was a grocery receipt, and it was rewarding.

Being that I was interviewing Elvis while he was riding back from playing in Phoenix AZ, I had to ask him if he's heard of "I Hate You When You're Pregnant," a popular local act. He said no, so I asked him who his favorite band to play with out there is, and he said Glass Heroes is a great band out of Phoenix with cool old school punk sounds, a fun bunch of guys. I had to ask about the drummer thing, how it seems like every time you see them they have a different drummer. He says it doesn't really bother him, he enjoys playing with different people all the time. It's kind of like getting a slightly different flavor all the time, which keeps things fresh.

Some of the drum talents they've used are DJ Bonebrake of X, Tom Brayton of the Dwarves, Mat Young of the Original Sinners, and currently Adam Jones, who Elvis describes as a super-talented and great guy.

Another thing I had to ask about was the label thing, and I don't mean record label. I mean the psychobilly/rockabilly question. He says it's more than one or the other, that he'd like to say it's all of the above. It would be nice to just be able to say rock'n'roll, but everyone's been throwing that word around so must it doesn't really have any specific meaning either. Of course there is the strong greaser element to Three Bad Jacks, but they don't want to have to ignore their other loves such as the Clash and Joe Strummer, and all that kind of stuff. Before starting Three Bad Jacks in '96, Elvis was in a band called Terror

Train that goes back to '87. They played with the Meteors in '92 or '93, and to very small crowds because almost no one over here knew anything about that scene yet. It's comparably huge over here now, but this guy was here "before the storm." And Three Bad Jacks have been selling out venues nationwide for seven years now. Side note: turns out Elvis also agrees that the Cramps deserve a little more credit from everyone as originators of the genre, alongside the Meteors. For all you budding songwriters reading this, I asked Elvis if he could share a secret songwriting trick. Unfortunately there are no tricks, but Elvis advises being into what you do. Seems simple enough, right? It's boring when bands don't really seem into what they're doing. It's a lot easier to make great music if you're only worried about doing what you love, not about fitting whatever image you think you're supposed to fit. Those people are fools. Like Mr. T, Elvis pities those fools. If you go by crowd reaction, all the friends and fans at every show singing along to every song like they do, Three Bad Jacks love what they do. So what does Elvis see in the future? Maybe an acoustic solo CD just to show off his songwriting. As for goals for an upcoming album in the nearer future, Elvis would love to work with a producer, the ultimate dream producer being Rick Rubin of course.

As of now, Elvis is kind of doing everything himself, and it would be beneficial to have the input of a talented producer with fresh ideas about songs he's so close to, it's hard sometimes to be objective. The current game plan includes doubling up on touring, running around and playing gigs all over the place. They get guys from labels at some of the shows, they're getting their material shopped to the majors, labels are looking... but Elvis tells me with a smile on his voice that he's not holding his breath.



SHOW INFO

1/21 @ the Cobalt
w/ the Abuse, Homesick Abortions,
Start the Panic, Citizens

OneWordSolution are a hard-working San Fernando Valley based political hardcore band. They have been around for just about 5 years and have not stopped or slowed down promoting their message during that time. Born out of former members of Good Grief and M.F.T., OneWord have proven themselves to be not only a thought provoking band, but also a powerful live band. I recently interrogated them: NicNak, Hef, Ark, and Evan (their other guitarist Dave was unavailable at the time of this interview), to pick their brains and ask them the questions I found most interesting.

B: What is the main message you feel your band is trying to disseminate?

NicNak: COMMUNICATE!!! As a society, we live our lives as strangers. We are conditioned to be suspect of all whom surround us. People live side by side in cubicle style stacked apartments facing the same struggles and day-to-day hardships. We pass each other on the street; sit across from each other on the bus; work in the same building... yet... most will never know each others' name let alone connect on any level beyond the superficial "hello" and "goodbye"... if even that!!! The rich will ignore the poor... The poor will resent the rich, and yet, we are all very similar. We all experience life on a very personal level, but those personal experiences, though varied, are composed of the same fundamental range of emotions: love, hate, fear, joy, pain, and on and on. If we took more time to get to know each other, if we made it a point to be aware of our surroundings, we'd most likely begin to see the similarities we share as opposed to the differences between us. This holds true on an international level as well. Human beings must re-learn to communicate with each other. Individuals must learn to have faith in themselves and compassion for others, and nations must learn to stop letting a handful of people make their decisions for them. Take part in your government and make your voices heard. As one we speak softly. AS ONE MILLION WE ROAR!!!

B: What political figures most influence(d) you?

Ark: I personally don't look towards political figures as being influential, namely for the sake that their only goal in life is to remain in office.

Secondly, "revolutionaries" and activists are not "political figures." If you ask me, they're people just like you and me who became tired of how they were being treated- regardless of the circumstances. That final straw that pushed them over the edge, and their chosen course of reactions, is what makes them celebrated amongst the revolutionary types.

NicNak: I'm inclined to agree with Ark: politicians hold no influence on me, and those few politicians who went against the grain and spoke out for the people or attempted to initiate a positive change, well, they ceased to be politicians at that very moment.

Hef: George W. Bush

B: What bands most influenced you?

Ark: Listen to music not bands. You might learn something by keeping all your options open at all times.

B: Why is this night different than others (perhaps you Hef or you NicNak can elaborate-being that you are my fellow Red Sea Pedestrians)?

Hef: It's different because you've never asked me that question before.

NicNak: If you are referring to the present Jewish holiday (and I know you are), I'm gonna have to tell you that though I share your heritage, I do not place faith in organized religion. I find that most modern religions spend more time pointing fingers at each other than addressing spirituality (Judaism included). In fact, the entire idea that human beings are nothing more than the sheep like creation of some grand being rather than the reflection and embodiment of the spirit is laughable and insulting. Religion should be about spirituality and not the segregation of groups of people. One should not be expected to subscribe to one rigid way of thinking. Life by definition is experience. Experience is growth, and that means being open to new ideas and being willing to accept changes as they happen... evolution.

B: What influences your writing?

Hef: My sadistic need to see people in the pit hurting each other. That's where I get the idea for a riff that will make you want to punch the guy next to you in the tooth.

NicNak: Life...

Ark: Musically, I'm influenced by sonic landscapes of an intelligent kind. My own two

eyes and a short-circuiting brain influence my literary works.

B: Where is your favorite place to play?

NicNak: Where music and entertainment have become so shallow and diluted that the audience is literally starving for intellect. In short, anywhere in the U.S.

Ark: So far, I'd have to say, Fat Tuesdays in Spokane WA. It's the club that has everything-including shitters with no doors.

Hef: So far the northwestern U.S.

B: What is the craziest thing that ever happened to you guys on the road?

Hef: I sharted myself before going on stage in Spokane, WA.

Ark: Hef coming up to me and telling me that he shit himself forty minutes before we were to go on that night; then making me drive him over to Subway so he could get cleaned up in the bathroom there. That failed, and he wound up playing that night in shitty drawers. That incidentally happened to be at Fat Tuesdays

NicNak: Uh... yeah...

B: In your opinion, what is the state of the "Punk" scene today?

Ark: I dunno'. I kinda' feel the same way about it now as I did when I was 16... I'm not a punk, not me.

Hef: It doesn't fuckin' matter at all what the fuck kind of state "the scene" is in... Music is not and should never be about scenes!!! It's really what you make of it. Out here, we created our own.

B: Who is the most evil of all of you?

Hef: NicNak is. He turns into a bat at night and sucks people's blood.

B: What is your favorite cheese?

Hef: Free cheese!

Ark: Canadian Cheddar aged six years.

B: that's all the questions I have, but summarize how you feel right now using only one word.

Hef: Cheesy.

NicNak: Sticky

Ark: How 'bout three words? -"GO FUCK YOURSELF!!!"

B: 'nuff said, thanks guys, and I'll see y'all later. I'm of to go fuck myself and get sticky and cheesy while visions of Linda Carter as Wonder Woman dance through my head- make that heads.



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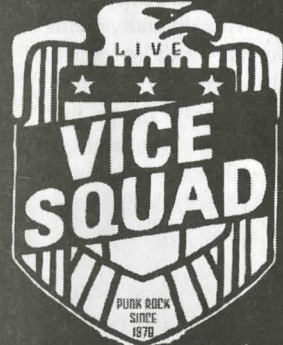
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NURAL

BY DONNA BALUCHI



We, the people of Southern California can and will judge you by your area code. It is known fact that area codes are the borders within which people evolve. Though many will claim that their area code does not effect who they are or what they do, it will not save you from the judgment of others outside of said area code.

For example, we have *Nural*. A band hailing from the recesses of the 818. To natives, we know immediately that this is the Valley. Not any valley, mind you, but *the* Valley. San Gabriel Valley. The place where the overuse of the words "like" and "totally" originated and spread to all area codes near and far. This would lead everyone to think several things:

1. Nural has probably been in existence less than a year and will be gone in less than a month.
3. Nural is made up of several dudes without a clue.
2. Nural is going to suck harder than a 310 hooker on friday night.

Well friends, try false, false and false. Nural is made up of Kyle Castellani on vocals, Charley Hoy on guitar, Kyle Black on bass,

Ryan Davis on Guitar and Aaron Breeding on drums. Starting out as a ska group while only in junior high, the now 19 to 22 year old high school grads are up and ready to blow- your minds!

Their Hopeless debut full length *Weight of the World*, has the diversity of a box of chocolates, but is magically void of the cherry walnut creme or the dreaded marzipan. From the opening metal crunch of "Tension" to the soulful, piano ballad "Forgive Me," Nural have a lot to offer listeners with an open ear and an open mind.

Talking to Ryan Davis (who pointed out how lame my area code is, 909- land of sluts and lifted trucks) he broke what they are down for me fairly simply. "We're just very normal guys who like to mess around and play music. We just like to have a lot of fun and just play, really. We've always kind of had the approach of people don't like it, then screw them, we don't really care. But hopefully they do." Playing all around the LA area, they started a following that reaches farther than just friends of friends, and then came the blessed internet.

Self proclaimed "MySpace whores," the band has actually assembled an E-Team. Not a street team, but an E-Team of about 10 kids who work exclusively with the monster that is MySpace. Checking out their page, you'll see they sell shirts and and their CD, you can vote for your favorite song, and post a Nural banner on your own page. And they are currently at 31,011 friends. That's more than the maximum capacity of over half the venues from 310 to 760. That's almost enough people for their own area code.

Their sound isn't something easy to put your finger on. It's sometimes fast, sometimes slow, sometimes loud and hard, sometimes soft and soulful. And over all of it, is a singer who can actually sing, like those Idle kids. I mean idol. This diversity stems

from the band's diverse taste in music. From Punk to metal to hardcore to R'n'B, each member has their own flavor that they bring to the table. "Have you heard of *Silverchair*? Have you heard [the album] "Diorama"? Ok, that record changed our lives. That record is like the bible to us."

And we can't talk about an 818 band without talking about their image, right? Wrong. Fashion core be damned! Like a breath of smogless air, Nural are not into eye make up, \$700 jeans or looking too cool for your sorry ass. As Davis put it, "Benji from Good Charlotte started wearing hot pink and now every fucking kid out there has ass-tight jeans, make up and the prettiest hair you've ever seen. It's so stupid, they have no identity at all. They look like someone just kicked them out of Hot Topic."

Nural will be playing January 4th at the Roxy in Hollywood with *Normal Like You* and *The Higher*. All the bands are on MySpace. If you aren't already their friend, befriend them at MySpace or visit their site at www.nuralmusic.com.

SHOW INFO

1/4 @ The Roxy w/ Maysend, Normal Like You & Kill Fast Casino
 1/13 @ Foothill High School
 1/20 @ The Bellmont w/ Normal Like You
 1/21 @ The Golden Skate w/ Normal Like You

SHOW INFO

1/14 @ The Wiltern
w/ The Bronx



It is hard to believe that a band that has been around for two decades have not already played every venue in their hometown. This month, however, Bad Religion will be headlining the Wiltern Theater for the first time ever to promote the band's new live DVD. The DVD, with its catchy title, *Bad Religion: Live at the Palladium*, was shot last year during two sold-out shows at the Hollywood Palladium. If you have ever seen the band live or watched their first video, *Along the Way*, you know that they put on energetic performances of the more popular songs from their records. Greg Hetson, the guitar player, says that the DVD begins where the *Along the Way* left off. They play songs from throughout the band's history, and this time their shirts won't change in every scene. He mentioned that *Live* is much more produced and that much preparation went into song choice, lighting and audio to make it exciting and ensure that it looks as good as possible. He also listed many of the extra features that DVD will contain, such as interviews with current members, a photo gallery, music videos, and footage from old TV appearances. He said that he was excited about its release and that although their record company is keeping the finished product under wraps, the rough cut he has seen looked good.

If you haven't been to a BR show recently you may be in for a surprise. You will be amazed at how many kids are in the audience and how they do not seem to know very many of the songs before *Stranger Than Fiction*.

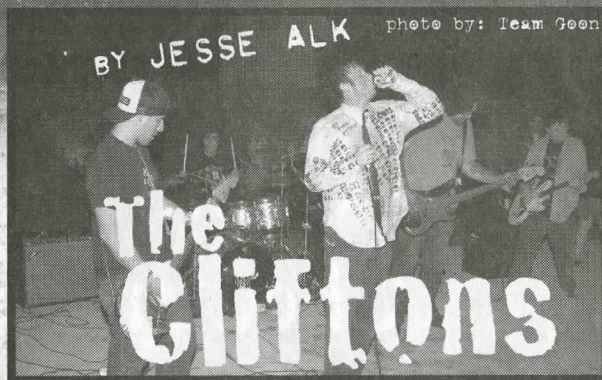
Subsequently, the band primarily plays the radio hits, and songs from the Atlantic Records years. So if you are over 21, or you are like this writer and don't like the albums without Mr. Brett, you may be disappointed. Not to mention feeling "old beyond your years" when you see scrawny kids screaming like little girls, especially when they are little girls (and there will be a lot of them) when the band plays the intro to "No Substance" or "I Love My Computer". Therefore if you are over 21 the band may play a few older songs you like, but really, they are not playing for you anymore, you do not have the disposable income.

Along with BR, if you get to the show early, you can catch the finals for the Guitar Center drum competition, because nothing sounds like more fun than listening to banging drums for an hour. Also, if you are really excited about drums, Travis Barker from those cell phone commercials (plus I think he knows Tim Armstrong), and Adrian Young from No Doubt will be making guest appearances.

Even though this month's show is not going to be filmed, be sure to get your tickets early because their shows always sell out fast, and you don't want to get stuck sitting on the Wiltern balcony. If you are not planning on going, but want to see what a Bad Religion concert is all about these days, then get the DVD and watch it at home. The drinks are cheaper.

SHOW INFO

1/28 @ Thee Parkside
w/ The Smut Pedlers,
Hallow Points,
Tommy Gun & the Bullets
and more



Somewhere around four years ago I was up in Oakland at a friend's warehouse, sitting through the average set of average bands when a bunch of kids I'd never seen before set up and started to tear the place down. I thought they were teenagers, but they must have been around twenty. With great songs and snotty old-school vocals I had to find out as much as I could about these guys. I started asking everyone who these fucking kids were, but the best I got was, "Oh, that's the Cliftons. I don't know, they asked if they could play here." Why wasn't everyone as psyched on this band as I was? Why didn't the crowd explode like the band deserved. Simple answer: They were idiots. I scrambled for a free demo they were passing out, and immediately played it 'till it took a shit. It would take a while for me to get another piece of the Cliftons, but that time has come.

Cliftons vinyl is out there for the taking, but get on it, 'cause so far it's been limited-only releases.

If your tired of punk rock rock-star attitude, tired of self-righteous fucks preaching their hypocrite bullshit, if you ain't cruzin' with no fucks, then the Cliftons just might be your band. The Cliftons play the sort of snotty, fast, tongue-in-cheek hardcore that can seem sorely lacking in an era in which people tend to take themselves so seriously. Mix the lyrics of the Dwarves, the hooks of the early Adolescents, and the frenetic energy of the Circle Jerks, and you just might have an idea of where the Cliftons are coming from.

Their vinyl-only release "Sex, Drugs, and Alcohol" has been a staple on my record player for months, and with a new 7" "Rock Out With Your Cock Out" on Malt Soda, and an album "Deadly Habits" coming next year, it

looks like Cliftons fans can look forward to more great releases. But to really get the true Cliftons experience, you've got to see them live. What can you expect at a Clifton's show? "Depends on what we're using that night.... homo-dust can lead to some "Gay Punks in Love" moments. Mix that with some of your grandma's pills and a shot of Jack Daniels to wash it down... we're ready to tear the place apart." No matter what night you hit, it should always be worth it. The band has already "tasted the fruits of many young girls around the US as well as Canada" and is planning to head to the Northwest early next year.

Check out their website at www.killthecliftons.com or on myspace <http://www.myspace.com/thecliftons> and definitely check them

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Growing up in the Valley, you learn a few things;
a) No matter what anybody says, it does get cold in L.A..
Only for about a month, but that's about all the "weather" us natives can take.

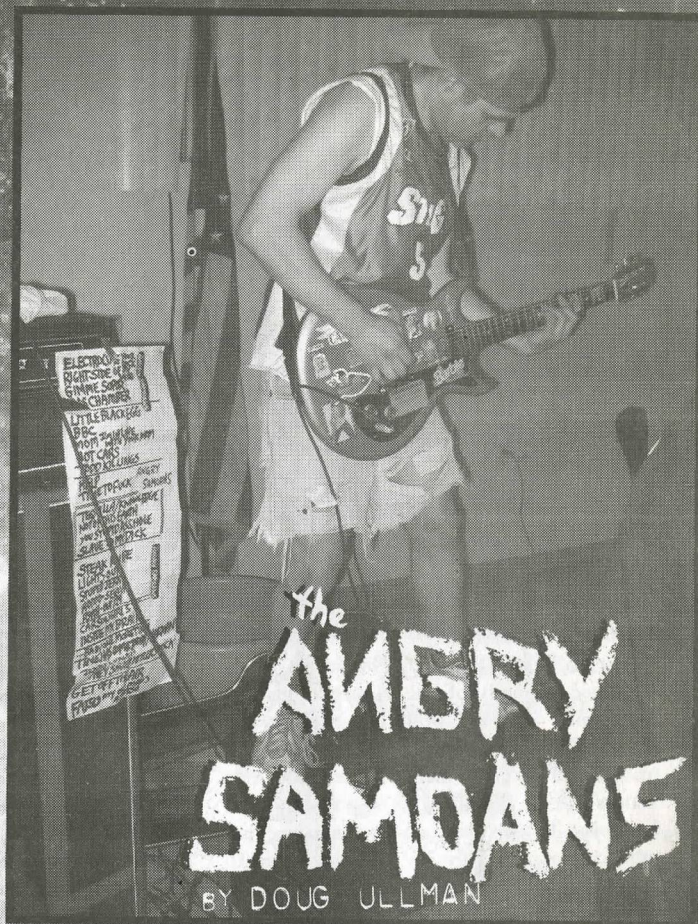
B) Ignore the endless parade of aspiring Actors/Actresses from Bumfuck Idaho. 95% of them end up naked on a dirty couch in chatsworth, Ass up in the air. This only qualifies as "making it" to 35 year old men who still live with their parents

C) We will never be as cool as the people living in hollywood think they are.

Ok, now that that's out of the way, lets get down to business. The Valley is a strange place. Home to gridlocked freeways and the porn industry, its no surprise that for years, kids have taken refuge in the punk rock scene. Waiting for the bus on sherman way is made so much more tolerable when you have a walkman on (yes I said walkman, deal with it!) thats blasting a new compilation you made at your friends house. If you were me, that mix would include songs from such Valley natives as Bad Religion, Circle One and of course The Angry Samoans.

I had the honor of talking to Bill Vockereth drummer for the seminal punk band the Angry Samoans. Born in Los Angeles and raised in Highland Park Bill wasn't exposed to Punk rock until 1978, when he answered an ad in the paper to join a band forming in the Valley. Growing tired of ducking gunshots and rising violence, Bill packed his shit and headed towards the Basin where he teamed up with "Metal" Mike Saunders and Gregg Turner. They started out as a Dictators cover band and honed there chops playing gigs at esteemed venues like the Camarillo State Mental Hospital! In 1980 they released the Inside my Brain EP that included the single "Get off the air", one of their more infamous songs. "Get off the Air" is a song about Rodney Biggenheimer of KROQ's famous Rodney on the ROQ program. Back in 1980 Rodney was THE king of Los Angeles music scene. If he liked your band and played your record you were made, if he didn't... Well as luck would have it Rodney didn't find the song funny and threatened to sue. Eventually cooler heads prevailed and the threat of a legal battle never came to fruition, but their problems didn't stop there. Pissing off Rodney meant losing the opportunity to play at numerous venues. The Samoans hid out for a while and resurfaced in 1982 with the release of Back From Samoa . The new album was the birthplace of classic songs like "they saved hitlers cock" and "tuna taco" . The Band cemented there reputation as troublemakers while playing gigs with bands like Black Flag, whose drummer Robo, Bill cites as a major influence.

Bill left the band in 1984 for a brief hiatus and Jeff Dahl replaced "Metal" Mike as frontman in 1985. Two subsequent releases in '87 and '88 (yesterday started tommorow and STP not LSD respectively) were made despite major label problems and even worse infighting between the band members. They broke up officially in 1988. This was not a band that could be kept down and by the mid-'90s Mike was fronting a revamped lineup that included Bill back behind the Drum kit. They still play but only on weekends and in California. Bill when asked how he has managed to keep playing with such a temperamental fellow like mike had only one thing to say, "things changed, we're not kids anymore.". He also loves playing to this day, even though the setlists haven't changed much since 1981! Bill was one of the coolest people I have ever talked too, so much so that I didn't even realize that I had been hearing stories about some of my idols until the next day.

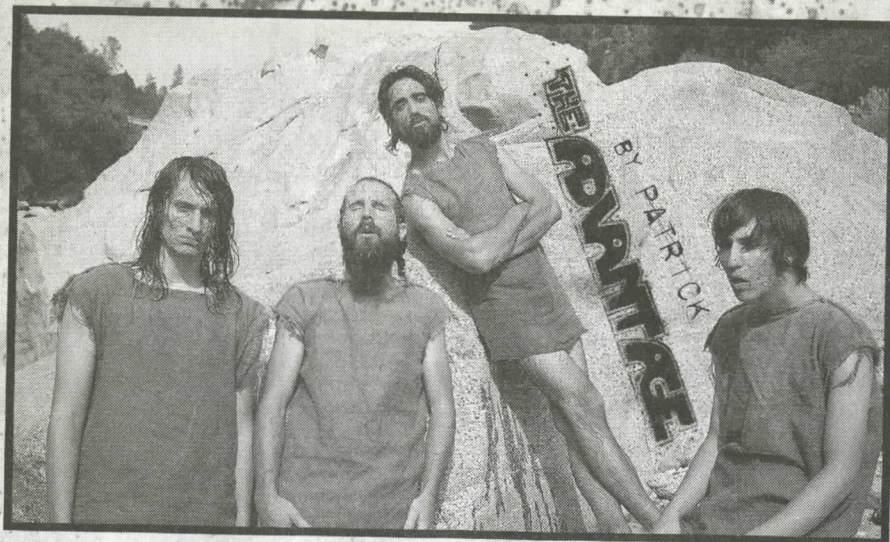


Asked if there was one thing he could change about playing now, Bill said he would rather play 3rd on a bill rather than headline so he could mingle in the crowd and watch the other bands play. How cool is that!

Besides playing with the angry Samoans, Bill is currently in the process of rehearsing with some OG punk rockers (sorry...I have been sworn to secrecy!) In a Black Flag cover band with a special twist! One truly gets the impression that both the punk scene and music in general have given Bill a lot and he knows it and appreciates it. The only difference between now and 1980 (besides tiring a little faster!) Is that crowds tend to be a little bit more diverse with folks young and old getting down to hits like "right side of my mind" and "gimme Sopor". We talked for over an hour and I hung up the phone kind of dissapointed. Not because of the conversation, but because I had to get of the phone! I was late getting this story in because I wanted to do both Bill and the L.A. punk rock scene justice (sorry Joey!!!). I hope I have. Next time you see the Angry Samoans on a the bill at a club go check em out, you wont be sorry. Hopefully you'll catch em on a night they play 3rd and you can meet Bill hanging out in the crowd. Buy him a beer and tell him that Doug at Big Wheel sent ya!

1/28 @ HOBLA with
Dead Kennedys ,Angel City Outcasts,
Bullet Treatment, Action 45

SHOW INFO



1/10 @ The Dip
 1/11 @ Empire Squared
 1/12 @ Bottom of the hill
 1/13 @ Nickel City Arcade
 1/14 @ The Attic
 1/15 @ Hard to Find Showspace
 1/16 @ Black Box Studio
 1/18 @ LB Warehouse
 1/19 @ Echo
 1/20 @ Fools Foundation

SHOW INFO

It wasn't until the year 1986 when Japan shared the gift of the Nintendo gaming console with the whole UnitedStates (for some reason New York got it first in '85). I myself had to go to rich neighborhood kids houses to enjoy the thrill of Super Mario and Exitebike. Today video games seem to be every other commercial on the T.V., and they appear to be more like movies released by Dreamworks, or other computer animated companies that you can interact with. You can't forget your roots though ... Nintendo is the shit.

The Advantage is a northern California based band that only plays the songs of timeless NES classics. That's right, just Nintendo songs! Once you hear these tracks, you start to realize how much these songs created by Japanese programmers inspire today's live bands. Members of the Advantage include Spencer Seim/drums, Carson Mcwhirter/bass, Robby Moncreiff/guitar, and Ben Milner/guitar. These guys bust out Nintendo songs with absolute perfection. With songs from Super Mario games, Metroid, the Megaman series, Castlevania, Double Dragon, and grips of others, their live show is sure to be a blast. Check it out ... here's a few words with bass man Carson.

BW: How did The Advantage form?

Carson: It started with two guys that are no longer in the band. It's always been a Nintendo based. It actually started out being called Generic These guys Forrest and Nick started the band with this 16 year old chick bass player and Spencer. Spencer is the drummer and the only original member left in today's band. Since then the rest of us have joined as others decided not to continue.

BW: Are you guys actual gamers?

Carson: Yes ... we all like different stuff. We usually bring a Dreamcast in our van when we tour. We have a little T.V. in our van, but we don't play Dreamcast. We've got this disk (for Dreamcast) that has every single Nintendo game

on it, so we just play Nintendo non-stop.

BW: Do you guys just stick to playing the old-school games?

Carson: Yeah ... I think I'm probably the only one who has ventured

into the newer games at all. Even so, most of the time I stick to older games myself.

BW: What's your favorite game of all time?

Carson: We get that all the time, and I think I give a different answer every time ... just cause I can't remember. I don't know, there's so many fuckin' rad games. I think the first time I played Mario 3 I started realizing, like, games are getting freakin' rad. That game was so much more complicated than the first two in some ways. It probably had a little bit to do with that movie The Wizard ... my impression of that game being more advanced. I went through tons of stages though. The first time I saw Marble Madness I was stoked. I like that game a lot. I got that game when I was younger and that was probably my favorite one.

BW: When was the last time you beat Mike Tyson's Punch Out?

Carson: I think one of us beat it on the last tour. I beat it like six years ago or something ... it's been a while though. I have done it.

BW: Can you beat Bubble Bobble?

Carson: I don't think I've ever ... I don't think anybody has. Is

that game beatable? That game gets so ridiculous once you get up in the levels.

BW: How do you guys breakdown the music for these NES classics?

Carson: You can download the music off the internet. You get the actual sound files from the games themselves. We plug (the sound files) in WinAmp to play them. It breaks down all the notes into separate tracks, so you can listen to every single sound that the game can make. You can also turn off channels ... so on original Nintendo there's usually only four channels, the triangle sound, two square waves, and a noise channel - which is the drums. You can have

one on at a time or listen to any combination of them. I think after Ninja Gaiden 2 they started to use low grade samples, like voice sounds, and it started to sound super crappy. Once it got to that, games started to be more than four channels, so we stick to the older stuff 'cause there's only four of us.

BW: Do you prefer the NES Advantage or the classic controller?

Carson: It depends on what game I'm playing really. I think for certain games the Advantage is a for sure an advantage. Games where you actually use the turbo on the advantage are super awesome. Shooter games or side-scroll shooting games are awesome with the Advantage.

BW: What is the 30-man code for Contra?

Carson: Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, B, A, Start.

BW: You guys ever thought of doing original video game soundtracks?

Carson: We've talked about it, but right now the band is directed to just being the Nintendo band. If someone came to us looking for an old-school video game soundtrack we'd be down. Right now though we just stick to what we are already doing.

BW: How often do you guys tour?

Carson: We try to do a tour like once a year, but this year we didn't do a tour, 'cause Spencer is also in another band called Hella, and they've been on tour like all year.

BW: Do you guys get laid a lot on tour?

Carson: Uh, no not really. I don't know ... we're a Nintendo cover band. There's not really a whole lot of chick action. There are some cool girls that are into Nintendo games and stuff, but it's never been that cool. It would be an interesting thing if it was like a total rock star tour, playing only Nintendo games ... sounds like every boy's dream. It's just Nintendo songs though, and we only get laid when we get back to our girlfriends.

Okay, so maybe I'm a cynic. No, I know I am. I'm always waiting to be disappointed, especially musically. There's just so much music out there amazing me on a daily basis, that my standards are set pretty high. Sometimes I hear a 7" and love it from the first listen. In these cases, I'm excited, but nervous to hear a full-length. A lot of bands can pull out two or three good songs. An album is another story.

The Marked Men, comprised of three of the four members of The Reds and the addition of Joe on bass, released a self-titled debut (on Rip Off) album that not only carried on the strength of the 7" (on Mortville), but grew from there. And their sophomore release, *On the Outside* (on Dirtnap), is easily one of the best records of the past five years, if not more. And, they just released another stellar 7": *Nothing's Changed on Shit Sandwich*.

Denton, Texas's The Marked Men are the kind of band that, when your parents come to town and meet you at a bar, will make you look like you may have had a few too many cocktails. You can't help but dance, even if you're the only one and trying to hold a reasonable conversation.

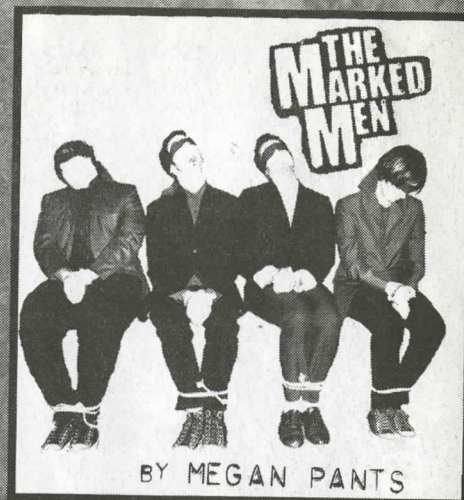
They're hard to pin down. Plain-clothed punk rock in so many ways. They don't strive to fit into the tight, and often boring, confines of an already defined scene. They aren't doing this for fashion, and they aren't doing this to get out their message. The

Marked Men's only motivation for making music seems to be the music itself. And the music is amazing.

Full of hooks, but not overly pop. Strong guitars, but not simply rock. Two singers with very different styles and approaches, but it all sounds distinctly like The Marked Men. On one listen, you may pick up elements from the Buzzcocks or The Beat (especially in Mark's vocals). But they're not as simple as that. They're too fluid to be nailed down to any group of influence. Much like Jeff's voice, the band just kind of eludes comparison by somehow managing to be both original and familiar at the same time, but you know you fucking like it. A lot.

Last month, The Marked Men played at the Fest in Gainesville, Florida. They were scheduled during the second half of Radon's first show in four years. Yes, people waited in line for hours before the doors opened to see Radon, but the Side Bar was packed with people who had opted to see The Marked Men instead. And with good reason. The Marked Men are one of the best shows touring these days, which is something I don't say lightly.

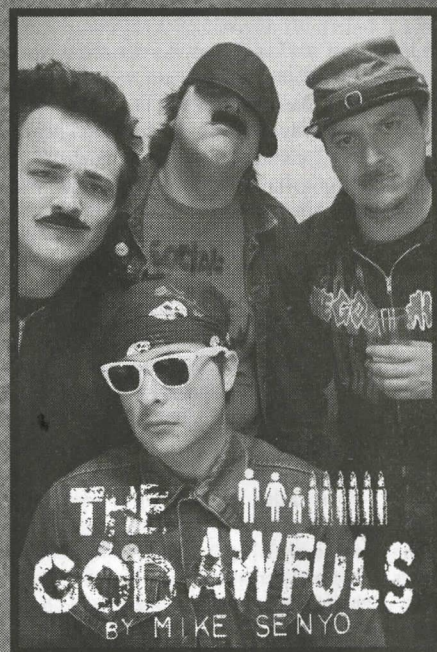
In July of 2004, The Marked Men played a show at Linda's Doll Hut in Anaheim. They played with The Soviettes, Fleshes, and Toys That Kill. At most, including band members, thirty people were there. Don't make the mistake of missing them again.



SHOW INFO

1/5 @ The Casbah
1/6 @ The Scene Bar
1/7 @ Thee Parkside
1/8 @ Alex's bar

All Shows w/ The Sultans, The Heartaches



SHOW INFO

1/10 @ The Alley
w/ Red Scare, Black List, The Audacity,
Teenage Kamikaze, The Restraints

The God Awfuls have landed quite a reputation playing their share of backyard shows and clubs. But next year the Awfuls plan to renovate not just their sound but the entire punk scene altogether. Kevin, lead guitar and singer, was kind enough to talk to me after the band's return from their recent tours in Europe and with the Eyeliner's.

Before doing the United States tour with the Eyeliners, the God Awfuls spent some time playing shows in the United Kingdom. "We get a great response in the UK. They are more receptive to American bands because we (U.S. bands) set a kind of standard and the kids are eager to see what we're playing. It's amazing to see all these kids come with their homemade shirts. It really reminds me of when I used to go to shows."

The God Awfuls last tour was a little rough, what with gas prices being close to three dollars but it was all worth it when they got to meet the one and only Joan Jett. However, since then the Awfuls have been at home relaxing.

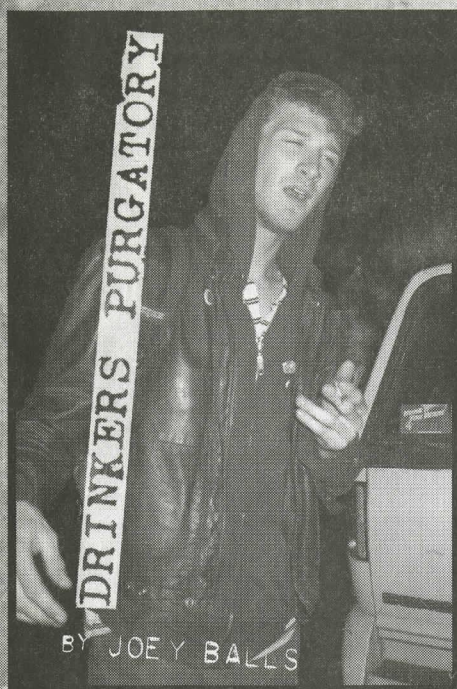
"We have just been writing tunes for the next record and adjusting to life without Chris," Kevin said. Chris, who played guitar as well, was asked to leave the band for different reasons. Originally a four piece, the God Awfuls are adjusting to life as a trio. "If we get the opportunity to find another guitar player than we'll

see, but right now we kind of like just the three of us, we have great chemistry."

If everything goes as planned the Awfuls hope to release a new record in late February, early March. "After four years of playing we've figured out what we want to do and this new record will be more advanced musically and a little different lyrically. The politics will never go away from our music but I think that I've stepped away from the preaching aspect and go towards more of how it affects my life. Everything is so safe now. It's sheik to protest the war and I don't know how much of it is genuine. Hearing that same rhetoric all the time loses its bite"

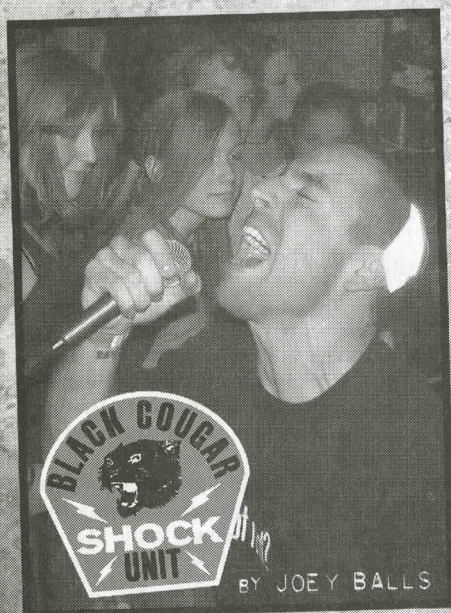
Kevin has also grown tired of the illusion idea of underground music and the reality of underground music. "I think that a lot of music, at least in the punk rock scene, that more kids are playing backyard shows and to me that's really the true underground theme of music. The ideas of what you want and can do changes over the years. We're trying to make this something special again."

The God Awfuls will be playing a couple of shows in January, in the Southern California area, and do not plan to tour anytime soon in order to focus on the record. This record will be something to look forward to for next year and will be out on Kung Fu Records.



SHOW INFO

1/15 @ The Scene Bar
w/ Black Cougar Shock Unit, Die Young



SHOW INFO

1/12, 1/13 @ The Zombie Lounge
1/14 @ Buster Daly's
1/15 @ The Scene Bar
w/ Drinkers Purgatory, Die Young
1/18 @ Surf Bowl
1/19 @ Thee Parkside
w/ Giant Haystacks, Young Offenders
1/20 @ Casa Sangre

Joey: Hey Pat, what are you doing tonight?

Pat: After Laguna Beach *the Real OC*, nothing.

Joey: Sweet. Let's check out that Drinkers Purgatory cd. I have to do a preview on them this month. You can help me out and figure out some questions.

Pat: What's in it for me?

Joey: The last of my roommate's whiskey.

Pat: Yeah bitch.

Later that evening...

Pat: Man! That chick Kristen is a bitch! Can you believe the attitude on that girl?

Joey: Totally. I mean, so self centered. I wouldn't put up with it.

Pat: Pop that cd in and load me a chonga load.

Joey: Cheers! (cd begins to play) Oh yeah, I can groove! This is bad!

Pat: Yeah, this is cool. Who are these guys?

Joey: They're from Anaheim, I think. Matty is putting out.

Pat: No shit. Big Matty?

Joey: Yeah, Small Pool Records. His code name is Matty Awesome.

Pat: It kinda sounds like that Toys That Killish shit. Sorta, but not totally.

Joey: Who doesn't? Yeah, and that other band they played with the other night, Killer Dreamer.

Pat: Shit yeah. That show was tight!

Joey: Remember that dude we blazed with in the alley? Troy. He plays in Drinkers. And another guy Mike G.

Pat: Who? That dude on acid?

Joey: No, that was another dude. Help me with some questions. What should I ask?

Pat: Ask them where they recorded the album.

Joey: At Davey Tiltwheel's house in Escondido.

Pat: Sweet. Oh yeah, small pool. Duh. You could ask why they thanked Small Pool Records but not Spring Break McTurtle.

Joey: Oh yeah, that's golden Pony Boy. I think they are in between drummers, should I ask them if they should call themselves Drummer's Purgatory?

Pat: We're rolling now. This cd is bad as fuck. They're playing soon, right?

Joey: Oh yeah, at the Scene. I sure like all the bands they thank. Oh shit! That was Walter Sobcheck!

Pat: Where? Oh, yeah. Vietnam. Yeah, this breakdown is pretty cool. This is their first record? Pretty cool. Who else is in the band?

Joey: Good question to ask. Let me see that in sleeve. Hmmm...

Pat: What's that noise? The beeping?

Joey: Dunno. Anymore tracks left on the cd?

Pat: Yeah, one more. Where do you think they're going with this beeping?

Joey: To the next track, just a guess. Lets wait. Hmm, questions.

Pat: Slack Mafia?

Joey: Yeah, I think they put out a zine. And they throw generator parking lot shows. Dudes are down. I think the Drinker's dudes are the Slack Mafia

Pat: They break you knees so you have an excuse to chill. Time for spin the sequel. **Joey:** This cd is like my ass. It smells like rock and roll.

Pat: When do you do the interview?

Joey: Should do it soon. Deadline creepin while I'm sleepin.

Pat: Yeah, you're spread thin like margarine. Bet you slack and have to use this fake conversation for the story.

Joey: Bet? Any point spread?

I won't lie and say I know a lot about his band. So here is what I do know. Alex Ulloa sings and plays guitar. He studied history at the University of Florida. He is very nice and doesn't drink. Pete is the lead guitar player but plays bass right now because the last bass player got a job and can't tour. Pete likes Natural Ice. Joel plays drums. That's all for Joel. Here's a little history - from the ashes of Panthro UK United 13 and House on Fire comes Black Cougar Shock Unit of Atlanta, Georgia. They've been around since August of 2003. Alex told me "All any of us have ever wanted to do is be playing in a band that is touring, and touring, and recording and recording. All of a sudden all of us are in the same band and it's just like fucking rad!"

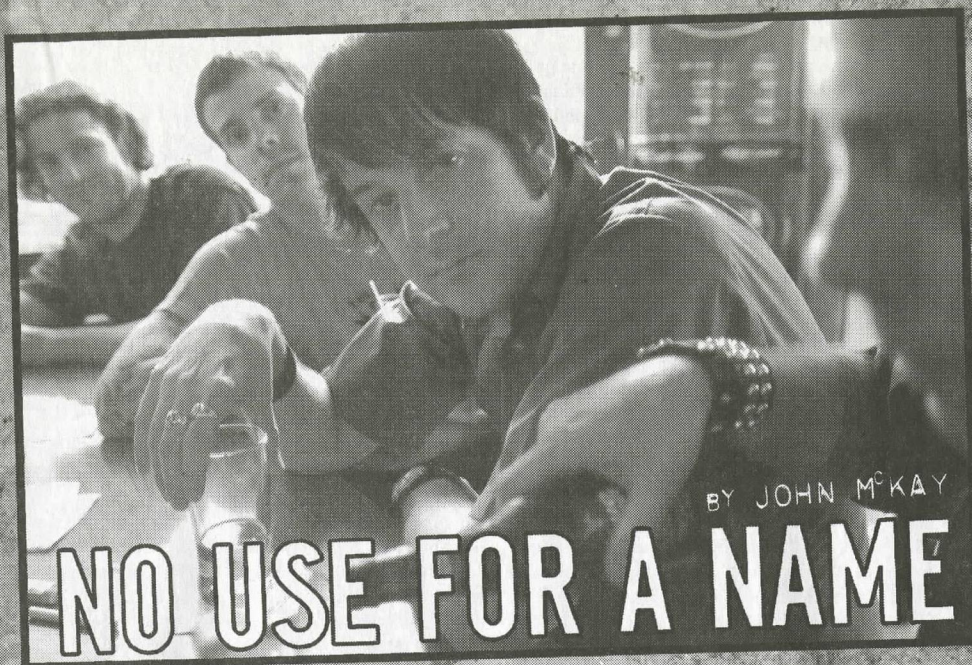
How has Pete adjusted to his new role in BCSU? "He's amazing. He'll be playing guitar leads on the bass. It's fucking cool. We're trying to figure out which songs work well as a three piece."

A mutual friend of Alex's and mine put us in contact because BCSU are coming out his way and they needed a show to fill a gap. So I called a club and booked some bands, all of which sound different but will work on the same bill. I told that to Alex and he was amped. "I like diverse shows where there is this wide array of styles. It used to be more like that. I have no illusions of the past being better than the present. But there are sometimes and certain things where all

that stuff sucks but his one thing was really cool. It used to be where you go to shows and each band is different than the other. Seems nowadays that people set up shows where all the bands sound the same, and you're like what's the point of that? I don't need to hear one shitty band trying to sound like the head liner and the next band doing a slightly better version of it. The third band doing a pretty damn close version what the headlining band is doing and the headlining band does what the first three bands were trying to do. It's just boring."

"I'll knock on wood when I say this, but the way things are going right now its really good for us and I'm really happy about it. The three of us have set up our lives so that we can drop everything and go on tour. We're going out for this five weeks, come home for five weeks and then head out to the Europe for about a month. If we have a permanent bass player then we can head back in the studio when we get back from Europe and record the next album."

Black Cougar Shock Unit put out records through New Industry Records, a label out in Cardiff, Wales, a DIY label run by Dave and Jo. Alex expressed his deep gratitude for the love and support they have shown for BCSU. Dave is coming out for the US tour. In Dave's words, "I'll be committed to this band until the day I die... yay!" How many record label execs can say that?



BY JOHN MCKAY

NO USE FOR A NAME

Keeping Them Confused

While it may be tempting to apply the title of their latest full-length to the band's lifespan over the past two decades, No Use For A Name's Tony Sly insists that the title of their new LP "Keep Them Confused" does not have any direct meaning, but is rather a line in a politically charged song that didn't make the cut on their recent album.

Followers of the band could be fooled, however, as the band has made their living through being unpredictable trend-dodgers who have somehow maintained to fly just below the radar of the national scene, despite being one of the most consistent punk acts since 1987. Whether confusing die-hard fans by supporting Sum 41 on a national tour or confusing junior scenesters by being as old as many kids' parents at Warped Tour, confusion has been key for No Use For A Name. There is one constant, however, and that is Sly and his band's workhorse ethic and meticulous devotion to their craft, and that while they may keep some confused, they are far more concerned with keeping themselves happy.

BW: You're currently supporting "Keep Them Confused." Having been around since '87, is it hard at all to maintain the drive to keep creating fresh music after almost two decades?

Tony Sly: Writing songs, for me, is still something that I love doing. I try to make

every album have sort of a fresh sound. The number one thing bands do is burn out on their own sound, what people think they are supposed to sound like. But I guess with each record we make we try to add a little diversity so that it's not appeasing everybody, like all the fans. As long as we can keep ourselves happy, that's what keeps the band going.

BW: Lately there has been a promising resurgence of the Cali punk sound, with bands like A Wilhelm Scream coming pretty much out of nowhere, and other younger acts brewing in the underground. For a while it seemed as though the Fat Wreck brand of punk wasn't nearly as prominent as it was in the mid- to late-1990s. Do you see a more widespread interest in this sound returning anytime soon?

Tony: Yeah, definitely. I mean, we kind of felt that because we're right in the midst of all that, and you know, it's one of those things where we just try to do our own thing. It's not like we try to ignore what's going on in the music business, we realize that we're not these other bands. We're never going to be. We can't get ourselves to dress up and things like that, it's not in us. We're more about songs and the quality of the music and things that, when you're in the middle of writing or rehearsing, kind of make your hair stand up on the back of your neck. That's what we think is a good song. It kind of goes back to how we last. I don't know,

it's just doing your own thing, really.

BW: You guys have been around long enough to know that trends don't really matter much anyway.

Tony: Yeah, not really. Gimmicks don't last. Songs are really what lasts. Every band has their ups and downs and things like that and you just ride it out because this is what we do. We started this in 1987 and then we basically in like, 1992 or '93, being in our early 20s, I was going to college and I was like, forget this, I want to do music, and everyone kind of quit their day jobs.

BW: A lot of people regard "More Betterness!" as one of the pinnacles of the late-'90s skate-punk scene. How have you approached subsequent albums such as "Keep Them Confused," knowing that an album you made so many years ago is still so highly regarded?

Tony: With "More Betterness!" songs were just flying out the window. It was very easy to write, and the songs just kept coming.

It was one of those things where you were just in this mindset and there's a steady flow of songs. The new (album) was the same, only it was a much shorter period of time. There weren't as many songs, but it was just sort of like, I'd write a song and move off of it. I wasn't trying to be a perfectionist; I was just trying to express what was in my head at the time, trying to get that onto paper or a CD. It's pretty melancholy, the record. It's just how I was feeling for a few months and the way the band was feeling. Things were a little bit on the depressing side, maybe, because what was kind of going on at the time with the war in Iraq, which is still going on, and the election.

BW: Your album is titled "Keep Them Confused," is this a political statement of some sort, or a personal reference to how you orchestrate your career?

Tony: Actually, it comes from a song that didn't make the record. It's a lyric from the song "History of Defeat," which is going to appear on an EP that we are releasing next year. We had three leftover songs from the "Keep Them Confused" sessions and that was one of them. We were going through lyrics looking for a title and we thought that was kind of cool and would throw people off and make them ask questions about it.

BW: But the album title is quite fitting, given your track record. For instance, you confused a lot of older fans by touring with Sum 41, and confused a lot of younger kids by touring on some of the recent Warped Tours, despite the difference in musical scenery on that festival as of late.

Tony: Yeah, it makes sense and we can't kick ourselves for making weird decisions on what tours we do, but at the same time, the title of the album was in no way directed at our fans. It came from a song that was more politically driven, about the war in Iraq. But we didn't want to set a tone for the entire record like it being a political record, either. That's not what we're about. We're about music first, and lyrics, and we write whatever we feel like writing.

SHOW INFO

1/11-12@ the Henry Ford Theatre, 1/14 Ventura Theatre, 1/15 Montgomery World Plaza
1/17@ The Catalyst, 1/18 @ The Catalyst, 1/19 @ 4th & B Theater, 1/20 @ SOMA
1/29 @ The Warfield All shows w/ Pennywise, The Suicide Machines and, Love Equals Death



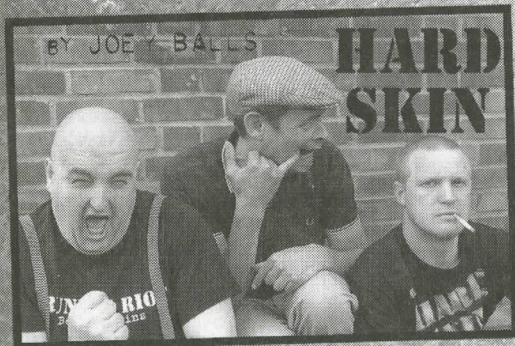
SHOW INFO

1/8, 2006 @ Peking Palace
W/ FightBack, Dirtbag,
Anti Hippies, Nuclear Waste
1/13, @ Fench Valley Theatre
W/ Ryan Mudd, The Stuff
1/14, @ The Troubadour
W/ The Briefs, Dead to Me, Clit 45

There comes a time after listening to punk rock for any number of years, you start to hear the same thing over and over again with little enthusiasm when bands all start to draw from the same influences and sound the same. It gets dull immediately and you find yourself looking for something that catches your ear. The Ignorant quietly released their debut 7" on a small label in the fall 2005 and the band has almost sold out of the first pressing without one advertisement and only few shows since its release but with better than average distribution for a first 7". The Ignorant's shows are anything but quiet affairs and for a band that mainly grabs the opening slot, they take to the stage and play their set with such intense energy that you soon forget they are not headlining. The band originally formed in 2002, but solidified their

line-up in 2004. Their hard work paid off booking a number of shows throughout the west coast on the strength of their five-song demo CD. The Ignorant played shows throughout California, Nevada and as far south as Mexico where they gained new fans at every stop. Rebel Sound Records released their three-song green vinyl 7" with bonus CD-R in September. Belly of the Beast has caught many ears within the punk community and has managed to gain positive reviews in Maximum Rock n' Roll, Big Wheel, Slug & Lettuce, Pocket Full of Change and New Reform. The band has also got tattooed on Dickey Barrett's morning radio show on LA's Indie 103.1. The Ignorant features the 2005 Punk Rock Bowling Tournament MVP Diego singing lead, Kelly tearing up the guitar, punk rock veteran Chip pounding the drums and Jason on bass. The

band recently welcomed Jason into The Ignorant as their previous bass player had other commitments. Jason has added a new element to The Ignorant and has already proven himself in the few shows he's played with them. Older, more jaded punks see The Ignorant do in fact get it, the music is powerful and the lyrics have more to them than the typical "fight the government" or "get drunk" lyrics that seem to plague many street punk bands today. The politically charged "Belly of the Beast", one of the best punk songs heard in a long time is a crowd favorite and the A-side of their acclaimed single. On a recent trip to San Francisco opening for The Briefs at the legendary Gilman St. Project, The Ignorant played such a great show, The Briefs asked them to open a couple of Southern California dates and the band did not think twice to accept that offer!



SHOW INFO

1/10 @ G Street Pub
1/11 @ Alex's Bar
1/12 @ Zombie Lounge
1/13 @ Gilman St.
1/14 @ Hemlock Tavern

Hard Skin are from England. They have British accents. They play great music and they are fancy pieces of flesh. Read on...

Big Wheel: How long have Hard Skin been a band?

Fat Bob: We have been a band since we was born, know what I mean? In case you don't - Since Day one. We've always wanted to live and breathe oi! and that's what we is doing. We are keeping the oi! flag flying high.

Big Wheel: Your bio title dubs Hard Skin as London's premiere "Oi!/Skinhead satirists". Is it safe to say that most most Oi!/ Skinhead punk bands take themselves to seriously and not enough beeriously?

Fat Bob: We are Serious...what are you fuckin' on about. We are the premier London oi! band but that's because there are no other London oi! bands. Know what I mean?

BW: In the case of Sham 69 vs. the Clash, plead your side for the former.

FB: Sham 69 are THE BOLLOX, Clash are BOLLOX. Know what I mean?

BW: You have upcoming shows with Dillinger Four in PA and Tiltwheel in San Diego. Am I off base to assume you guys are on a pro "No Beer's Left Behind" platform?

FB: Who are Dillinger 4 and Tiltwheel?? They both sound like gay karaoke bands to me. So in short-we won't be drinking beer with them.

BW: Your latest album "Same Meat Different Gravy" can make you shit your pants, piss your self drunk, eat some food and fall in love, and start a fight- all in one sitting. Anger, love, happiness, would you beat me up if I said you guys were emotional, or 'emo' for that matter?

FB: It is emotional music....but not emo like

you've heard from DC or San Diego. This is *emoi*. Emotional oi! music. Know what I mean?? Probably not because you are light years behind South London with new music. We are so far ahead of the game there are bands in Gipsy Hill that sound like 90's bands rather than 80's bands.

BW: Who farts at the end of Law and Order (up your arse)?

FB: Fat Fackin' Bob.

BW: How is Hard Skin going to welcome the New Year?

FB: A game of darts on the stroke of 12 followed shiftily by the missus having a stroke of me dart.

BW: What American beer do you prefer? What American beer do you dislike?

FB: The only thing we hate more than American beer is Americans.

BW: Who are the "Boys in Blue"?

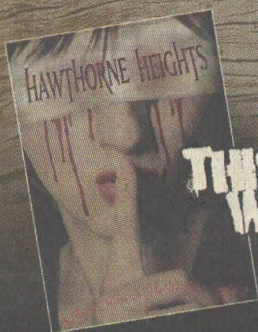
FB: The boys in Blue is the greatest Football Team in the world - Millwall FC. Admittedly they are having a shit year and sit third from Bottom of the Championship but the only way is up and even if they get relegated we know we can take anyone on the terraces. Know what I mean?

BW: Gillette or Shic, which work better?

FB: I think the word you are looking for is WORKS not work. Are you thick?? Our birds always shave our heads cause they think it's sexy so you'll have to talk to one of them..... but I can't give you there numbers cause you'll probably try to chat them up....do they have Women in America?

BW: Is it hard to get a decent burrito in England?

FB: What is a burrito? -Is my question to you.

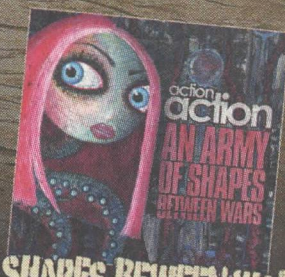


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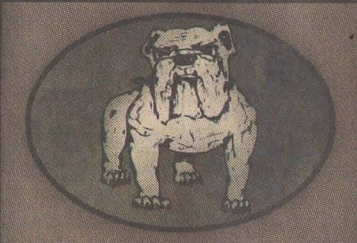
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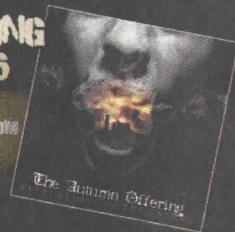
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There is no doubt that everything about punk rock has gone through some pretty drastic changes over the years. From its early conception to its 1980s revival, to the punk resurgence of today, it has mutated from generation to generation. Some argue that punk doesn't stand for the same thing anymore. Many things have changed but one thing that has stayed the same is the high, fist raising energy and true punk rock vibe of Southern California's, Pennywise.

After sixteen plus years of playing, they unleashed their recent album, *The Fuse*, with the same fury and vigor of their first. While some people may criticize them for remaining the same year after year, others look to the foursome for a constant soothing sound of what punk should be in this fickle age of fashion and fads.

"People today just go out and put on the punk rock uniform and they play the same stuff and have the same moves, said guitarist Fletcher Dragge.

Pennywise strongly believes in staying true to what punk is supposed to be about and keeping it how they remember it was in the 1980s. Fletcher says they will not give into the fads or the people who complain they're too consistent because it is just not in their hearts to play anything else.

"Everyone is like a robot now and its just become this who's who thing and trying to get on a major label and become rock stars."

Fletcher says that the guys in Pennywise never wanted success and that they only wanted to play the music they loved. He says the success they did obtain came "slowly and naturally", unlike the success of many bands now days that have girls crying in the front row before they even make an album.

Of course, Pennywise didn't have the same technology to take advantage of as bands do today, especially with the take off of myspace.com. Bands can be heard thousands of times with the click of a button before they ever play a show.

Fletcher believes that musicians are in it for all the wrong reasons now and that they just don't have the same passion and love for it as they did before.

"These bands just come out of the woodwork, I can name a hundred of them, saying they are going to be the next big thing and just sitting around telling people that is just so fucking gross to me," Fletcher said.

He believes that if you have to tell someone you are rock n roll, then you aren't. The fake emotions and rotten people that come into the business really upset him to the point where he feels sickened by what the music he once loved has become. "It's like the blues. You can't make a blues singer out of nothing. They gotta walk the road and have it in their soul to be good. So many of these bands now days just don't have any soul," said Fletcher.

Fletcher blames commercialism for much of the decline because they take everything that is or might be cool and popular and over due it to the extreme. He said that he cant even listen to bands like Anti-flag anymore because of how they talked political rhetoric and about how bad corporate America was and then went and signed to a major label.

"I don't care what you tell me, that's not right and totally hypocritical. You can't do one and then do the other. They are great guys and I've always liked the music but it seems like commercialism gets a hold of everything and ruins it," Fletcher said.

Because they miss the days when punk was pure, they decided to go back in time for the recording of *The Fuse*. They spent more time just having fun with it and jamming together than they did recording and re-recording over and over to get a perfect sound on the album.

"We were never known for playing perfectly or tight or taking it too seriously, we just are out there to have fun," Fletcher said.

Many of the early punk records that Fletcher enjoys the most aren't recorded flawlessly. Bands like the Misfits, Dead Kennedy's and Black Flag released some of the most raw sounding recordings out there, but to him, the fact that you can hear sour notes and out of tune guitars, is what gave those albums their energy.

"We felt like over the last couple of albums we've been getting too into the perfection aspect of making an album and not keeping some of the vibe that we had on earlier albums," Fletcher said. "We wanted to try to make a record that sounds like we were making it ten or twelve years ago."

Pennywise also experimented a little on *The Fuse*, by using different guitar sounds and effects to drive the listener and add texture to the songs. Fletcher said their "I don't care attitude" on this record contributed a natural rawness to the overall sound of the songs.

"People make mistakes in real life you know. It's a better attitude to have, than trying to making everything falsely perfect," Fletcher said.

The band had their usual predicaments when they sat down to think of a title or this album, narrowing it down from hundreds of possible titles to one. Out of the top ten, Fletcher said they gravitated toward *The Fuse* because they felt like their music sparks others imaginations and gets them to think about things differently.

"It was a fitting title because our music is kind of like a fuse that can ignite something in others," Fletcher said.

As they head out for yet other tour, Fletcher is excited to finally be doing a decent club tour rather than the usual large outdoor venues. He said he couldn't wait to get on stage with such a great lineup including No Use For A Name, Suicide Machines and newcomers Love Equals Death. "Having this caliber of bands on the bill from open to close is something you don't see everyday."

SHOW INFO

1/11-12@ the Henry Fonda Theatre, 1/14 Ventura Theatre, 1/15 Montgomery World Plaza
1/17@ The Catalyst, 1/18 @The Catalyst, 1/19 @ 4th & B Theater, 1/20 @SOMA
1/29 @The Warfield All shows w/ NUFAN, The Suicide Machines and, Love Equals Death

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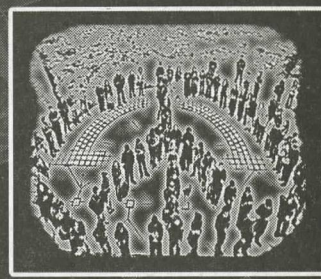
Bang Sugar Bang
"Thwak Thwak Go Crazy"



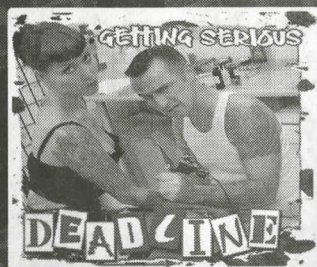
The Vibrators
"Buzzin'"



Final Conflict
"Ashes to Ashes"



So Unloved
"Pink Black & Broken"



Deadline
"Getting Serious"



Red Alert
"Blazin' thru the Years"



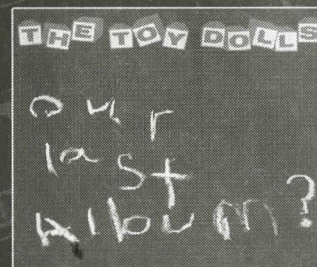
GBH
"Punk Junkies"



Blitz "Hits"

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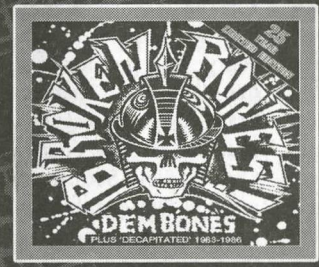
HOT TITLES



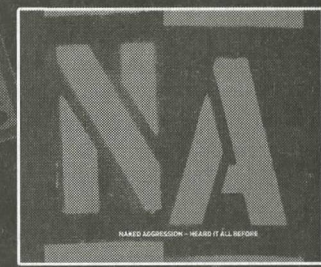
The Toy Dolls
"Our Last Album?"



Adicts
"Made in England"



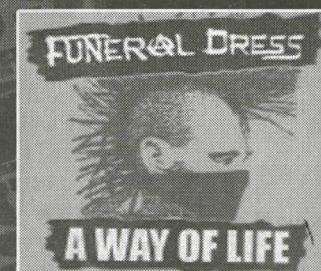
Broken Bones
"Dem Bones / Decapitated"



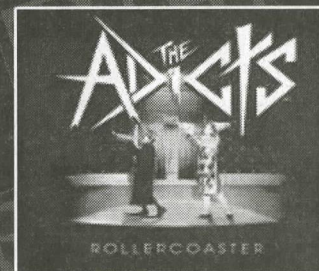
Naked Aggression
"Heard It All Before"



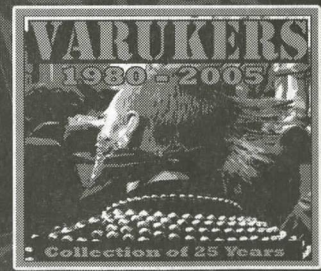
Total Chaos
"Freedom Kills"



Funeral Dress
"A Way of Life"



Adicts
"Rollercoaster"



Varukers
"Collection of 25 Years"

BY MARCUS SOLOMON

photo by: Team Teen

SHOW INFO

1/2 @ El Dorado
w/ Narc. Youth, Time Again

1/3 @ Alpine

1/4 @ the Library in S.F.

1/5 @ Slims in S.F.

1/6 @ the El Rey
w/ Bad Reaction

1/7 @ Soma

ADOLESCENTS

This is undeniably one of the greatest and most influential punk bands of all time. Now, 25 years after its genesis, Adolescents is once again waging war against the status quo, ignorance, and everything mundane with three of the most effective weapons on Earth; truth, music and volume. The band never really went away—each member going on to do their own different things—but the echoes of the early years continued to resonate in the ears and minds of those who remembered, while legions of new kids discovered the timeless anthems of suburban teenage frustration and explosive exhilaration.

Now, things are again charging ahead at full-speed with a new-found sense of power, focus and the release of a new album—OC CONFIDENTIAL—which is every bit as good as the band's first release, the eponymous and iconic "blue album." In fact, the new record is better than anything Adolescents has previously recorded. While it is impossible to replicate the amazing sense of exuberant newness created by the

first release, the current collection displays superior musicianship, better arrangement, and an enlightened maturation of the angry, yet precociously insightful spirit that defined the band both then and now. Translation? It was good then and it is even better today. Founding members Tony Cadena, Steve Soto, and Frank Agnew have retained their youthful anxiety, penetrating sense of critical social insight while honing their skills and sense of comprehension in the most unforgiving school that ever existed—everyday life.

Founding members Tony Cadena and Steve Soto were interviewed by Marc at Phillippe's Restaurant in Los Angeles, CA. on 12/10/05.

Tony Reflex (Cadena) – vocals
Steve Soto – bass
Frank Agnew – guitar
Frank Agnew Jr. guitar
Derek O'Brien - drums

BIG WHEEL: [Prior to Tony's arrival] In a recent review of the new album, I wrote that

every song was great except for "California Son." I was later informed that it was inspired by the relatively recent deaths of both of Tony's brothers; one by suicide and the other by murder. Now I feel shallow. Do you see how that song is odd in relation to the others?

STEVE: No, I don't because I know where it fits in the whole story.

BW: It seems to oddly happy.

STEVE: The chorus sounds happy, but the rest of the lyrics are very...bitter.

BW: What made you finally decide to create another Adolescents album?

STEVE: Every time we get together to do some shows, it seems like Casey [Royer] was always the one to say "Let's put out a new record!" But all this stuff started happening with Tony, and he came to Frank [Agnew] and I. He had been writing all this stuff and it began with the three of us. Rikk [Agnew] was in and out of the process.

BW: What's the deal with Rikk?

STEVE: Rikk's real talent is in being a songwriter. His songwriting is amazing. "Kids of the Black Hole," he wrote that

by himself. The ALL BY MYSELF solo record he did, most of those were supposed to be the second Adolescents record. In his time, he was amazing! But he hasn't written anything in the last ten years that...you know.

BW: Punk rock gossip time! Casey told me that you kicked him out the band because you thought he made fun of your weight.

STEVE: Not true. He is on and off again, but he is more off than on. If you watch him play drums, sometimes he hits the cymbal, but it doesn't move.

[Tony then arrives carrying FIVE cups of coffee and one soda.]

TONY: I brought my lunch.

BW: I want to apologize for writing that I did not like "California Son." I did not understand where it was coming from. I thought it sounded like an orange juice commercial.

TONY: You don't have to apologize to me, but if someone is offering residuals...

STEVE: We'll take 'em! [Laughs]

BW: Was it necessary to have such tremendous personal tragedy occur to spur you to create another album?

TONY: No. We were working on stuff. It would have happened eventually. It gave me impetus.

BW: Are you pleased with the new creation?

TONY: Yes.

STEVE: We are not too proud of some of the in-between records, but we are very proud of this one. It seems to be selling alright, and the reviews are mostly good.

BW: Tell us about the AMPM "Digi Drink" cups.

STEVE: There is now something like 250,000 AMPM cups out there with my music on the bottom. I haven't heard it, but I went out and bought one. They're MP3 files.

BW: How did that come about?

STEVE: We were in New York for the save CBGB's thing and we got that [The club] saved for another year, and I met the iPod guy, and it just went from there.

BW: Are you making a living from your music?

STEVE: I'm living off the music because I play in like 500 bands.

BW: [To Tony] And you supplement your income by teaching elementary school?

TONY: Yeah, I do. [Tony teaches 5th grade.]

STEVE: We don't sell records like Green Day, but...you know. [Shrugs]

TONY: You know what I learned from our

band? I learned you gotta work hard if you want things to happen, and things don't always happen the way you think.

BW: Can you explain to me how the guy who wrote "I Hate Children" ended up being a teacher?

STEVE: Tony and I wrote that song, and it was never serious; it was a joke.

TONY: I graduated from school, with a degree in World History. My wife suggested substitute teaching because the money was good. After that, I started working in a special education school. I thought it would be easy money, but it wasn't. It was really cool. Those kids are smart!

BW: I know from my own experience in working with autistic and Down Syndrome kids that they are smart, but you have to be able to speak that language.

TONY: Yeah. I can speak that language. I am very perceptive in that way. They are

"You know what I learned from our band? I learned you gotta work hard if you want things to happen, and things don't always happen the way you think."

very intelligent, but they communicate differently. It's a different modality.

BW: I think it is interesting to see how punk bands were saying some very antagonistic things in the early days, but nobody was stupid enough to shoot up their school.

STEVE: The guitar was my weapon of choice.

TONY: You think guitars and microphones are toys? They are our weapons of choice.

The pen is mightier than the sword and everyone in the band always felt that way. You can get more done by writing something down rather than going out and causing destruction.

BW: How did the two of you get interested in politics and world events?

TONY: We have always had a cohesive worldview. We always considered those things.

STEVE: We would read about stuff. I used to read books about Vietnam and stuff.

BW: That must have been the key. You guys actually READ books and things. Kids do not read much anymore. This is the age of

computers, video games, Fox News, and apathy.

STEVE: Yeah. Culturally, you don't have to even be involved.

TONY: Fox News. The enemy of free speech.

BW: I don't sense any egoism here, but are you aware of the impact your band has made?

STEVE: We are aware of it. A lot of the newer bands will say in their interviews how the Adolescents had been such a big influence. Sometimes we can hear it in different guitar parts and sometimes somebody comes up and says, 'You don't know how much of an influence you have been on my music.' Then he hands us a CD and when we hear it, it's like, uh... Sometimes I think, 'I hope I didn't inspire that.'

BW: Hey! What about that Adolescents skateboard from Team Goon? Are you now or have you ever been a skateboarder?

STEVE: I would skate to the store to pick up a twelver.

TONY: I stopped skating when they invented those plastic wheels.

STEVE: I just saw THE LORDS OF DOGTOWN movie, and its funny how all that stuff happened around what we were doing.

BW: They made it seem like the Dogtown guys were the only ones, but THE BADLANDS skaters of the Inland Empire deserve as much credit. Even so, skateboarding is truly the only punk-rock approved sport. Snowboarders try to claim it, but you can't be a gutterpunk and be a snowboarder; unless you have rich friends.

STEVE:

Right, you don't need a lot of money to be a skateboarder.

TONY: I had a ten-speed [bicycle] and when I got on a Big Wheel, I just didn't look that cool.

BW: Why do you think that a large portion of your current audience is so young?

STEVE: Because we thought the same way they think today. We still think that way. And you can't fake it. Well, you can fake it, but a lot of them will not fall for that. When the kids come see us, they know it's the real deal.

TONY: They can see that there's light at the end of the tunnel.

Go to: www.theadolescents.net



Sleepytime Gorilla Museum



Trey Spruance of Secret Chiefs 3 and Matthias Bossi of Sleepytime Gorilla Museum

Trey Spruance (Mr. Bungle, Faith No More) founded Secret Chiefs 3 (SC3) in 1995. The band's current release (their 5th full-length studio recording) is titled *Book M* and has done exceptionally well. Trey began Mimicry Recordings in 1998. In 2004 Mimicry Recordings released, *Of Natural History*, Sleepytime Gorilla Museum's (SGM) third full-length album. It has been a natural progression for these two highly original bands from the greater San Francisco Bay Area to tour together. The tour presents a much anticipated event for all Secret Chiefs 3, Sleepytime Gorilla Museum and Mimicry Recordings fans.

Trey and Matthias Bossi (SLEEPYTIME GORILLA MUSEUM drummer) interviewed each other about these shared tour dates and other oddities. Trey of SC3 directed the following questions at Matthias of SGM. Matthias did him the courtesy of answering them!

Trey's Q: Behind the steps taken to dismantle the masquerade of good and evil, I detect a hint of institutional authority behind SGM. Is this anti-anti intellectualism, or anti-anti-intellectualism?

Matthias' A: SGM's familial lifestyle is one of strict routine. Modeling ourselves after the great monarchies and football-dynasties of yore, the band operates on a minute to minute breakdown of tasks, from bean preparation, rigorous exercise, and scheduled reading, to a constant dialogue on the merits of the gypsy life. This is anti-anti-intellectualism at its most elemental.

Trey's Q: When I see you perform, I feel like the Apocalypse must've already happened -- you all seem like comfortable residents of a post-End Time world. How did this come about?

Matthias' A: Passion. We're just preparing for the inevitable, by physically conjuring a post-life stage persona, so that we might be called back for a starring role in the actual apocalyptic ballet.

Trey's Q: I can see how things like "rock against rock" would cancel out notions of progression, but how do you REALLY explain how this band remains unblemished by the cruel march of time? Oil of Olay? Antidisestablishmentarianism?

Matthias' A: One Word: Tennis.

Upon replying to these grueling inquiries the tables were turned and Matthias made probing inquiries of Trey...Trey replied.

Matthias' Q: Can those who have denied and/or ignored "TRUTH" fully experience the music of SC3?

Trey's A: In fact, Denying Truth, if it's done with intensity and rigor, is likely to bring a person into a zone of camaraderie with us. The only people who are categorically limited with respect to a full appreciation of our music would be the cowards -- the "unrigorous" who are blinded by the day-to-day hand-me-down pseudo-philosophies of modern times. Too wet around the ears for any sort of game of "Pin The Tail on the Donkey-Headed-Self", they are welcome to just brush our music off as "weird", and continue with their useless lives.

Matthias' Q: Three separate bands? Simultaneously? Does maximalism manifest itself in your daily ablutions, and not just your music?

Trey's A: Actually, it's seven separate and distinct bands on the last CD. Two of these, UR and Ishraqiyun have performed independently. We're still working on the Operation of drawing the archetypal bands down into the assiyah world. Eventually, six of them will tour -- three per night. We've done this in a "prototype" on all our previous tours, so its not new. It's just that we're now in the middle of focusing it, fixing it, magnifying it, and giving tincture. For this cycle of live shows we are suspending the operation of Separation, to test the solution, and give the apparition of a 'band'.

Matthias' Q: Our respective bands attract a most random cross-section of rabid fans. In fact, it can be guaranteed that on this tour you will be approached by a manic 20-something who eschews the typical post-show shop talk (is that a banjo?) and cuts right to the burning questions surrounding either Ndebele puberty rites, or the destiny of the soul. Does having to riff on initiation, death and the hereafter with your fans make you as happy as I think it does?

Trey's A: When they ask me to teach them how to die correctly, literally, no!!! But you're right, I do thank God daily that people coming to our shows are not the ones who are just sitting around waiting to die. We musicians can spend our lives entertaining needy, dim-witted sycophants, and call that "success." The horror of that Abyss, once looked into, looks back into us. It's important to either see people you can respect out there, or just stop... Allah Akbar is all I can say.

SHOW INFO

1/12/06 @ the Catalyst
1/13/06 @the Troubadour
1/14/06 @The Great American Music Hall

What do a photographer, a web dude for a nonprofit organization that calls the Governorator on his shit, a dude who has his own analog recording studio and a new father have in common? They are all in the Los Angeles based band the Checkers are! The Checkers, who were nominated for LA Weekly's best new artist of 2004 are back in action with their upcoming album "Running With Scissors" coming out in January 2006 (now!), That being follow up to the highly revered "Make A Move", the Checker's have tour plans for early 2006.

G.G. King (George) plays guitar and has the studio, Radio Beat Studios, where "Running With Scissors" was recorded. Julie Vox sings and writes the lyrics. Mark Reback hits the skins and emails people about how we need to remind the fuck heads in charge they can't keep doing what ever benefits them and destroys us. And Lee, former bass master general of Madcap, lays the bass. With that out of the way, the Checkers are a happy fun band. The music is great bouncy rock and roll to have a beer to, but be careful. Beer and bounce equals foam and sticky floors. But that's what it's all about sometimes. Mark spent some time on the phone with me shooting the shit about the new album and about his job

"George is the main songwriter, but on this record we collaborated a lot and co-wrote the songs. I have a good ear for arrangement, and so does Lee. It was really kind of a band project where as the first project Julie and George had a lot of the songs written already. I was only in the band two months when they recorded it. I wasn't even comfortable with the songs when we recorded them (laughs). This definitely feels a lot more like

a band album."

Mark gave me the lowdown on his job and told me his political views are not necessarily shared with the whole band. "I was living in New York working at actually Sony Music of all places - the "man", the anti for a musician. And I just saw how brutal and corrupt and how wasteful it was at these big major labels and corporations, especially for a musician, where you're lucky if you get a dollar per cd, and most of the money goes to the label where it gets wasted. Like 30,000 dollar trips a month to Europe on the Concord, five star hotels. It's like, Jesus you know? What about the artist? That's what's important here, not your freakin trip to Europe. So when I moved back to L.A. I can't be part of this corrupt corporate America thing anymore, I got to do something positive and help the change. This place- Foundation for Taxpayers and Consumer Rights (FTCR) was co-founded by Ralph Nader back in the eighties and it's all about sticking up for the public interest and getting people back involved in politics and standing up to our government when they are not representing our best interests which is pretty much all the time since Bush has been in office. There's been good news about them rejecting the Patriot Act renewal and all that shit. And Bush got busted for all that secret wire tapping. I think the house of cards is about to fall with this thing. I think people have had enough."

Check out the Checkers when they come around, have a blast and dance your ass off!

www.thecheckers.net

www.myspacemusic.com/thecheckers

www.consumerwatchdog.org (FTCR)



SHOW INFO

1/8 @ The Echo
w/ The Twats, Holograms, Red hearts

1/12 on KXL radio fm

1/28 @ Zen Sushi
w/ Lipstick Pickups, Si's Top Ten, Red Hearts

The Black Halos are one of the few bands left that remind you of the New York Dolls and the late Johnny Thunders. Hailing from Vancouver, Canada, the Black Halos are the rock n roll that keeps you alive during the week so that you can make it to the weekend. Billy Hopeless talked to me before the Halos were coming out to California to a play a couple shows, including with Social Distortion.

"We're really excited about playing a show with Social D. They always select good bands to be a part of their shows and the best part is the bands are very underground."

The Halos recently traveled down through the hurricane ravaged south with Duane Peters and the Hunns. "It was just amazing because Duane is a classic. The Hunns are for real and it's rare to see this day and age that someone like Duane is still pushing boundaries."

When asked why such a long wait in between records. Billy just laughs. Alive Without Control is the first record in four years from the Black Halos. "We broke up. We imploded. Any good band is like a firecracker and we were always out on the road. We needed time off and the old band was just me and Rich Jones writing all the songs." Jones left the band since then and has been replaced with Adam of American Heartbreak, while the Halos

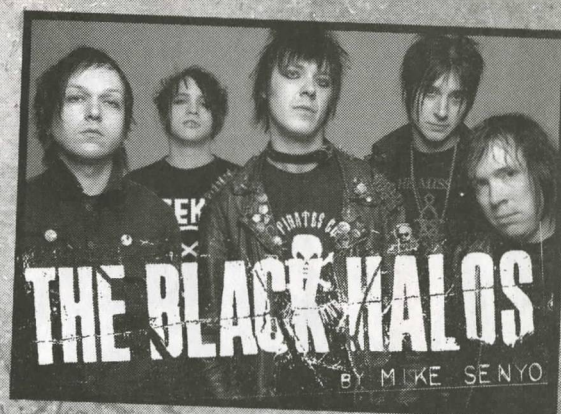
have added another member as well, Dennis on bass.

"It really wasn't that hard to get back together when Rich left," Hopeless said. "One of the things that I wanted was that everyone is involved. All musicians are different and those guys bring different styles of playing, it's like being with a different lover, like Adam came from a war metal band and he brings like that Frankenstein element."

Being from Canada I asked Hopeless if there were any differences in the scene from the U.S. "Canada is a bit more accepting. The U.S. seems spoiled because there are so many bands. We're proud of our punk history because otherwise you have Celine Dion. In the U.S. everyone gets separated and Canada has such a small scene that the billing is more open. You have all kinds of people and all kinds of bands playing the same show."

When asked what a Halos show is like Hopeless replies with chaos. "It's unplanned. Our music is rock n roll in the rawest form. It's so encompassing that we don't know what's going to happen next."

The Halos will be playing all over Southern California this month. "We are not one of your mainstream bands. We're un-neutered, we may bite your ankles but doesn't everyone love the mutt?"



SHOW INFO

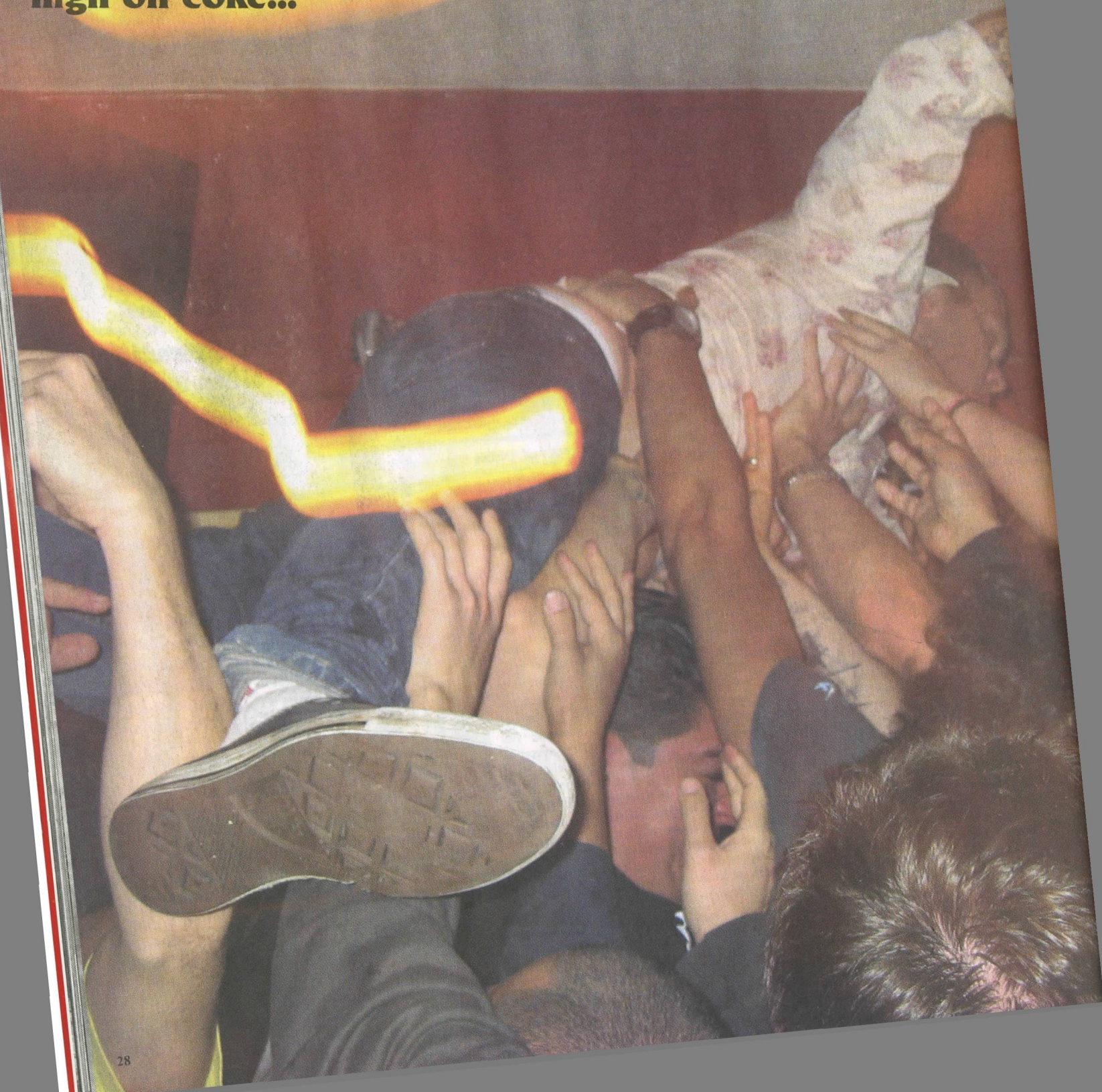
1/5 @ Grant & Green
w/ American Heartbreak

1/6 @ HOBOC
w/ Social Distortion

1/7 @ The Brigg
w/ Lady Killers

1/8 @ Knitting Factory
w/ Lady Killers

“We go to [the doctor’s] house and he’s shooting us up with B12 talking about how Bono thought he could save the fucking world because he was high on coke...”



THE BRONX

BY JOEY BALLS

The Bronx ripped onto the music scene at beerbong buzz speed. It seemed instantaneous that they received a major record label deal and hit the road for a slew of tours. They've recorded a soul shattering self titled full length album and several seven inches. It's been three years since these dudes from the southland started the Bronx and they've already toured the world and sold grips of records. Nothing short of an amazing feat, but that's all regardless to the fact that the Bronx are truly an amazing fucking band. I don't care how they got a record deal and/or the fact that they even have one. When I saw them play at the Doll Hut in Anaheim it came quite apparent that they don't care either.

Let me explain. Matt, the singer, used to sing in this band Brotherhood of Death. I saw them play at the Doll Hut (then Linda's) circa 2001. Matt was going fucking off. Hanging from the ceiling, throwing his body around like a rag doll, and totally captivating the audience of dudes. It was awesome. Seeing Matt today in the Bronx isn't any different, there are just a lot of people in the crowd. But that was five years ago. Matt now fronts one of the best bands I've ever seen period.

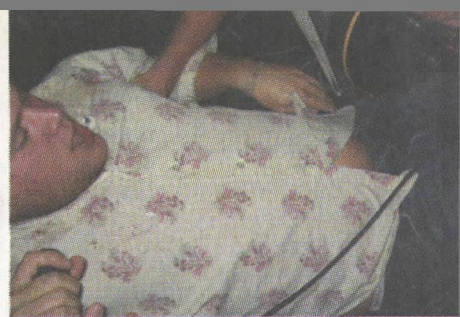
Right now they are finishing up recording their second full length with big time producer Michael Beinhorn (Herbie Hancock, Ozzy Osbourne, Red Hot Chili Peppers). Here are some facts – Matt sings and used to gut chickens. Joby plays guitar and just got married to his long time girlfriend. Jorma is small in stature but plays big drums very low to the ground. James plays bass and is also known as Tweedy. One thing the Bronx likes to exude is mystique, and my conversation with Matt was anything but a candid exclusive of behind the Bronx secrets. So I asked him how to construct the perfect burrito instead.

Joey: How many tunes do you think you'll have on the next album?

Matt: We wrote about thirty songs and ended up recording fifteen or sixteen tracks in the studio. I think we're gonna put like eleven tracks on the record. I think records suck when they are too long. Anything over twelve songs, I just, I don't know. I don't think it's good.

Joey: You guys have been pretty busy, huh?

Matt: The last three years have been absolutely nuts. You know we spent about a year and a half on the road and touring with all these amazing bands I really love and admire. We even toured with bands we didn't really love. You know, it's so weird to come home and be home for a long time. I almost think I'm starting over in a way with this record, it's like you have to get used to everything again. Like you come home and you almost turn into a vegetable. Then you start recording and you turn into a zombie, and by the time you go back out on the road you're a completely different person then you were when you got back. It's kind of weird



photos by: Rafe Mordente

experience. But it's better than my old jobs.

Joey: What were your old jobs?

Matt: I worked at a bank. I gutted chickens. I worked security. I've done it all.

Joey: Are your's and Joby's dads really engineering the album?

Matt: (laughs) Yeah, they're hands on. They've got a couple of key parts in the record that they are handling. We thought it would be kinda funny.

Joey: Remember that show at Linda's? Is that when you and Joby started jamming?

Matt: (laughs) Yeah, well, that's where it all kind of started, man, back in the original Blue Collar/Let Down/Brotherhood of Death era. Out of those ashes. Joby and I, we've been playing for along time, whether or not it was in the same band or just bands that played (shows) with each other. He was actually good friends with my older brother, that's how we first met. Joby was in a band with James, not really a punk band, but more of an alternative band. He got Joby to go to a Brotherhood of Death show and that's how Joby and I met, just kind of kicking it and playing together after that. Then Joby introduced me to James and Jorma.

Joey: Are your lyrics accusations or things directed at anyone or anything in particular? They seem pretty elusive.

Matt: Yeah, they're directed at a lot of specific things. It's hard for me to stay focused, in life and in general. And especially in songwriting. I could be writing about someone halfway through a song and then completely be talking about someone or something different the rest of the song. It kind of turns into a clusterfuck of situations that are on my mind at the time. It's actually pretty funny sometimes when I look back on some of the songs I've written, how the subject matter changes but it doesn't seem like it does. It's all very specific things to me. I try to write songs in a bland sort of way where you don't really know or have an idea of what it's about - where it can mean a million different things. I tried to do that and I don't really like that. I don't like trying to write songs that the universal kid or brain or whatever can understand and can be taken a million different ways. It's just that it doesn't make sense to me. So I tend to write about specific things that either I'm going through that no one else might understand. Usually there is someone else out there that can take meaning out of it but it's not really something I'm worried about.

Joey: Is Gilby Clarke producing your next album like the last one?

Matt: No. It's this guy named Michael Beinhorn. Kind of like a big shot eighties and nineties producer guy. He's pretty cool. Certain stuff you got to deal with that I wasn't ready for. That's another reason why this record has been taking so long. When you have someone like that who is just on a completely different level than you are it's like a give and take type thing. You teach each other things, and it just has taken us to a completely...some of the

stuff we're doing in the studio man I couldn't believe it. The way Joby's song writing and guitar playing on this record is just ... I've never heard anything like it. It's unbelievable. Some of the stuff that I'm writing and singing, it's like stuff that we ourselves couldn't have done quickly unless we had someone like Michael to bring it out of us. Which is really cool, but you know, when you're fucking in the middle of it it's just absolute hell.

Joey: And your last album?

Matt: That album was just pretty much demos. Record labels kept saying like "we'll give you a deal but we want to hear three more songs." So we just kept making songs in packs of threes and then before you know we had like twelve, so we just threw them all together and put the record out. It might have been a year, I don't even know, before we put the record out.

Joey: How will the new one compare to the old one?

Matt: It's not going to be way different, but it's going to be different. We made a conscious decision to step away from, you know, sounding like anyone else. It's like man, you hear bands now that just make you hate music. My goal as a musician is never in any degree, or, six degrees of Kevin Bacon, ever be associated with bands like...Hawthorne Heights, or bands like that that just drive me nuts. It's the same shit over, and over, and over, and over, and over again. So we pushed each other - even though we try to sit in comfort pockets every now and then, to do something different. It's not like the experimental good band gone bad difference that sucks, it's us doing something special that I really believe in. I think it's pretty fucking awesome. I'm really proud of us, proud of the band. I don't know man, I'm really excited for this record. I think it's pretty fucking amazing.

Joey: You're stoked.

Matt: I want to be that person who had this opportunity. Five or ten years later down the line I'm working at a gas station or something because it didn't really work out and I never went to college don't really have an education, so it gets to a point where I'm fighting and I'm working my ass off right now just to make sure I can do this for the rest of my life you know. That's what I want to do. I got a grip and I don't want to let go.

Joey: You're not much of a school dude?

Matt: Not a big fan of school after about six grade. That's kind of where I decided it was kind of pointless, well, not really pointless looking back, but that's how I felt. I just think that certain people are just born to go through school, and other people are born to just...paint. Everybody's different, and I hated school. Never really liked it. I always liked doing my own thing and trying to do different things, creatively and music. Riding bikes. Skateboarding. Whatever. I always just wanted to be a kid my whole life. Never have to work a job with someone standing over my shoulders where I'm training to do something

that I could fucking care less about. I just want to enjoy life at my own fucking pace. Do things that I want to do. I don't want to die with an employee of the month plaque. I want to have records that my kids and family can listen to forever that will be around so I can have some kind of...you know, I did something. That was kind of the coolest thing when our band got signed. It was like -wow! This record is out and people are buying it, it's something I did and it'll be out there for a long time. It's a great feeling.

Joey: Here's a lame question. How did you guys find your, uh, sound?

Matt: A lot of the sound came out of the natural chemistry between the four of us. Jorma is a real precision oriented drummer. He's like a machine with timing and the way he cuts beats up and dissects everything. And Joby, he's a fucking genius when it comes to guitar and putting songs together. The way that first record came to be was Joby coming in with riffs and songs and we would just all as a band cut it up and rearrange it and glue it back together until it was what we wanted and it actually came together real quickly. And you know we're all very different. Joby and I are similar, but we are very different. James and Jorma are very different. I think the difference in styles and the way of approaching music, you know, it's like Joby is workaholic. He's crazy. He has to have everything planned out and done before he actually does it. And someone like me, I don't even go into the studio with all my lyrics written. I have to leave that certain amount of space just for something to actually happen. That's just the way I do it. I'm a procrastinator and I always like things to happen in the moment.

Joey: So you guys have a label called White Drugs. What's going on with it?

Matt: We got this thing called Social Club going on too. It just started with basically putting out Bronx seven inches and on the B sides we're going to have different musicians coming in and playing different things on cover tunes or original songs and it's just cool. It's fun to be able to do stuff that you always thought was so hard, so impossible. I never realized how easy it is to put out a seven inch. You write two songs, scrape together 3-400 bucks and you can put it out. And now we're in such a spot as a band where all these songs and creativity is just flowing and we're just stoked that we have the opportunity to put all this stuff out there. We get money here and there from labels who are like backing our cause and it's fucking cool man. I never really thought I'd be in this spot where I can fuck around like this. It's all coming out on White Drugs. The first seven inch is the Bronx Charles Manson song that me and Joby did with a Bronx b-side that Keith Morris sang. We got Josh Holmes from Queens [of the Stone Age] coming in, the guys from Los Lobos are coming in to do stuff, Joe and Don from the Icarus Line are coming in to sing and play guitar and bass on some stuff. It's another

excuse to do something with no rules at all.

Joey: And the dvd?

Matt: That was supposed to have come out a long time ago. It was our first Australian show on Jormas birthday, it was a fucking blast. I have no idea when it's coming out.

Joey: Who is the Guvn'r?

Matt: It's classified, I can't tell you that. Sorry about that.

Joey: How was the Swedish ecoli?

Matt: I didn't get that. That was some bullshit that James and Joby got. I ate the same sandwich. It was a sketchy beef sandwich and I fucking loved it. I thought it was great! Yeah, I didn't get the Swedish Ecoli, you know I'm even hesitant to think it even existed. I just think it might have been the body rejecting a month of tour, I don't know if it's a beef sandwich that's going to give you diarrhea when you've been on the road for a year and half drinking and doing drugs and eating the shittiest food imaginable. I don't think one little beef sandwich is going to send you over the top.

Joey: Tour butt is the worst.

Matt: I had a pair of pants once that smelled so bad, like pure ass. I went to a bar in the middle of nowhere and this dog just buried his nose into my ass! And he wouldn't stop, it was pretty embarrassing. But you know, what are you gonna do?

Joey: How would you build the perfect burrito?

Matt: First of all it's got to start with a solid tortilla. You might even want to do a double wrap.

Joey: Corn or flour?

Matt: Always flower! Double wrapped flour. Then you're going to need to get a solid pinto bean. The Henrys vegetarian bean is a very strong bean. I love beans but I can't stand the whole bean. It really grosses me out. So I mash my beans. I mash them until they are nice and kind of creamy. And then you throw that in with some carne asada, some Mexican rice, and some sour cream from a sour cream gun. And some guacamole and some tomatoes, and hot sauce man, that's pretty good.

Joey: Brand name hot sauce?

Matt: I like the super mex salsa myself. I've been known to go into Del Taco or Taco Bell and just buy a taco then drain them of all their sauces. That's the punk way to do it, I guess.

Joey: Have you ever had a buracadilla?

Matt: No, what's that?

Joey: You wrap a taco in a burrito and wrap a quesadilla around that. Taco Bell stole the idea and called it a crunch wrap, but my friends from Rancho Cucamonga have been doing it since 2001.

Matt: Are you serious?

Joey: Yes.

Matt: Well, it's a little known fact that my dad actually invented the chilito.

Joey: No way!

Matt: Oh yeah! And he even calls it a chilito. You know that's an interesting point. What if Taco Bell has field agents that they just fucking send out in the neighborhoods to rip off fucking

families that are cooking up the prime shit? You know, with the buracadito or whatever and the chilito being stolen.

Joey: Like that Ignorance Park song "The FBI is in My Toilet", only it's Taco Bell and there in my kitchen. So you guys tour with some pretty awesome bands, huh?

Matt: That Circle Jerks tour was so much fun. Those guys are so amazing. Going out with them and GBH, like GBH are probably the coolest dudes I've ever met. Those guys are just unbelievable. Those guys will do anything you put in front of them. Literally, all of them would drink a gallon of vodka every night, pounded xanax, taking ecstasy, doing coke, and they'd wake up the next day and start all over every single fucking day. Like fucking clock work.

Joey: And they're old dudes.

Matt: Yeah. One of them is a grandfather. Those guys are unbelievable.

Joey: Speaking of drugs, have you visited the Phil Lynott Museum in Ireland?

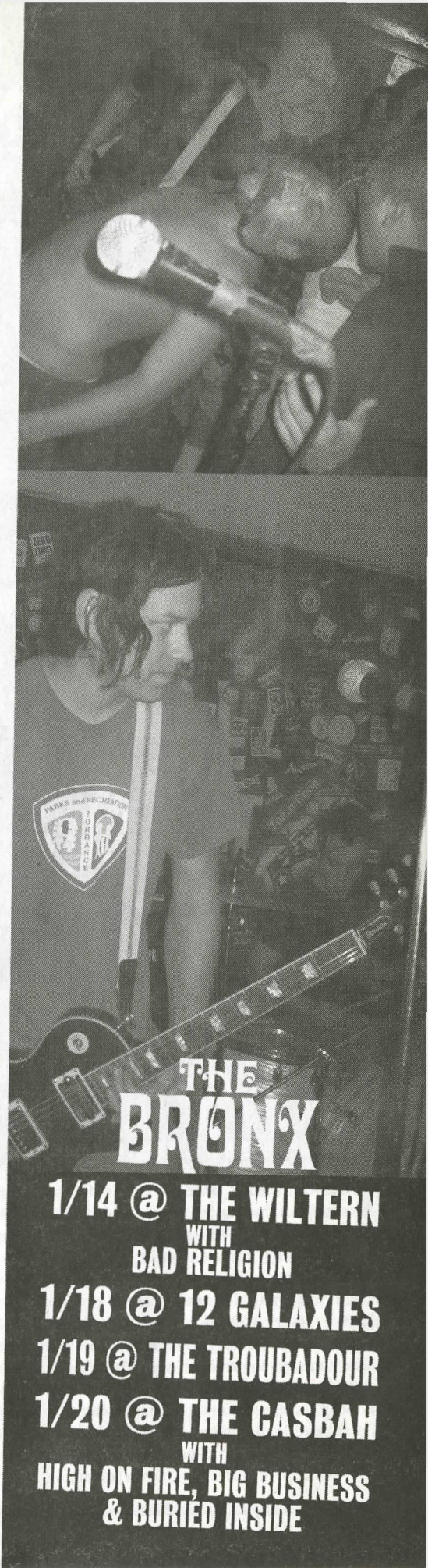
Matt: No, we went to the Guinness factory though. Jorma and I were sick so the guy doing production at the show took us to this doctor. Bono's doctor. We go to [the doctor's] house and he's shooting us up with B12 talking about how Bono thought he could save the fucking world because he was high on coke, and how he hated Bono and that they almost came to fist fights numerous times and he finally had to leave, but he and Bono are cool now. And we're just sitting like, "what the fuck just happened?" And then we were playing show and people are just buying us Guinness's and everyone was so cool.

Joey: Have you guys done Japan yet?

Matt: Yeah, that was another fucking wild one. I don't even know how to explain it. It's just so weird. Like people are just waiting outside your hotel room to take pictures for a newspaper, and it's just crazy the amount of things they'll do. It's like the worship thing. When you actually play, it goes from quiet to loud, quiet to loud because you say anything and then they start cheering and then immediately they'll get quiet and wait for you to say something else. We played Summer Sonic there, we played in front of 10,000 people at 10am. It was outrageous, so much fun. We ate beef tongue and beef stomach cow stomach - all this gross shit. I got a Big Mac that looked exactly like the picture. It was completely perfect!

Joey: They got some fucked up porn there, don't they?

Matt: Oh man, yeah. They use these things-we were watching porn on tv for hours because they take these giant elephant massagers and they will like make girls pee! It's fucking unbelievable. There was rivers of shit coming out of this woman and the dude is just peeing on her at the same time. And then all of a sudden she's tied up around a spare tire with like a donut in her mouth...(laughs)



THE BRONX

1/14 @ THE WILTERN
WITH
BAD RELIGION

1/18 @ 12 GALAXIES

1/19 @ THE TROUBADOUR

1/20 @ THE CASBAH
WITH
HIGH ON FIRE, BIG BUSINESS
& BURIED INSIDE

EL COCHINO CONTEST SERIES

By: SumDumSurfer



James Rodriguez: Frontside Grind

photos by: Team Goon

I've been skating since the early '70s and have been making 'em since the mid '70s. 33 years later, I still get the urge to shape out something bizarre. One day, this past August, I got a little weird and decided to create something that was a parody towards the "pig" (very wide pool shapes) boards that I've seen over the last two decades. Since I'm lucky enough to work at one of the oldest skateboard factories still around, I was able to bang out the prototype in one evening. It started out as me finding a box of 13" wide GullWing trucks. I walked around the shop, with a truck in my hand, looking for something

to shape to match the massive hanger width. I was having zero luck... then I came across an experimental wakeskate board that we ended up changing and never used. The end product looked pretty funny and I was riding it in the parking lot that night. Later, a few of us ended up at the local skatepark. I was able to do a few things on it and it drew a lot of attention. I was shocked when several people, including my boss, suggested that we produce these monsters. After touring it around a few of the skateparks that feature bigger terrain, it was clear that various people could do some amazing things

on the board. I chose to name the board El Cochino (Spanish for The Pig). One day, me and three of my friends were talking about how rad it would be to have a contest on an El Cochino setup. We all ended up agreeing that everyone would simply throw in \$5 to skate as much as they wanted. The grand prize winner would win a complete new El Cochino and all of the contest money. To make things even more interesting, we decided to have viewers of Concrete Disciples' website be able to vote on the skater after the four stop series was done. We'll take the best ten and post up some video and still footage for people to check

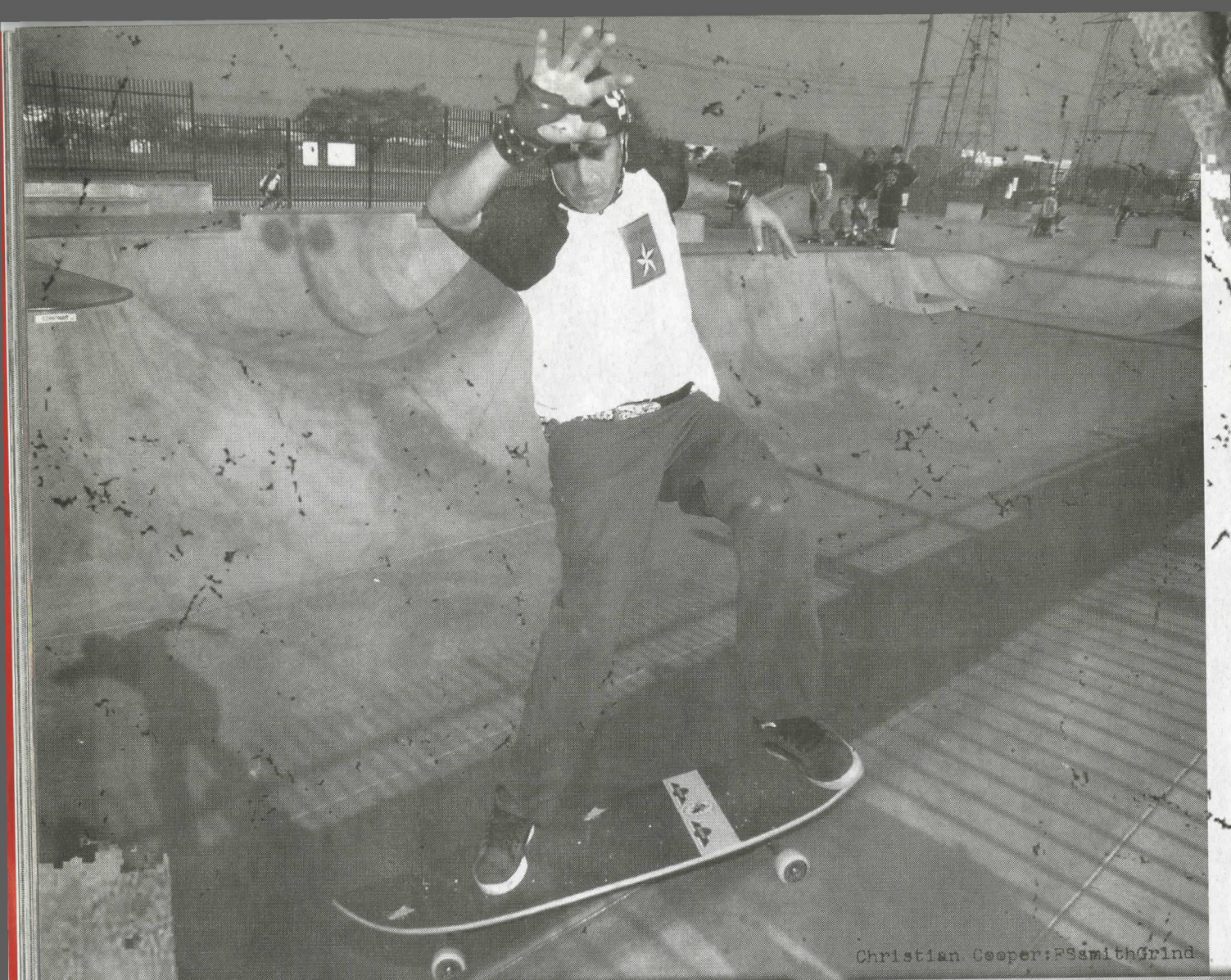


Kyle: Frontside Air

out. The guys over at Concrete Disciples were kind enough to host this wacky idea. As of this writing, we've completed two of the four scheduled venue visits. The first being at Chino skatepark on November 25th, where we saw Brian Whitney step to the challenge first. After he got used to the board, he quickly adapted to the massive wheelbase and width and ended up pulling off a rad invert in the deep end of the pool. **INSANE!** Later, he was able to get a ton of altitude and air over the peninsula in the middle of the flowbowl! **INFRIGGINCREDIBLE!** A handful of other skaters, including MSK, Kyle, and Ben Butler, went on to also throw down

somesick moves on the beast that day. The next stop was at Glendale skatepark on December 11th. Nick Chism showed up (he also skated at the Chino event) again and threw up some airs and good coping moves. MSK also came out again and was able to pull off a few tailtaps and cess slides, in addition to many rock & rolls. Nolan Johnson blew away us all when he came flying out of the square combi bowl skyng a very stylish tuckknee frontside air. **AMAZING!** Just as amazing, was watching James Rodriguez execute a nosegrab tailslide on the 11' oververt pocket! **INSANITY!**

What we've witnessed so far, has been some beyond stellar skating and a lotta people meeting together and having a fun time. Which is why we all began skating in the first place, right? I'm truly stoked to see people having a blast and ripping stuff up on a stranger than fiction skateboard. For more information regarding the contest, visit www.concretedisciples.com and to see the specs on the board and it's components, visit www.madridskateboards.com See ya at the next stop... which will be announced on the C.D. site. **KEEP SKATING!**



Christian Cooper: PSmithGrind



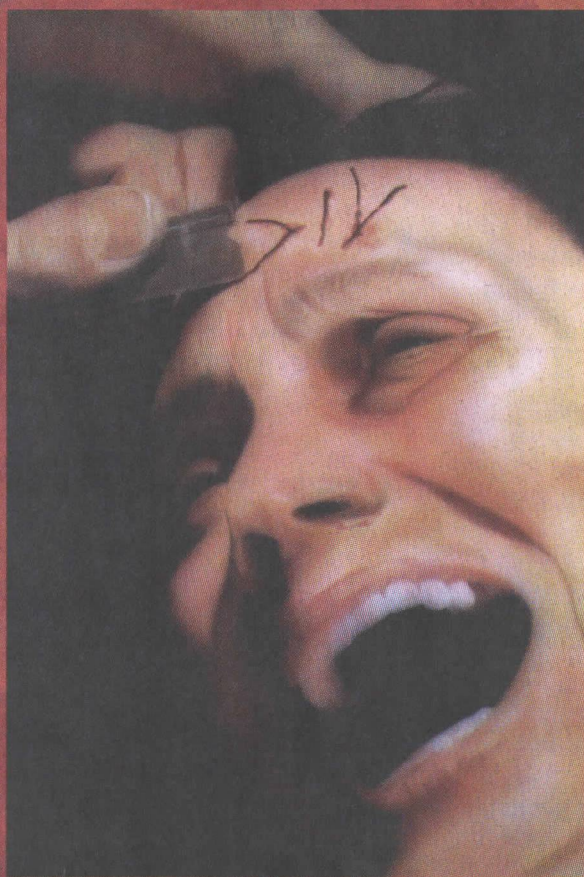
Nolan Johnson: Frontside Air



BIG WHEEL

Art Profile

Jarrold L. Robbins



With a Glendale diner as the back drop, I waited to meet with the artist I had spoken to several times over the phone. I wasn't sure of what he looked like or who he might bring with him. All I had was the mental image of his paintings, working like a slide projector in my brain. I had examined the paintings at least ten different times, looking at the blended paint on canvas. It was a little bit like watching a horror movie. No matter how many times you tell yourself, "It's just an actor in make up, it doesn't exist, it can't hurt me," you can't help but jump at the sight of shadows or lay awake half the night with your head under the covers. Looking at Robbins' paintings gave me that same feeling. I had to tell myself it was just a painting, nothing real that could hurt me, but the more I tried to believe the painted images didn't exist, the less I believed myself. Somewhere, I believed a woman was having the word "victim" carved into her forehead at that very moment. And the individual who brought this scenario into existence was coming to meet me. Many would find themselves in this situation feeling intimidated, but I didn't. I was down right scared.

"These are intense, serious paintings, painted by an intense, serious artist who may or may not be intense and serious," I told myself. Turns out, he mostly just intensely ate his Denver Omelet and seriously offered me a buttermilk biscuit.

The Los Angeles art scene for the most part has had a revival of sorts to the days of Andy Warhol, where art shows are nothing short of a party and colors and commercialism dictate what is created. Jarrold Robbins couldn't give a shit. His art is like that of classic artists- Picasso or Matisse- and his goal is not commercialism, but passion. He was the first artist I ever met who honestly never wishes to be designer.

Sipping at weak tea and talking with Robbins and his wife Nelly, I suddenly felt like meeting people was a good thing. We never interviewed, we simply talked. Traveling was something we spoke

BIG WHEEL



THE BRONX





fondly of, and recommended places for each other to travel to. He told me about growing up in Virginia and how nice and quiet a place it is. He told me about moving to Los Angeles about eight years ago, believing that he would be around more creative people, but was sadly disappointed. We also laughed together about the current trend of using Chihuahua dogs as clothing accessories, hoping the trend will either eventually evolve into dog jewelry, where live dogs can be worn around your neck, or dogs will be outsourced by parrots who will engage in conversation with others for you.

Anyone can claim themselves to be an artist. Anyone can put an orange peel in an empty tuna can and call it art. Anyone can wheat paste a xeroxed copy of their cousin's face everywhere. Not everyone has the passion and will to be beyond commercial art. Not everyone can put their all into a painting. And, let's face it, not everyone is talented enough to create art that is memorable and emotional and cool as hell to look at. But I suppose that's why no one else is Jarrod Robbins.

Big Wheel: What got you started into art in general, and when did it start to become professional?

Jarrod L Robbins: I don't feel one can "get started" in art. It can't be learned, like a trade. For me it's always been there. At times it's been a much more driving force than others but it's always been there. Not to say that you wake up in the morning and go about your day creating beautiful work. As with anything in life that matters it has to come from a place of pure passion and an all encompassing desire. I liken it to the life of a junkie, who's every waking moment is driven by his taste for his drug of choice. If that's not for you, find a hobby on your own time. Nothing is more irritating than going to an "art show" and seeing that some self-proclaimed "artist" has felt the need to insult the intelligence of others by tacking his loose leaf notebook paper sketch or wet cocktail napkin to the wall as if he were the next Caravaggio. As far as it becoming professional, I believe if you doing something long enough be it good or bad, you're bound to get noticed.

BW: What is something that gives you inspiration?

JLR: That's difficult to pin point, so many things. You just have to be aware of everything, looking and listening. History for one but I would say mainly human's actions and reactions to each other. The feelings I get from observing them in different situations. In this town, more probably than any other, there are so many ruined childhoods so many unfulfilled and broken dreams, yet the sun continues to shine down on all this everyday. I find beauty in the irony of it all. What drives these people to fight tooth and nail, selling their soul all along the way for the crumbs from some "so-called celebrity's" plate. What lies behind the guise of these people, behind their false smiles. So many people have so many insecurities and fears there should be no reason not to be constantly inspired, especially here.

BW: What mediums do you enjoy working with?

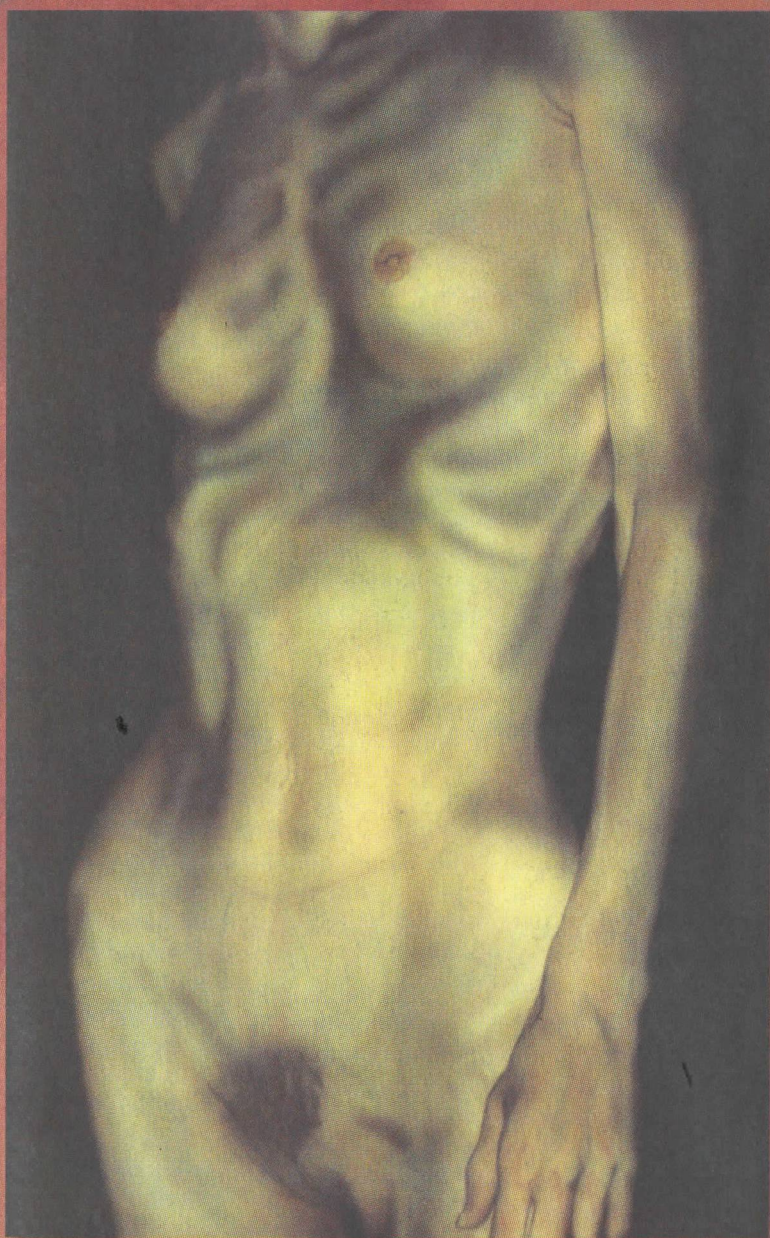
JLR: Of course painting is my favorite. Sculpture and composing music are other mediums I enjoy working with from time to time but my passion lies in painting. I don't want to be one of thousands out here who claims to do everything, artist, actor, model, musician, filmmaker, etc. Whatever happened to doing one thing and focusing all your energy and passion into making that be the best it can be. There is no shame in that.

BW: The website is very swanky, do you run the website yourself?

JLR: "Swanky" thank you, but no. A good friend has designed and maintains it for me. I couldn't imagine doing that kind of work, it's an entirely different language than I'm accustomed to. I've worked with a few designers and respect those who can do it well.

BW: I noticed that you worked in the Orthopaedic and Prosthetic field for a while. Care to expand on that (i.e. what did you do exactly, for how long, and how that experience may or may not influenced any art)?

JLR: I was mainly fabricating test sockets for post-op patients. In college I attended class on prosthetics and orthopedics. With the orthopedic side I was intrigued, that with the aid of technology one could make the body do something that it was absolutely against. The prosthetic side I liked but thought and still to this day think that the leaders in this field are approaching this subject from the wrong direction. If we see someone



who is missing a limb, the first thing thought is "oh my god" and usually that is followed by sympathy. These appliances worn by patients are more than often aesthetically crude. They should be treated as a functional accessory. High end collaborations by famous Industrial and Fetish designers. As far as it being an influence on my work, everything in life leaves a scar on you which ultimately comes out somewhere, whether you be a carpenter, teacher or a surgeon.

BW: Your style is very characteristic (the black background with realistic human body). How did that style develop?

JLR: It began with the "Dora" series. The female anorexic body as a landscape. Quite frowned upon but tragically beautiful nonetheless. The viewer needed to be able to study these forms without any distraction in the background. This is the idea that I've stayed with. No distractions from the subject. I'm not trying to impress people with my ability to paint curtains at the moment.

BW: "Infinite Power Granted" Is a very very powerful series of pieces. Would you like to talk about what inspired it, and what you meant by painting it?

JLR: This is a very fragile topic. Let's see if I can put this into words that won't lead to an angry mob chasing me out of town.

There is a popular character flaw I notice in a lot of people. If something tragic has happened to you, your family, etc. in the past, instead of having the will to rise above and be judged for your individual actions in the here and now they take the easier of the two paths and decide to wear the label "Victim" on their sleeve.

Sympathy is the strongest device one can use against you. It's a shield that protects them from actually being seen for what they truly are.

As far as the actual paintings go. I believe that if one reads what has been mentioned above and views them it will all make sense.

BW: "Untitled I" from 2000 was my favorite of what I saw on your website. Would you like to talk about what inspired it, and what you meant by painting it?

JLR: That was actually my first large scale painting which evolved from the earlier

drawing "Home". The viewer doesn't know if it is a "What could have been or a what was scenario".

A woman stands in the doorway obviously physically crippled and without her skin. Upon further examination her shadow reveals that whatever the accident was that caused this it has also left her emotionally and mentally crippled.

I'm often surprised at the effect it still has with people today.

BW: "Exoculo I" I thought was a photograph initially. How do you achieve a look that realistic?

JLR: Thank you, but without going into a Bob Ross teaching class about the different



techniques I use I'll say that it's a very time consuming process. For realistic works a certain large size canvas is required and a lot of thin layers upon thin layers.

BW: Do you work with any galleries right now?

JLR: Nothing as far as new shows go, I just wrapped up a solo show that ran at The Key Club. Right now I'm focusing all my energy on a rather large new series based on a French novel from the mid 1800's.

BW: I noticed you have a film poster, Static-

X painting, and a tribute to JG Ballard. Do film, music or literature inspire you artistically?

JLR: Film, in general I find the least inspirational. More as entertainment, which is sad. It shouldn't be this way. I hold it in the highest regards though. It should be the ultimate art. A combination of the best of everything; poetry, painting, music, theater, etc. All the best artists in their field working on a common vision. Unfortunately though we're given bad films in which the characters talk about other bad films or films that are just blatant combinations of other bad films.

With all do respect, there are small group of filmmakers making good films (for the most part outside of Hollywood) but you have to look extremely hard. Instrumental music, I find is the most beneficial for inspiration, a soundtrack for your thoughts. It allows you to think for yourself instead of being forced to by someone's lyrics. I feel the same for good literature be it fiction or non fiction, it gives way to many images and ideas for me without having a visual interpretation laid out, permitting me to create visuals to follow the text.

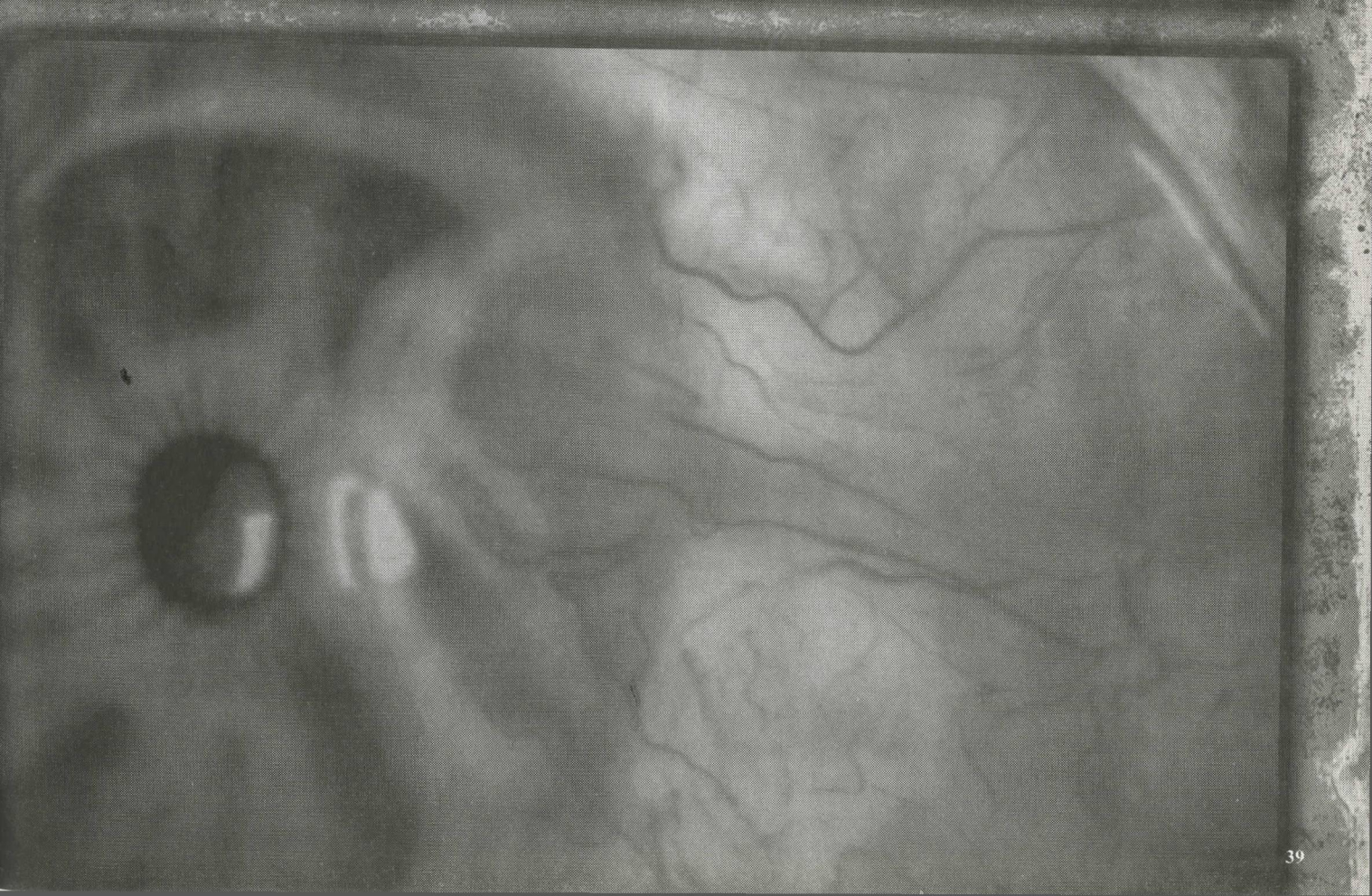
BW: How would you describe your paintings evolving over the years?

JLR: My earlier works were very cold anatomical studies, body conscious very emotion and expressionless. As I and my technique evolved so did the work. The bodies began to express more raw emotion it became more of a study of the human condition. The great equalizers : pain, fear, violence, jealousy, sadness, etc. Subjects that not all except socially but understand completely when they are alone.

BW: What do you have in store for the future?

JLR: Painting.

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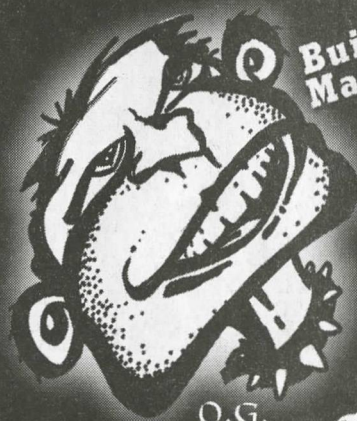
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RAZORCAKE



If your love of punk rock goes beyond the “mohawked guttered bratty I don’t give a fuck spectrum” and falls more along the lines of “this mainstream capitalistic fucked up world needs change and a moral enema” then chances are you’ve been lucky enough to grace through the pages of Razorcake magazine. If you haven’t, worry not! There is still time! They have the most interesting and in depth interviews, the most thought provoking columns, hilarious comics, record reviews, zine reviews, editors letters, and loads of beautiful insight into the culture of punk rock.

I read my first Razorcake in Rafe’s old record store. It had this awesome article on

Duane Peters. I started to read it on the toilet. I spend a good portion of the day there. But the article was long enough to outlast my visit. By the time I finished I was astounded. Not only because Duane was still alive after all was that he’s been through, but even more by how thorough the interview was. Years went by. Issues kept coming by monthly (six a year). I would sit in that record store reading and learning. Bands I never heard of smiled at me on the covers. Then I met Todd and Sean, the razors inside the cake. Often too nice and too willing to let me chew their ears off, I would lightly converse with them at shows and Punk Rock bowling tournaments. I bought Todd’s book “Born to Rock”. I saw a reading of one of

Sean’s short stories at a record store. I realized that they were so much more than the makers of a great magazine, they were, dare I say, gurus, or fuck. It was them (and Rafe, Mr. Bawesome) who inspired me to work on a magazine. Not because I think they are cool and what they do is cool, but because what they do goes beyond the scope of what most bands, labels, and whatever this thing called “punk” is procured by.

Todd and Megan invited Rafe and I to visit the Razorcake headquarters. They gave us tips and pointers and showed us their inner workings, and cookies. I wanted to interview Todd and Megan, the two who run the day to day operation of Razorcake because they have been



approved by the government to be a non-profit organization. So I asked him because I wasn't sure what non-profit meant. They explained the legalities, days of paper work to fill out, fees, and hoops of fire they needed to jump through just to apply. Twenty minutes later I noticed the tape player wasn't working. The battery juice was out. I freaked. Todd and Megan put fresh batteries in the tape recorder, and me at ease. Those serene fucks!

Joey: You were explaining, about non-profit, punk rock

Todd: What we do on a day to day basis, I don't think is that odd. I've been involved with it for so long, and I do it all instinctual, just by habit.

So, when we had to explain to a bureaucrat in middle America about non profit punk rock, DIY grassroots punk rock, it made me realize, oh man, we do something that is not that common at all. Like for example- bands come through that will stay on our floor. We won't charge them for it. I don't think twice about it. They come in, use our toiletries, eat our food, we give them beer, and we don't send them a bill. It's awesome. I think it's great, but for someone who is not involved with that, [someone] who goes around and travels and goes to hotels and eats at chain food restaurants all the time, this is a completely different culture. So when we say we are doing it for a "punk culture", it is so far removed from the music industry. The music industry is entertainment high commerce;

we have nothing to do with that. And we've had nothing to with that since day one. And we still want to be removed from it. We just see it all around us. You travel around anywhere you see strip malls, you see Wal-Mart, and you see all that stuff. We want to have a culture that's not only against that, but provides something that's even better or a distinctive alternative to that. And no one else is doing it. You know, no one from these large corporations have any interest in this what so ever. We're not tricking people into becoming punk rock, we're fans of punk rock. It exists. All we're doing is trying to perpetuate it, foster it, and help it along. And put our two cents into it, too. That's where the non profit comes in. We're not pulling anyone's leg, we're not saying we're

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doing all these things when we are not, we just never thought about it in those terms, it was always second nature to us.

Joey: Megan, when did you come out here and how did you start working for Razorcake?

Megan: I came out here from Maine. I was kind of in a rut, but it was a happy rut. I was working in coffee and booking and promoting bands and stuff. It was the middle of April and I said to myself "if it snows one more fucking day I'll move anywhere". People knew that I didn't like L.A. because I came out here three days after the [Rodney King Verdict] riots when I was sixteen years old. We went right from that to *Hollywood* and *Disneyland* and I was like "this place sucks!" And so, I was just like, snow one more damn day I'll go anywhere. Someone was like even Los Angeles? I was like fuck it, yeah, even Los Angeles. It snowed one more day. I bought tickets. Moved out here.

Rafe: Did you know anybody?

Megan: I knew one person.

Rafe: Did you know Todd?

Megan: No.

Rafe: How did you meet Todd?

Megan: I lived on 4th Street in San Pedro, paths crossed. Todd Conge had a birthday show and Todd and Sean were there and...

Todd: She started off doing reviews and interviews and stuff. It's basically like anybody else we've dealt with. It starts off pretty slow, we kind of test people out. It's kind of like, here's a big word for you, meritocracy. Key word is merit. By work, we can give you more work, if you want to do it. You just have to prove yourself. You have to be reliable. Very simple. It's open to anybody, but you have to do the work.

Megan: I was actually really hesitant to start doing anything for [Razorcake]. It started, actually, because (pauses) we love wrestling a lot: me, Todd and Sean. I'd come over, we'd watch wrestling and listen to records and stuff. [Todd and Sean] have music coming in all the time, they both have to do the reviews, and so they're always throwing something you've never heard, and, Sean I think was the biggest pusher for it. We'd sit there and be talking about music like, "do reviews, do reviews!" and I'd be like, eh. I did the interview

before the reviews. The

Epoxies were coming and I really like the Epoxies, and nobody really wanted to do the interview. So was like "Todd?" He was like "do it".

So I did.

Rafe: This is kind of a general question - who started Razorcake?

Todd: It came out of Flipside, and I had two things in my head: I'm not going to do it alone because it is way too much work, and two at first I just wanted to do it on the internet, because I didn't have any money. I got assed out of Flipside by not getting paid for two years. So, I went with my friend skinny Dan, who lived in Tucson at the time, and we started doing a website with him and his wife, just getting everything together.

Rafe: Was that under the Razorcake name?

Todd: Yes, it was under Razorcake. And the reason why we have Razorcake as a name is that was in 1999, and names for websites were going for thousands of dollars. So we really went through like over 300 really shitty asshole names and really good ones, and they all cost money. Razorcake was the first one that was available.

Joey: And that's how you chose the name.

Todd: Yeah. I always wanted a name like Fireball, or something.

Megan: Fireball? Are you serious?

All: {laughs}

Joey: I think you ended up with a pretty good name...

Megan: Nail pudding...

Todd: We just didn't want, you know, Stab You in the Face and Eat Your Neck, Barbed Wire Romance, or anything like that. We wanted something that doesn't really make sense but it actually left a little bit of an impression.

Rafe: Did you actually find the name Razorcake?

Todd: Well, the closest thing we found was Razorfish, and then Danny's wife Katie actually came up with it. She's the one that said it's really cool.

Joey: So now that Sean is gone, from a reader's standpoint, the contributions

have been more heavy...and...I think it's really good. That's not even a question.

All: {laughs}

Todd: Now Sean is doing Gorsky Press full time. He's the editor and chief of that - I'm the editor and chief of Razorcake. Sean is an amazing writer and an awesome guy. The thing is that Sean and I are so motivated, we don't like relying on other people if we don't have to. We would end up doing entire issues together. We would break it in half, and do it half and half, everything. When he said 'I need to go up to Ventura because my wife is getting her PhD in psychology, you're going to have to take it over', I first kind of freaked out. Then I realized, I'm surrounded by really, really talented people, and I have to trust these people more. So, now, I'm much better at delegating, giving people timelines, saying "hey can you please do this", and people have been doing awesome. And so we have other people doing graphics design for us. I farm stuff out to a lot of other people. I still put it altogether and do the final things on it. My hands are all over it, but now I'm kind of giving up the reigns and I feel a lot better about it, too. I feel like if there is more involvement with it period, people have more ownership of it.

Rafe: Do you find it hard to get people to help you out? I mean, assuming that you aren't paying your writers...

Todd: Can't pay our writers.

Rafe: Do you ever find yourself feeling guilty, or maybe that's the wrong word...

Todd: Well, again we're going back to this idea of commerce, you know like, music industry vs. music culture, is that if somebody just sent me something and ran it in a magazine, I feel guilty. But, I develop writers. I give creative criticism and work very, very hard with our writers. With Jimmy [Alvarado], I've worked over a decade.

Also there is the possibility where if the writers are with us long enough and dedicated enough, they can put out a book by them. I

write letters of recommendation; I go to bat for these people when they have a job interview. All this stuff. It's a lot more involved than someone sending me words and me printing words.

Rafe: And these people want to be a part of this culture...

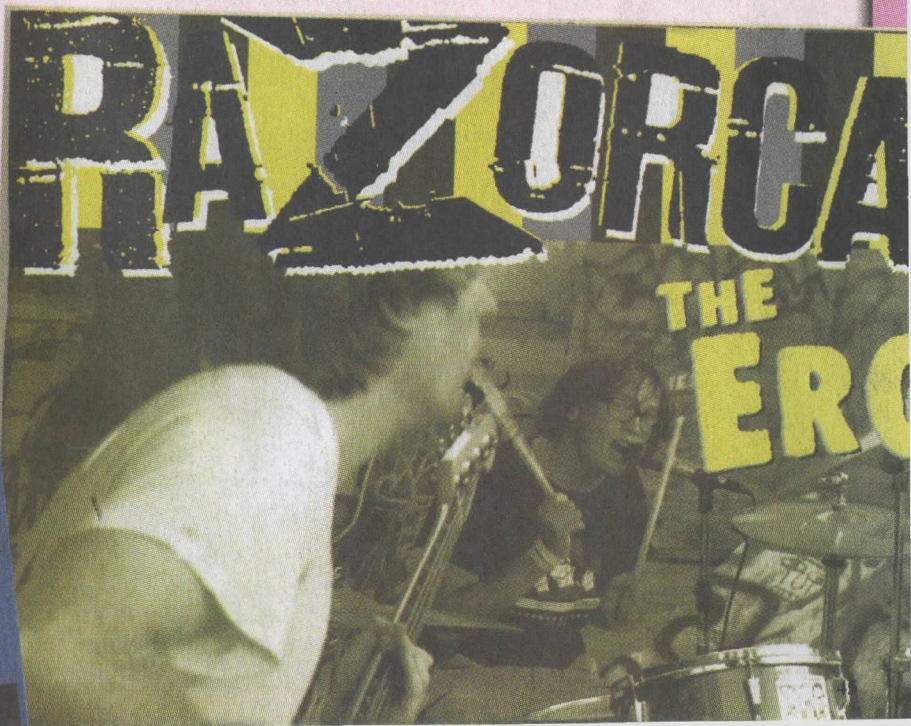
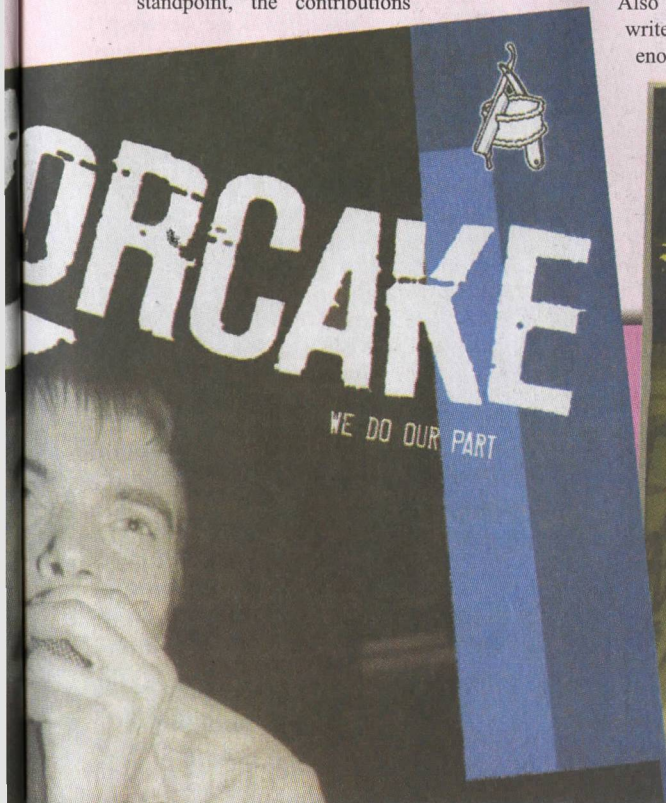
Todd: Yes, It's great. Everyone brings new things. Like, Maddy Tight Pants brings really excited, heavy politics in a very joyous, very serial centric way of looking at things. Nardwaar is perfect example. Kinda nutty, but really well researched. No matter how spastic things are, in print they're all really well tuned. You know I'm very aware of what's going on, with the position of everything. Like, this last issue Amy Adoyzie wrote this thing about going back to Vietnam. Her parents were Chinese refugees from Vietnam, and then the next column is Jim Ruland's father, who was [in Vietnam as] a commander of a Swift Boat talking about his experiences there. I think that's awesome because we're just a punk rock magazine ... yes and no. So we have these very broad sweeping stories that you wouldn't expect to see in one of them, but to put them together, that's where it comes from. So, if we could pay, and if the nonprofit allows us to do that, fantastic, but we don't want that to be the sole motivator for people turning stuff in and the sole motivator for running a magazine. It's all sustainability. If we can do it and we can pay people, I'll feel awesome! It's not "hey-let's all lose money". Even if it feels that way sometimes.

Megan: But also, I think we'd feel a little bit more guilty about it if we were getting paid.

Todd: I make a \$1.66 an hour and I get paid so I can have a room in the same apartment that I work. I've never charged a dime to Razorcake for any of my truck upkeep; oil, gas, brakes, springs, transaxles. And we pick up all the magazines in my truck.

Megan: Razorcake has paid me in a few pizzas, and a burrito here and there.

Rafe: Keys for survival. Pizza and burritos.



Joey: I kind of look at Razorcake like a band, or being in a band. You and Sean started it, and now he can't be in it right now, but you've gotten the band enough exposure that people know who you are and what you're about, and people can contribute in that vein. It's just cool to see that Razorcake has grown into something, its inspiring people, and that's what's keeping it alive. Again, not a question.

Todd: (laughs) Yeah, I agree with that though. I do run this magazine like a small band. How do you maximize these limited resources, and how do you play to your strengths, and like try to minimize and...how do you get better and better and keep things going? You tour America 4 or five times, well we've been around for five years now, and we have certain advantages with that.

Rafe: I think that, what I've noticed about Razorcake, is that you guys are good at finding bands that nobody knows of, that are actually good. Obviously there is no formula for that, but...

Joey: Like Against Me!, Dillinger Four, Randy, the Soviettes, all these really good bands that you guys love and feature all end up on Fat Wreck Chords. Are you an undercover A and R agent for Fat?

All: (laughs)

Rafe: Ok, Joey, the first part of the question was how do you find all these bands that nobody has ever heard of? Myself being in a band in L.A., you would think I would have heard of some of these bands. Then Razorcake comes out and I read about the Ergs. Who the fuck are the Ergs!? Next thing I know I'm like, these guys are awesome!

Megan: The Ergs are one of my favorite stories ever. Like, Todd is busy as fuck so he is real selective about what he'll review. Me, I'm real selective in digging through the shit pile! Part of it is after four years [of reviewing] I feel like I'm still paying my dues. There's something to it, and I think part of that like growing up in a small town where you don't have access to that stuff and you go through and you're like "oh...Hudu-Gurus, this looks like it's gonna be good", and you listen to and you're like "oh, that's not good and I just wasted my fucking money". But when you find it, it's just yeah...So I was going through [the pile] and the Ergs had the *Ben Kweller* Ep. I picked up like four or five times and in a month. I was like, "if I'm going to pick it up I might as play it." I put it on and I said "oh this is really cute pop stuff," then I listened again and thought "this is really good", and then one day it just hit me, and I'm just like "SHIT!, They're doing some noodley ass, tough-crap in this pop. I love this fucking band." Then the next thing they did was *Dork Rock Cork Rod* and that blew me away. They are one of my favorite bands period. Just the fact that I just happened to pick it up - that's the best feeling. That's why I end up doing forty shitty reviews looking for that one gem. That's part of getting in to punk rock, like you have this thing and it's yours.

Rafe: So it's just random...

Todd: Well, mine is a little different. I know other people who run magazines, large magazines, and they don't listen to the music. They look at sound scans, they look at what's selling. I don't review everything I get. I'll sit down, and I love 7", so

I'll play fifteen to twenty 7" every rotation. And there's usually something really good in there, just out of nowhere. Then you look at ...who do they reference? Who do they thank? Oh they know all these people that I know. That kind of thing. Then I just keep an eye on them. If they develop a couple of seven inches, then they are going to come thru. That's how we found Small Town. That's how we found Fucked Up. That's how we found Career Suicide. And after a while, people will come to you. People will say, "oh, if you like this, then you'll also like this". I think the new Bent Outta Shape is awesome. I think the new Swing Ding Amigos is awesome. There's a band out of Austin who just put out a record that I think is awesome. And it's not some publicist is telling me this, it's not someone with a lot of money telling me this.

Rafe: Correct me if I'm wrong, but you also like the stuff that comes out of the struggle. The people with the money, and the people who can write up a fancy one sheet and tell you how great a band is by looking at the sound scan, that band probably lost their edge a long time ago.

Todd: And it's pragmatic. If you're going to do that, you know you're going to have a lawyer. You know you're going to have a publicist. You know you're going to have some image consultant. You know you're going to have a tour manager, and all these people are separating you from what you're doing. They'll say, "We'll let you have 100% control. But are you sure you want to use that picture? Can you look a little tougher? Can you cut your hair a little bit more?" And all these things are like a little piranha; not one bite is going to kill you. But it's all...it just doesn't excite me. I'm not on a witch hunt, though. I don't really care. Do whatever they do, however it happens. But, what we're experiencing I think is very, very real, and also, the Fest is just a perfect example. Forty to fifty bands I was really excited to see. Bands that we've seen before like Grabass Charelstons when they tour by themselves. Seeing them in a packed house playing to people going nuts, it's like - ok, there is something real and valid, and it's great music. Some of the smartest, most intelligent, funniest, hard-partying people in the world are out there, and I want to be apart of it.

Rafe: What happens when you find a band that starts on that small level then starts blowing up? Like Against Me! for an example.

Todd: Against Me! is one of those bands who are an exception to the rule. I think they are awesome dudes. I think they've done three great records. I think they have also made the record so many bands have not been able to make. Very honest with so much integrity, there just such good dudes. And I don't say this with any malice, but I hope whatever decisions they make they are comfortable with them, and they can live with them. Because there is so much behind this, I can understand what certain motivations would be. I was front row center with At The Drive-In, and I thought those guys as a unit, interpersonally, would be fine and they totally destructed. That's sad because I saw them very early on, very idealistic and also pushing this music really far, really quickly. Again, I don't want to ostracize Against Me! if they choose to be on major label because I think they are awesome dudes and

I think they are doing it for the right reasons. They are doing things that totally fucking piss off their tour manager because they'll split the door with the Grabass Charelstons; and they take the Grabass Charelstons on long tours. They don't have to. And they're not doing to say "fuck you tour manager guy", they are doing it because they want to. Against Me! is a real specific case.

Megan: And it goes to the case that, it's not their fault that they're popular, because, fuck, I like them and I'm not surprised other people like them. I don't think they started out saying, or at any point said "we are going to make a career out of this, and we're going to be on MTV" which I heard they are...

Rafe: I didn't know they played music on MTV anymore.

Todd: I just look at the track record. Case by case, Against Me! falls in a good category. Multiple hundreds of independent bands went to a major, four made it. Just look at the average.

Joey: Todd - having to be business minded and passion driven, do you feel like you're split in two?

Todd: It's literally ... and this is a Dillinger Four thing, monkeys vs. robots. There's a monkey on one side, and a robot on the other side of my brain. The robot does all the business stuff and I have to force that robot to work. You know it's like maintaining a computer. Sometimes it fucks up, I have to sit there and do it. But, if I were just a robot, what good am I? I have to remember the monkey is there too. I have to go and lose my shit sometimes. I have to go party. I have to go listen to music and not think about it in any other context than this the pure, raw, energy and fun that got me into this at first. And that's why people get burned out because that balance isn't there. They either get burned out or they loose all their money and don't know what to do, so they go right back into the larger culture. So those two things are constantly pulling knives out on each other, and it's hard. Some days it's awesome, like going to the Fest. Others its not, like filling out paper work for four days straight. Setting everything up so you never have to pay late payments on anything, getting it so you're basically making something that should not exist on a budget that does not exist, but you've found a way to do it and you're within 50 dollars of bankruptcy.

Rafe: What has kept you from joining the ... hmmm, what's the term you-

Todd: Robot Army?

Rafe: Yeah! (laughs) What has kept you from joining the Robot Army for so long? You've been doing this, including your years at Flipside for...

Todd: Ten years.

Rafe: Yeah, ten years now, and like you said, most people our age have got legitimate jobs and they'll drink and go to the punk shows on the weekend.

Todd: I hate bosses and I have a real hard time with authority in a very real way. I don't mind working. I don't. I don't mind working real hard. As long as I'm working for someone else they have to answer everyone of my fucking questions. I understand if you're going to make three times as much off of me, you're going to pay me really fucking well to do it.

★ DRAVEN ★

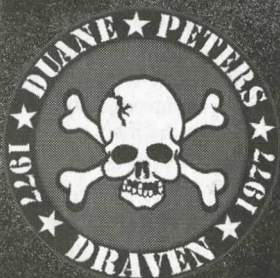
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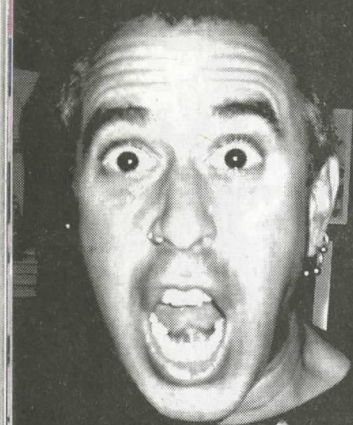
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Xmas! I'm a jew, for those of you that don't know, so Xmas doesn't mean much to me other than the opportunity for people to spend money on presents. Luckily I don't have to do that. We're getting drunk over at my house and that's another part of Xmas I know, HOLIDAY CHEER! (Kampai!) I just don't understand what the big deal is, but hey, if Xmas makes you happy, than good for you. Anyways, by the time you read this Xmas will be a memory of drunken nights and days of football and lot's of gluttony. And it's now a new year, hope you had a wonderful party on new year's eve, got wasted and got laid, because there is nothing better to end the year than a good fuck and some serious drinking. I'm rambling. I tend to do that, even more so when I'm drinking.

What's really important in this new year is bowling practice. Bowling I hear you say, the "sport" of overweight middle age men of yore, who the hell goes bowling anymore. Well, if you're a punk rocker there's a good chance you've been to our annual punk rock party of the year which we like to call our PUNK ROCK BOWLING TOURNAMENT. This year mark's our eighth annual tournament, held in Las Vegas, the greatest American city cause it really shows the best and worst of this country. I always tell people that have never been to the U.S. that they need to visit Vegas, it's just a hell of a party. Yeah, I know, it ain't what it used to be, too many people and too many assholes, but it's still a place to go and have a party that you really can't have most anywhere else. And our party is really one hell of a party, we've got 168 punk rock teams (four people per team) drinking, bowling, drinking, fucking, drinking, gambling, getting wasted, bowling, fucking, seeing a lot of great music, drinking, gambling, watching Flock Of Goo Goo ('80s cover band of punk rockers) playing in a Las Vegas lounge while we drink and gamble, seeing the Hollywood Pin-Up Girls Burlesque show and Manic Hispanic. Well, I think you get the picture and that's just a smidgen of what goes on.

Why bowling? Why the hell not. It's easy, it's harmless, you can drink while you do it and it's really just an excuse to go to Vegas and have a party. And as we start the New Year, I really think it's important to remember that you never know how long you have in this world so you damn well better enjoy it while you're here. We work hard to get by and hope to be able to enjoy life at some point, but I say enjoy it every day cause you can't save for a future that may never happen.

Ok, what's going on in the world that's worth talking about? Oh, our King, er, President Bush has admitted that he gave the ok for government wiretapping without a court order, even though it is illegal. Of course the justification for this is that we "have to defeat the terrorists" despite the fact that he broke the law and infringes our civil liberties. And what terrorists have we defeated? Osama Bin Laden is still out there, so is Zarqoui. They've got Saddam in a monkey trial and a "free" election that is being touted as the reason for all the bloodshed in Iraq, since they couldn't find those so called weapons of mass destruction, is really just a prelude to an inevitable civil war. Iraq is not a real country, it's a creation of a former colonial conquest. It consist of three major groups, Sunni Muslims that ruled under Saddam, the majority Shiites that are now taking over and the Kurd's in the north that have been trying to get their own country for years. So great, we went in to create a democracy and will have started a civil war. Of course why we went in according to the current administration is not the reason we went in. We want to control oil, the greatest commodity in the world. A stable Iraq will allow western oil corporations to "help" the new government to get that oil to the people in the west who will pay a premium for it. And guess who gets screwed if that happens? Of course, the newly liberated people of Iraq who will have had democracy forced down their throats. I'm all for representative government and America is a wonderful experiment in "democracy" but we don't live in a real democracy anymore than the Soviet Union was ever under a real communist government. Our representatives don't represent us, they represent the big multi-national corporations that give them the millions of dollars to pay for their elections.

And that's the world we live in, where people in "democracies" don't vote and send their children off to die in the middle east to protect them from terrorists and bring "democracy" to the heathens who call us infidels. Fucking religion! I don't know much about Jesus, but does anyone seriously believe that he would be happy that people celebrate his birth by spending money on shit they don't need while people are starving, dying in wars fighting over which "god" is the "god" and worrying if they'll make it from one day to the next. If religion is supposed to be about love thy neighbor and the ten commandments and do unto others, why is it that hell and evil and terror and killing are what we get!? I wish you a happy holyday and truly, peace on earth for everyone, not just the part of the world you live in.

With Enemies Like This, Who Needs Friends?

Around the time when Donald Rumsfeld first shook hands with Saddam Hussein, and Ronald Reagan declared that ketchup is a vegetable, my ten year-old brain had two epiphanies surrounding the state of contemporary cinema: first was that the presence of Mr. T enhances the stature of any film, and the second was that if the portrayal of Communists in movies such as *Red Dawn* were true, then America was doomed.

Oh sure, a plucky gang of Michigan high school students led by Patrick Swayze thwarted impeding Communist mayhem, but not until after the godless reds gunned down PTA moms, and forced Henry Dean Stanton to mutate into a cartoon character. In 1984's *Paris, Texas*, Stanton's brooding depiction of a mixed up, alcoholic trying to reunite with his estranged son and wife proved that once again, love will fuck you up.

One year later in *Red Dawn*, Stanton proved that wily Moscow, via Cuban and Chinese proxy military forces, will convert your neighborhood drive-in movie theater into a concentration camp, all the while trying to teabag your daughter who happens to be Jennifer Grey. Sound ridiculous? Yes. Did my ten year-old ass buy it hook line and sinker? Yes.

My ten year-old friends and I were a roving pack of xenophobes, and we devised imaginary plans on how we would torture Russians if only we had the chance. A consistent thread to our various torture ideas was that we'd sing John Cougar Mellencamp's "R-O-C-K in the USA!" as we'd dunk the offending Ruskie's head into a bucket of piss. Ha, ha, take that you Commie asshole. In hindsight I don't know what would be worse, piss in the ears or John Cougar Mellencamp.

Shortly after this phase, things changed, pubic hairs were grown, and my interests shifted from Communist water torture techniques to wooing twelve year-olds with braces and plaid skirts. Furthermore, the Berlin Wall fell, and the Cold War ended. The Russians were no longer the bad guys, and everyone seemed happy for a metaphorical minute (think "Wind of Change" by The Scorpions). But then Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. Despite the fact that the USA had given him the wink wink to do this, the invasion was nonetheless deemed "naked" by George Bush The First.

Fifteen years later, Saddam Hussein's still hanging around like a case of herpes that won't go away, whereas Cold War propaganda films such as *Red Dawn* and *Rocky IV* have aged like a gay hustler on speed. Didn't the fools who made *Rocky IV* learn anything? Keep. Mr. T. In. The. Mix. Also, the Brat Pack casting of *Red Dawn* makes it seem like a post-apocalyptic answer to the John Hughes' teenage comedies of the '80s. I mean come on,

if the Commies were invading Michigan, it would have been cooler had the arrowhead of American resistance been led by Wayne Kramer and The White Panthers rather than Patrick Swayze and The Wolverines. What also makes *Red Dawn* that much more ridiculous nowadays is that I work with a guy named Yafim who immigrated to the US from Russia in the early '90s. Yafim's splotchy complexion, 5'5 stature, perfect half circle belly, and mangled teeth that harbor bacon breath serve as a yin to Ivan Drago's 'roided yang in the anti-Commie hit, *Rocky IV*. Yafim's one of the funniest guys I've worked with, and my labor history's rearview mirror is riddled with the comedy wreckage of grifters, boozers, coulda' been contenders, gigolos, and safe crackers.

Prior to immigrating to the USA, Yafim explained to me that he used to dig trenches on the outskirts of Moscow. "It was a good life," he said without a trace of irony. Despite this, Yafim can be a gloomy motherfucker. He recently saved up to go on a cruise to the Caribbean. When he returned, I asked how it went.

"It was terrible," he responded.

"Too much sun. I don't like."

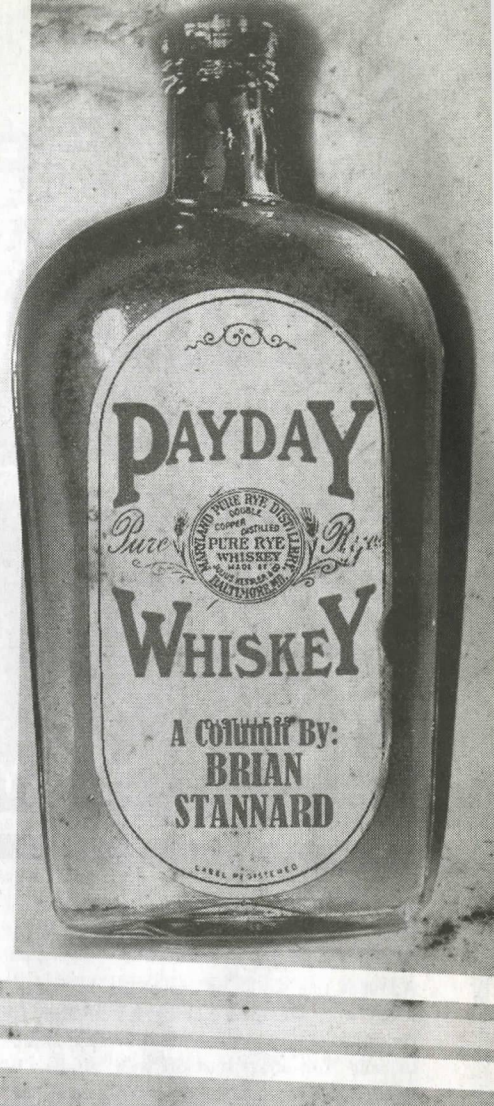
Yafim's bleak outlook on life causes concern for me and my other co-workers so we always make a point of inviting him out with us on our Friday night carousings. "Hey Yafim, you look a little glum these days, we're going out to have a couple of beers, you should come along."

"Noooo. Beer is for children."

Last month was Yafim's birthday. Everyone at work asked what he wanted to do. He mentioned The Russian Bear, a club on Clement Street in the middle of San Francisco's Russian neighborhood in the Richmond District, but we figured it would be just as easy to have the party at work after everything had closed. With James Brown and the JB's kicking, and the vodka flowing (Yafim doesn't do irony, he wasn't kidding when he said that in his opinion, beer is for children), he stood in the corner with his trademark scowl.

"Hey Yafim, turn that frown upside down," we said. "We've got music going, your friends are here, they brought vodka, come on man, it's your birthday!"

"Noooo," he responded. "Today is terrible day. I was born when they bombed Pearl Harbor." Sure enough, Yafim was born December 7,



1941, a

baby born into the country that bore the worst of the worst of WWII, only to win and have bread lines as a trophy. No wonder he's a gloomy motherfucker.

For awhile, Yafim's job was to guard the loading dock at my work, a loading dock that overlooks one of the most depraved, crack and heroin-ridden alleys in San Francisco. Classroom English is Yafim's second language, though he's become acquainted with some token Spanish phrases, ("mucho trabajo, poco dinero") and if you don't blink, he's been known to raise the roof, as they say. Regardless, it's hard not to feel for the guy when a sixty year-old man wearing a bathrobe and a Burger King crown saunters up to the loading dock and asks, "Hey man! I'm a had a yab. Ohhh jub. Jacka' bitch-ass pussy! Know what I'm sayin'?"

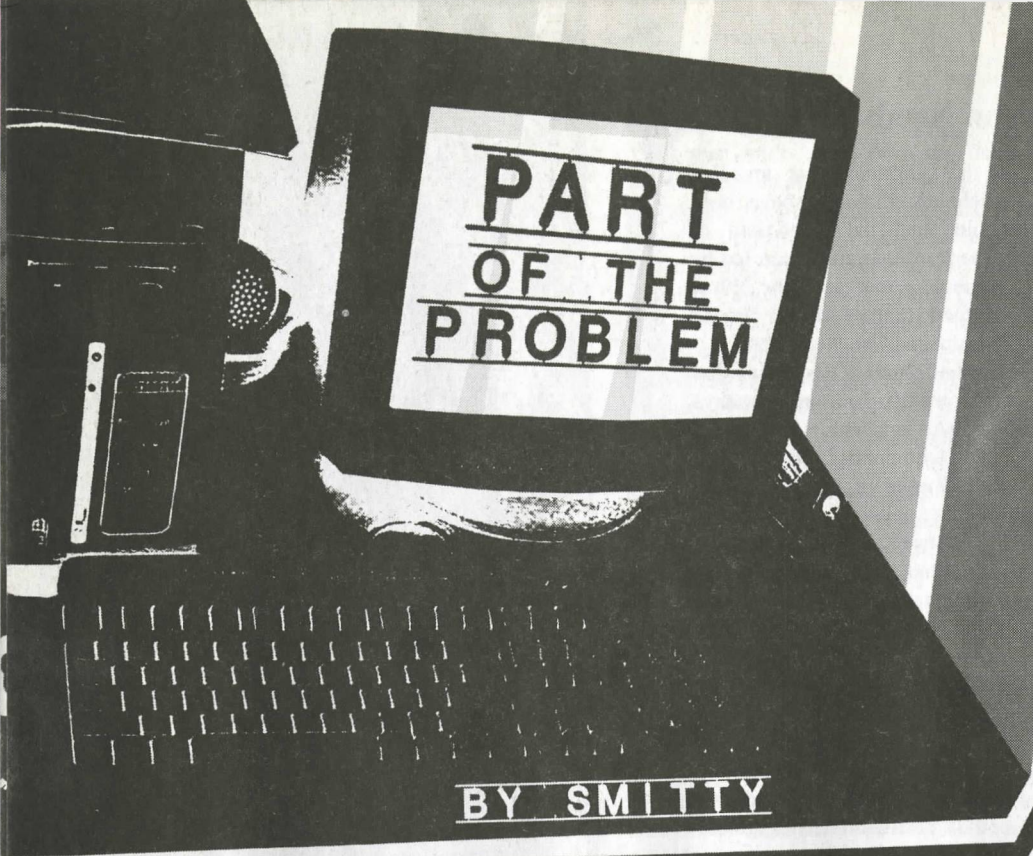
In this case, "Yafim shuffles up to me and says, "Excuse me, Brian. There's a man over there.

He talks crazy. I do not understand."

"Yafim, you and me both, brother."

"Yeahhh, it is terrible," he says.

I nurse a beer as I type this, sorry Yafim. You're a weathered man, I'm not worthy to drink vodka from your cup.



PART OF THE PROBLEM

BY SMITTY

“Balls...Joey Balls.”

Admit it, that would be one of the coolest things to say when you meet a chick. It's certainly about the quickest way to work the conversation around to balls. You could start off with, “Balls...Want mine?” But it would take a very special lady to greenlight that conversation.

But I digress.

For this issue of Big Wheel, I'd like to correct an incredible oversight and conduct the first ever punk rock magazine interview of me.

BW: So, Smitty...if that is your real name, what's going on?

Smitty: Not much. I'm a little late on this month's Big Wheel column and watching the Pats play the Bucs in my pajamas surrounded by a wall of pornography.

BW: Why so much porn? It looks like Joey Balls bedroom in here.

Smitty: I'm a porn reviewer for Adult Video News. This is the time of year when I have to review all these screeners and vote for the best porn of the year for the AVN Awards in January...and celebrate the birth of Christ.

BW: Mildly interesting. What's this BlankTV thing I keep hearing about?

Smitty: BlankTV.com, it's the Net's biggest punk, hardcore, ska, indie and alternative music video website. It's completely free, uncensored, d.i.y. and retarded. We currently have almost 3,000 music videos and live clips spanning the past twenty-five-odd years of indie and underground music. You haven't seen it?

BW: No, I've been pretty busy.

Smitty: We've been up for six years.

BW: Don't get your panties in a bunch. I'm a

busy guy. I heard you released your first music video DVD comp in 2005.

Smitty: Yeah, it was called *Blank the World*, sixteen bands from sixteen countries.

BW: How'd that go?

Smitty: About three weeks after we released it, the DVD company we partnered with laid off most of their sales staff. Consequently, it didn't make it into many retail outlets.

BW: Hahahahahahaha...oh man, that sucks.

Smitty: You're kind of a prick.

BW: There's been talk. So, I hear you used to work at Madonna's fan club. That's pretty gay.

Smitty: Fuck. Yes, I did work at Madonna's fan club, ICON, running customer service for like a year.

BW: How the hell did that happen?

Smitty: Well, I after I left Hustler, I was screwing around looking for another writing gig. In the meantime, I worked at a maildrop/shipping place up on Sunset. That's where ICON got their mail. So I used to see Rob DelVecchio, who ran ICON with his wife, Marsha, every day when he'd pick up his mail. One day, there was an incident, outside of work, that ended up with someone breaking six of my ribs in a very methodical fashion. At the time I had a broken bone in my foot too, so I was pretty tore up. The shipping place took one look at me and fired me. So I had my ass thoroughly kicked, seven broken bones, no insurance and no job. I gave Rob a call and he offered me the gig. It was very cool of him.

BW: Again, mildly interesting. How would you say this interview is going so far?

Smitty: Not so well. It definitely seemed like a better idea in my head.

BW: What happened with the BlankTV movie we kept hearing about?

Smitty: Lots of fun fucking questions from you,

eh? What happened is that I wrote a script about some kids who started their own punk rock business in L.A. It was originally about a record label, but it ended up being about an online music video channel.

BW: This sounds familiar.

Smitty: Anyway, when the script didn't seem to be going anywhere, I still knew that the premise was solid. So we threw the script in a drawer and went ahead and started the fictional company in real life.

BW: That's kind of insane. Who's we?

Smitty: Myself, my wife, Myna Threat, from the L.A. Derby Dolls, Joel Spielman from Crosscheck Records and Eddie Sunset, another Boston-to-California transplant.

BW: ...and then?

Smitty: Well, late in 2004 I dragged out the script and polished it up a bit and submitted it to a screenplay competition. It made it to the finals, but didn't win. Then I heard from a producer who was interested and got it optioned. Unfortunately, about eight weeks before production, there was some kind of meltdown with the producers.

Their company split in two...half got all the money and equipment. The other half had my script.

BW: Oh man! You are like the kiss of death!

Smitty: Yep. So, we ended up having to hire a lawyer and going through a bunch of bullshit to get the script back in my hands. Now we're going to try again with a new company who's just optioned the new draft.

BW: And the likelihood of anything coming of this?

Smitty: Ask anyone. I'm fatally optimistic. We'll probably end up with a great movie that everyone hates or a shitty movie that everyone loves. Whatever. I'm one re-write away from never having to look at that script again and that is a pleasant thought.

BW: As a “writer” how do you feel about that fact that both Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie are published authors and you are, well, not?

Smitty: That's funny. Fuck you.

BW: Don't kill the messenger, Shakespeare. Grey hair looks distinguished on some men...not so much on you. I seem to recall that you used to have dyed black hair for years. Why'd you stop doing that?

Smitty: You son of a bitch. You know why.

BW: We'll take that as a “no comment.” Is it true you were once arrested for renting a stolen car?

Smitty: Yes.

BW: Stupidest thing you've ever done?

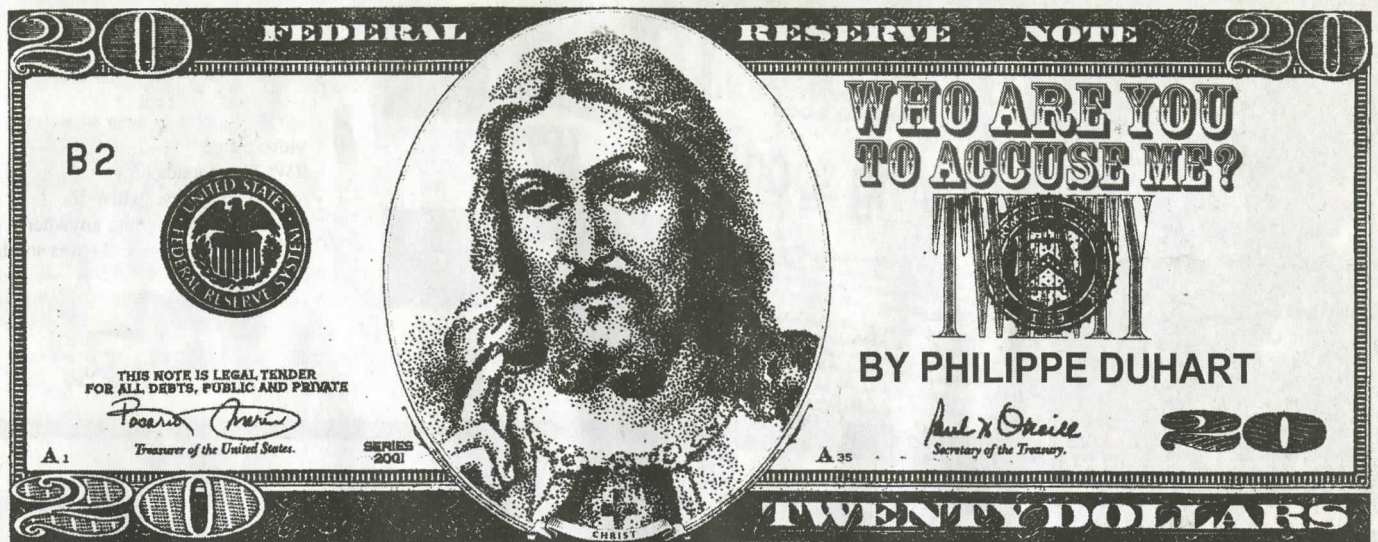
Smitty: This interview is starting to rank up there.

BW: I was thinking of the time you got your seatbelt caught in the door of your car and instead of opening the door you kept pulling with both hands until the belt popped free and you hit yourself in the mouth with the buckle, splitting your lip and knocking yourself out of the driver's seat.

Smitty: Yeah. That was pretty funny.

BW: Well, thanks for your time. I won't keep you. I'm sure you have some vigorous reviewing ahead.

Smitty: Fuck you.



Why Are There Still Democrats?

Parties exist for an ideological purpose. The Republicans, for example, serve an important function in our society: they direct the rich man's shaft into the working man's ass. Democrats nominally play defense for the lower classes—the other 99% of the nation. There was a time when Democrats actually accomplished *things*: winning elections and passing legislation. FDR adopted the more palatable demands of the labor movement into the platform of the Democratic Party. The Cold War—a Democratic construct in these pre-Reagan days—fostered a witchhunt of sorts against the radical wing of labor organization, with the result of 'conservative' labor being absorbed by the party as a bulwark against Communist sedition in the union movement. This allowed the Democrats to fashion themselves as the party of the people.

From Social Security to the Civil Rights Act, the Democratic leadership (with the notable exception of the Southern Bloc) actually made things somewhat better for working people. (Democrats doing something? I know its hard to believe, but it happened.)

There was also their militant nationalism—of Wilson, FDR, and LBJ—which would ultimately undo the party as an effective force in American politics.

If we are sincere in our analysis, though, the American voter and his moronic bent is not off the hook. Republicans embraced the race card in the 1970s and 80s as a way to steal working class white votes from the Democrats. From Nixon's Southern Strategy to Reagan's attacks on 'welfare queens,' Republican mandarins manipulated white racism into gain electoral victories. Since 1972, wages have stagnated (in real terms) in the US. The white union voter was manipulated into blaming the poor for his declining standard of living, while predatory multinationals who sought cheap labor in the browner world to undercut American workers who had the balls to expect good wages and working conditions.

The 'angry white man' is still quite susceptible to the corporate-funded spin of the Right, like believing there's a war on Christmas

and that the federal government hates Jesus—ignore the fact that the government is controlled by Jesus' friends, i.e. the Republicans.

But the roots of the fall of the Democrats can be squarely traced to the disillusion wrought by the Vietnam War, a wholly Democratic venture. Fissure in partisan solidarity were manipulated to get Nixon into the White House.

A war that appears to have no end in sight, an Administration repeatedly claiming victory and begging patience on the part of the masses, a party in power marching lockstep in a failed nationalism, a nation rift by very real social strains—if history is a guide, we're seeing the demise of the Republicans.

In actuality, history is not a guide. Republicans, you must remember, are as successful as they are evil. And Democrats are as inept as they are (use your own derisive term, it'll apply).

Why are Democrats such unflinching losers? Because Democrats have sold their base for thirty pieces of silver.

Democrats look to the Clinton regime as the golden age of the Party of the People. But Clintonian centrism instituted a project of paying lip service to the 'middle class' ('working class' being a non-entity in the political discourse) while trying to get at some of that sweet corporate money Republicans fellate for. Clinton pushed the party toward conformity with the Republicans on economic issues, leaving the squeezed middle class and the dying working class (assuming there is a distinction) to fend for themselves. The Democrats newfound obsession is with the swing-voter—that uninformed moron who can't make up his mind on shit beyond partially agreeing with everything he's told and making idiotic comments like 'both sides have some good points.'

So we've got a war with no end and a populace with little taste for its continuation, and a bullshit 'debate' between the parties in Washington with one side wanting to 'stay the course' and the other insisting on staying the course, but maybe a little differently.

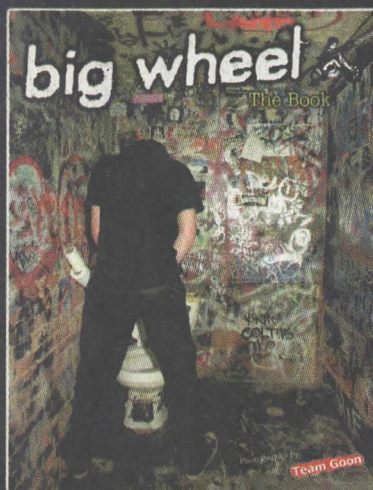
The main problem with Democrats is

their *Wile E. Coyote-esque* penchant for walking into the Republican's traps. With each successive electoral round, Democrats make some vague statements, Republicans attack them as unpatriotic, Democrats counter by vaguely qualifying their previous comment with some jingoistic palaver, and Republicans then bust out with the 'flip-flop' uppercut. After a humiliating defeat, the Democrats go back to the drawing board and decide that the key to victory is to adopt the Republican's platform, but with an added dose of vagueness. Then they're surprised when they don't win.

Add to this the proclivity of Democrats to eat their own. Howard Dean—not a smart man by any stretch of the imagination—makes a substantive statement about this war resembling Vietnam in the 'wait it out' strategy of the Administration. So, Democrat mainstays attack Dean and his comments, and then argue for more patience on the part of Americans, insisting 'Iraqification' (training Iraqis to fight the war we started) will work...maybe...and then claiming we can 'redeploy' in a year or two...perhaps. After all, the public was patient in the '60s and look at how 'Vietnamization' went off without a hitch.

As if the idiocy of Democrats couldn't get anymore pathetically idiotic, party strategists are banking the future on the glorious reign of Hilary Clinton. They'll insist that her vague moderating centrism and vaguer Jesus-talk is the key to the Democratic utopia which awaits us. These are the same idiots who thought Gore would make a good president, and then followed with the idea that Kerry could beat Bush. Amazingly, these people have somehow figured out how to make being a abject and consistent loser into a job where they're actually paid (money) for never being right about anything.

An old-fashioned purging of the party ranks is necessary...but that's the Stalinist in me talking.



Team Goon

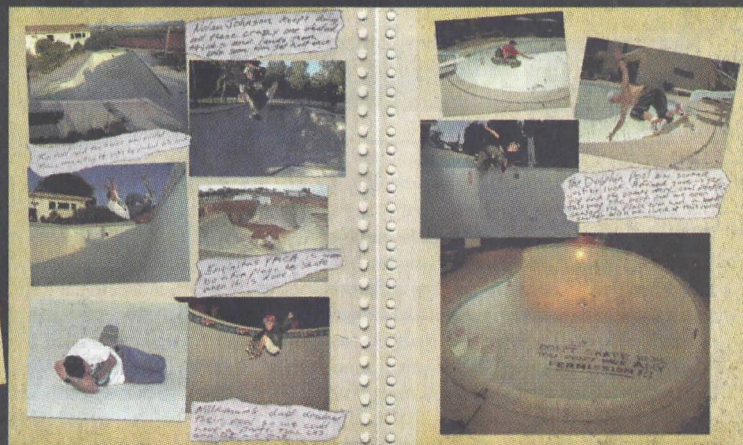
photo book

Coming soon

over the last 5 years Team Goon has been out taking photos at various skate spots and punk shows. what you see here is a small snapshot of the news photos that were taken, with many that never made their way to the teamgoon.com website.

the book is a look into the lifestyle that is punk rock and skateboarding. the book is expected to be released in early 2004 and will price out at \$19.95, a soft bound and a limited edition hardback coffee table book will be made available.

for more information on the book and where the book will be available go to www.bigwheelbook.com



...everytime i take a leak
i think of these guys...



What I want

Wanna know what I really want? I want nothing more than to get away from everything. I want to move to the Bavarian countryside and raise happy wool sheep in the lush Bavarian fields. I don't ever want to read the news or turn on a computer again. The only time I want to be around a television is if there's a baseball game on. I want to occasionally come home and blow the dust off of my neglected CD player to listen to whatever Paul Simon songs I haven't yet taught myself to play on my worn and well-loved acoustic guitar. I want to grow my own pot and raise my own food that would be free from chemicals and other cancer causing additives that plague our current food supply. I want to sit by a nourishing fire with my beautiful wife, surrounded by my loving children, never worrying about what kind of world they're going to inherit from me and my generation. I want conversation with my neighbors at the local brewpub to revolve around mundane things like the weather and family, the whole time knowing that away from our simple lives we have a government that is running things smoothly with the best interests of its citizens and the rest of the world in mind.

But that shit ain't gonna happen, and not just because most Paul Simon songs are too hard for me to teach myself on guitar. The reality is that shit is way fucked up. And it's going to get worse before it gets better. Until then, I'm gonna stick around and fight.

On December 12th President Bush did something that shocked the world: he took five unprepared questions from an unscreened audience. I doubt that we will get to see too much more of this kind of behavior from the Boy in the Bubble, but for a brief moment we got a chance to glimpse into the strange world that is Bush's head.

While the press was busy overcoming their shock at Bush's rare candidness, they seemed to have missed exactly what was said by our Commander in Chief. They seemed focused on the fact that Bush estimated at least 30,000 Iraqis have died as a result of our military misadventure in their homeland, the first

such estimate to come out of the White House. (While it may give some a nice fuzzy feeling to know that the president is actually aware that people are dying as a result of his actions, 30,000 are far fewer than the 100,000 dead as estimated by the medical journal *The Lancet*. But hey, at least he's trying. Judging by Bush's tax policies, numbers aren't his strong point). Unfortunately the real story here is not the casualties in Iraq but instead Bush's prediction that there will be more wars to follow. "The long run in this war is going to require a change of governments in parts of the world," Bush said. Both Syria and Iran were singled out as possible regimes that need to be dealt with to ensure "future homeland safety for the U.S".

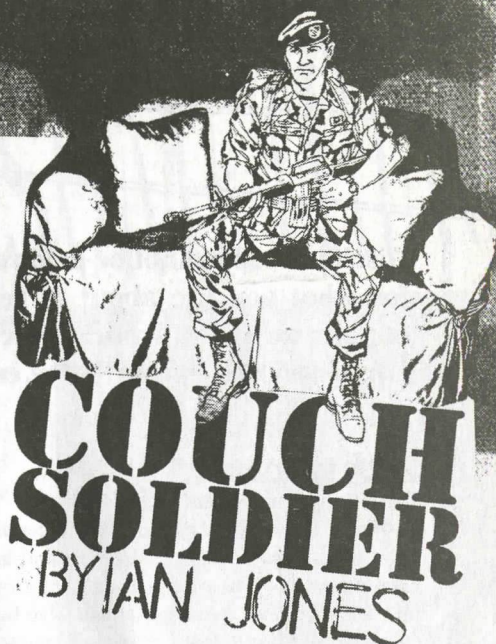
So it would seem that we are going to be at war with Iran soon unless something very nice happens. The problem with going to war with Iran, aside from the unforgivable bloodshed that will result, is the fact that Iran, unlike Iraq, actually has a military. Is their military capable of beating ours? Probably not. But invading Iran would not be a walk in the park.

Another possibility is that Iran will get the jitters from the sound of war drums coming from Washington and pull an old-fashioned pre-emptive strike. Where would they hit us? I don't think it's beyond reason to believe that Iran would invade Iraq and knock out our current troop deployments over there. Are they crazy enough to do it? Well, in case you haven't been paying attention, the president of Iran has been talking a lot lately about how the Holocaust never happened and how Israel should be wiped off the map, or moved to Europe. So yeah, he seems pretty nutty.

But then there's the Israel problem. Israel has nukes, although they won't admit it because no one is supposed to have those things in the Middle East. Iran is supposedly developing nukes. If Iran were to begin mobilizing troops further west towards Israel, I doubt our Jewish friends would wait for the U.S. to send in the cavalry before pressing the button.

And then there's the Russia problem. Russia and Iran are allies. Russia sells Iran military equipment. Russia is, more

or



less, reliant on Iran to keep a foothold of influence in the Middle East. They're already upset about NATO expanding into former Soviet Bloc states in Eastern Europe, so they won't take kindly to the U.S. trying to handle one of their friends in Mesopotamia. Don't expect for them to stand by idly if we go to war.

And then there's the problem with our army, which is pretty much taxed. If a large war were to begin, you can bet your ass there will be a draft. I'd like to think that I'm safe because I just surpassed the current drafting age, but if push comes to shove they will draft whoever they can get their hands on. That includes me, and it may include you as well, dear reader.

And I don't even want to think of what North Korea would do while we are distracted completely in Iran. They seem to just be sitting over there waiting for the chance to fuck shit up.

So the stage is set for what could be a big fucking mess, and I've only glazed over some of the possible situations. Of course these are worst-case scenarios, but I believe that it's better to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. And the best thing would be practicing some real diplomacy, but that is something that our current administration is unwilling to do. But I hope they start soon. I've got sheep to tend to.

...the Gspot...

By: BM Franklin

Disclaimer: I cannot be held responsible for what you are about to read. Enter at your own risk. Knock Twice. Ask for Larry. Don't look him in the eye, enter below.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

I've been dumped on, yelled at, cried over, fed up, disgruntled and fucked by the fickle finger of fate. I've had good times, bad times, weird times, and half truths. I've been pissed off, bummed out, and hung over. I've stood tall, felt small and I've been selfish. I've been happy, I've been sad, I've been glad and I've been more than mad. I've been hungry, I've been cold, I've been stupid, so I've been told. I've been in a pickle, I've been fickle, and I've asked someone for a nickel. I've been high, I've been low, and I've seen a guy naked down below. I've been sweet, I've been sour and I've had power.

And I'm still looking forward to 2006!

Happy New Year!

And with that, let's have a "Year End Review" of sorts, shall we?

Lesson # 1: Everyone's world revolves around them. We've gone over this... It sounds egotistical, so people like to deny this one. But think about – what other vantage point do you have but your very own? You can be there for someone, hold their hand, but only they can feel the pain. It's their world. Their world revolves around them. Realize there are so many other vantage points other than your own, and your opinion doesn't matter, although counts. So many people care too much about being right rather than understanding the whole picture.

Lesson 2: Talking trash is a weakness *and* a bonding experience. When you talk behind someone's back, it's obviously an insecurity on your part, because if you were totally secure, you wouldn't feel the need to empower yourself with malicious thoughts. But on the other hand – and the most evil thing about gossip – is that it bonds people. When you're in that gab session with someone, you feel close to them. You have a common ground. They feel like you (and you, them) – hence – everyone's world revolves around them. It'll always revert back to that.

Lesson #3: Everything new is hard. Once you master how it's done, you may not be good at it. But it's not as big a deal as you thought it was.

Lesson #4: It's all a dream. From age 15 and before, it goes slow. After that – time flies. All your life you wanted to look older – drive, drink, get into clubs. Once you reach that age – you wish you were younger. You'll wish you would have realized how lucky you had it. But youth is

wasted on the young. Realize that.

f

Lesson #5: You're not as hot as you think you are – even if you are. Even Tommy Lee got sick of Pam. Anything new is exciting. For some reason, any experience is better with something or someone new. The one you love and have known for years isn't as appealing. Mind bender. We all condone commitment – but it's the uncertainty of what were doing that makes us feel alive. There's no sense to this.

Lesson #6: Life is not a dress rehearsal. Hugging a corner all your life may be the safe bet, but you won't have as much fun. Shyness is a waste of time. Shy people don't speak up, therefore, they get nothing.

Lesson #6: And speaking of speaking up – If you don't say anything – don't complain! People bitch about things they never tried to do anything about. For instance, if you don't like a comment from someone or the way something is being done – say something! Plus, how can someone fix what you don't like or how can you ever compromise with people if you keep your wants quiet? Speak up. Life is now in session – are you present? Note: The only problem with saying how you feel is most people can't handle the truth. People rely on the weak to say nothing and make life easier for them. But the squeaky wheel gets the oil.

Sidebar: The trick for confronting someone with an issue you may have is in how you do it. Always do it one on one – when you're either alone or no one can hear your conversation. Otherwise you're "making a scene" or embarrassing them and they'll have to protect themselves in front of the "crowd."

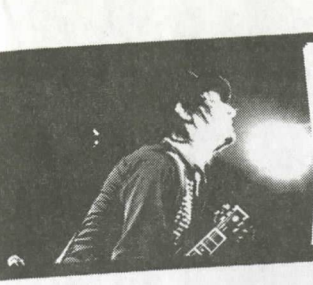
Look both ways out there and be safe. You're precious cargo, don't blow it. Peace.

IT'S JUST A STUPID DREAM!

Why is it people always think they're dream has to mean something? Especially if it has something to do with what you're going through in real life or it hits close to an issue you've faced. So you search for some hidden meaning the dream may hold, about your past, present or future.

But what if dreams don't mean anything? What if it is, in fact, just a dream? Does everything have to mean something – or can coincidence and dumb luck exist? It seems in this world that people are hell bent on attaching meaning to almost everything. But sometimes we don't mean it, it means nothing and it truly doesn't matter.

I'm just saying...



SHUT UP

BY: MARKO 72

& SAY SOMETHING

Back in the mid/late 80's when I was a kid, the nucleus of my town's punk scene was the local bands playing rented out Chinese restaurants, Mexican billiard halls, community centers, and apartment complex driveways in my hometown of Santa Barbara, California. Bands like RKL, Lethal Dose, NOFX, Section 8 (now called Lagwagon), Scared Straight (now called Ten Foot Pole), Strung Out, Toad the Wet Sprocket (yes, even they were considered 'punk', gasp!), Legion of Doom, Vatos From Hell, Illiterate (my old band), Threatened Hope, Penis Brigade, Jerkin Gerkins, Rat Pack, Stalag 13, Agression, Dr. Know, the whole Mystic Records/Nardcore scene, etc. Every fucking weekend. They were all there, along with a bunch of visiting out of town bands. At the time, nobody gave a fuck about these bands anywhere else in the world. If you read books or magazines, when they talked about punk, it was always the same regurgitated names; The Ramones, the Damned, The Clash, the Misfits, Black Flag, the Germs, etc; all great bands for sure, but merely icons and rock stars from where we stood; the bands from our own scene meant a lot more to us. We could see it happening and growing right in front of us, we could feel like we were a part of it rather than just spectators. Now most of those bands are considered to be pioneers of modern punk. These unsung heroes unceremoniously did the thankless task of marching into the unknown, guitars and drumsticks as machetes clearing the brush and paving the way for the Converse and Vans clad hordes to come.

Anyway, the reason I'm reminiscing about this is that just the other day, I received sad news of yet another fallen punk. Bomer (aka: Richard Anthony Manzullo) the notorious drummer and later bassist of one of Southern California's most influential punk bands: RKL (Rich Kids on LSD) died of a drug overdose on December 12, 2005. He was 38 years old. It was no secret that Bomber danced with the needle, but his visionary musical talent somehow excused him from the negative stigma usually associated with hard drug abusers. He was like the Charlie Parker (jazz great) of punk rock, you knew you were in the presence of greatness when he was around, but you knew it might end suddenly. He chose his lifestyle as a means to alienate himself as much as possible from the ordinary and the mundane, he was a true one of a kind human being. His extraordinary musical genius is what he'll be remembered for. I kind of lost track of him over the past few years; I know he was still pushing musical boundaries; supposedly composing classical music around the time of his passing. Last I checked he had started a band after RKL called the Other, which took progressive punk to an unrivaled level; hunt down that record if you can find it; also get your hands on RKL's most definitive records: "Keep Laughing" and "Rock and Roll Nightmare" to hear Bomer in prime form. Earlier in 2005, we lost another shining star of Santa Barbara punk rock: Derrick Plourde; the original drummer of Lagwagon and the Ataris. He died at the age of 33 back in March. Derrick and I grew up together playing in garage bands and going to shows. Ironically, Derrick was probably Bomer's biggest fan and protégé. He learned drums from watching and listening to Bomer. Listen to Lagwagon "Hoss", "Trashd" and Bad Astronaut "Houston We Have a Drinking Problem" to hear Derrick at his best.

Well, I hate to paint such a morbid picture for you all, but it's important to use these pages to talk about the stuff Rolling Stone and the like don't give a fuck about. Some day when you think about it, punch up RKL on your Google and dig in to some important history in honor of Bomer!

IT'S NOT HALF EMPTY, IT'S NOT HALF FULL, IT'S JUST BROKEN

A MONTHLY COLUMN BY DAN DISMAL

It seems to me that people take for granted what they have in this scene. Touring bands come through town and treat their shows like it's just another etching in the belt. Promoters put their shows on so haphazardly that things end up running behind schedule or falling apart. Names are ruined and blackballed overnight pretty much and no one seems to care. Maybe if people sat back and realized that once these times are over, that's it! It used to be that you had to be a well known band to even consider touring, these days because of the influx of new talent bands can easily get out on the road and experience the forbidden fruit or the touring lifestyle. Maybe because this has become so easily achievable is the reason why there's a touring circuit full of bands that live in a dream world where they are not responsible for their actions. Remember people, everyone is connected somehow and your actions will come back to haunt you! The same goes for these damned promoters who accept every single show thrown at them in hopes of making a few extra bucks. Half the time you have someone who doesn't even know the music booking out a show because they're the well-established booking company in the area and can pay out that huge guarantee. Maybe if everyone grounded him or herself and realized that this is music, an art form and a lifestyle that used to be reserved for the bands that were making it then maybe things would stop being such a circus of idiocy? All I can truly do is sit back and watch in awe as bands make a mockery of their music and promoters end up taking a nose dive because they've bitten off much more than they can chew.

Three quick stories that happen within a 72-hour period.

Chapter One – The Slap In The Face.

I am contacted by the Knitting Factory, which happens to be one of the better clubs in the LA area about booking a last minute show for them. I get e-mails out, book up 7 slots, design flyers and get everyone on the ball with promotion. The night of the show the bands end up pulling a collective crowd that total a little over 100 people. A very good number since there was only about 5 days to fully promote this show. Where there should have been celebration there was stupidity. A band that is still unknown to me decided to put holes the size of human beings in the backstage area, which I will have to pay for. These are the same bands that are asking me to book them on larger shows but since they're too drunk to know any better they put everything at risk in the name of a good time.

Chapter Two – The Reluctant Promoter

After my ordeal with the Knitting Factory backstage I take my band

on a short mini-tour. The first stop was an amazing show and the second stop was supposed to be even better. I agreed to have my band headline as long as we were on stage by 10:30 since it was a Sunday night. About 10:15pm I decide to find the promoter and see how many bands are left. I talk with the door guy first and he says, "there are 5 more bands then you guys." What the hell? I find the promoter, ask him what the hell is going on and he just gives me a bunch of stories about bands bitching about playing shorter sets and a whole slew of other crap. Why did this guy book 15 bands on a Sunday? He has two stages and only alternated between them for the first 4 bands and then everyone played on the larger stage. The soundman was too busy getting loaded to pay attention to anything and here I have this promoter throwing his hands in the air. I have to take control to make sure everyone gets to play and it ends up being that by the time my band plays there's about 10 people left at 12:15am. Why put on shows if you can't handle the bands and their bitchy ways?

Chapter Three – The Circus Of Crap

The very next day I had to work at a show I put together. The tour package was full of newer bands and I put on some good locals to ensure a crowd for the touring bands. It's a Monday so there's an expected low draw for the show but the touring bands ask me if they "have to play the show" about halfway through the first local band. I tell them I don't care if they do but why go out on tour if you're not going to play the shows? The touring bands play but they end up making up songs on stage and not playing their actual songs. They come across like they don't care that people did pay to see a show so all the paying people end up leaving before the first touring band is even finished. Then one of the bands asks me if I can get their 6 friends in for free because those friends just came to see them! I tell him that "the first two bands brought in everyone and all their friends paid and were driven off so his 6 friends can pay as well." At the end of the night, the bands still ask to collect money even though they basically didn't even perform their music and wasted my time. How the fuck does that make any sense?

Three different days, three stories of people who really shouldn't be in this scene because all they're doing is ruining it for the people who really want to be in it. Ah, this is a rant, I know it but you're all stuck reading it because more than likely, you could easily play one of the characters in one of these stories. It really is well past the time we all wake up and cut the shit.

PUNK LIGHT THERAPY

BY MARCUS SOLOMON

GROW OR DIE

Before addressing a couple of other topics, I wish to comment on the subject of going to college. Two other columnists for this magazine have written that it is a waste of time to attend college. I STRONGLY DISAGREE, and encourage everyone to attend an institution of higher learning. Why? Because knowledge is its own reward. To learn is to grow. Before you can control something, you first have to understand it. The more you know, the more control you have of the world around you. Depending on what college and major you choose, this can be a very important step in the continuance of your destruction of the illusion machine. College is the place where you can learn all the things they did not tell you in High School. For example, you can major in History and do research on how our nation is founded largely on genocide of the Native American and the slave labor of dark-skinned humans. Q: Can you name the only country to use atomic weapons against unarmed civilians? A: The United States. Or you can major in Peace and Conflict Studies and eventually teach about how people follow whoever feeds them while fighting against those who bomb them. This is a lesson all world leaders need to learn --G.W. Bush in particular, but I digress.

Of course, going to college is no guarantee that you will get the job/career of your choice, but if you require guarantees for everything before you act, then you will accomplish absolutely nothing. Sure, you have to meet and know the right people before you can move into that job you are reaching for, but that's how it is with any goal that exists in the social sphere. If you want to start a band, you have to meet and know other musicians. If you want to hit it big, then you have to meet and know the people who can make it happen. But is that

the point? No. The creation of music should be the purpose in itself, and so it is with knowledge. Sure, you can learn on your own, and that is fine, but it does not mean that others should not decide to reach for a degree at a University. As I have written in previous columns, the Federal government really does not want you to go to college, because then you will gain the knowledge that can be used for effective protest. Many progressive social movements such as The Free Speech Movement (in Berkeley) were organized by college students. Martin Luther King's Civil Rights Movement was powered largely by the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee. Rosa Parks was actually trained for the historical bus protest by SNCC. As for me, I had to leave my studies at U.C. Berkeley when my grandmother became terminally ill and I have yet to return to complete my final semester, but I have every intention of doing so. Until then, I make a modest living as an academic tutor. If you are done learning, it is time to die.

Item two: DHARMA PUNX

Last week, I went to a very interesting and informative lecture and meditation session presented by Noah Levine, author of the book Dharma Punx. I had no idea there was a group of like-minded, rebellious, punk rock Buddhists out there; I thought I was the only one. I also STRONGLY SUGGEST you obtain and read this book. In short, it is about how Noah was on the "live fast, die young" agenda, and how he found redemption and meaning via Buddhism. Believe it or not, punk rock and Buddhism have a lot in common. Both understand that life is difficult and suffering is part of the game. Both also encourage rebellion against the corrupt system and meaningless status-quo, but not rebellion in the traditional sense. Breaking stuff, resorting to violence, and generally

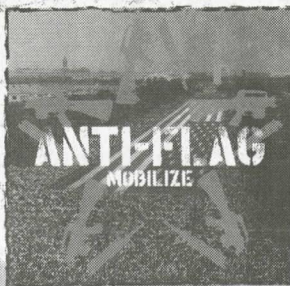
throwing a tantrum is so ordinary, and that is exactly how you were conditioned to behave. Being non-violent, aware, and practicing passive resistance is truly going against the grain, because being an ignorant, violent, asshole is the accepted norm. But what if you hate religion? Good. Buddhism is not a religion. The Buddha is not a god and never claimed to be one. He is just a teacher. It is more accurate to call Buddhism "Mind Science." Check out his Website at: www.dharmapunx.com, and look for his book Dharma Punx at your local bookstore.

Item three: At the time of this writing, according to Newsweek Magazine, The Federal Emergency Management Agency still has nobody in charge of emergency housing for the Katrina Hurricane victims. Isn't weird how our government can provide medical assistance to virtually every citizen of Iraq while supposedly rebuilding the schools and hospitals (that weren't supposed to be blown up in the first place,) but it won't do the same for our own fellow Americans? Back of the bus now means bottom of the lake. Bush and Co. simply do not care about poor Americans (of any color,) but they gotta pretend like they care about the Iraqis so they can get at that oil. That plan is not working out so well. Please keep doing what you can to help make a positive difference. You will never run out of things to do.

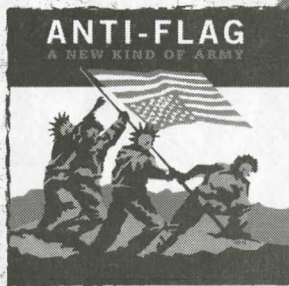
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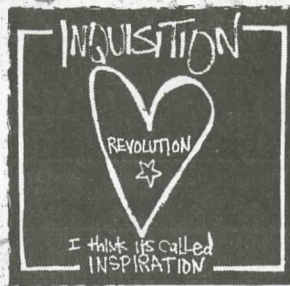
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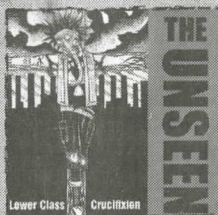


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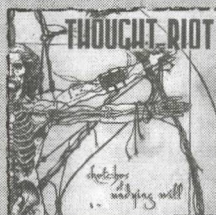
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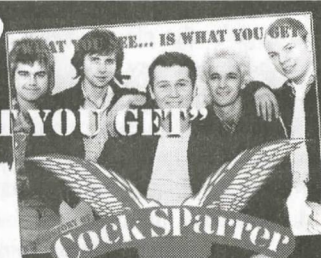
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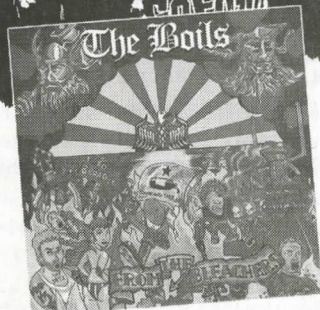


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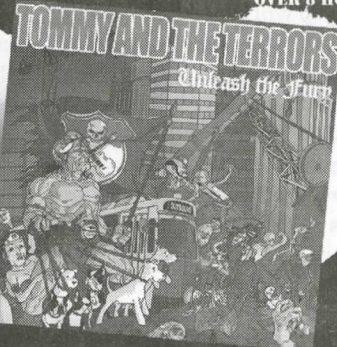
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Another Year Wasted in Paradise

OVERDOSING ON REALITY

BY SHAWN STALTER

For the past four years I've been living on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean along with nearly a million other morons. I won't tell you the name of this island because I know what you'll do. You'll start dreaming up images of half naked girls in coconut shell bikinis and grass skirts shaking their hips to some mind numbing ukulele music. You can probably even see the fat, sunburned vacationers numbed up on painkillers and watered down tropical drinks sitting around tapping their fingers pretending to enjoy their last days on this planet. Unfortunately, this island has made itself part of the American mystique and for some reason I can not grasp, continues to draw countless families to its shores each year so that they may "get away from it all". Good luck with that. Even in this plastic paradise we have crime, poverty, disease, corruption, and homelessness aplenty. You can't run away from the ubiquitous orgy of American materialism or its social byproducts no matter how many frequent flyer miles you burn or how hard you wish you could enjoy watching a sunset.

I actually saw footage last week of two middle-aged women beating the shit out of each other in a shopping mall out here. Apparently they were both hell-bent on buying the same ugly purse which was probably made in a sweat shop somewhere near here where people fight over food instead of purses. This is what life is like in the place I've called home for the past four years.

I've tried to be a good guest in a land that few Americans respect or care to understand. The local folk here despise what has become of their once lush tropical oasis in the middle of the Pacific and you can't blame them. America has used this place as a bombing range, a nuclear testing site, and now we've even launched a brutal campaign of fast food and outlet mall construction on this ancient soil. With no

escape other than a six hour flight over water, I just take my chances and try to experience a taste of anything that is real. It hasn't been easy.

At times the island feels like an alien world humans occasionally visit to take away fruit and plastic trinkets. Sometimes they even leave with venereal diseases after getting "lucky" with the toothless transsexual hookers that hang out downtown and prey on the constant stream of Midwestern farm boys out for a night of thrills in "paradise". I love the homeless people here though. They're mostly just an eclectic collection of burnt out surfer hippies left over from the sex and drug craze of the 60's. I admire anyone who can wear a black trench coat year round in 90 degree weather.

Crazy things happen no matter which part of the world you call home. I understand this. But each day here is a new lesson in insanity. About a week ago I went for a drive down by the beach to watch some drunk tourists fall off of their scooters when something on the side of the road violently grabbed my attention and shook me loose from my wild daydream of crashing tidal waves and man eating half-shark people. How many gallons of gasoline does it take to cleanse the filthy soul of a man? This question sprang up in the deepest recesses of my mind as my right foot lay harshly on the brake pedal in the heat of that moist autumn afternoon.

As I drove past a group of young surfers, I noticed in the distance a colorless liquid flowing violently onto a man's hair, soaking him head to toe and cleansing away the harsh salt water stench of a morning spent riding the waves. The liquid spilled out from a bright red, 5 gallon jug that was better suited for storing a potent gasoline. In fact, as I came closer I noticed that he actually held a gas can above his head and the contents were pouring over his fragile, sun-drenched figure.

I scooted past at nearly a crawl, jaw and eyes wide open. Tension was in the air. I was not alone in my observation of a scene with sickening potential. Several other not so innocent looking bystanders gazed on thinking they might too bear witness to the violent chemical end of a soul they knew nothing about nor cared about in any way. Eyes wide with anticipation, I followed every trickle of the liquid down his back and onto the ground where a puddle had collected beneath his dirty rubber sandals. Would I see the ball of fire engulf the fragile shape of this guy? He was so serene in his last moments much as I envision a martyr looking outward on his adoring crowd, wide smile on a worn face as the executioner's blade falls swiftly. The last drops of liquid death fell suddenly on his forehead. Eyes still shut this would-be Buddhist monk put the gas can down at his feet and reached into the window of his car. Every muscle in my soul became tense as I realized I was about to witness the end of one man's journey in this world. Why would he do it? What set this guy off? Was he also sick of the blatant commercialization of his ancestral homeland? But how could he locate a match so easily with his eyes shut? Could I handle the psychological impact of seeing another man's flesh burn off his body?

His left hand drew out a large black and white beach towel and he began to wipe the liquid from his sun drenched face. The collective sigh of relief coupled with guilty undertones of disappointment could be felt for miles around. Who bathes in water from a gasoline can? A very confident man with a surfboard apparently. After having my fill of madness for one day, I drove on down the gentle slope of a barren hill along the coast with the goal of locking myself away once again in my roach infested studio apartment, safe from the insanity of Plastic Polynesia.

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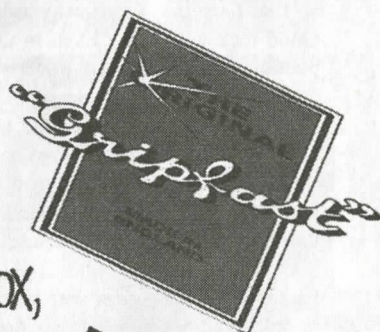
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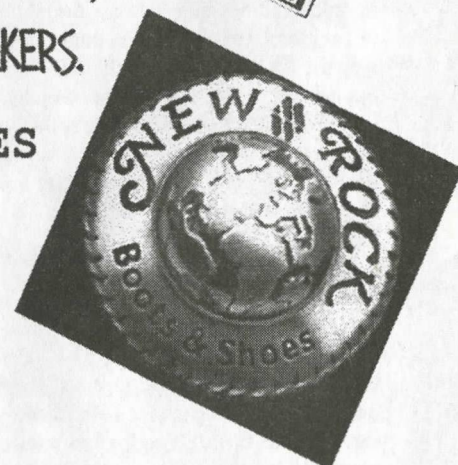
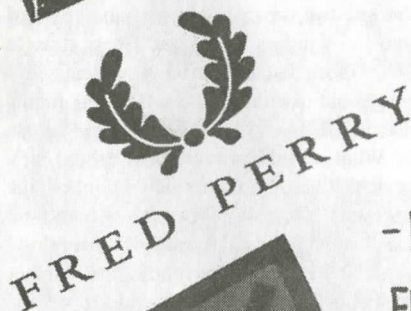
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PAWNS IN THE GAME

BY K.L. LUVICH

The Guises of White Privilege

Often I feel as if I will walk onto King and Main to witness the transformation of this city into some harmonized utopia. If this delusion says anything about my experience working with young adults of South Central Los Angeles, it speaks to the hope and progress these students forge, myself being privileged as their comrade in contemplation. Through dialogue, observations and assertions are made regarding the world as it is and the world as it should be. Students discuss with me the history that is their lives. I can't help but acknowledge that I will someday be a part of that history too. This being a position of profound influence, potentially negative and positive, I must consider several things. One of which is the fact that I am White.

This is clarified everyday as I enter the classroom and become the "outsider". My "Whiteness" is magnified as I grapple with ethical questions and confront what it means not only to be White but to be White working in South Central. My students and peers might assume that I am not racist considering my intentional choice to work in a community composed primarily of Black and Latino families. However, in this case and in many instances, assumptions are dangerous and *intention* is not the question. The question is: *How does one come to terms with being White, having and being authentic to anti-racist beliefs, and confronting the existence of racial divisions.*

For the majority of White people, this is not an issue of conscious reflection. Its easy for Whites to believe that they are not racist as mainstream culture promotes the very "PC" façade of racial harmony. Some claims made by White folks as a result of this deception are as follows: "If racism occurs today, it consists of sporadic and isolated incidents." or "I know a Black guy that worked hard and made it out of the 'ghetto'. If he can do it, why can't everyone else?" Claims like these pour out of the mouths of White Americans, a symptom of White privilege, manifesting itself in arbitrary uses of language, an absent understanding of race dynamics, and *assumed* good intentions.

In addition to making ungrounded claims, White folks enjoy the following privileges, among many others: 1. You can be sure that your neighbors will be neutral/pleasant to you.

2. You can accomplish something without being seen as the exception or a credit to your race.
3. If a cop pulls you over, you can be sure that you were not racially profiled.² For many White folks, racism is simply viewed as the ugly behavior of a few individuals, *not* as something we all have a responsibility for. And suggesting that hardworking White folks have acquired accomplishments through privilege makes many uncomfortable or even resentful. We live in a country built on the "myth of meritocracy"² Taking responsibility for this privilege seems to equate an admission of weakness.

Historically, we live in a post-Civil Rights Movement era, which allows for unwarranted comforts regarding racism as displayed by many White Americans. It's difficult to digest the contention that racism is not embedded in American social thought. For those of you whom adhere to this fantasy, I direct your attention to any history text through which you may deduce that race, has since its inception, permeated the American socio-political climate. If that seems too arduous a task, let us examine the innumerable images of Black Americans left stranded in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Or perhaps, we can reflect on the villainization and execution of gang leader turned author, peace maker, and two time Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Stanley "Tookie" Williams.

Truth: The existence of legislative and symbolic gestures acknowledging the need to protect individuals from racism *does not remove* the idea of racial tension or the existence of de facto stratification from public consciousness and institutions. Consequently, when we accept this fact, it is imperative that we include White people in the discussion. The exemption of White folks only works to perpetuate the problem as they continue to believe that racism does not apply to them. **Myth:** "We are not victims of racism so we are not responsible for its eradication."

The privilege of being White allows for a lack of social responsibility and is a vital component of the racism that is used as a tool to continue a "historically based and institutionally perpetuated 'invisible' system of exploitation", as stated by Cameron Levin, co-founder of AWARE (Alliance of White Anti Racist Evolving). AWARE has taken significant steps toward confronting Whiteness and combating racism, outlining principles of anti-racism and redefining the meaning and use of racism. It

is now seen as a functional *tool* used to divide Whites and People of Color, supporting the larger White supremacist system which benefits less than 1% of the population— wealthy, heterosexual, White males.¹ — *Pawns in the Game?*

If you have made it through my esoteric exposition, you might be asking: *How the fuck does this apply to my supersized, real time televised, sound bitten, subterranean youth culture?*

Truth: We all have a stake in this place. Racism detracts from the health of *any* society. The spectrum that lies between social unconsciousness and initiating a hostile revolution is varied. It includes at a median point a consciousness of the fact that the unjustifiable exploitation of *any* human being existing in this space has much to do with how we fill the space too.

If you are not at the point of staging that rebellion but you'd like to avoid being socially comatose, a leap in the right direction might be to reflect upon how you contribute to the perpetuation of racism; tattooing this world with unintentional ignorance through arbitrary language and behavior; and how the privilege of being White is just that: *A privilege*. Included in the stake on this world is an investment in how its future is defined. Let us define it on our own terms, defiantly positioned upon the grounds of responsibility.

1. "Towards a Radical White Identity" 2005, Cameron Levin & Susan B. Goldberg, Co-Founders of AWARE (Alliance of White Anti Racist Evolving) email: struggle@earthlink.net
2. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" July/August 1989, Peggy McIntosh, Peace & Freedom Magazine

Note: Title taken from song, "Pawns in the Game", Bob Dylan, "The Times They Are A'changin'" 1964

For further reading on White privilege: White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son by Tim Wise Soft Skull Press 2005

By K.L. Lovich — <http://leftwalkedwest.blogspot.com>

Made in insert name of foreign country here

BY THE CREEP

When was the last time you looked at any item you have purchased or in a store to see where it was manufactured? Have you recently put on some new Chuck Taylor sneakers or a pair of Levi's jeans? What does the tag say on the inside? Does it say Made in America or does it say Made in China, Made in Vietnam, Made in India, Made in Pakistan? The list of countries currently manufacturing goods formerly made here in America is mind-blowing!

Companies manufacture items overseas and then bring them back into the United States at a fraction of the cost of having them made here. This practice is commonly called out-sourcing and it is hard to pinpoint when in history this practice started to eat away at this country's domestic economy. The corporations and U.S. government are partially to blame, but some of the blame must also fall on the shoulders of the citizens of this country. In a way, we all let this happen slowly over a period of decades. Who would have thought when the first company (whoever it was) discovered there were no union hassles or negotiations in foreign countries where workers could be paid pennies versus the high hourly American wages that thousands of companies would eventually follow suit year after year by closing factories only to reopen them overseas? Union demands, which may have also been another reason why companies closed factories out of frustration or greed depending upon who you talk to, could have also been a factor as companies started to get wind of cheap labor and non-existent labor laws on foreign soil. The workers have no rights and have no way to fight to get them. People living and working in developed countries figured out many years ago on how to attain

workers' rights. The eight-hour workday and minimum wage was not always the standard. It took many industrious workers who fought tooth and nail for such milestones way back when. Developing nations will probably never have such a luxury because corporate greed is what rules these factories.

Corporations based in the United States would rather close hundreds of factories across North America, retain a skeleton executive work force while leaving the skilled labor, i.e. blue collar workers, high and dry without a job. GM, the country's largest automaker is getting ready to lay off thousands of workers in 2006 as they prepare to close more factories in America but they have also said they are moving some factories to foreign soil. Ford has also announced they may be planning the same stunt in 2006. You may say it is good for them (insert random country here), we should share the wealth. This may be true, but it is not the wealth we are sharing. Sure these countries get the jobs, but they do not get any of the benefits, such as health care, 401k or decent salary. All of those costs are saved at the home office and the highest executives are the ones that benefit with the fat paychecks. The human factor here in America is much greater.

If you have ever traveled the country either on vacation or with a touring band, you really don't start to see the effects of out-sourcing until you leave any given metropolitan area. After leaving New York City, Boston, Chicago, Atlanta or Los Angeles for example, you will see farms that were once thriving businesses, are now either downsized to the point that the farmers can barely survive, abandoned factories that were once home to hundreds of proud workers,

towns were all of the quality good paying jobs are gone and people have gone from making a living to barely scraping by working at the local Wal-Mart. Stores like Wal-Mart are especially guilty of supporting manufacturers who have opted to out-source thus being able to offer low wholesale prices to people who may have at one time actually made what they now buying before losing their job to someone in a foreign land.

When corporations such as Converse, Pillowtext, Levi's, GM or Ford cut 30,000 jobs "to cut costs" the people who counted on employment from these places are left with nothing. Many times these are the last big employers in any one given area and after they close and move, the former employees are left with nothing but humiliation and unemployment. President Bush says the economy here in the USA is booming with a low unemployment rate. Well, sure, people may be employed but they have gone from making a decent salary to a very low, possibly part-time, hourly employment in retail. He rarely ever brings up the types of jobs, just the number of jobs that are supposedly filled.

Can anything be done to help prevent the loss of manufacturing in North America? Yes, most important is research. We all most know someone who lost their job to out-sourcing and in order for this trend to stop, we must try and do what we can to support businesses that still see it is vital to retain their manufacturing in the United States. Retail or service doesn't drive an economy, manufacturing does and sadly this will eventually come to light possibly when it is too late to stop the moving train headed to the land of out-sourcing.

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RECORD REVIEWS

A.D.H.D.

'Til Your Ears Bleed

That's right! The first of my bundle for review and a good omen. Not a shitty OC band from the OC. I was unable to find a track I didn't like, which is rare for me. These guys do it right. It's snotty but sharp and irreverent. Punk rock. Love it, baby. I especially fancy the fucked over song. Track 6 "Outta my way" is not yer average you dumped me song. Homey's not trippin' cuz he gave yer ass VD. This shit's lookin' good to me. I could see them live. I like their style and I was into it right away. I can fully appreciate this- maybe cuz I'm not crazy, just a little out of my mind. Find them; see them, but their CD. -*Ginger Vitus*
Ares Records

Allegiance *Overlooked*

San Francisco's Allegiance combine fast, angry straight edge hardcore ala Floorpunch and Carry On, with moshy breakdowns that can sometimes remind me of Madball, and other times Rage Against The Machine or Brother's Keeper. Isaac Fratini's drumming is impeccable, and the musicianship is tight all around. What I have trouble getting past is the vocal delivery, which amounts to monotone, high pitched yelling. This 13 track full length is also missing a *hit*. What am I talking about? Hardcore records don't have hit singles! Technically, no, but what I mean is that there are no tracks that stand out from the rest. There are no memorable moments. The 22 ½ minutes just come and go without leaving a

mark. If Big Wheel used a point system, I'd give *Overlooked* a 5/10 or 2 ½ out of 5 stars. You get the idea. The album isn't terrible and it isn't great. Allegiance is the 2005 equivalent of a band like Wide Awake. They are very representative of a certain time and a certain scene, without leaving a huge impression on me. -*Ben Edge*

Rivalry Records

Bravo Fucking Bravo *II*

Emo-core that hearkens back way back to the mid/late 90s, when I used to see at least three bands a week play my college town that were cast of a similar mold. Either Bravo Fucking Bravo is pretty original sounding, or they are biting a band that I managed to avoid hearing. You are in for screamed vocals over blaring guitars playing a lot of octaves and minor chords. The drummer keeps the rhythms varied. I give them props for playing non-cheesy emo in 2005 (I can't think of any other bands who have done that). However cheeseless and original BFB comes off, it doesn't keep them from being Boring, with a capital B. I couldn't wait for the CD to be over. They have a song called "Jean-Claude God Damn." Is that clever or obnoxious? You decide. -*Ben Edge*

Alone Records

Brunt of It *Certain Uncertainty*

If you live in Riverside or Orange County you probably think this band sounds great. But for the rest of us the Pennywise train passed about 6 years ago, and Bad Religion is the only band that

should sound like Bad Religion. This band sounds like they have been trying really hard for several years and never quite made it. They don't have a cohesive sound and the cd artwork is so ridiculous I would probably pass it right by if it was in the store. The music is ok enough that they could be the opening act at a show, but I would not want to buy their cd. -*Jason Rocks!*

Birkhaus

Captured! By Robots *Captured Alive! CD & DVD*

It's really hard to talk about *Captured! By Robots*. Because there is just no goddamn way to actually describe them without downplaying the brilliance of the whole thing. This guy builds an entire band out of robots, and goes on tour. The robots really do play their instruments. Each tour is a new story/theme, and the whole thing rocks the fuck out. This combo CD/DVD is a full live show, both listenable and watchable, and it's just fucking amazing. You really have to see this to believe it, and thanks to the miracle of DVD technology, now you can! The songs rock like hell on a biscuit, too. Incredible. No fan of music or robots should be without this. My wife is wearing panties that say "This ass was CAPTURED BY ROBOTS!" and their fucking hot. Buy or die, puny human!

-*Throwmonkey*
Selfreleased

The Checkers *Running with Scissors*

First track sounds like X mixed with Blondie. Can't go wrong there. The next song has a

Epoxies feel. I likey. The album keeps going with a very up tempo solid pop energetic happy mood. Recorded in guitar player G.G. King's Radio Beat Studios analog with minimal digital tweaks and it makes the difference. And Lee from Madcap (super awesome basshead) is on it! Yeah! The super catchy "Pick a Prize" and rhythmic rougher round the edges "Blue Eyes" give the album dexterity. The last track was inspired by Billy the late bass player of GuitarWolf. Spill a drop for a fallen rocker. The title track has disco beat and Berlin-esque ambient aurora. Did I say aurora? Next thing you know I'll be saying "balls of energy". Kick my ass when that happens. Then go get this album. -*Joey Balls*
Teenacide

The Dials *Flex Time*

I was lucky enough to catch this band at my local dive bar. The singer was wearing a short skirt & knee socks, and rocking the living fuck out of a vintage Hagstrom bass. Hello love! But for as easy as it would be to write off this band as "Oh look, cute girls in knee socks", they rock like hell live, and their album is every bit as good as it should be. The Dials are catchy without being played-out, sentimental without being trite, and fun without being vapid. Fucking great new-wave pop songs with enough bite to satisfy even a jaded, bitter fuck like myself. Color me impressed.

-*Throwmonkey*
Latest Flame Records

Drinkers Purgatory *Self titled*

These are some tight ass songs. They are definitely fans and influenced by the likes of D4, Killer Dreamer and Toys That Kill. There's even a story about these guys in here somewhere! Small Pool Records #0, and these dudes are the hero! This album conjures up fond memories of drunken Sunday mornings at the Escondido Palace of Fun. Walter Sobcheck makes a cameo appearance. I'm surprised the album even came out with the amount of good pot finding its way in to the lungs of these dudes, but it has! The end of the album has this awful beeping that segues into the last track containing satirical insight to the end of the album. Super fun, super stoned, super dudes. The Slack Mafia wins!

-Joey Balls

Small Pool records

E > K > U > K

Auto Exploder

This sound is popular right now, and it's not bad, but also not really my cup o'grog. The structure is familiar but they do it well. Nothing jaw dropping in my opinion, I'm not into it. If I were to see them live, and then again months later, I wouldn't remember them. I'd like to see them concentrate on their lyrics more cuz they're talented musicians, and more feeling rather than emulation of their influences.

-Ginger Vitus

Otik Records

Go It Alone

The Only Blood Between Us

The drummer of this band, Lucas McFadden (ex-Carry On, Reserve 34, Face Tomorrow) fell off a 500 foot cliff. Miraculously he lived, and even more miraculously, he's as good of a drummer as he ever was. Go It Alone play melodic hardcore with a sense of urgency that is faked by most bands, but comes across as very real on this full length. Musically, I would compare them most closely to Battery and Champion. This is a keeper. BTW, what's up with the boring, silvery one-tone photo-only layout that fellow Northwest hardcore bands Champion and

Blue Monday are also doing? Don't let it keep you from checking out the music contained therein. - Ben Edge

Rivalry Records

Himsa

Hail Horror

Oh shit, these guys are from Denmark. Go, Cookie Monster, Go. I like the lyrics on a few, but the music, not so much. The darkness is there, the Hail Satan growling and whiplash inducing head banging are well represented, and double kick madness is not exempt. But these guys want to party with Anton LeVey and Burzum while I'll stick with some Bob Marley and maybe some Stiff Little Fingers.

-Ginger Vitus

Prosthetic Records

Iron & Wine / Calexico

In The Reins

I really wanted to like this album. I don't know shit about Calexico but I adore Iron & Wine with something approaching the madness of one of those fever dreams where you are driving a mack truck through your ex-girlfriends house while talking to a coked-out hooker on the CB and getting a blowjob from a chimp named "Mr. Hambone". You know the kind of dream I'm talking about. But unfortunately the pairing with Calexico has fucked up whatever mystical quality Iron & Wine possessed that made me love them within the first two lines of the first song of theirs I ever heard. Buy a copy of "Our Endless Numbered Days" instead and revel in the warmth of Sam Beam's majestic voice. -

Throwmonkey

Overcoat Recordings / Touch and Go

Lightning Bolt

Hypermagic Mountain

I don't even have this album yet. I haven't even heard it. But you know what? It fucking rules. How do I know this? Have you heard "Wonderful Rainbow"? Then you understand. You just *know* that there is no way this new album from the Dynamic Duo isn't going

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to rock out with its cock out, and probably render your neighbors sterile. LB can do no wrong, do you hear me? Brian Chippendale could substitute orphan babies for his drumsticks at his next show and I wouldn't even blink when the blood bounced off the cymbals and got in my eyes. Brian Gibson must play bass with his enormous cock. No instrument on earth could make those sounds. All hail Lightning Bolt!

Throwmonkey
Load Records

Melee

Everyday Behavior

Mass-produced, radio friendly, music. I have never before heard such mediocre rock and roll. But the band is on Sub City Records so it is what I should have expected. This syrupy sweet music bothers me so much that I can't stand to listen to it. Who the hell are these people making records for, except possibly themselves? Does anyone actually listen to emo bands anymore, or have people still not wised up to the fact that there are more important things in the world than ex-girlfriends and self pity? This band and any dork that supports and perpetuates this kind of music needs an ass kicking while they are shopping for sweaters at the mall. —**Jason Rocks**

Sub City Records

Rabies

Kill

You

This came to me with no sleeve. Just a burned CD with a Xeroxed sticker on it. Curious...Hey, what's this? I like! 80's South Bay punk re-visited. The guy sorta sounds like Milo live. Good solos, good changes. Total skaters. They like DI, Descendents, Black Flag, Adolescents. 5 songs in 8 minutes and, yeah, somebody's an Agnew fan. Oh, and-did I hear a Simpsons theme pinch? Excellent. This could jump start many stagnating circles. I'd throw out some gas money to go watch them play. Hey, feel free to send me any radical free shit you may have. —**Ginger Vitus**

Racebannon

[*The Inevitable*] *Singles And Rarities 1997-2005*

This Indiana quartet has been touring and putting out records for almost 9 years, and I've managed to avoid having even heard of them. Lucky me! My winning streak unfortunately came to an end when I listened to this 2 CD set. Talentless, art damaged hipsters seem to make more records than any other category of human I know of. I would describe Racebannon's sound as abrasive pounding, bordering on total noise, with the whiny voice of a castrated male yelping over the cacophony in no discernable rhythmic pattern. I would guess that they are fans of the same Romulan, white belt early 90s San Diego scene that The Locust was birthed from. Listen up fuckwads — I know your kind real well. You think you are doing something profound with your music, and you think you are being smart in the process. You're doing neither. P.S. Your Black Sabbath cover sucks. —**Ben Edge**

Alone Records

Running on Fumes

The Beginning of the End

Just when you can't review another album, Running on Fumes falls on my lap. I put it on, and words like sweet and awesome come to mind. This is a big step up from their last album. The songwriting has been turned up a notch, the production is killer, and all around this album kicks ass! Highly recommended for long skate sessions, barbeques and late night beer adventures. And if you think it doesn't get any better, there's a piano on the 9th track! Billy Joel eat your heart out! Check out the sort of secret track for extra laughs. —**Ginger Vitus**

Fallen Angel Records

The Slackers

Peculiar

The Slackers are a great band and they have yet to put out a bad album, and Peculiar, their latest, is no exception. 13 tracks of the best ska around today. However, unfortunately only 6 of those songs are new, while the rest are different versions of previously

released material including all of the songs from their latest, very political, EP, International War Criminal. They must have felt that those songs were so important they needed to be included on another release, but this time around a little more up-tempo. All of the songs are still good though, and the new ones definitely make the record worth buying; including my favorite, the very soulful, rhythm and blues number, "What Went Wrong". Although the dichotomy of political songs placed together with love songs is a little strange, all of them are excellent in their own respect. So even if you already have the EP, pick up this cd also. You won't be disappointed. —**Jason Rocks**

Hellcat

Socci

1970

Right away, this shit is bizarre. Some drunken Quaalude popper at the beginning mumbles incoherently about the Uncensored Entertainment Empire and then some mumbo jumbo about "what yer about to experience is...something. A thumping, rave style back beat, horrible recording and screaming is at first, horribly annoying. But there's only one track, so I listen to it 4 times, and each time it grows on me a little more. Eventually, I passed it around the office. Everyone was horrified, so I love it! Different to say the least. If yer one who has to give it a few spins to be sure, try to get through this once. If you do, you'll probably appreciate the art in it. It's so wretched that it's awesome. If you crave something random and weird, this could be fer you. I don't know where you could find it. I couldn't read anything on the stapled Xerox copy that acts as the packaging and the copy I lifted is number 12 out of 27. —**Ginger Vitus**

Uncensored Entertainment Empire

The Swellers

Beginning of the End Again

Melodic hardcore venturing into very familiar territory with grips of harmonies and the NOFX beat that my band is guilty of

perpetuating too. These guys are young; few of the members are still in high school! The lyrics are definitely the best part of the record, especially in the first track. "Immunity" is a fast killer tune. The musician ship is uber tight. The production is tight. Super clean and flawless. A little two flawless if you ask me. Sounds like the Fat Wreck bands after 10 years of touring. But nonetheless, these guys are going places. Warped Tour eat your arse out. MTV here they come. Not being cynical here, or am I? Nah, I probably would have loved these guys when I was 16. And there is a lot of room for these guys to grow. Can't wait to hear what they have to say after a few years of experience. —**Joey Balls**

Search and Rescue Records

Swing Ding Amigos

Kings of Culo

Looking for something different? Something that thrashes, crashes and burns? Well, my friend, the Swing Ding Amigos maybe just what you need! This three piece from Tucson are, you guessed it-Mexican! The cover of this album should be enough to put you in stitches. But this album is no joke. Every turn is unpredictable. Every track displays fast and hectic assaults on the senses. Falsettos? Check. Switched up time signatures? Check. Instrument changes live? Affirmative action. And probably speak Spanish. Live this shit will fuck you up. I highly recommend burritos and this album. —**Joey Balls**

Recess Records

TEE-M

E a r t h i o t i c ...

Songs from a oneroom palace

What year is it? The first track says it all—"And I was gone. I tried everything but I could not come around". My sentiments, exactly. Track 4 is their feel good number "She lives in a car". Now I'm laughing and this is neither the time, nor the place. They sent this to the wrong person. —**Ginger Vitus**

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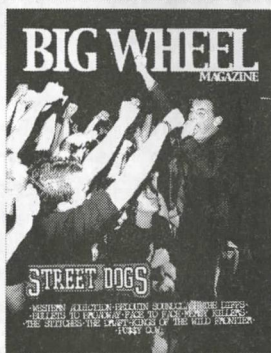
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Thinking Aloud

Remote Mind Control

First of all, I love this drummer. Having made the rounds, I find the rhythm section is where it's at. That being said, I really like the vocals – very important. Yer shit could be Beatles excellent, but if the vocals blow, I'm out. Strong guitar work, good structure. I think they'll be moving up in the ranks in the near future. Already getting love from Indie 103.1 is a good sign. The music has heart and the lyrics aren't trying, but succeed. Simplistic, not rudimentary. I like track 5 "Hit Me" and would like to hear tracks 6 "Mood Swings" and 7 "Stop" live. **-Ginger Vitus**

Low Rent

We Are The Fury

Infinite

Jest

They have a Strokes vibe that I can do without, but they change it up a bit briefly, even throw in a Queenesque guitar part that caught my attention. I wasn't really into their style. It changed in a lot of ways throughout, but stayed the same. I know this is one of those things that'll only make sense to me, but fuck it. They almost had me with track 5 "Soap Opera" but that was where it all ended and that was fine with me. **-Ginger Vitus**

New Armada

CockSParrer

What You See ... Is What You Get DVD

Here's a new DVD release from TKO Records featuring the one and only Cock SParrer. This DVD is real long ... we're talking 480 minutes (that's 8 hours), so I had to call in sick to work just to watch it. What You See ... Is What You Get was put together by Belgian filmmaker Pollet Yannick and the band, and took over two years to put together. There is footage covering these oi!/street punk legends from 1977 all the way to 2003. Just about any hardcore Cock SParrer fan would consider this DVD a must have.

What You See ... Is What You Get comes with two discs. The first disc starts off with a live hour and a half show at Macambe in 2003. The over all sound quality of the show is dog-gone amazing. Every single then goes down without a hitch.

The shit fuckin' rocks. The camera angles however just ain't cuttin' it. You only get two shots of the band during the performance: one behind the guitar player and one way back somewhere in a crowd of skins. The shot from the crowd gives you more of an inside look at the people walking by. Cock Sparrer still kills it though. After the show you get a lengthy interview with the guys. As the interview goes on, there are clips of the interviewer going around asking people where they came from to see the show. It's then you realize just how big this band really is. You seriously got kids from Norway, Germany, Austria, Scotland, Portugal ... pretty much you name it, they're there.

The rest of the DVD comes with all kinds of extras including an in depth documentary of the band from start to finish. There's footage of the band's tour with the Reducers SF through the good ol' U.S.A. in the year 2000. It also comes various footage of shows from 1994-1996, music videos, and all kinds of interviews. For all you rookie fans there is a complete discography that gives you the lyrics to any song with the click of a button. After you get all that history and those songs under your belt, you can then go to a feature that tells you where you can get your nifty new Cock SParrer merchandise. Fuckin-A man, the future is now!

Anyways, What You See ... Is What You Get is pretty much the best way to get to know Cock SParrer. You see a lot, and you get a lot. It's crazy how these guys are way older now and still rock out the classics you just can't forget. Check out this DVD, it's totally worth it if you're a fan or even just a little curious. Cheers!

The Psychobilly Sickness DVD episode I

It's my American privilege to explain to you exactly why I think the person behind a certain dvd about psychobilly didn't just get psychobilly sick but also very well just might have killed it. OR you could just go to any Hot Topic store and pick it up to find out for yourself, it's the DVD with the green-quiffed skull drawn on the

cover art, using what looks like a mentally retarded five-year-old's concept of shading (and art in general) while interpreting graffiti art, only with the primary media in actual use being colored pencils and puffy paints (if you really want to see a sample, www.BobArt.us). BUT... I hope after reading this review you will think twice about purchasing this DVD or letting a friend purchase it, because the kind of people that market this kind of product should not be encouraged with such things as public support or fiscal success.

Okay, so what it comes down to is, this DVD is kind of aspiring to be a software update for all today's robot kids, the kids programmed to be lazy non-thinking subscribers to a harmless corporate-approved version of counter-culture. This DVD is basically saying to these kids, "Bored of Punk? Waiting for The Next Thing? Try new Psychobilly! It's kind of like punk but with a fresh retro flavor!" I should get in the names of the featured artists somewhere so here it is, but please take my advice and don't get excited when you see the names of cool bands like Guana Batz, Asmodeus, and Demented Are Go! None of these bands have any songs or footage more than five seconds long featured on the DVD.

Anyway, most of the actual time focused on bands is spent kissing P. Paul Fenech and the Meteors' asses. In a totally lame way, trust me. And I love the Meteors. I enjoy watching any live footage of them, even poorly edited footage with low quality sound that isn't even synched up correctly (because literally speaking, this whole DVD is off synch). But back to my point, even everybody on this DVD who talks about the "first ever" psychobilly band mentions both the Meteors and the Cramps. Like the Sex Pistols and Ramones with punk, did it happen here first or over there, who started it all? Geoff Kresge rips off Matthew Lillard's SLC Punk monologue on the Ramones and Pistols followers almost word by word to describe how he feels about the debate between Cramps and Meteors followers.

So what is this "psychobilly" about? Is it about fresh ideas and original thought? Doesn't look like it. Anyway, my original point in this section of the rant was there is absolutely no live footage, sound clips, pictures, not even any further discussion of the Cramps, so why did they bring them up? As one of the competitors for title of first psychobilly band, don't they deserve a certain amount of brown-nosing? Apparently not. This DVD sounds like a businessman's analysis of psychobilly, to be used for incorporation of psychobilly into mainstream culture. It's just that the quality level of this whole product is crap.

Again, I could go on and on about how much more stuff sucks about this DVD, but I think this is already too long. Big Wheel ought to just give me a monthly psychobilly review column so I can gather all the "psycho" CDs and DVDs for the month into one spot and say everything that needs to be said on the matter (and related tangents, which I'm obviously a big fan of). The column could be called "The psychobilly is dead, long live the crapobilly." What do you say, Rafe, Joey? Can you guys afford to double my pay? Two times zero; let's see, carry the three... Oh yeah, here's the bottom line: This DVD sucks, don't buy it! Even if you just try to watch it for laughs, you will still be disappointed! If you insist on trying to watch it, I advise borrowing it from some poor sucker who already has it (like me) instead of buying it. But I much more highly advise you to avoid this DVD as you would your sister's feminine products (you know the ones I mean)! **-King Nick**

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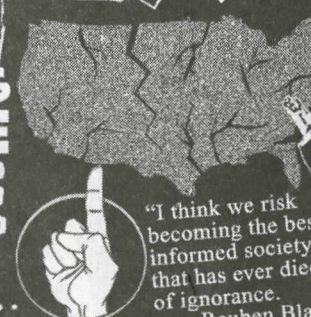
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90069

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90069
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The Ventura Theatre

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Ventura, CA 93001
805.653.0721

Webers

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Reseda, CA 91335
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90069
310.652.4202

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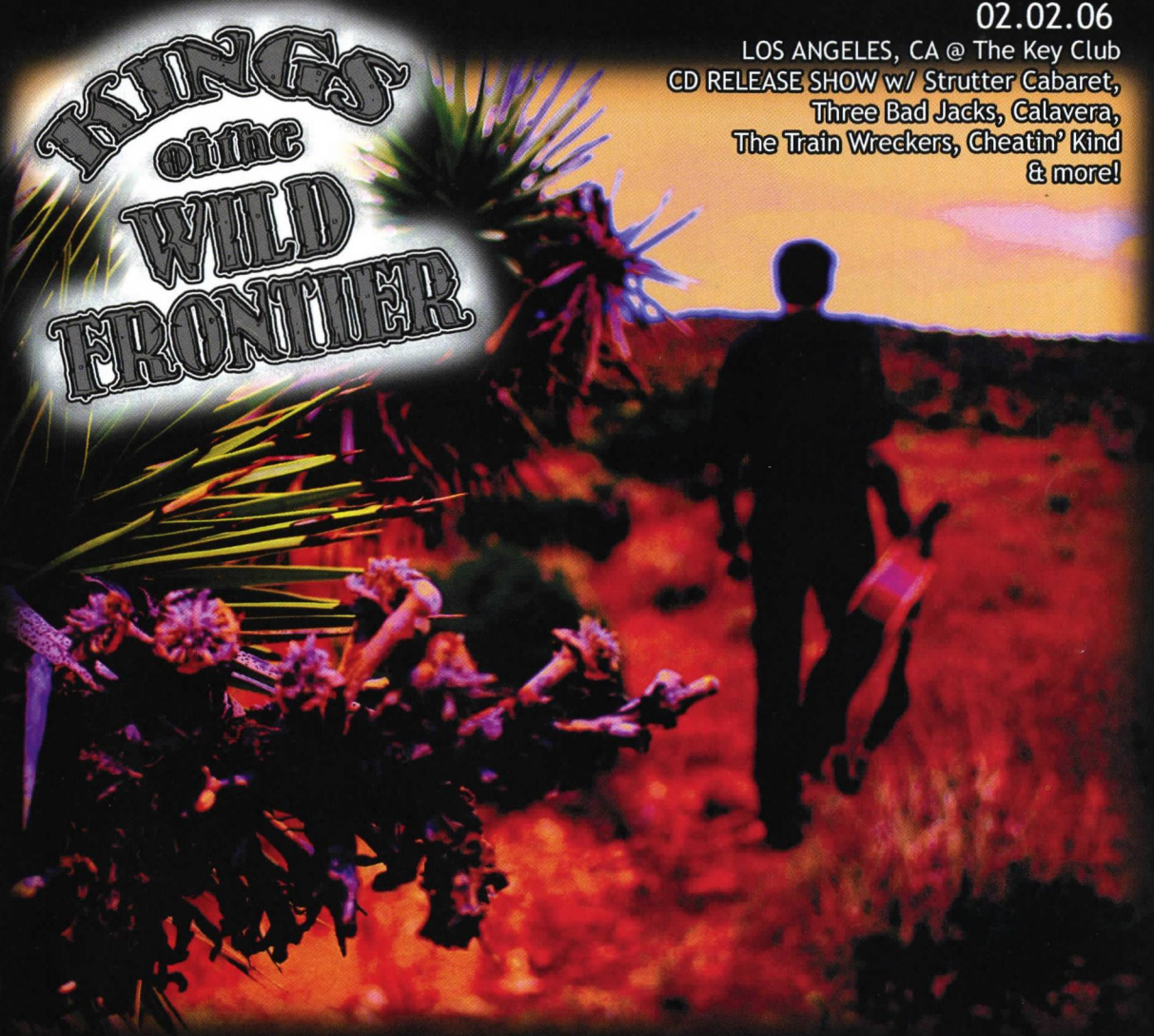
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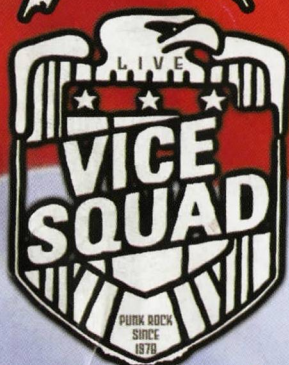
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