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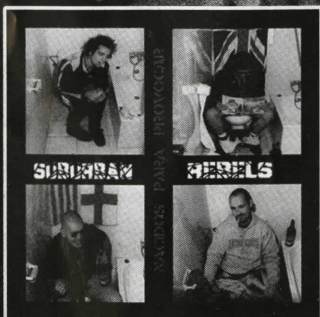
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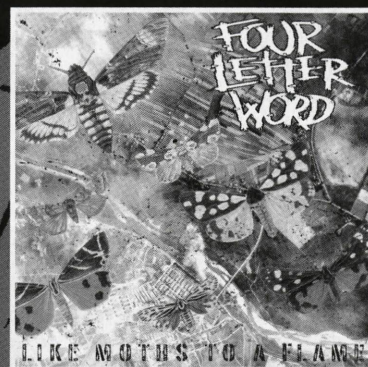
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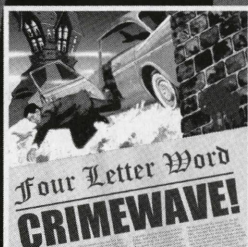
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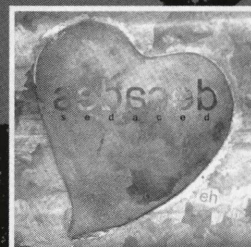
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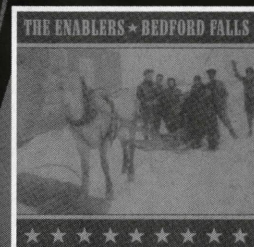
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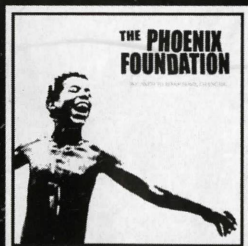
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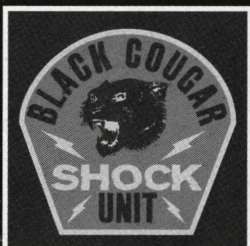
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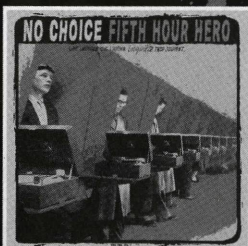
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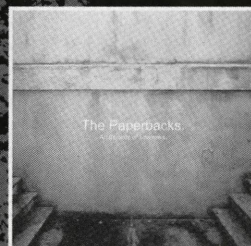
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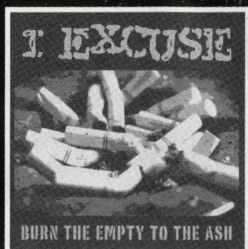
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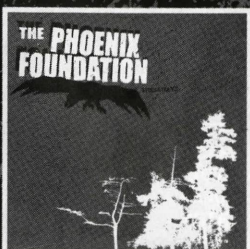
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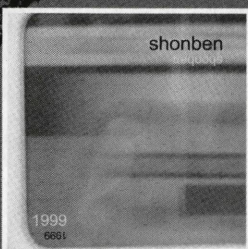
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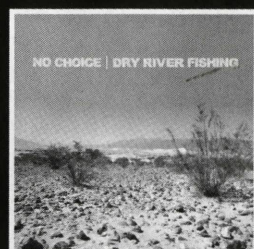
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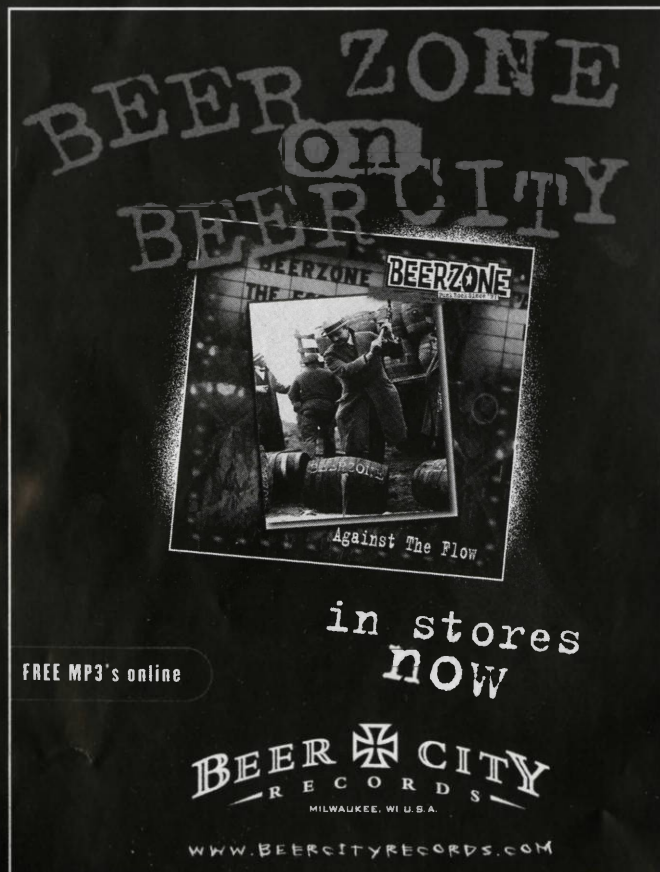
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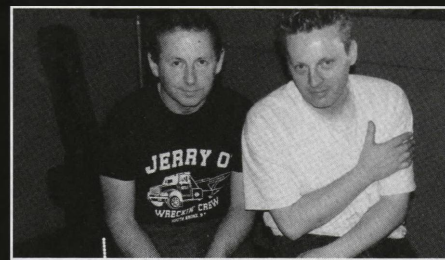
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RADIATORS



Another interview long overdue in the pages of this fanzine is one with Dublin's premiere Punk group The Radiators (From Space). In March 1977 The Radiators (or Rads to their fans!) unleashed the best 7 inches of plastic this island has ever produced in the form of "Television Screen", backed with the equally superb "Love Detective". On the A-Side the frustrated bunch of teens from the suburbs of Dublin screamed and wailed their way through a rough cut fusion of distorted guitars and lyrics about wanting to smash their Telecasters through the television screen, 'cos they "don't like what's goin' down". All this built around a single blues riff, but played with so much conviction the band sound unstoppable ... and unstoppable they were, recording their two (and only) full-length albums in just over six months. The Radiators are yet another story of great talent gone unnoticed in their time. Lack of good management and experience in the music industry, led to their demise in March '81, having relocated to England in search of a living through music. Sadly it was just never to be for the Radiators commercially speaking, but it's clear they laid the groundwork for what followed. Fast forward to summer 2004 and there's news of a reunion gig on the cards to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Joyce's Bloomsday in Dublin's Village venue. Founder members Philip Chevron, Steve Rapid and Pete Holidai are to be joined by Pinhead drummer Jonnie Bonnie and Pogues bassist Cait O'Riordan. I track 'em down to their place of rehearsal in the Temple Bar Music Centre on the Saturday prior to the gig. Pete Holidai and Jonnie Bonnie are present for the interview, whilst Cait departs about ten minutes into the conversation. Phil Chevron has yet to arrive in Dublin and adds his comments some weeks later.

(LIVE PHOTOS TAKEN AT THE VILLAGE, DUBLIN.)

RIOT. 77: So who's in the line up then? Introduce the Radiators in 2004!

PETE HOLIDAI: Jonnie Bonnie on drums, Cait O'Riordan on bass, I'm guitar, Phil Chevron is also guitar and lead vocals and Steve Rapid of course.

RIOT. 77: You're in the Ramones tribute act Pinhead, is that right Jonnie?

JONNIE BONNIE: Yeah ...

PETE: ... and what other bands did you play in?

JONNIE: Uhhhh!!! God ... Loads of stuff ... mainly old Punk and Rockabilly or Psychobilly stuff around Dublin ... but it dissolved when the film came out ...

CAIT O' RIORDAN: What film?

JONNIE: The Commitments.

CAIT: Oh, who was in that?

JONNIE: The bloke I was in the band with. But at the moment I'm doing the Ramones thing all over the country. It's going really good and I'm enjoying that. Great fun.

RIOT. 77: ... and what have you been doing Cait, since you left the Pogues?

CAIT: I got married and then just spent however many years since travelling and seeing the world basically. I moved back to Dublin city then last year I think it was. I got the word that the Radiators were reforming and they needed a bass player so I jumped at the chance to do that.

RIOT. 77: You're originally Scottish is that correct?

CAIT: Am I? Well my mother was Scottish, my Dad was Irish, I was born in Nigeria, so I don't really know what that makes me.

RIOT. 77: Pete ... the Ding Dong Denny O'Reilly record was the last thing you worked on I think?

PETE: It would have been the last album I produced yeah. A lot of people think that's a comedy record, but musically it's quite serious, it's not a comedy record at all. You've got Kila playing on there.

RIOT. 77: Right, yeah they were the backing band?

PETE: Yeah. They gave it that real authentic sound we were after. Actually we were using "Rum, Sodomy And The Lash" as the reference for it.

CAIT: Oh, god ...

PETE: But it's a good record, the songs are really good. There's parody's in them, but they still stand as good songs.

RIOT. 77: Does he write the songs?

PETE: Paul does, yeah.

RIOT. 77: You're not playing music at all, apart from this, are you?

PETE: No. I'm just teaching at the Ballyfermot College Of Further Education and working on different projects with other bands. Years ago when I would do a recording session with a band, I'd have to travel to wherever it was the band was doing the recording, but because of digital technology now, they can just go ahead and record everything and then send me a copy of the tracks that I just put in my computer and do the mix sitting at home.

RIOT. 77: Phil, what about yourself?

PHIL CHEVRON: I take whatever theatre and music jobs are interesting and pay acceptably well. Recently I wrote and arranged the music for Kathy Burke's production of Brendan Behan's, "The Quare Fellow" at the Tricycle Theatre in London and also for Púca Puppets, "Songs In Her Suitcase" at the Project in Dublin. I have a band with Terry Woods and Ronnie Drew - The Hellfire Club - and of course, I'm still with the Pogues and the Radiators. I'm working on songs for all these projects and for a solo album I'm recording in Texas next year - my "American" album. At the moment, I'm busy supervising the re-release of nine studio albums - two by the Radiators and seven by the Pogues and have just finished remastering the soundtrack album for Alex Cox's "Straight To Hell". From 1996 to 2001 I worked almost exclusively on writing a stage musical but it has not yet had a production and it's not quite finished. All projects take as long as they take. Some take longer than others. I am based in Nottingham, but work everywhere.

RIOT. 77: There've been a couple of other Radiators reunions down the years.

PETE: There was only the one actually. The A.I.D.S. benefit, which was in '85 and we only had two days rehearsal for that (laughs).

RIOT. 77: What about the one last December ... didn't you play at some Joe Strummer tribute?

PETE: Yeah. The gig was on a Thursday and we rang the guy up on a Tuesday and said, "Listen we're all in town, any unance we could come down and play a couple of songs?" We had a little rehearsal in Cait's place I think, didn't we?

CAIT: Yeah.

PETE: ... and then went down and did a couple of numbers. It was from that, because it felt really good, that this came about.

RIOT. 77: What songs did you do?

PETE: We did "Ring Of Fire" and "Television Screen".

RIOT. 77: Oh right, you didn't play Clash songs?

PETE: No, well "Ring Of Fire" was a reference to Joe Strummer's collaboration with Johnny Cash.

RIOT. 77: So what happened to the other members of the original line up or were they approached about this?

PETE: Jimmy just wasn't available. We sort of lost touch with Mark, but I don't think he would have been into doing it.

RIOT. 77: What's the Plan 9 thing in brackets after the bands' name all about?

PETE: That's just a throwback to the original name of the band, which was the Radiators From Space, but the "From Space" bit was always sort of hidden from the name, so this time with Plan 9 it's kind of the same thing and

another reference to the whole B-Movie stuff, because the original ideal of Punk was the Do It Yourself attitude, you know? Plan 9 comes from the terrible Ed Wood film "Plan 9 From Outer Space" and having that in the name today separates it from the original Radiators From Space, because obviously we've got different members in the group.

RIOT. 77: So you don't get confused as a cabaret act? (laughs)

PETE: Right, yeah.

RIOT. 77: Are you doing new stuff?

PETE: Yeah ... we're doing new cover versions (laughs). It's not just, "Let's get together and do a couple of gigs", it's, "Let's get together and do a couple of gigs and see where it goes from there".

Hopefully the plan is to start writing and recording stuff if it goes well and release it to generate

some income.

RIOT. 77: Ace Records are reissuing the two Radiators albums ("TV Tube Heart" and "Ghostown") I heard the other day.

PETE: That's right yeah. It's gonna be in like a cardboard sleeve type thing.

RIOT. 77: That's your man who runs Chiswick, yeah?

PETE: It is. Ace Records is the main company now, they own Chiswick Records and they also license stuff from a lot of other labels, which was something they got into in the mid-eighties.

RIOT. 77: That guy who ran Chiswick, he was Irish wasn't he? London Irish?

PETE: There was three of them. Ted Carroll, who managed Thin Lizzy at one stage, Roger Armstrong and a fella called Trevor Churchill. They started out with this stall in Soho Market and then moved to the shop in Camden and basically just wheeled and dealt in records before getting the notion of maybe bringing out their own records.

RIOT. 77: Have any of you read that book, "It Makes You Want To Spit" about the old days of Punk in the north?

JONNIE: Nah, I've heard about it though.

PETE: I haven't read it.

RIOT. 77: The Radiators get a bit of a pasting in it by someone and I can't remember exactly who it was, but it was some band who was playing a gig with you and they were saying they became really disillusioned with the group after they seen you changing out of your bellbottoms backstage and into straight leg trousers just for the gig ... any truth in that?

PETE: I've never worn bellbottoms in my life.

RIOT. 77: Yeah right (laughs).

PETE: Seriously.

RIOT. 77: So what were you doing exactly then prior to Greta Garbage And The Trashcans?

PETE: Uhhhh!!! ... I was at school (laughs). Same as everybody once I left school really - you want to work so you can buy yourself your first guitar.

RIOT. 77: What sort of music was Greta Garbage And The Trashcans?

PETE: Well, I think me and Steve Rapid were always into the American bands like the MC5, Iggy and the Stooges, early Aerosmith stuff even.

RIOT. 77: Yeah, their early stuff is excellent.

PETE: The New York Dolls as well we were big into ... and then some other Glam stuff like Bowie, T.Rex and that.

RIOT. 77: Phil answered your ad in the newspaper Pete looking for like-minded musicians ... was that the start of it all as far as the Rads were concerned?

PETE: Yeah ... well it was Steve Rapid who placed the ad actually I think. I just remember hearing this little squeaky voice down the phone, "I seen your ad in the paper" and it was Phil ... He came along anyway and was this weird looking kid I thought (laughs). He joined the band and Billy Morley left, so Phil knew Mark Megaray and Jimmy Crashe and they came in literally within a few weeks. We had five people then that just seemed to really work well together.

RIOT. 77: What part of Dublin was all this happening in?

PETE: Portmarnock.

RIOT. 77: That's where you were from?

PETE: No, I used to live in Tallaght. I'm not from Tallaght, but when my family came back here we bought a house in Tallaght and lived there for a few years. So every Sunday, I used to get up and get a bus into town and then a bus out to Portmarnock where we'd literally rehearse in a garage.

RIOT. 77: Your first gig as the Radiators was supporting Eddie And The Hot Rods.

PETE: Yeah, I think it was ... in U.C.D.

RIOT. 77: What was the reaction like?

PHIL: I think it's fair to say that most people - apart from a hardcore of fans and a quiet minority who genuinely believed something new and exciting was happening - were baffled and bemused by us, though that rarely bothered us.

RIOT. 77: How'd you end up clinching a gig like that as your first gig???

PETE: I think Phil rang whoever the promoter was at the time and I can remember his words actually - he said, "We're the only band who can play support" and the promoter obviously agreed with him.

RIOT. 77: Were you at a lot of these gigs Jonnie?

JONNIE: I wasn't at that one, no. I was in Moran's Hotel and that ...

PETE: There weren't a lot of gigs. We only done something like seventeen gigs before we went to England. We did a gig in Galway, Sligo and Cork before we went to England I think and then we came back and toured the entire country. Most were in

Dublin, but we did the odd college gig and that.

RIOT. 77: It's difficult to imagine what the reception would have been to a band like the Rads playing gigs outside of Dublin at the time ... even now there's still parts of the country where I'm sure you'd be chased out of if you plugged in an electric guitar and started playing Punk music ...

PETE: That's right ... you see you have to put it into a timeframe and if you go back to 1977, Ireland was a completely different country to what it is now. Certainly on the west coast of Ireland there'd be lots of covers bands and Show Bands and all this sort of thing, rather than having bands coming around and touring, so when it finally happened they just didn't know what it was. They'd just sit there and we'd play and do our thing and they'd go, "What the fuck was that?" (laughs). There was literally no reaction; they had no comprehension of what this stuff was. I remember after one particular gig these young guys came up to us and said, "That was incredible, we've never seen anything like that before!!" and we were like, "Well, why didn't you react?" and they said, "Well, what are we supposed to do to that sort of thing???" I said, "I think you're supposed to hop up and down like a pogo stick and spit at the band, with a dog chain around your neck that you attach to your boyfriend or girlfriend" (laughs). "Wow!! That sounds great!!" (laughs). So I always wonder what happened to the next band that came through that town (laughs). The Punk thing was a fun thing you know and that's what I always remember from it and the great thing about Punk, as with all youth culture movements, was that young people were accepted into that community regardless of whether they were tall, short, fat, skinny, white or black, do you know what I mean? If you're a Punk you're a Punk, if you're not a Punk you're not a Punk and that's the way it was, which was always a good thing.

PHIL: Horslips persuaded us that playing around the country was good fun and, whenever we could actually get work, we found that by and large, we thought so too. We had a big following in Cork and Carlow. At Kiltullen, Co. Kildare, the local nuns brought tea and sandwiches to the stage so we could have a break.

RIOT. 77: When was your first recording ... around '76 or so?

PETE: I think so, yeah. That was actually financed by Jackie Haden and Eamon Carr. They picked up on what we were trying to do and arranged studio time. We recorded it in Trend Studios off Baggot Street.

RIOT. 77: That's still going, isn't it?

PETE: I think it is, yeah. It was in a little alleyway, this sixteen-track studio. I remember we blew a fuse and we were so delighted with that (laughs). Back then you'd be working with engineers who just didn't have a clue what it was or what to do with it or anything like that. That's why it ended up that we had to bring someone over from England to do the album, because we needed someone who was in tune with Punk music basically. No bands were doing anything like that at all.

RIOT. 77: Were you a fan of the Horslips when Eamon Carr came along?

PHIL: Horslips were the first truly independent band - they put out their own records on their own label - and in picture sleeves too, which was unheard of at the time. Steve Rapid's artwork landed us our Chiswick deal but Eamon made the connection. He knew Ted Carroll and Roger Armstrong from way back.

PETE: I didn't know much about them to be honest. I'd only come back to Ireland not long before that ... I mean, I was born here, but brought up in London and my family moved back in the early seventies. I stayed here for about six months and thought, "No way, I'm going back to London" (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Did you hate it, yeah?

PETE: Yeah, but it was during those six months that I met Steve Rapid and we kept in touch through writing and that and when I came back again a few years later we started up a band. We had an ad that said, "Bass player wanted for Punk group" and all these people would show up who could play bass but didn't have any idea what Punk was ... Jazz guys and Blues musicians ...

RIOT. 77: Why did you start referring to yourselves as a Punk band because obviously this would have been a year or two before the word Punk was a recognised term? There's always been a Rory Gallagher side to the band as much as the harder edged Punk stuff you did ...

PHIL: What we discovered - somewhat to our dismay was that we were artists, not Rock Star types. Artists are mavericks and hate being categorised. Actually, they may even try to categorise themselves, but if they do, they will instantly, and instinctively, rebel. An artist will always know that Rory was brilliant and The Vibrators were rubbish. In saying that, I only really became familiar with Rory's work after the lovely man's death. I knew a couple of Taste singles but Rory would

not have been an "influence" in the way Horslips or Bowie were.

PETE: Well you see the Punk thing to us ... I can genuinely say that the concept of Punk and the Radiators was in place long before 1975/1976 and I can remember when I did come back here in 1972 Steve Rapid was playing in a band called Bent Fairy And The Punks and they were supporting this horrendous rock group called Cromwell I think (laughs). The Punk thing was really a reference to stuff like Marlon Brando in films like "The Wild One" ... you know, referring to New York punk kids, type of thing and that was our initial exposure to it.

Thankfully we never bought into the Malcolm McClaren/Kings Road trappings of Punk ... well we did a little bit in some of the early Chiswick photographs, which we've always regretted. We were running in parallel with it ... in London you had bands like the Clash and the Pistols happening in '76. In Dublin you had us and to a degree the Boomtown Rats, but we would have been more in there, in the thick of it. But in all the cities all over the world it was happening anyway and it was all unknown to each other. It was just that the London scene got exposure in Dublin and we sort of realised, "Well yeah, this is what we're trying to do as well". We were happy to be associated with Punk, but it was the whole Do It Yourself attitude of it that we were into, where we literally did organise everything ourselves, right down to putting our own posters up.

RIOT. 77: Right 'cos your first single pre-dated the Clash and the Pistols.

PHIL: I think "Television Screen" is a unique record. It's a great blast of snot, built up over the years and expelled from the nose in one 1 minute 49 second blast. There was nothing like it before and it's never been bettered, though I love the cover version by Japanese "teengenerate" punk band The Registrators, which is almost identical. I loved the Clash - we all did - and it was a pleasure and a privilege to work so closely with Joe Strummer in later years. I miss him.

PETE: Yeah it was certainly one of the first ten significant Punk singles and I think one of the best. There was a review in Rolling Stone where it was compiling the top Punk singles and it had the Pistols, the Damned, the Clash, the Jam and our single "Television Screen". He thought ours was the better one because it's got all these weird frequencies and really gets inside your head.

RIOT. 77: I always had a suspicion that it was by complete chance that the single ended up sounding that way ...

PETE: Yeah, it was just that the engineer was rubbish (laughs). Because it was our first time recording a single, we didn't have the experience in a studio and we just wanted to sound like us. We'd just turn it up and it was more or less live anyway ... I think the guitar solo was overdubbed and the vocals, but the rest of it all was just a live take. That's what you do when you're that age - you just want to plug in and play. We'd have no idea about things like track-laying - that was completely alien to us. It was the same with "TV Tube Heart"; that was recorded in three days and mixed in a couple of days as well. That was recorded in a place called Lombard Studios; I don't know what it's called now. I think Daniel O'Donnell recorded his album there (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Do you still have a copy of all the old singles?

PETE: I have about four copies of each. I might have grandchildren some day, so I better keep copies of them.

JONNIE: I bought a copy of "Enemies" two months ago at a record fair in Dun Laoghaire for 10 Euro ...

PETE: As long as it's worth more than the Boomtown Rats I don't give a shit (laughs). There's go for a fiver, ours go for a tenner.

RIOT. 77: Do you still see a lot of them about?

PETE: The singles?

RIOT. 77: Yeah.

PETE: You do, yeah. They're very sought after still. Even in London you'll pay a tenner for them. Funny, in Japan you pay fifty for them.

RIOT. 77: Did they get distributed over there?

PETE: "TV Tube Heart" was released in Japan.

"Ghostown" was as well. "TV Tube Heart" was issued on CD in Japan too and that's the only place it has been.

RIOT. 77: You never played there, did you?

PETE: No, we never went over there. But we have the website up now (www.theradiators.tv) and I got an email from Japan saying, "You guys are Punk ... we wanna come see you and speak to Mr. Philip" (laughs) ... you should have seen it.

JONNIE: Remember the ad in Hot Press ... I think it was a full page ad ...

PETE: Oh yeah ... there was an instance with Mulligan Records, who brought out "Ghostown" and they took out this ad in Hot Press that said, "We'd like to thank all 350 people who bought this album". But what they didn't say was that when they brought the album out it was



delayed for two months because they didn't have any sleeves, but Advance Record Store which used to be opposite the Gaiety had already sold about a thousand copies which they'd gotten in on import from London. By the time Mulligan Records got it out in Ireland, who was gonna buy it if they had it already? That was very misleading.

RIOT. 77: It's often stated Phil, that you were the first Punk in Dublin or introduced Punk to Dublin ... any truth in that?

PHIL: Dublin has been producing Punks for centuries. I'd never dream of claiming to be the first.

JONNIE: I didn't know Phil back then ... when Punk started out in Dublin, everybody hung around Grafton Street and especially Advance Records and one of the first gigs was in St. Anthony's Hall, which I had a hand in making happen and played on the bill. The Virgin Prunes played as well and U2 were there and wanted to play, but we wouldn't let them on (laughs). They'd been on the Dave Fanning show that week I think ... but everyone just hung around and then Moran's started doing gigs and you had the Vipers and all that.

PETE: Yeah I remember in Moran's you'd have drug dealing on the ground floor and then the gigs downstairs. The police used to raid it all the time. Smiley Bolger was there and that was the first time I saw Smiley. That was actually the first real Punk venue I think ... a lot of people say it was the Baggot Inn, but it was Moran's. In the early eighties then we had the Magnet.

JONNIE: The Outcasts used to play there and every time they'd come down they'd never get to play a full set because it would just be chaos. The Blades played there too ... that was actually the part of town they were from I think.

RIOT. 77: Did you say Moran's was Smiley Bolger's place?

PETE: He didn't own it, but he used to run it.

RIOT. 77: I thought he hated Punk.

PETE: Smiley is a businessman and I think that's the bottom line. If ever there's a new thing happening he'll always try and get in on it. There were some great gigs there though.

JONNIE: I remember The Drug Addix played there, who featured Kirsty McColl.

PETE: They were actually a good band. The Punk scene in Dublin then would have been different to London. That era had a longer lasting effect in my view because of all the bands that came through and you had pirate radio, which still doesn't get the credit it deserves for tuning into what we were doing.

RIOT. 77: Yeah, Fanning even came from that.

PETE: Oh yeah. RTE were losing all their listeners because they just didn't have what the young people wanted because they were all listening to pirate radio. One of the great radio stations was Radio Dublin who used to broadcast from this house in Inchicore. And I think Fanning had a show on that.

JONNIE: There was another one in that building on Stephen's Green, you know Shanahan's Restaurant on the Green? Up the top of that Georgian House in an auld dingy room with creaky floorboards and Fanning would be sitting there broadcasting.

RIOT. 77: The Undertones first gig outside of Derry

was supporting the Radiators in the Baggot, wasn't it?

PETE: Yeah, that was in '77 sometime I think. This guy who new Phil mentioned about a band in Derry who were something similar to the Outcasts story – they couldn't finish a gig without getting the plug pulled on them or something like that. We brought them down and it was a great experience. They arrived while we were on stage in the Baggot Inn sound checking. We just saw these kids walking in with their guitars in cardboard boxes with a bit of string tied around the top of them, wearing Doc Martins and Parka jackets; real scruffy bastards. They just stood there in awe, watching us sound check with their jaws on the ground. Then they unwrapped their cardboard boxes, took out these cheap guitars and Fergal just goes "1-2-3-4" and Bam!! straight into it and within a second our jaws were on the ground (laughs). When something like that happens you know you've got to be shit hot that night otherwise you're going to have the floor wiped with you. The Undertones were great though and they always brought out the best in us.

RIOT. 77: What do you make of the current incarnation of the group?

JONNIE: I haven't seen them.

PETE: Yeah I saw them at some tribute gig I think it was and I thought they were good. What I like is that the singer does his own thing and doesn't try to mimic Fergal Sharkey. There's still loads of energy there. What was the other band they were in after that?

RIOT. 77: That Petrol Emotion.

PETE: That's it, yeah I quite liked them too.

RIOT. 77: This was around the time when the Radiators started taking off, you were getting media interest and press write ups in Sounds giving "Television Screen" single of the week and that ...

PETE: One of the advantages of signing to Chiswick was that they were well in with the press.

They had a reasonably good reputation and you knew when they brought a record out that there would be some substance there. I remember when that Sounds review came out and it got single of the week, I think it was in April of '77 and we didn't go over to London 'till September, by which time we had the album recorded, but yeah I think Sounds were the first to give the group coverage. Record Mirror's review was "Crash, bang, thud, wallop, - more unforgettable Punk" and that's still my favourite review. The N.M.E.'s review was good as well.

RIOT. 77: Was there a lot of negative press, were there a lot of people who still didn't get what you were doing?

PHIL: Well, you just do the work and hope it

gets across to people. In a sense other peoples' opinions of you are none of your business. The people who were slagging off our stuff in 1977-1979 were the same people matter-of-factly calling them "classics" when they were reissued. Who cares?

JONNIE: Those papers were great in those days.

You'd get them over here in selected shops.

PETE: There were four really good ones – Record Mirror, Melody Maker, Sounds and N.M.E. It's just a shame what they turned into.

JONNIE: Yeah, you look at N.M.E. now and it's more like Smash Hits.

PETE: Yeah, it is. Look at Hot Press, for god's sake. There's no way they would have put a band like the Corrs on the cover of Hot Press in 1977.

JONNIE: I seen the N.M.E. where The Rads were on the cover before for 25 pounds sterling.

RIOT. 77: Do you have all them?

JONNIE: I've got about ten N.M.E.'s from those days with the Clash on the cover, Pistols on the cover. I got them in Oxfam years ago. I bought them when they came out first but of course I didn't keep them. Then I saw them in Oxfam for fifty pence each. But they're amazing, classic covers and I'm thinking of framing them as well, but I don't want to take them apart.

They've got ads in them for stuff like The Police playing in the Hope And Anchor and all those other bands that went on to be huge, but were still relatively unknown at the time.

RIOT. 77: Were you in London for much of that Pete?

PETE: I think when we went over in September of '77 a lot of the big players had moved on from the small venues and were playing in bigger places and also a lot of them were concentrating on America at that point.

The next phase of groups began to come through like Sham 69 and Eater, but The Police were never convincing. I felt they tried to latch on to Punk, but it was pretty obvious that they weren't and I would never consider them a Punk band at all. The record companies of course started to refer to it as New Wave then as a marketing concept, so by the time we made it to London it was pretty much dead in the water and all you had left was the plastic Punks – people who just got into it because it was the trendy thing to do.

RIOT. 77: Were you into Sham 69?

JONNIE: I was into Sham 69, yeah.

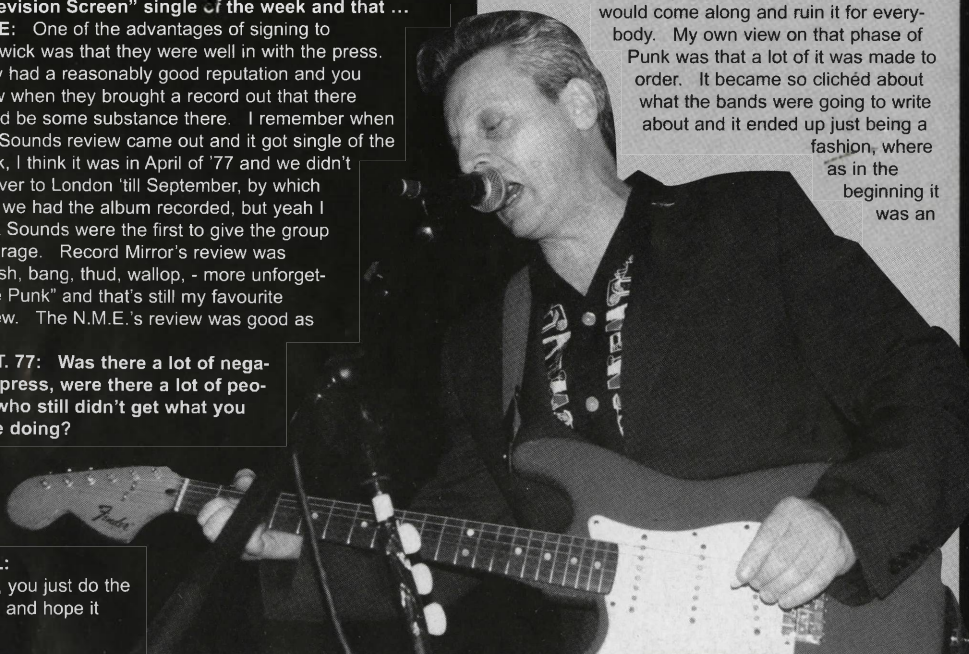
PETE: Not really, no. I think Sham 69 were in it over their heads anyway. They had this sort of political edge, bordering on racism.

RIOT. 77: The band???? No they didn't.

PETE: No, the band didn't, but the problem they had was that the (racist) skinheads attached themselves to it. I was at a Sham 69 gig in The Roxy where there was Punks watching it and then suddenly from around the back came fifty skinheads and you could see what was going to happen. They just wanted to push everybody else out of the way and the Sham just didn't have any control over it. Jimmy Pursey just did not have the authority to say, "Get the fuck off my stage!!", you know what I mean? That was their problem; they were out of their depth.

RIOT. 77: You don't think they stood up to it?

PETE: No they didn't. They didn't control it. The skinheads controlled them as opposed to them controlling their audience and they just seemed to be unable to handle it or deal with it. This was an occurrence at every bloody gig they did – the skinheads would come along and ruin it for everybody. My own view on that phase of Punk was that a lot of it was made to order. It became so clichéd about what the bands were going to write about and it ended up just being a fashion, where as in the beginning it was an





attitude. I don't think any of us think any differently now than we did then when it comes to making music or doing things in general. We still have that same attitude. Once it became a trendy, fashionable thing all the decent bands distanced themselves from it. The trouble with bands like Sham 69 was that they got caught up in the all the trappings of it and started writing songs about being a Punk just for the sake of it.

RIOT. 77: How did Phil Lynott happen across the band?

PETE: That was during the Bad Reputation tour in 1977. Thin Lizzy weren't stupid and their management weren't stupid and because the whole Punk thing was happening and there was this huge young audience it made sense for Thin Lizzy to offer us a support slot as a way of giving this new movement the nod of approval and hopefully get some younger fans to come out.

JONNIE: How did you go down?

PETE: Good question (laughs). It varied. The closer to London we were, the better we went down. The further away we were, they just didn't want to know.

There was actually a conflict between the Heavy Metal fans and the Punks. Glasgow was scary; I can remember that. We got booed on to the stage, never mind booed off. The Glasgow gig was the second gig of the tour and we were used to having an audience that loved us, but this crowd certainly didn't, they didn't want to know us. It was a learning experience and a big eye opener. We froze on the night, because we'd never experienced something like this before.

We played the entire set, but we held back a bit, you know? We were whinging to the promoter after the gig, "We want off this tour!", you know? (laughs). He said, "Look, just hang in there and you'll be grand". We did a lot of soul searching over the next few days and decided if that ever happened again we'd just give back as good as we got, you know? It did

happen again then in Manchester; we walked on and got this terrible negative reaction, but because we'd been through it before we just stood up and shouted, "Fuck You!!! 1-2-3-4" and gave it twice as much (laughs). Within our half hour set we'd turned the audience around, so it worked, you know? I mean they weren't raving fanatics or anything, but they actually respected us. We needed that Glasgow one to make us realise that we can't just go on and go through the motions; you have to give it everything.

RIOT. 77: Is the Glasgow gig the worst gig you remember playing?

PETE: It wasn't the worst gig ...

RIOT. 77: ...

or the hardest gig even?

PETE: Yeah, it was a difficult gig. We needed to experience what we hadn't experienced before and in the long run we benefited from it, because we never let it happen again. If we walked on to a negative crowd, we were well able to handle it. Thin Lizzy actually paid us to go on the tour as well, which wasn't commonplace, as quite often you'd have to pay to get on, which was something we never believed in. There was this big band, and I won't mention their name, but suffice to say they're still going, who offered us a British tour and a European tour. They invited us to do it and then asked for ten grand. We told them to fuck off. In fact looking back now, I think if we had the ten grand we probably should have done it because it would have been a good tour to be on.

Another reason we did the Thin Lizzy tour was that we'd get to meet Tony Visconti, who I think had just finished producing "Live And Dangerous" which is a great album and one of the things we asked was if he could be brought along to one of the gigs and I think it was the Hammersmith Odeon gig that we met him at and it was from that meeting that we ended up working with him for "Ghostown".

RIOT. 77: One thing the Radiators became known for unfortunately was the stabbing incident and subsequent death of one of your fans at a Rads gig ... can you give me some of your memories of that particular gig?

PETE: That was a gig we organised ourselves. Also on the bill were the Vipers and Revolver. The main problem with it was that the media viewed it as an opportunity to associate getting stabbed with being at a Punk gig as opposed to going out anywhere in Ireland on a Saturday night and the chances are you might get stabbed. We had to defend our position and no one would touch us for six months after that, which was when we started thinking, "Fuck this! We don't need this, you know?" The other downside to it, obviously apart from Patrick Coultrey dying, was we went in to record "TV Tube Heart" early. Because no one would touch us or give us a gig, the record label thought in order to keep us active they would bring the recording date forward and we went in a bit sooner than we should have and probably before we were ready. With "TV Tube Heart" there was a period where I couldn't even bare to listen to it, but a few years ago I came around again and rediscovered it and saw it for what it was, which was a bunch of young kids having a great time with some really good songs. It captures the band as they were at the time.

RIOT. 77: Was that indicative of the way punk was heading in Dublin at the time or do you view it as a one off incident?

PHIL: It could have- and did - happen at any gig or disco in the country at the weekend. The fact that it was a Punk festival drew lurid press headlines. The incident affected us personally but also made us more determined to continue. It made us take our project more seriously.

RIOT. 77: What's your favourite era of the Radiators, Jonnie?

PETE: The current one!!! (laughs)

JONNIE: The early days. I remember when they resurfaced a few years later in the gangster suits ... "Stranger Than Fiction" and all that ...

PETE: Jesus, yeah. That was a disaster, a big mistake. Talk about losing the ...

RIOT. 77: I think "Plura Belle" is one of your best songs.

PETE: Yeah that's alright. That rescued us a bit.

RIOT. 77: Was that part of the reason you moved to London then? Things just turned sour over here after the murder?

PETE: ... here was no real structure in Ireland at the time. Its only post U2 that it's become viable to actually stay in the country and most bands do it now for tax reasons more than anything else. It seemed like the logical step to take and we didn't necessarily want to do it, but we had no choice really. We were stuck in the middle and if it wasn't London it would have had to be New York or something, because it was quite difficult to launch a career from Dublin in 1977 when Ireland was still an outpost.

PHIL: Simply, there was work in London where there wasn't at home - ironically, the age-old emigration story. I think "Ghostown" would have been a different record if we'd stayed at home. For that reason alone, I'm glad we left. London created the cultural conditions and paradoxes for Irish people in the late 70s and early 80s, conditions that also made the Pogues possible.

RIOT. 77: Yeah that was something Phil later said about the Pogues; that you felt the idea never would have worked had they been an Irish band as opposed to a London Irish band. Do you think the same

applied to the Radiators?

PETE: I think so, yeah. Being in Ireland was like being in exile almost, you know? The reality is that Ireland is just a very small market place whatever way you look at it. If you're playing the same nightclub three times in a row, you kind of start to wonder if you're going anywhere. You don't want to be in a band to play some crappy night club, you want to play at the great venues. There was a limit to how far you could push it or how much you could achieve being based here.

RIOT. 77: Do you think Ireland is more ready for a band like the Radiators today than they were in the seventies?

PETE: Hmmm!! I dunno ...

RIOT. 77: Do either of you listen to much stuff around today?

JONNIE: I mainly listen to a lot of old Rockabilly, fifties stuff, Country ...

RIOT. 77: Yeah I've noticed there seems to be some sort of trendy revival thing going on there ... have you seen that night in The Dice Bar that they have?

JONNIE: Oh yeah that seems to be doing quite well ... every week there's more and more people at it and it's the kind of people who would normally listen to the stuff. Usually it's the same faces time and again turning up to the same gigs in the Rockabilly scene in Dublin, so I think it needs to happen where new people get into it.

PETE: It never went away I don't think and there's a lot of similarities there ... it's the same as Punk where it's gutsy, rootsy, rock n' roll music. I mean the Clash had elements of all those types of music in them.

RIOT. 77: You're missing my point though ... it would almost be like if the Globe had a Punk night or something and all these people start showing up who would normally never give a fuck about that sort of thing.

PETE: Oh right, yeah. I know what you mean.

RIOT. 77: Johnny Thunders got up to play with you at a gig in London, is that right?

PETE: Yeah that was at the launch of "TV Tube Heart". Two people turned up to it from the media. One was Nick Kent, who was a legendary journalist and probably the first journalist to do everything the band did in terms of excesses and stuff like that. He was a brilliant writer as well. But yeah, Nick Kent and Johnny Thunders turned up. Johnny Thunders got up and done "Psychol Reaction" and "Television Screen" with us and we have the photos to prove it. We're going to put them up on the website. We were looking for them 'cos a lot of people didn't believe us when we said Johnny Thunders got up and played with us.

RIOT. 77: How did he know how to play "Television Screen"?

PETE: It's very basic. You can learn it in about five minutes; it's just a blues riff. He did manage to blow my arse up actually (laughs). It was weird, playing away and I look up and there's a New York Doll beside me. He probably thought it was even weirder that there was a Radiator beside him (laughs).

JONNIE: Did you see Johnny Thunders when he played here in the New Inn?

PETE: I did ... god ... not a good experience ... it was terrible ...

JONNIE: He was pretty close to the end then ...

PETE: He was. It was really scary; he was walking around with puss coming out of his eyes. It made me glad that I never got into any serious drug abuse ... but having said that he still got on stage and played the songs to perfection and I don't know how he did it.

JONNIE: The New Inn; that was another Smiley Bolge venue ...

PETE: Yeah, it was a kip, but all the great venues were just battered old places that people took over and great things happened in them. To me that's a great venue; not like all these poncey places they have all over Dublin now.

JONNIE: Yeah, the New Inn was about three times the length of this room and probably the same width with black walls ...

PETE: ... an absolute shite P.A.

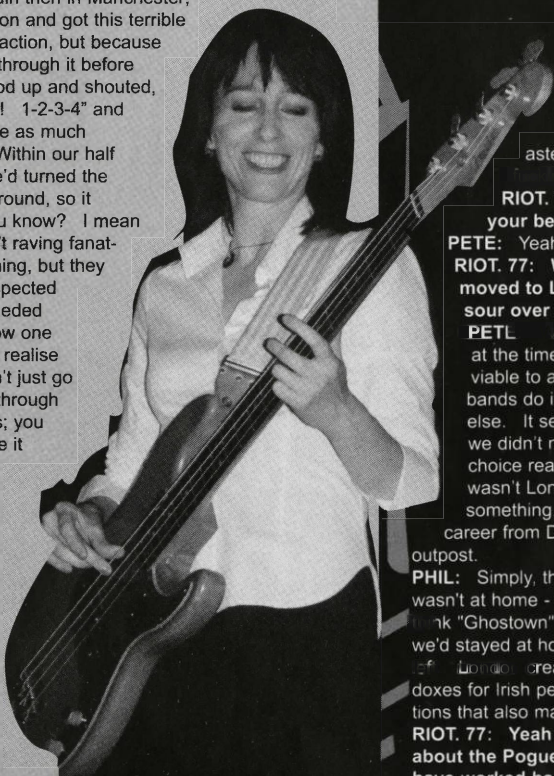
JONNIE: ... with a settee down the back. It was great.

RIOT. 77: What do you make of Dublin venues today?

PETE: I don't like Dublin ... I think it's good that there appears to be a lot more interesting live acts around, but just find it all a bit too poncey to be honest. We're doing the Village on Wednesday and I think they've finally got the formula right, apart from where the toilets are. It started off as the Mean Fiddler and then it was Mono and now the Village. The sound is much better than it used to be.

RIOT. 77: Do you either of you go out to gigs much?

JONNIE: Not as much. It's so expensive now that you have to choose. Like if you go to a gig one night, you can't afford to go to another one the following night and then with the price of drink on top of that



RIOT. 77: What was the last good gig you seen?

PETE: Iggy Pop wasn't it?

JONNIE: Yeah ... Marky Ramone ...

RIOT. 77: What did you make of that?

JONNIE: I didn't really like Marky Ramone as a person or at least the way he came across in the spoken part of the show, but I thought the gig they done afterwards was great. He was losing the head with the U.K. Subs guys (laughs). Marky's used to playing gigs with no break in between songs, just "1-2-3-4-Bang!!" for the whole gig. But the U.K. Subs guys would walk over to their amp to take a swig from a beer and Marky's shouting at them, going "C'mon!! C'mon!!" (laughs) ... that happened a few times.

RIOT. 77: Take us through some of the lyrical content of Radiators songs.

PETE: Well "TV Tube Heart" was mainly about the media's reaction to what we were doing at the time and various other things we would read and hear in the media, like on "Television Screen" and "Press Gang" and then "Enemies" was obviously a pun on the N.M.E. but we just left it hanging there so it could mean whatever you want, you could take it either way. Phil has written another verse for "Television Screen" and amended the lyrics for 2004, where he talks about the Iraq war and that and basically saying twenty-five years later and you still want to smash your Telecaster through the television screen. "Sunday World" was about the paper, but also just describing Sunday's in Dublin and I think it still does that quite accurately even today.

RIOT. 77: Boredom.

PETE: Boredom, yeah. Not having any interest in going to church and basically just lying around doing nothing all day.

RIOT. 77: What about "Prison Bars"?

PETE: Again that's about being influenced by television ... the prison bars are the 625 bars that make up the picture on the screen.

RIOT. 77: So did you write much stuff over in England or about the place, because even "Ghostown" was written before you left Ireland, is that right?

PETE: No. Some of it was. I'd say most of it was finalised and put into shape in England.

RIOT. 77: But it was about the contradictions you viewed in Irish society, wasn't it?

PETE: It sort of was, yeah. But we always felt it could be about any city in the world. The way it came across in the end would have been more Dublin specific, but the problem with that is trying to get other people to buy into it and the journalists in the U.K. didn't understand the lyrics and a lot of the Dublin terminology. If you're Irish but not living or working in Ireland you do tend to see things a lot clearer from the distance and that's how "Ghostown" was written.

PHIL: London gave us a fresh perspective on ourselves and on our background. In some ways, I suppose we also felt the need to forge an identity apart from the - by then - increasingly identikit Brit punk bands. Apart from Pete, who grew up in

London, we had little common experience with the London bands. That was good - it concentrated the mind. I've talked too much about "Ghostown" after all these years. It's without a doubt an extraordinarily ambitious and courageous record and I think it possibly grows in stature as it gets older. But rather than my waffling on about it yet again, I'd rather learn what - if any - resonance it still has to other people.

RIOT. 77: Did you notice many significant differences being based in London ... what were the advantages of being based there, other than it being the home of Chiswick?

PHIL: On a personal level, we were a bunch of teenagers unleashed for the first time ... what do you think?

RIOT. 77: What was working with Tony Visconti, who produced the album, like?

PETE: What he showed us how to do was take the ideas we had and transform them into recorded songs that have longevity.

RIOT. 77: You think the album still stands up well today?

PETE: Yeah and a lot of recordings that were done around that time don't. I don't mean this as a putdown, but I was in a shop the other day and they had the Boomtown Rats on and to me it sounded really dated, which is something you find with a lot of eighties records.

RIOT. 77: I think the Rats records still sound great.

PETE: I think 70's records and to a degree 60's ones, but particularly 70's, I like best. To me they sound timeless. This new generation of, not only kids, but the bands themselves, are all trying to sound like seventies bands and are listening to those records trying to replicate them. If you go down to a second hand market and pick up a Flaming Grooves record and listen to it, it sounds like the Strokes or the White Stripes.

RIOT. 77: Yeah its scary how much those bands replicate that sound.

PETE: It's a great format to have - just bass, drums, guitar and vocals. I love that format.

RIOT. 77: The Rads did bring in synthesizers though.

PETE: Yeah we did. I mean, there's no harm in that either. Bring in new technology, 'cos we couldn't just keep thrashing about. We had to evolve as every band does I think. The way we evolved I suppose was to become a little bit more sophisticated, but not hugely so and I still think there's a certain spirit in "Ghostown". The spirit and the attitude is different to that on "TV Tube Heart" 'cos we were different people. The five young fellas that went in to record "TV Tube Heart" and the four that went in to record "Ghostown" had changed as people. I'm not saying we mellowed out, but I'd been married and expecting a child and that sort of thing changes your perspective. But we can still play any of our songs off either album in any order and if someone came along next Wednesday who didn't know the records, they wouldn't be able to tell which songs were off which. They actually gel in really well together.

RIOT. 77: "Ghostown" alienated a lot of your Punk following, didn't it?

PETE: Yeah it did, but that's not a problem either. If they want to hold on to "TV Tube Heart" then so be it. But why should we make the records that the public want? If you do that you end up playing the same songs twenty-five years later to the same audience.

RIOT. 77: Which is pretty much what you're doing now (laughs) ... do you think it'll be the same audience on Wednesday?

PETE: No, I don't. I think it'll be a mix.

There'll be people there from the same era or generation as us, but also a lot of young people who've heard of the band but never seen us. For me personally, one of the main reasons I wanted to do this gig was

because of Joe Strummer dying. I could drop dead tomorrow and we'd been talking so long about doing this gig and I thought, "Well, c'mon lets just do it then". It makes you realise that you've got to get up and do the things you want to do and not let it drag on.

RIOT. 77: You never did get that lucky break with the Radiators ... what do you think it was that prevented it from happening?

PETE: Fate. In many ways I'm glad. I know that sounds strange and we did lick our wounds for a long time, but when you're in a band all you can do is make the best records you can and when you go on stage play the best gigs that you can. One thing that we never had with the Radiators was management. I think looking back now we all agree that we should have had proper management in place. "Ghostown" for example was delayed twelve months after we'd recorded it before it came out because we got on too well with the record company. We should have had management there battering them around until they got the

record out. I think if it had come out within a few months of it being recorded it would have been in sync with that second phase of New Wave albums where people like Elvis Costello and bands like Blondie were starting to break through. But by the time "Ghostown" did come out twelve months later there was another fifty albums like it, so it lost its impact. You have to remember that there was only six months between the two albums being recorded. Six months after finishing the recording of "TV Tube Heart" we were in the studio again recording "Ghostown". When you put it into that context you realise how rapid the progression was. But what we're doing next Wednesday at the gig is just stripping it all down with no frills. Just raw rock n' roll, more than likely all over the place but that's what we're good at and the way we like it.

PHIL: We were hopeless businessmen and lacked ruthlessness. That's no longer the case.

RIOT. 77: What was the idea behind getting back together again in 1988 to record "Under Clery's Clock"? That song is basically about you Phil, wanting to be openly accepted as a gay man in Dublin? You never really spoke of that before ... was that always common knowledge amongst the Radiators audience ... were you openly gay at the time? ... I'd imagine that must have been difficult in Ireland at the time? Did any of the band's following have an issue with it?

PHIL: It was unfinished business. Being openly gay in Dublin in the mid-70s was a bit of a non-starter. But there was always a gay subtext to "Ghostown", something that added to its mystery, its darkness, because it was suppressed. I was never quite sure if letting the light in when we added "Clery's" to the album for its 10th Anniversary release was the right thing to do, but hey! ho! it's done now. I "came out" in the early-mid 80s and came out "publicly" when the Pogues started having hits, mainly to spoil the fun of "The Sun", who were busy out-ing pop stars at the time. I don't know if anyone had a "problem" with it, to be honest. As I said before, other peoples' opinions of me are not really any of my business.

RIOT. 77: You actually made demos for a third album is that right?

PETE: Yeah we did, but I think we'd just run out of steam by that stage. The reality is, to work professionally in this industry you've got to be able to pay your bills and that's the bottom line. If that means getting a job then that's what you've got to do.

RIOT. 77: Ok, one final question to you Phil - You also wrote a play during The Radiators years with Jim Sheridan called "The Ha'penny Place" ... what can you tell me about that?

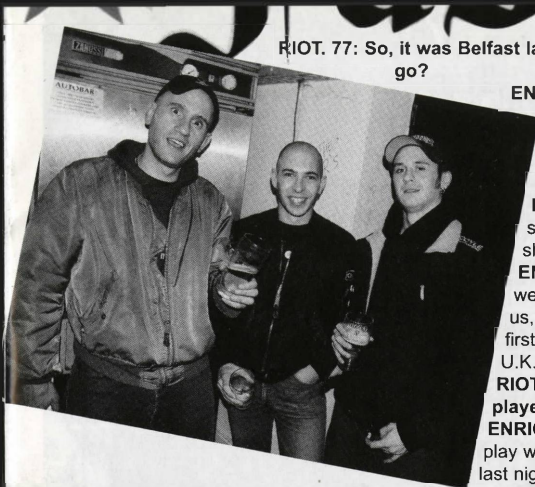
PHIL: Jim wrote the play, I wrote the music to his lyrics. It was, I suppose, a musical. It was based upon John Gay's enlightenment Folk Opera "The Beggar's Opera", which was also the source of Brecht & Weill's 1928 show "Die Dreigroschenoper" ("The Threepenny Opera"). Jim set it among gangsters in Dublin and Belfast and it had elements of Charles Haughey and the 1970 gun-running affair. Jim and Peter Sheridan (Peter directed) had an incredibly undisciplined and experimental way of working then. When it worked, it was magic. Just as often, it drove actors to the point of madness. As the composer, arriving quite late in the rehearsal process, I was basically just dodging the crockery and working on my ulcer. The musical director, in my absence, had massacred much of the music and it was too late to do much about it by then. On opening night, the show over-ran by about an hour. Traditionally, in the Dublin Theatre Festival, each production gave a press conference the morning after the opening. The company, led by Mannix Flynn, took this opportunity to address the astonished world's press, complaining bitterly (and in their presence too) about the Sheridans. Later that day savage cuts were made to the production by Jim Sheridan, to tame the piece down to manageable length. Sheridan was ruthless with his script and with my music. But when I watched the show that night, I was gobsmacked to find that the two most obvious elements for cutting - a lengthy Beckettian monologue delivered by Peter Caffrey, and an entire scene starring Mr Pussy - were still in the show!! In fairness, the monologue was a wonderful piece of writing and Alan Amsby's drag act was a scream, but neither had very much to do with the narrative of the show!! What a cast - apart from Mannix, Pussy and Caffrey, "The Ha'penny Place" starred Agnes Bernelle, Jeananne Crowley, Ciaran Hinds, Pat Leavy, Johnny Murphy, Ronan Wilmot, Vinny McCabe and many more brilliant Irish actors. Also, there truly was greatness in Sheridan's play. Perhaps it needed an outsider to come in and make order from the chaos. But at that point the Sheridans were the great white hopes of Irish theatre and no one had the guts or the resources to call halt.

The staunchly anti-fascist Los Fastidios have been making waves on the international Punk circuit since their birth in '91. From the once militantly right-wing city of Verona, Italy, ringleader Enrico became the outspoken voice of the left in his town. Establishing his group of likeminded Punks and Skinheads under the banner of Los Fastidios, the band became synonymous for their revolt against the fascist uprising in continental Europe. To date, they've released a steady flow of top notch Oi! anthems that easily hold their own with anything this side of the first three Angelic Upstarts records. There've been plenty of personnel changes along the road, but the band's message remains firmly intact - Love Music: Hate Fascism! Their recently released "Siempre Contra" album offers further proof of this, if any were needed and takes the Oi! movement into new dimensions, paying relevance to life in 2004 and not steeped in retrospective traditions of yesteryear.

The sound of Los Fastidios owes as much to the Skatalites as it does The Oppressed, but one thing's for sure; it's always unmistakably Italian. Whilst they've clocked up a considerable amount of road mileage in their fourteen year existence, strangely a visit to these shores had never materialised until October of this year. I caught up with Enrico and guitarist Paolino in the backstage environs of Dublin's, Voodoo Lounge before their gig that evening and whilst there was a clear language barrier there, we managed to scrape together something resembling that of an interview. (All photos taken in the Voodoo Lounge, Dublin.)

Los ★ Fastidios





RIOT. 77: So, it was Belfast last night ... how did that go?

ENRICO: Yeah it was really good ... not so many people, but they told me that was the typical crowd for Belfast.

PAOLINO: The people there seemed to really enjoy the show ...

ENRICO: Yeah they did ... they were dancing and singing with us, it was great. That was our first gig in Ireland or even the U.K.

RIOT. 77: Really? You haven't played in England before?

ENRICO: No, next year. We got to play with three really good bands last night ... Runnin' Riot and two

others I can't remember the name of, but one of them was an old band from Belfast.

RIOT. 77: Was it difficult to finance something like this? Just coming over for the three gigs?

ENRICO: Yeah it's just three gigs and it's expensive, but we hope to cover all the costs. Conor organised it, who we met when he was in Italy this past summer with his job. We played in Palma and he was at that gig and said he wanted to organise some gigs for us in Ireland ...

PAOLINO: ... which was incredible for us (laughs).

ENRICO: ... yeah and then a few days after he got home he wrote to us and said he'd start organising it for October. He's a good promoter.

RIOT. 77: Where else have you been this year? Have you been touring much?

ENRICO: This year we've been around most of Europe and done about eighty or ninety dates so far. We started touring in February and went to countries like Serbia, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, France, Germany, Euskadi, Norway, now Eire and North Ireland and Italy of course.

RIOT. 77: You toured Canada a few years back too, didn't you?

ENRICO: Yeah, some years back we went to Canada for St. Patrick's Day in Montreal and that was fuckin' great. Actually a few days ago a promoter wrote to me asking if we'd come over for a festival there in July next year, so hopefully we can make it over for that. It's been getting a lot better lately and we're getting requests from all over about playing gigs there, so we're probably going to run into some problems next year, trying to organise all that I think. At the moment our schedule is completely booked from February to June next year, so it's going to be a busy year.

RIOT. 77: How has the "Siempre Contra" album been doing for you? Has the reac-

tion been good?

ENRICO: Yeah, very good. The fanzines and magazines seem to like it and have given it good reviews. Maximumrocknroll even gave it a good review yesterday (laughs). It's sold around seven or eight thousand copies to date and with all the gigs we're doing to promote it, it doesn't appear to be slowing down at all.

PAOLINO: The vinyl completely sold out. The CD's sell in Italy, but most of the other countries want the vinyl.

RIOT. 77: Los Fastidios have had a lot of line up changes down the years ... how long have you been with the band Paolino?

PAOLINO: I've been with them three years now.

RIOT. 77: What bands were you in before that?

PAOLINO: Ohhh ... lots of bands ... The Twinkles are probably the best known. But we've had this line up of Los Fastidios for about a year now.

ENRICO: I think this line up is the best we've sounded since the beginning.

RIOT. 77: Are you the only original member Enrico?

ENRICO: Yeah, I'm the only original member.

RIOT. 77: Something that always comes up when you read anything on Los Fastidios is the trouble you've had down the years, particularly early on, with fascist skinheads showing up at gigs and I read some members of the band quit over it ... is there still an issue there with that these days?

ENRICO: There was a lot of hassle with that around the mid-nineties, because we live in a town called Verona, which used to be the most fascist town in Italy, but now the anti-fascist movement has grown much bigger. Two members from the first line up left the band because of problems with fascist skinheads. There were a lot of fights all the time against the fascists. In the beginning I was the only anti-fascist skinhead in my town, so it was really easy for them to pick on one person. But it's a lot harder when there're as many anti-fascist skinheads as there are now. But we can never relax at any gig and have to always look over our shoulder. Last week, for instance, we had to stop playing when one of them got into our gig. We refused to play until he left the bar. He was saying he only wanted a drink and it was his right to be there, but we said no and told him to fuck off and the riot police were called. We don't have any tolerance for fascists ... even if it's only one person; we refuse to play for them. They tried to steal our culture in the past, so today we musn't allow them any space in our scene.

RIOT. 77: You're bringing The Oppressed over to Italy next year for the first time?

ENRICO: Yeah, great band ...

PAOLINO: One of my favourite bands ...

ENRICO: We're bringing them over to play at a festival in Italy. It's an anti-fascist event in a big squat and we're playing on the same bill. It's a celebration of sixty years liberation from the Nazi scum in Europe.

RIOT. 77: How do you think Los Fastidios have developed as a band over the years?

ENRICO: When Los Fastidios started in 1991 the band was a Oi'n'Roll fun band but soon the events of my life and the global situation drove me in a more social and political direction; our songs talk about our lives so if at the beginning I could sing "Beer, Oi! and Fun" now I have to shout "Siempre Contra" which means "Always Against". Los





Fastidios' sound and style can be near to skinhead and Oil culture but our lyrics are different. Before any of us are a skinhead or a punk or a musician every one of us is himself. I know that animals are the first victims of the global exploitation, millions of innocents massacred every day ... no matter if I like Oil music or crusty, I want to fight for animal rights. We support a lot of animal rights organisations, in particular www.chiud-eremorini.net which is a movement against a farm near Reggio Emilia that sells dogs, rabbits, mice and other animals to the vivisection laboratories and in December we'll play a benefit gig for them.

RIOT. 77: You wrote a song called "Anger in The Heart", about Carlo Giuliani who was killed in the Genoa riots ... tell me about that ... were you at those protests in Genoa?

ENRICO: Yeah I was in Genoa. It was a fuckin' terrible experience. I think everyone at that demonstration understood that this was the beginning of the war of our times for the people. It was the beginning of a global oppression that we are now living in. But we continue to support demonstrations like that and the whole protest movement and the squat movement. Last July was the third anniversary of Carlo's death and we played a remembrance gig in the square where he was killed. Carlo's family were there and stood at the front of the stage for the gig. It was a very strong experience. On the 13th of November we'll play in Venice at the Anti Nato Meeting demonstrations....and so on....

RIOT. 77: Do either of you live in squats?

ENRICO: No, we don't. Italy is a bit different to other countries in the sense that there aren't as many squats there

where people actually live in. Most of the squats are used for social activities or gigs and that's a scene that we strongly try and get behind whenever we can.

RIOT. 77: Another song that stands out in your repertoire is "Johnny And The Queer Bootboys" ... what was the inspiration behind writing that?

ENRICO: We're against all kinds of discrimination. Whether it be racist discrimination or sexual discrimination, it comes down to the same thing.

PAOLINO: People seem to think that it's ok to slag homosexuals off and we just wanted to be clear that it's just another form of racism.

ENRICO: People always ask me, "Who is this Johnny guy?" (laughs) ... it's me, it's you ... Johnny is one of us. Everybody is free to choose what they want to do with their lives and nobody has the right to tell them otherwise. We've also just done a video clip for the song and they're playing it on a lot of the cable-access channels.

RIOT. 77: From day one Los Fastidios mostly sang in their own language ... was that something that was always important for you to maintain or have you ever

felt that singing in English would reach a wider audience?

ENRICO: Well, I'm standing here talking to you now in English and we can communicate ok and talk about Los Fastidios, so I think we still get across to English speaking nations. Also when I try to sing in English people always say I sound funny because of my Italian accent (laughs). But we include both English and French translations of our lyrics in the CD booklet and that's something that is very important to us ... that you know what we're singing about. It's funny though because when we play in other countries the people actually know the words to the songs and sing along to them in Italian even though they don't speak the language. The main thing is that we're getting the message across, regardless of what language we're singing in.

RIOT. 77: A lot of your earlier releases were on a label called Skooter Records ... was that just your own label you had at the time for self-releasing stuff?

ENRICO: Yeah that was my label and KOB Records (www.kobrecords.com) was born from the ashes of it. Skooter Records was just a really small label that we used for Los Fastidios's releases. I just put a few things out on it and folded it when I started KOB in 1996 as a shop in Verona. Then in '98 I started releasing stuff on KOB as a record label. KOB Records is a strictly antifascist and antiracist label really involved in punk, Oi! and ska music. The Kob bands all have this attitude so with many of them we have a real friendship and it happens to divide not only the stage but the street and fights too. KOB Records is also a street shop based in Verona and it isn't easy juggling the shop, the label and band, but I really believe in what I do. We work a lot with other labels to try and build a bigger network. I think it's important to have a relationship with other independent labels. We collaborate with Mad Butcher from Germany, Insurgence from Canada, Jimmy Jazz from Poland, Fucking North Pole in Norway and hopefully in the future with some other Scandinavian labels. It's a good way to promote foreign bands in Italy and for the other labels to promote Italian bands in their countries.

RIOT. 77: Ok, one last question ... you're both scooter fanatics, is that true?

ENRICO: Oh yeah, scooters are great. The only problem

we have now is that we're always on tour and unfortunately you can't tour on a scooter (laughs).

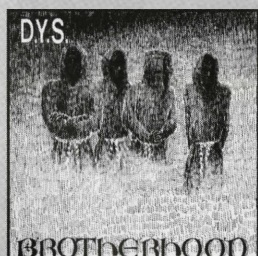
RIOT. 77: What scooter have you got?

ENRICO: A Vespa. I love Lamberetta's; they're excellent for the style but the engines in them aren't as good as Vespas.

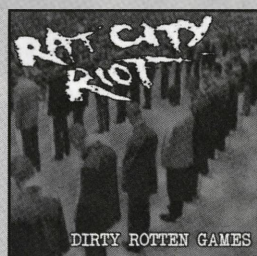
PAOLINO: I had to sell mine 'cos I had no money to pay the rent (laughs).

ENRICO: When we didn't gig as much as we do today, I'd be on my Vespa every weekend. In Italy there're places you can go and you can drink and drive, it's great (laughs)

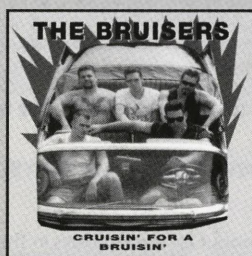
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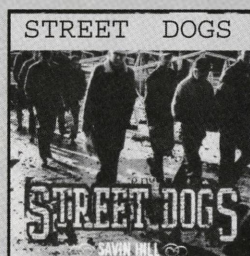
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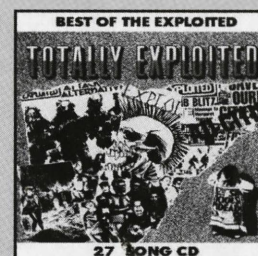
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DVD REVIEWS



BAD RELIGION "ALONG THE WAY". (EPITAPH)

I still have my VHS copy of this, which was a definite favourite of mine during my teenage years. This is a direct transfer of the video on to DVD format; no more, no less, no extras, no nothing which is kind of cool as I get to see if it's still as great as I remember without any of the useless frills we usually associate with DVD. True to memory, this is everything a Bad Religion live video should be and nice to see it being kept in print. Filmed on the European leg of their 1989 "Suffer" tour, which marked the band's return to form and one of their many highpoints throughout their twenty-year plus career, "Along The Way" uses live footage shot in over fourteen European cities and intersperses it with personal interviews given by each member of the band, interestingly using a technique of asking each person similar questions and comparing the answers, often to find conflicting view points. Perhaps this was the magic, much like The Ramones, that kept them together this length of time. If you remember the band during this era, you'll know their live set consisted of what we now deem the "classic" songs from the group. Basically put that means their first EP and album and the "Suffer" album played almost in its entirety. Difficult to argue that they've topped this kind of form since. The Brett Gurewitz interview is particularly good, as we see him discuss such topics as his longstanding crack and alcohol addictions in frank terms. "Along The Way" is a fine time capsule of what it was like for one of the forefathers of American Punk Rock during the dark days of the scene, when Bad Religion were almost exclusively out there on their own. There's a debt to be paid to bands like this and hopefully this DVD will keep that in people's minds. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

DROPKICK MURPHYS "ON THE ROAD WITH ...". (HELLCAT)

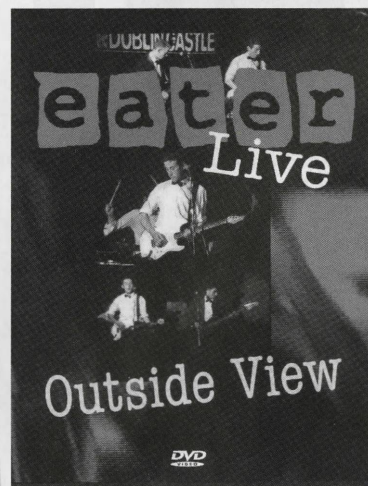
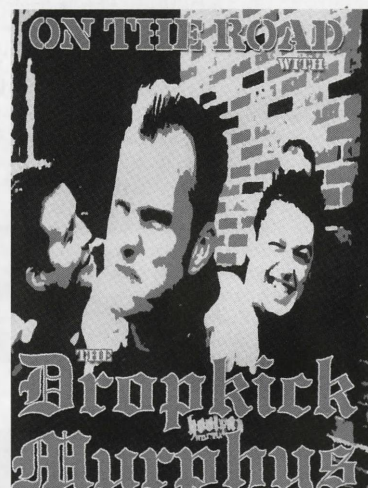
This is an excellently put together video capsule of the band every Irishman loves to hate! Incredibly inclusive and covering just about everything the Dropkick Murphys have achieved, stood for and put their name to since their formation some seven years ago. There's over four hours of footage here and none of it is irrelevant; surely a first for the DVD medium? "On The Road ..." gives the viewer an insight into what makes the band tick and how it all works on tour with them. At times this involves the childlike American goofball humour we've come to expect from them, constantly mimicking the antics of teenage Jackass freaks on camera, though I guess when the boredom of the road sets in bands have been known to resort to worse when you think about it! The cameras follow the band all over the world, from squash pit clubs to arenas and outdoor festivals, chasing them into every nuck and cranny of everyday life on tour. They've clocked up an incredible amount of mileage in a short space of time and played in practically every Punk hotspot around the globe. From New Zealand to Japan and even a brief look at one of their Dublin gigs, Dropkick Murphys can, at their best, make for vigorous viewing entertainment. Later work from the group doesn't exactly stack up when paired with their first EP and subsequent album and to really get a glimpse of them at their best they should have included some Mike McColgan action here, though perhaps video footage of that era, prior to the big explosion, is a bit thin on the ground. In any case, the band look desperate to erase how good a singer he was from the minds of more recent followers. This thing is stacked with all kinds interesting stuff on the group; to start with there's the 2002 Paddy's Day gig in Boston shown in its entirety which you'd imagine is more than enough to make a DVD in itself ... there's all their videos from day one, amounting to quite a handful, tour performances, home videos, and a documentary entitled "65 Days Of Hell" that captures the band on a gruelling city to city tour of the States. It also delves into their support of Trade Union struggles and Labour issues, which is insightful. Other bands should take notes in how to construct these things and I'll hand it to 'em, this is probably the best and most complete band DVD I've seen to date. Nothing was spared and every aspect of Dropkick Murphys career, bar the aforementioned McColgan years of course, is covered in depth. (HELLCAT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

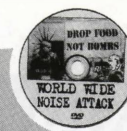
EATER "LIVE: OUTSIDE VIEW". (CHERRY RED)

The inevitable reunion of Eater (like most bands from their era) came about for the Holidays In The Sun festival in '96 and naturally there were a couple of other gigs placed on the cards while they were at it. One at the Forum in London and another, this gig here, just prior to that at Camden's Dublin Castle in '97. According to Andy Blade's liner notes on this DVD, the gig wasn't advertised and merely intended as a small gathering of friends and close fans of the band. Dublin Castle looks a small venue, similar to that of the 100 Club, suitably compact for an Eater gig of this nature. The sound is muddy to say the least and it's all shot on one hand-held camcorder by the looks of things, which may question the validity of acquiring it a DVD release in some people's minds. The other angle on it is, with Eater material being so thin on the ground, generally anything that comes to light on the band is worth a look. Eater, as you may well know, weren't always the most popular of bands around London and you either loved them or hated them. There was a lot of gimmickry surrounding the band, but I felt they had the songs to back it up. Sloppily played Garage Punk numbers in the vein of T.Rex meets the Dead Boys, similar in style to what of the Damaged Goods bands of today work on. It's a sound most fans of first-wave Punk Rock will be accustomed to. Dressed in dinner suits for this performance Eater run through a handful of their most loved, including "Thinking Of The USA", "You" and their celebrated Bowie cover "Queen Bitch". Don Letts provides the opening words and there's also an interview and book reading from Andy Blade included. It could have been vastly improved with the addition of a second or third camera angle and a decent sound job, but as it stands "Outside View" is still a nice addition to the rather sparse Eater catalogue of releases. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

PARADISE LOST "LIVE DEATH". (CHERRY RED)

Apparently this DVD demonstrates why Peaceville Records were so eager to sign Paradise Lost!!! Eh? As a joke one can only assume! Pioneers? Pioneers of a genre firmly lost up its own arse. If you recall the late eighties, then you probably aren't going to view bands like this in the highest of regard and it was probably only due to the fact there was bugger all of interest happening in any music scene at that time, bar the Psychbilly upsurge in England, that Paradise Lost rose to acclaim. What bands like this and a whole host of others that followed basically did was slow down what Napalm Death had been doing some years earlier. The big confusion of it all to me was when they cited Black Sabbath as the forefathers of the scene. Sabbath had songs and range, something called vocals, and bloody melodies. This lot couldn't be further away from that if they tried. Granted Sabbath were Doomy and so are this crowd, but that's about where the comparisons end in my book. You couldn't write less interesting music if you tried and cookie monster Nick Holmes on vocals was always a gobshite. Its bad enough the bloke singing like that, but why does he have to talk in between songs in the same voice? One seemingly endless power chord struck time and again for the entire concert does not constitute for a good band. It's bland, forgettable and most of all, extremely unconvincing. I never realised Cherry Red had a stake in such shite. Someone's gotta be havin' a laugh over there! (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)





RAMONES "RAW". (IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT)

Following on from the wonderful "End Of The Century" documentary its back to basics here again with the latest DVD offering from the Ramones camp. In its simplest form "Raw" extends the already well-trodden ground of its predecessor "Around The World", bringing us, for the most part, more footage from Marky Ramone's camcorder that didn't make it into the first film. Marky, if you didn't already know, carried a camcorder on tour with him for the last seven or eight years of the group, gathering hours upon hours of the Ramones in action, onstage and off. The other part of this DVD is a rare 27-minute concert performance of the Ramones performing in Italy in 1980, that was only ever screened once, on Italian television for it's original broadcast, and assumed forgotten about in the archives. The concert itself is a great piece of film and captures the band in that essential period when everything sounded just right. Joey's singing was spot on and he actually sang all the words to every song, as opposed to mumbling over half of them as he was prone to doing later on. The songs are played at the right pace too – faster than the recorded versions but slow enough to get a groove going that often sounded lost in their later years. It's an open-air gig in Rome in a beautiful setting in front of the Vatican. They also filmed the band soundchecking for "Cretin Hop", which is something I've never seen and naturally they give just as much in the soundcheck as they do the gig itself, just going to show how good the band genuinely were and how it all came so naturally. With the exception of that, there's bucketloads more interviews, tour escapades, mingling with the stars, TV performances and so on to wade through. Some of it is repeated stuff, viewed elsewhere and at times you feel Marky is milking this cash cow for all its worth (yes, he produced this). The bonus stuff on this DVD is a complete waste of time, with the exception of the audio-commentary track for the entire movie provided by Marky, director John Cafiero and Johnny Ramone (this is believed to be Johnny's final contribution to anything Ramones related before his death). Cafiero treats it as an interview and gets good mileage from both Ramones, asking them questions regarding their memories from around the time of each scene in the movie. Not a must-see piece of Ramones film by any means as it mainly just covers the basics, though worth checking out for the Italian concert footage and Johnny's final words. (www.image-entertainment.com)

RESTLESS/FRENZY "BABY PLEASE DON'T GO/JUST PASSING THROUGH". (CHERRY RED)

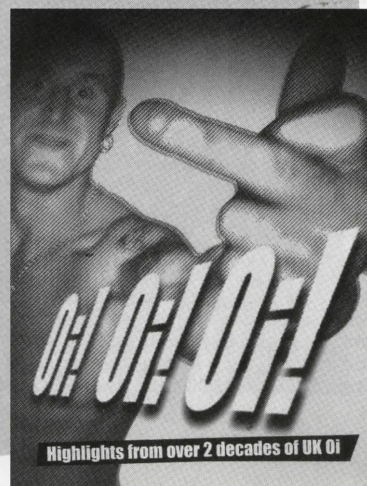
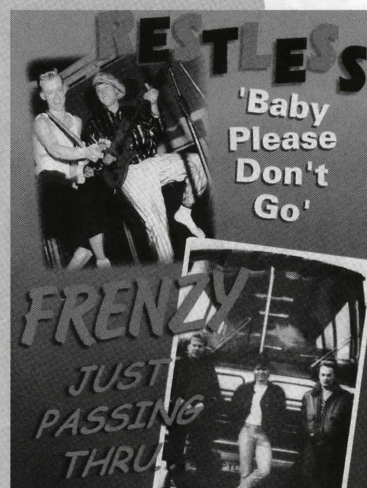
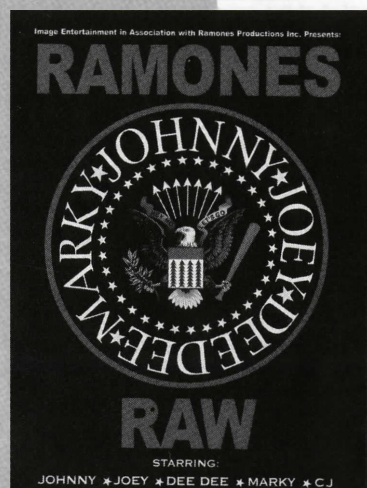
This is a pairing of two Psychobilly juggernauts here, in a double header featuring Restless and Frenzy. Steve Whitehouse links the bands together, playing for a spell in each. Restless are from the early eighties and the gig in question captures them in '87, hammering it out in Lancaster's Sugarhouse. Each band gets over a half hour's timeframe, much of it segmented by interviews with them. Frenzy go to work in a similar playing field and were again favourites for headlining Rockabilly gatherings in the eighties. Their half of the DVD includes a rather hilarious promo video of them driving around Blackpool, whilst the live gig is also from '87 at Birmingham's Barrel Organ. The days of neo-Rockabilly's prime may have long passed and in a way the resurgence of Punk Rock in the early nineties had at least something to do with killing it off, but both these bands have fought on through the hard times and are still to be found on the increasingly underground circuit today. It probably would have been exciting as hell to be at any of these gigs in the eighties as this was definitely the scene that carried the banner for the disenfranchised youth of its day; making it a nice landmark in the already impressive Cherry Red catalogue of DVD material. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "BURNING BRITAIN – THE HISTORY OF U.K. PUNK, 1980-1984". (CHERRY RED)

The DVD to accompany the book of the same name, or visual accompaniment if you will. Presumably compiled by Ian Glasper, this gives us a fair run through the key bands in the book, in both live and promo video setting. Spanning the years 1981 through 2004, "Burning Britain" is eager to show us some of the UK 82 bands as they are today, including G.B.H live in Japan, opening the DVD with "Diplomatic Immunity" from 2004. This is followed also by the reformed Discharge's run through "Ain't No Feeble Bastard" live from their hometown of Stoke, filmed last year. Peter And The Test Tube Babies then contribute a laugh worthy homemade video for "Busy Doing Nothing", which sees them doing just that for three minutes! Other stuff that grabbed my attention was Vice Squad performing "Out Of Reach" in Cardiff 1981, Newtown Neurotics splendid "Kick Out The Tories", The Business "Out In The Cold" from Japan in '97, External Menace with "We Wanna Know" from H.I.T.S. '96, the promo video for The Toy Dolls "Geordie's Gone To Jail", and U.K. Subs "C.I.D." in Manchester '83. There's no interview footage or anything to break the monotony of a band after band compilation (considering there's thirty of them on here) which they could have used as it tends to get much like a CD comp of a similar nature – runs out of steam about halfway through and you find yourself skipping on to your favourites. Other bands that may be of interest to some would be the Exploited, Chaos U.K. One Way System, The Varukers, Abrasive Wheels, Anti-Nowhere League, Disorder, Chron Gen and Action Pact amongst others. I'd say about half of this was enjoyable; the other half I could live without. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "OI! OI! OI!" - HIGHLIGHTS FROM OVER 2 DECADES OF U.K. OI!". (CHERRY RED)

Over twenty years on from the original outburst and Cherry Red takes a check back to see how well its all aged and what the modern day standing on the Oi! movement is. From the intense Thatcher years in Britain to the post depression age of Tony Blair's Britain some feel nothing much has changed and all the issues touched upon by bands like Angelic Upstarts, Sham 69, Red Alert and The Oppressed still ring true today. For irony spotting check out the hilarious interview segment of Garry Bushell slating Joe Strummer for selling out and living in a big house instead of the tower blocks he sang about – easy there now Gaz ... people with glass houses and all that!! There's a song in there somewhere!! This DVD is put together with the highest of standards in mind and intersperses the live performances and promo videos of bands with recent interviews of the forerunners from the movement. Last Resort, Cocksparrer, The Business and Argy Bargy all offer their take on what Oi! meant to them and come up with some credible conclusions. It's the music that matters most though and gracefully the material here backs it all up, bar the odd dud clip that was included for historical reference more than anything else. Favourites of mine on this one would be the promo for The Toy Dolls "Nellie the Elephant", the vintage look back at The Business in action performing "Blind Justice" in a dingy pub, though disappointingly it's the same clip used on the UKDK video and is also dubbed. Oi! never had the backing of the mainstream press and that's what kept it real and raw, though also perhaps the



downfall of the movement and post '82 it became near impossible for bands to find anywhere to play and when they did the gigs were generally tarnished with violence. There're a handful of bands that kept the spirit alive, which is audible in all manner of forms today, particularly anything coming from the direction of the States, but as they say, you can't beat the real thing and that's what we've got here. Like most movements, at the beginning it really was new and fresh, but it couldn't possibly last for long and ultimately became its own worst enemy. It's a credit to the movement that it's been archived semi-well and this DVD gives a brief glimpse into a scene that ultimately came from nothing and survived, albeit for a short time, on its own feet. One thing though, The Exploited were never an Oi! band ... were they? (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PSYCHO ATTACK". (CHERRY RED)

This is basically the highlighted version of two Psychobilly all-dayers that took place at The Hummingbird Club and The Charlotte in '88 and '93. Each band gets between one and three songs and contenders here include The Meteors, Long Tall Texans, Frantic Flinstones, Hangmen and the Caravans amongst countless others. Most present were at the cutting edge of the thriving neo Rockabilly scene at the time and this expertly shot DVD captures them warts n' all in the two sweat pits in Birmingham and Leicester. As the film makes its way up each bill, we see an increasingly spirited response from the crowd, nicely including as much of them here as the bands themselves, giving a thorough indication of just what was so special about this era. Passionate and incredibly creative from a musical standpoint, the truckload of heavyweights pulled together for this DVD will surely please most fans of the time. There's the odd dud along the way, but "Psycho Attack" quickly pulls itself back up from any depths of mediocrity by blasting us with another unrelenting piece of Rock N' Roll fury. Both festivals looked a lot of fun and have understandably gone down as staples on the Psychobilly calendar. Check this out if you're interested in what was going down in Britain during Punk's dark days. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNK AND DISORDERLY 2 - FURTHER CHARGES". (CHERRY RED)

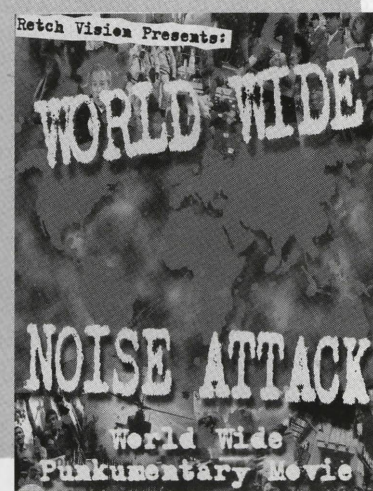
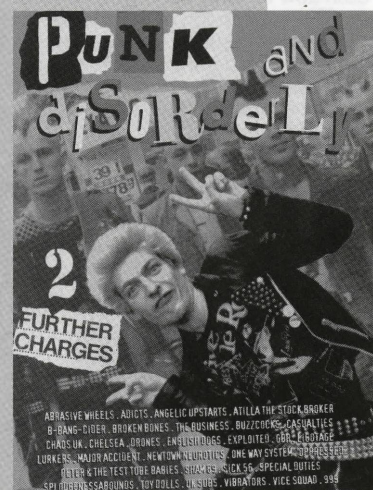
Cherry Red are kind of the ultimate purveyors in this type of thing. They unleashed the first in the series a long way back and no one could argue its about time we had another sift through the eighties archives of prime Punk viewing. All the big name acts are here from the second wave of Punk, along with some newer faces like The Casualties, paying homage with their whole outlook to bands from the era. Some of the footage is more recent versions of old songs, such as the Upstarts excellent "I'm An Upstart" from Morecambe in 1997, a clip of The Business playing "The Whole truth ..." in Bradford circa '98, The Buzzcocks "Orgasm Addict" at the first HITS Festival in '96, The Oppressed in '96 playing "Same Old Story" in front of a hometown crowd in Cardiff and "Nasty Nasty" from 999 filmed in London in '87. There's a handful of promos thrown in here too by the likes of Becki Bondage's post Vice Squad outfit Ligotage with "Crime And Passion" from 1984 and the excellent new video clip from up and coming Blackpool band Sick 56, shot last year. As you can see, quite a mixed bag of stuff, crossing the old with the new, but no one can deny the impact this music had when it was done well. Of course we've always got the obligatory dirge from bands like the Exploited to contend with, but it's the high grade of other moments courtesy of The Toy Dolls, Lurkers, Attila the Stockbroker, Newtown Neurotics, UK Subs, Adicts and Sham 69 that makes it all worthwhile. Too many people tend to overlook a lot of this music today as cheap cabaret acts, but this DVD nicely shows what a lot of the bands are up to these days so you can make your own mind up. (CHERRY RED RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "SECRET WEAPONS OF KUNG FU 2". (KUNG FU)

The first one of these Kung Fu DVD sampler thingys was put on sale for \$6.98 in the States and shifted 15,000 copies, so I guess they're trying to repeat the experience here with another round up of what the label has been up to video-wise (promo and live) since. Kung Fu has put a lot of their time and efforts into the DVD medium, releasing what seems like a new DVD every month. They obviously believe in it being the way forward and to be fair to them, they've kept the quality high, whatever about some of the bands. Most would agree that Kung Fu have misfired on occasion and further proof of that if any were needed is the inclusion of Goldfinger, Audio Karate, and the terribly unfunny Neil Hamburger. But on the upside there's always the likes of the reliable Vandals, the upbeat God Awfuls, firm Street Punk favourites Pistol Grip and One Man Army and old time stalwarts such as the Adolescents and even a rare WeirDOS clip at the end to really brighten up my day. Assuming this is also being sold as a cheapo sampler, you more than get your money's worth here, with the good easily outweighing the bad. Be warned though if you've purchased any of "The Show Must Go Off" DVD's as much of them are also represented here with at least five of the videos being lifted from them. Extras include an audio commentary by the bands and directors. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NIJHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "WORLD WIDE NOISE ATTACK". (RETCH)

The first and probably the last Retch Records DVD compilation, if the note that accompanied this package, explaining the heartbreak and turmoil that went into putting it together, can be believed. First off, thirty-one songs is far too long and makes it run out of steam roughly halfway through and although there's only fifteen bands on it, it just really starts to drag on and seems never ending. You'd have to be a serious Thrash Punk diehard to sit through a lot of this and as you've probably guessed, I'm not. I can appreciate the passion, aggression and adrenaline in a bit of Blitzkrieg, Paradox UK and the like, but when there's little musical scope present as a vehicle for it all, it loses its appeal rather quickly. Bands that did turn my head on this were, Hunkies, The Analogs and A.P.A. but much of it is filler material. There's clearly been a lot of work put into the compiling of this, but had it been halved I think the quality of the decent bands wouldn't have been overshadowed so much by the also-rans included here. "World Wide Noise Attack" intersperses live scenes of the bands with interview segments, which I like as it gives you a bit of background information on who you're about to listen to. Retch Records by the way is 100% Punk run and the brainchild of Blitzkrieg's Spike and you can tell by his words on this, how passionate the guy is about the whole deal and certainly not one for walking into any trend-driven pitfalls. This is the music he's put his heart, soul and life into and in that respect cannot be faulted. It's a labour of love and as Retch's baby steps into the world of visual entertainment, not half bad. (RETCH RECORDS: 49 ROSE CRESENT, WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ, ENGLAND.)







THE SABREJETS

100% PROOF ROCKABILLY MAYHEM!

Perhaps the greatest unsung heroes of Irish music would be Belfast's Rudi. Looking back it seemed they were the band that had it all – the infectious songs, the sugar coated Glam Rock leanings and the Punk pedigree, not to mention an unhealthy obsession with Marc Bolan and Johnny Thunders, that lives on to this day via lead singer/guitarist Brian Young. Pretty much single-handedly kick starting Punk Rock in the north of Ireland, Rudi were unfortunately overshadowed in the media by the craze surrounding Stiff Little Fingers and The Undertones. Rudi lacked the industry muscle that the big guns had in abundance and although things did look as though they were finally about to take off for them when Paul Weller took an interest and signed them up to his Jamming label, it all fell apart with the subsequent break up of The Jam and the inevitable axing of the label. Two thirds of Rudi took up alternative modes of making a living whilst Young resurfaced in 1987 with Rockabilly renegades The Tigersharks, who later became known as The Roughnecks, before conceiving his current outfit of greased up Rockers, the Sabrejets in 1994. The Sabrejets concocted a lethal dose of Young's Glam and Punk Rock past and fused it with an up-tempo take on all that falls under the Rockabilly umbrella, pioneered by the likes of Link Wray, Carl Perkins, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent and a host of pre '58 Rock N' Roll acts you'll hear on anything that passed through the doors of Sun Studios. The 'Jets made a welcome trip south of the border this past November for a one-off gig in Smithfield's, Voodoo Lounge. I spoke with the lead singing motor mouth Brian Young one Sunday afternoon in the run up to the gig and what follows, for the record, is actually a heavily edited version of a two and a half hour long conversation!!

(Live photographs taken at the Voodoo Lounge, Dublin.)



RIOT. 77: What's this Punk photo exhibition you were telling me you were at the other night?

BRIAN: It wasn't just Punk photos. It was an exhibition called "Shot By Both Sides" by Stuart Bailie who wrote for the NME and that and he's written a couple of books, one on Thin Lizzy and has a radio show up here as well. He goes back years and was in a band with my brother. He's in the "... Spit" book actually ... he played in bands too like Acne and that. He's always sort of been interested in photography also and he decided to get in touch with different photographers for the Belfast festival and put together an exhibition of photographs that were taken here from the Punk era up to date. It wasn't a huge exhibition; only about forty photographs, but of those forty about half of them were from the Punk days and then some of the later Punk stuff from Giros and the Warzone and that sort of stuff. It's the first time anyone's done something like that up here. At the launch on Thursday night he asked Greg, Petesy and myself (Shame Academy) to get up and play half an hour 'cos there were photos of us there and it was absolutely packed as it happens ... us standing there playing in front of photos of ourselves twenty-five years ago (laughs) ... it went really well for him. It's strange though and something that annoys me about the whole thing is that twenty-five years after it happened you get a photo exhibition on the whole thing, but at the time events like the Belfast Festival weren't interested and wouldn't touch Belfast Punk with a barge-pole.

RIOT. 77: Do The Sabrejets still play around the Punk circuit or is the Rockabilly one a different scene in Belfast?

BRIAN: We have a very big crossover, which is weird, because Belfast is so small. There is a Punk crowd and a Rockabilly crowd, but there's a lot of crossover. The reason a lot of the younger ones come see The Sabrejets is because when Joey Ramone died there was a tribute gig for him up here that Andrew out of The Dangerfields arranged and he asked us to play at it, so that was the first time a lot of the younger ones seen The Sabrejets and probably the first time they would have seen a double-bass! After that gig then a lot more of the younger ones started coming to see us. We've played with Runnin Riot several times too, who we all like, and Colin is a good friend of mine. Belfast being so small, most people have heard of nearly all the bands. To be honest a lot of Rockabilly purists think we're too noisy or too Punk and then a lot of the Punk purists think we're too Rockabilly. We're just happy enough to play and

whoever comes along, comes along. Even years ago when you had divisions in music and you were only supposed to go see a certain band, up here it was completely different. There was a big crossover between pubs like the Harp and the Bailey; the Bailey being the Teddy Boy pub and the Harp being the Punk pub. But because Punks would have brothers who were going to The Bailey or whatever, it all just became people who were into all different types of music. Everybody started to realise that if you're into music like that then there is a big crossover there and there's no point in being precious. When you're not sixteen anymore you start to realise this and that was why I became fed up with Punk in the first place; it had become so narrow minded and such a cliché and when it started it wasn't like that at all. Everybody's got their own definition and it depends when you grew up and what bands were Punk at the time. It's not for me to say what they think is Punk isn't Punk to me and vice versa. What annoys me is when people tell me they like such and such a band and I'll say "I don't" and they'll say, "But didn't you used to be in a Punk band?" (laughs). Yeah, but the Punk bands I was into were like The Clash and The Heartbreakers and stuff. There's no similarity between The Clash and The Heartbreakers and The Exploited and Discharge. But it's just down to your own personal tastes and as I said before, when you grew up. I'm sure the people who went to see the Exploited and all that would have thought the early Punk bands weren't hard enough or thrashy enough or whatever. There's no right or wrong and if you look at it, I'm playing Rockabilly in 2004 and there're people who'd argue that Rockabilly ended in 1957. Everybody makes their own mind up I suppose.

RIOT. 77: Does Liam still live in Los Angeles or are you all in Belfast fulltime now?

BRIAN: Liam never lived in Los Angeles; he just seemed to spend a lot of time there! I knew Liam for years before I even knew he played the guitar, it's a strange thing. I had a band called The Tigersharks and at the time Liam put out a great fanzine here called Rumble and then he also wrote for a Swedish one called Ratbeat. Liam was very involved in the Legion of The Cramps and followed The Cramps around on whole tours of England. That's how I got to know Liam; we were both into the same type of music like The Cramps and Johnny Thunders. He used to come and see The Tigersharks as well and it was only when that band folded that he even mentioned that he played guitar, so from there we've always just been good mates. It seemed logical for us to start playing together and then the other two members, Marty and Bill, had both played years

ago in The Crazy Quavers, who were Belfast's best Rockabilly band in the early eighties. The Sabrejets have been going ten years at this stage and that's the longest I've been in any band ever. It's my favourite band out of all the bands I've been in too. When you're sixteen everything is black and white; you're always right and everybody else is wrong, but when you get to my age and you're still playing in bands, you do it because you want to do it and not because your mates are doing it at the time or whatever ... that sounds a bit wishy washy, but ... (laughs)

RIOT. 77: You had a fair bit of input in the "... Spit" book about Belfast's early Punk days that came out this year ... are you pleased with how it all turned out?

BRIAN: The input I had started when Sean and Guy began trying to put this whole thing together years ago ... I think there's always somebody in every band who collects memorabilia and posters and scraps of things about the band and I was that person in Rudi. Sean and Guy got in touch with me and I was able to help them out because I had kept all the gig fliers and tickets and that. I didn't know Sean at the time, because he's a bit younger than me but I knew Guy from The Harp years ago and when he used to do record fairs and stuff. I was able to put them in touch with a lot of people because when they first started trying to contact all these people there were a lot who had moved away and couldn't be located and what have ya ... I helped them as much as I could simply because I've always said that Northern Ireland bands never get the credit they deserve and that goes right across the board, not just Punk bands; there were loads of other good bands here in the eighties. Even when Rudi and Good Vibes and that whole thing was going on here, the local media just weren't interested and were trying to push whatever was flavour of the month or on Top Of The Tops. They had all these great bands and labels on their own doorstep, but they weren't interested and they're still not interested. The fact that they had to get the book published in Dublin just says it all. The impact the whole Punk movement had up here was amazing. It's only now that I think people are slowly starting to realise it. People have put aside their rivalries and hostilities and are looking back on it as good times. The reason I wanted to help as much as I could with this book was because I was sick to death of reading in other books or magazines about Northern Ireland Punk and all you'd get was two bands -- "Stiff Little Fingers and The Undertones", and if you were lucky they might mention Good Vibrations too and that was all! You'd go "Fuck Off!" That's absolute shite and these were the books that people were reading and taking as gospel truth and it really bugged me and it bugged a lot of other people too. I have nothing against any other band or whatever, but that's not a true reflection of what was happening at the time. You just imagine that everything you read in a music book or magazine must be true. You don't realise that half of them are written by people who steal somebody else's article and rehash it, but don't actually do any groundwork or research on the subject themselves. I would be the last person who'd want to go back and rant n' rave about Rudi, because for me Rudi finished when it finished. But I was always really proud of what we did, though like most bands we didn't split on particularly good terms. We'd all had such a real sickener at finding out the way the music business worked. But you move on to whatever else and don't want to be sitting around twenty-five years later going on about something you did when you were a teenager. When Rudi split Ronnie and Graham weren't interested in pursuing music any further. It was only when I was asked to play a few songs at a T.Rex tribute night that I remembered why I got started in the first place. I started mucking about with a couple of friends again that had been there that night because we were all into Link Wray and stuff. Even then you don't want people bringing up Rudi again because it's done and dusted and you have to move on. It was just going back on it all again with the book brought back all the good memories and people like Mark Brennan had been in touch wanting to do a CD on Cherry Red and then a fella in Germany has put out three LP's and four EP's of demos and that. It's nice to have the stuff out there so people can buy it if they want instead of having to pay extortionate prices for old singles that aren't worth it in the first place, you know? I'm proud of it all but I don't want to have the Ex-Rudi tag attached to me forever. The book just focused people's attention on what happened back then and the launch brought a lot of people out that I hadn't seen for years and because it was that long after the event everybody put their wee petty squabbles behind them. I think everyone just wanted to remember the fun we had when we were young. It's not something you'd want to do too often because you can't wallow in nostalgia all your life. But it just seems that every time you open a book or turn on the TV someone's waxing lyrical about whoever they liked when they were young and as far as I'm concerned all the bands over here were as good as any that happened elsewhere, so why should I read fifty-eight pages of shite about the Sex Pistols when there's not two pages about anything that happened in Northern Ireland. It's just taking a bit of pride in what happened up here. It's the same in every city I'm sure. There're probably millions of bands from Dublin in the eighties that nobody would ever remember now. We had some great bands up here in the eighties and none of them ever made a record and they'll never be remembered because of that. It's the attitude that if someone goes away and does well then everybody will love them and say they loved them all along, but until they do that, everybody hates them. The book put the record straight on a lot of things because I didn't want someone in London or Dublin telling me what happened in Belfast, because they weren't there and if they weren't there at the time then they don't know anything about it and it's as simple as that.

RIOT. 77: Do you stand by the claim that Rudi were the first Punk band in Belfast or was there much going on before that ...

BRIAN: It's a historical fact that Rudi were the first Punk band in Belfast. I'll give you a quick timeline and try not to bore you with ancient history. We were just a gang of mates that ran around together from East Belfast, who were into Glam Rock. In 1975 a few of us went over to the Isle of Man to see T.Rex and got to meet Marc Bolan, which for a bunch of fifteen year olds was amazing. He gave me a T.Rex songbook and I went home and learned to play them on a guitar that I bought off my cousin. We were all really into music and put a band together that became Rudi. I worshipped the New York Dolls, Ronnie was into David Bowie and Grimmy liked Slade. We all liked early Rock N' Roll too and when I started playing the guitar it was Chuck Berry stuff that I'd play along to. Most of Marc Bolan's stuff is three chord Rock N' Roll. Most of what we began playing in Rudi were old Rock N' Roll and Glam Rock songs though we couldn't even work out any New York Dolls songs apart from "Pills" which wasn't even a New York Dolls song! But it was the only one we could work out and as nobody else was listening to Bo Diddley, we used to tell people that we wrote it! (laughs). Nobody knew any different (laughs). When the whole Punk thing came along in '76 it was the first Ramones album that made a big difference to us, because when we heard it we could actually figure out how to play all the songs on it and we started doing "Blitzkrieg Bop" and "Let's Dance". It was from that then that we started writing our own songs. There were no venues in Belfast that would touch us 'cos we were only fifteen and sixteen years old. We'd just hire places ourselves and put on gigs in places that people didn't

want to use. We used to pack in two or three hundred people a night. This was unheard of at the time, but we didn't know any better and thought that's what you had to do. We'd book places like the Gilton Lodge and the Glenmachan and those were the first Punk gigs held in Belfast. Later on when the other bands started these were the only gigs where people could play that sort of music. Bands like Stiff Little Fingers and The Outcasts would be coming to play the Glenmachan, simply because we'd already established it as a place to play. In '76 everything went mad music-wise when the whole Punk thing kicked off in England. All the Punk bands used to talk in interviews about liking the New York Dolls and whatnot because most of the people who were in Punk bands at the start were Glam Rock fans and it was only later that Heavy Metallers decided to cut their hair and join in. A lot of the style was even the same with the haircuts n' all that stolen from Glam Rock and most of the songs the Punk groups started out playing were covers of Glam Rock songs. That was how things took off here; there were a couple of discos in Bangor where people would have dressed Punk, but it was more fashion orientated and generally people who would have been into Roxy Music and Bowie. They liked the fashion of Punk but they weren't too sure about the music. Whereas we liked the music and then the fashion, but we weren't walking around with Sex t-shirts on or anything like that. What we had was, Grimmy used to work in a clothes wholesalers and he stole these boiler suits that we splattered paint on, and thought looked very impressive (laughs). We didn't realise how dreadful it looked (laughs). This was before Punk hit the media and there wasn't any hassle with it yet; it wasn't till later on that people started looking to start fights with Punks. That came with the Sex Pistols and the "God Save The Queen" thing, because up here when a band sings a song like that one side automatically thinks they must be pro-monarchist and the other side assumes its an anti-monarchist song, so you're sort of caught in the middle. Northern Ireland had its own wee spin on things and the disco in the Glenmachan used to take "Anarchy In The U.K." off before the verse about the U.D.A. came in, so as not to offend some of the regulars (laughs). There weren't that many venues in Belfast as it was and then the city started to close down at night, so we were left with having to hire these hotels and book them as a birthday party and to be honest I don't think they cared what we did so long as we pulled a crowd in. As Punk gradually spread, other bands started cropping up and playing these venues, but we were the first band playing what could even remotely be termed Punk here for about a year. I was at both The Outcasts and Stiff Little Fingers first gigs ... we knew The Outcasts, but we saw an ad in the NME for Stiff Little Fingers and went along to check it out, 'cos they were both within a week of each other. We were surprised when we turned up at the S.L.F. one 'cos we thought we were going to see this new Punk group but it was actually a band we'd seen before called Highway Star who still had long hair but decided to become a Punk band.

RIOT. 77: Are you saying you don't rate S.L.F.?

BRIAN: At the time everybody here hated them; there's no beating about the bush. Having said that, at their first gig they could play better than all the other bands in Belfast put together. The Undertones were already doing something similar and deserve the credit for it. Now a lot of people don't like The Undertones, but they were doing exactly what we were doing at the same time, if not even earlier, and they were doing this up in Derry and having a much harder time of it. You see, when Punk took off in Belfast there were a lot of people doing fanzines and there were shops down here, but The Undertones were stuck up in Derry without any of that, you know? It was great to be around at that time in Belfast when Punk took off and everybody started joining bands. I think its important that Rudi were the first band there and some people might slag us saying we weren't a proper Punk band or just a bunch of troublemakers or ex Glam Rockers or whatever, but to me that's what Punk came out of. The whole thing about it was it defined who you were ... you were a Punk and somebody else wasn't (laughs) ... very childish, but that's a part of any youth culture I think. Stiff Little Fingers were nice people but they were absolutely hated in Belfast. They helped us out with gear and we helped them out with gear and Big Gordy who'd been in Highway Star even ended up playing bass for us, so everybody did help each other out. But Stiff Little Fingers were basically a longhaired Heavy Metal band and were playing long-haired Heavy Metal long after Punk had been going and that's why everybody hated them at the start. It wasn't because we didn't like them as people and it wasn't because of the political angle because they didn't sing political songs at the start, they just did covers. They did the covers very well and that was the scary bit. At that first gig they must have played the whole of the first Clash LP and the whole of The Stranglers first LP and it was like a K.Tel Punk band. They could play all of the keyboard parts on guitar and as a live band they were always excellent. The reason people didn't like them after that was because of Gordon Oglivie's involvement. People didn't take them seriously as a Punk band because Jake still had long hair and wore flairs, which mightn't mean much now but at the time it did. You have to put yourself in the mindset of a sixteen year old where you're always right and everybody else is wrong and it's all in black and white. When Gordon Oglivie came along that was when things got a bit strange simply because we distrusted his motives. Most of us here in Belfast felt they were just using the whole thing as a gimmick. Now, I wasn't in the band so I don't know if they were or not, but there was enough anecdotal evidence at the time from people who were closely attached to them, to make you wonder very seriously just how much any of it meant. I think whatever music Jake played he would have been successful, because Jake is just one of those people who's a very good performer, very good front man and a very good guitar player. If it had been Speed Metal that was popular at the time he'd probably have made it fronting a Speed Metal band. I'm not saying he's as cynical as that, because I don't know Jake that well ... the only one I knew reasonably well out of the band was Henry Cluney and that was just because we were two idiots who liked T.Rex. Henry would have been the one that would have ran about town with the rest of us, whereas Jake was always that bit more the one who'd always have his eye on the bigger picture. They were that late in the game that I just saw them as bandwagon jumpers. As far as the political thing ... we played with them in London and Gordon Oglivie's press release was lying about the place and it was just patronising shite. Whether it was the Stiffs choice or not they got caught up in that whole trendy lefty thing and they were very trendy for about six months. We'd moved to London at the same time and we used to get journalists coming up to us asking why we didn't sing about politics and we'd be going, "Why should we? Didn't we start a band to get away from all that shite because we're sick to the back teeth with it and anyway, how do you know we're not?" Just 'cos we're not making stupid shit slogans and shouting them at people doesn't mean we're not, you know? At the time Tom Robinson was hip and trendy which I could never understand 'cos his band were absolute shite and he came along to that gig and we cornered him in the dressing room and gave him absolute dogs abuse. The Stiffs press release was saying they were two Protestants and two Catholics. They weren't. If that's lies then what's the rest of it? The press release that Oglivie did for them was all about the band crossing the peace

line and risking their lives to play music and it was cynical calculated tabloid tripe.

RIOT. 77: They were all Irish weren't they?

BRIAN: Huh?

RIOT. 77: All Catholics?

BRIAN: No, they were all Protestants ...

RIOT. 77: What???

BRIAN: Yeah they were all Protestants.

RIOT. 77: I never knew that!

BRIAN: Well, there ya go.

RIOT. 77: I thought they were from West Belfast?

BRIAN: No, they were from North Belfast.

RIOT. 77: I didn't know that.

BRIAN: You see? Press means everything and people believe it all. The way we looked at it was they were using this to sell a band ...

RIOT. 77: But The Clash and the Pistols and most other Punk bands were doing exactly the same thing ...

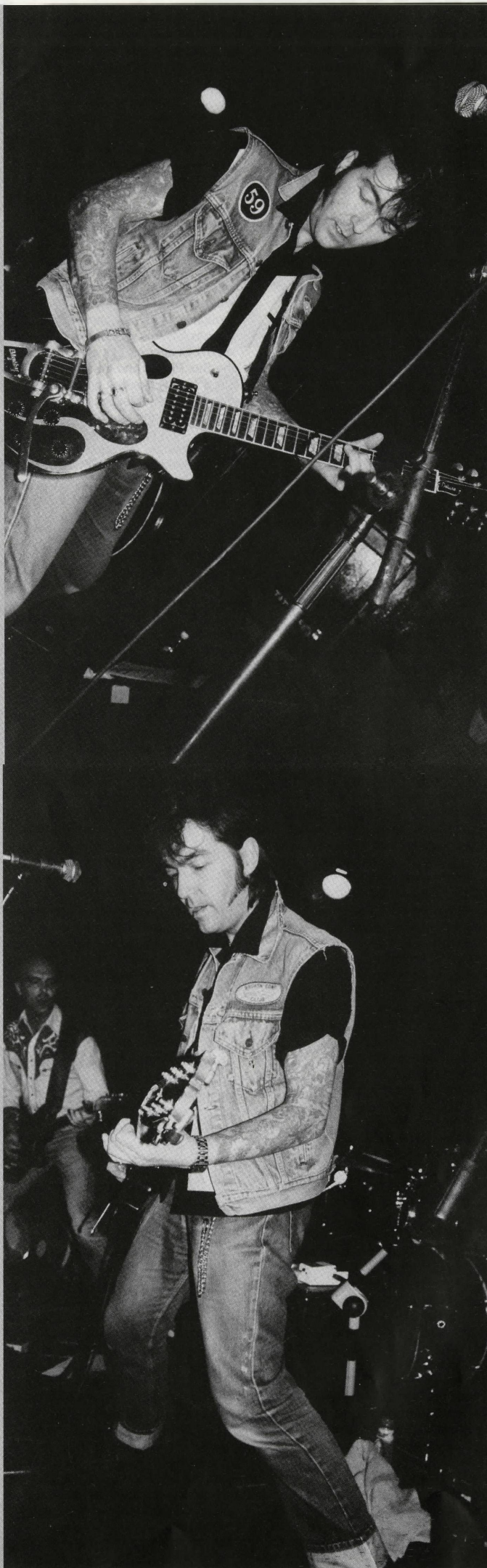
BRIAN: Yeah they were, but we were too stupid to realise that. If The Clash or the Sex Pistols said something, we believed it and couldn't see that it was exactly the same thing. We viewed it as cynical manipulation and didn't realise that's what every band does in order to succeed, which is a good reason why Rudi never succeeded and the Stiffs did. They used the right angle at the right time, but I would still question the validity of using that sort of thing at the time. I think their hearts were in it ok, but most of it was Oglivie's way of getting them noticed. That's why the Stiffs and The Undertones still hate each other because The Undertones got slagged for not writing about stuff over here. The thing was, the Stiffs didn't stay over here; they only done a handful of gigs and then went to England. Henry lived here but the rest of them didn't. Jimmy wasn't in the band yet at this stage. I don't want to make this into something it's not because there was never any big feud between us or anything and we always got on as people. Yes, all the bands hated each other but all bands do hate each other when they're sixteen. You don't like to see bands doing better than you and you haven't yet realised that if one band does well from Belfast then it automatically helps all the others. Something else that does sicken me about the Stiffs to this day was their treatment of Henry Cluney, which I won't go into, but he was and is one of the nicest people you could meet and while he was in the band I always gave them the benefit of the doubt and stood up for them, but the way they ended up treating him was shameful. The band that's currently playing as Stiff Little Fingers at the minute isn't Stiff Little Fingers and it hasn't been for an awful lot of years.

RIOT. 77: I think they're still an excellent live band. Have you gone to see them play at all?

BRIAN: No, I've never seen them without Henry. I wouldn't cross the road to see them. I gather from your magazine you're a fan of theirs?

RIOT. 77: I am, yeah.

BRIAN: I'm probably burning my bridges here then (laughs). But when I read your magazine I figured you were a fan, so I thought I'd wind you up (laughs). I thought they were good at the start and when Jimmy first joined them too; he was a phenomenal drummer. When we both went over to London at the same time, Rudi were by far the most popular band in Belfast and "Big Time" had come out. We didn't know it at the time but we were big fish in a small pond and we didn't really look outside that. We had no manager or any of that stuff and we went over to London in a van with nowhere to stay. We literally slept in the van until we found a few squats. We only got gigs by luck and had no clue about an agency or anything like that. You're sixteen/seventeen what do you know? The Stiffs had Oglivie with them and came over and done their first gig and we supported them, thinking this was hilarious, 'cos in Belfast it would have been the other way around. It was a real eye opener for us though as we'd never been on a big stage before and hadn't a clue what we were doing (laughs). The Stiffs came on and were great and if you didn't listen to the words they were singing, they were excellent. I saw them playing with the Radiators From Space on what must've been Halloween '78 and it was the Radiators big



comeback gig in the Electric Ballroom. They put the Stiffs on first and they wiped the floor with the Radiators. The Radiators died on their feet. The reason for that was, apart from the Stiffs being a brilliant live band, their LP was just out and they were really flavour of the month ... and also by this time the Radiators had gone fuckin' New Romantic (laughs) ... years in advance ... 'cos I liked the Radiators records, I liked "TV Tube Heart". I remember Marty Cowan always told people he hit one of them up here because he had seen them change out of their flares and into their Punk trousers (laughs) when they played Jordanstown Poly ... its true.

RIOT. 77: I asked Pete Holidai that and he said it was a load of shit.

BRIAN: Well, Marty would have hit anyone at the time (laughs). He didn't need an excuse to hit anyone. I wasn't at the gig, so these are only Marty's words on what happened, but I believe him.

RIOT. 77: Have you seen the Radiators since reforming?

BRIAN: I haven't, but I know my pal Jonnie Bonnie is drumming for them. I'd like to see them. I could never stand the Boomtown Rats ...

RIOT. 77: What????

BRIAN: Yeah, they played up here very early on and were one of the first big Punk bands to play here and it was just like watching a cabaret band. They were absolute shite. "Looking After Number One" was just out, but I thought they were no more Punk than the Bay City Rollers.

RIOT. 77: Depends on your definition. In the truest sense of the word they were as Punk as you could get.

BRIAN: I thought they were absolute piss. Once you'd seen a picture of them with beards you knew they'd just shaven their beards off to become a Punk band ...

RIOT. 77: I don't think Punk Rock to them was about whether you had a beard or not ...

BRIAN: But it was as cut and dried as that at the time. I remember when we first went over to London, Gavin Martin came over with us in the back of the van and he took us around to see Tony Parsons who was fond of showing us pictures of Mick Jones with long hair (laughs). I was horrified; I couldn't believe it. Our illusions were completely shattered (laughs). But I loved that first Radiators LP even though I don't know anybody else that did. I liked the "Million Dollar Hero" single and stuff. I know all this stuff about other bands might look bad in print but you have to take it with a pinch of salt. I've said stuff about the Stiffs before and people take it really seriously and you feel like saying, "For fucks sake, its only bands!" I'm just trying to get my side of the story across, because for twenty odd years I've had to listen to other people telling me that the only band to come out of Punk in Belfast was Stiff Little Fingers. It's just bollix!

RIOT. 77: Do you remember the gig you played with S.L.F. supporting The Adverts?

BRIAN: Yeah, I do. It was the Stiffs, then us and then The Adverts. The Adverts fucked everybody off by making us stand about for three hours while they fanned about sound-checking and pissing about like megastars. Then when everybody was queuing up outside waiting to get in, they just switched everything off and left and went to watch themselves on Top Of The Pops. They left ourselves and the Stiffs with no soundcheck, nothing microphoned up ... The Adverts who I had liked up to that point were absolute shite live and the Belfast audience didn't like them at all. They didn't like the fact that they'd fucked about two local bands first either, which we made sure to tell them (laughs). I was just disgusted by them because I thought all Punk bands helped each other out and thought that's what part of it was all about. We were so naïve and didn't realise that's the way most bands operate. So ever since then we've always made sure that any bands we play with get properly looked after with some sort of a soundcheck and if they need gear we'll lend them our gear. When we toured with The Jam they made sure every band that toured with them got a soundcheck and treated them well. The Jam paid us to go on tour with them and our van broke down and they bought us a new engine, you know stuff like

that. Also because we were playing on a big stage my guitar lead wasn't long enough and one of their roadies made one especially for us so we could play. They honestly couldn't do enough to help us. The Stiffs first major tour, what do they do? They charge their mates The Starjets how many thousand pounds to support them? That's common for bands, but it's not what you do to your friends, you know? But I suppose that's why bands are successful, because you have to be ruthless. There's more to it than that to me though. At the same time you can't single just the Stiffs out for this kind of behaviour. The Clash, who were my favourite English Punk band, probably talked more shite than the Stiffs ever did and were more politically naïve and into posturing and posing than any other band. They probably broke more promises than any other band ever. They threw Mick Jones out, who was the best thing in the band, and released "Cut The Crap" which was absolutely dreadful, but The Clash are still by far my favourite English Punk band. Warts n' all, there's no band that's perfect and I could just as easily turn around and slag Rudi to death for a half hour as well. I'm not getting at you for liking the Stiffs (laughs).

RIOT. 77: **Ok, moving off S.L.F. then and onto another band ... Skrewdriver ... Rudi supported them in Manchester once ...**

BRIAN: Yep! (laughs). We played more funny gigs ... How that came about was when we were in London we ran about with a band called The Raped. Again their records don't do them justice but they were an excellent band. One of our pals Nick, better known as Mr Puke, was living with the band - he was fifteen and had run away to London and he was too young to sign on so the guys in The Raped took him in and looked after him until he was old enough to sign on. They fed him and clothed him and when we came over he introduced us to The Raped and we got very friendly with them. They lined us up a lot of gigs out of the goodness of their hearts really and helped us out an awful lot. For example there was a time when we went to Peterborough and the promoter up there who had a local band on said The Raped and this other band can play but he didn't want the third band, which was Rudi. The Raped said, "We'll get in the van and drive home unless you let Rudi play". So they let us play. That was very much part of the whole Punk thing at the time - helping people out. People look back on Punk as a very negative thing, but it was a very positive thing here and also in all the small towns outside London. If you judge Punk on what people remember of it now, they remember about three bands, but that's not what it was like ... not forgetting about the Skrewdriver question (laughs) ... but to me the most important thing about Punk and what is continually overlooked now is the importance of the small labels, as they showed that anyone anywhere could make their own record without having to go to a major. And on a small label you can put out what you want without watering it down and you sometimes get paid too! In fact I could argue that once all the big bands like The Clash, The Jam, The Damned and the Pistols signed to major labels they weren't Punk bands any longer and anything they did wasn't any different to what the Bay City Rollers or Westlife or Britney Spears does and I would argue that point very strongly. I'm not blaming any of those bands; if someone throws money at you, what do you do? The bottom line is if all those bands had signed to indie labels or set up their own indie labels, then Punk would have changed things and maybe achieved what it set out to do. I'm not saying if Rudi were offered millions to sign we wouldn't have - we'd have probably jumped at it and killed each other in the process (laughs). But to me that's where Punk fell down and whilst I don't like any of The Exploited type bands, at least the majority of them were on small labels and had their own network of labels and gigs. All the stuff that went on in Belfast afterwards too, with Giros and that was much truer to the spirit of Punk than anything that was released on a major label. But then I don't like the music, so it's all contradictions ... but getting back to the gig with Skrewdriver (laughs) ... it was just a one off thing and like I said we got to know a lot of local bands in London when we lived there. We got to play with the Nipple Erectors, the Damned when they were the Doomed, we were booked for the next Clash tour, which would have been all the Irish dates in '78 but then Bernie Rhodes got sacked and we looked really stupid having told everyone we were gonna tour with them (laughs). But we got the Skrewdriver gig through a band we played with called Bitch and a couple of them were connected with the Nipple Erectors. As far as we were concerned we were just playing a gig with a Punk band called Skrewdriver and I think I'd bought their first single at some stage and that was all we knew. I was pals with Morrissey at the time through the New York Dolls fan club that we tried to set up and I rang him and said "Stephen we're playing in Manchester, come along and see us at last!!" I have a suspicion that we may have got the gig because Bitch didn't have a van and we did and they needed a lift up (laughs). When we got to the place it was in this club that was like a derelict wasteland and us and Bitch both set up and played and then Skrewdriver got up and they were all Skinheads, but a lot of our mates in London and Punks in general were all starting to become Skinheads so we didn't think anything of it. There were actually quite a few people there who had come along to see us too, though Mr. Morrissey didn't show up and later told me that he wouldn't set a foot inside that place 'cos you were likely to get a hiding (laughs) ... he didn't want to tell us beforehand in case it scared us off (laughs) ... so anyway by the time Skrewdriver had come on most of the people had left and they started putting these Union Jacks out over their amps and about twenty older Skinheads came in ... To be honest we just thought it was funny and they didn't start any trouble or anything. As I say at the time there were a lot of Punks becoming Skinheads and I know I'm generalising here when I say this and I shouldn't because a lot of my mates are Skinheads but at

the time there were a lot of Skinheads latching on to this and their only interest was in causing trouble. It hadn't gotten the whole National Front thing yet but later on when we were back in London and you'd get Skinheads there was usually some National Front connection there and some sort of trouble attached to it. Before all that though most Skinheads were just Punks with short hair and the Oi! thing hadn't kicked in yet. It's nothing very interesting and the only thing I can remember about the gig now is that we had nowhere to stay afterwards and a couple of girls broke into a flat for us so that we had somewhere to stay. We left before Skrewdriver had finished and it wasn't a very exciting gig. We played with tons of bands and that one doesn't stand out.

RIOT. 77: **What ones do stand out?**

BRIAN: Probably the best live band we played with was The Jam. None of us were Jam fans and to end up on Paul Weller's label was very strange for us because we weren't any way Mod inclined. If anything we would have definitely come from the Rocker side of things. It was Tony Fletcher that picked us for Jamming as he'd set the label up and Paul Weller bankrolled it. I liked The Jam's singles but could never really get into their LP's. Long before we were on the label I went to see them in London with Generation X and Slade and The Pirates and a couple of other bands at this festival in Wembley. I wasn't expecting great things and it was around the time when you had all the fighting between Mods and Skinheads and all this shite and someone got stabbed ... but I'd gone to see Generation X and their second album had just come out but they were very poor and had become just like a Heavy Metal rock band. Slade were brilliant live and we'd seen them a few times. The gig was nearly stopped because of all the fighting, but The Jam ended up playing and "All Mod Cons" had just come out and I'd never seen a band play as angry and aggressive a set in my life. It was a real eye opener for me. When we ended up on their label and touring with them

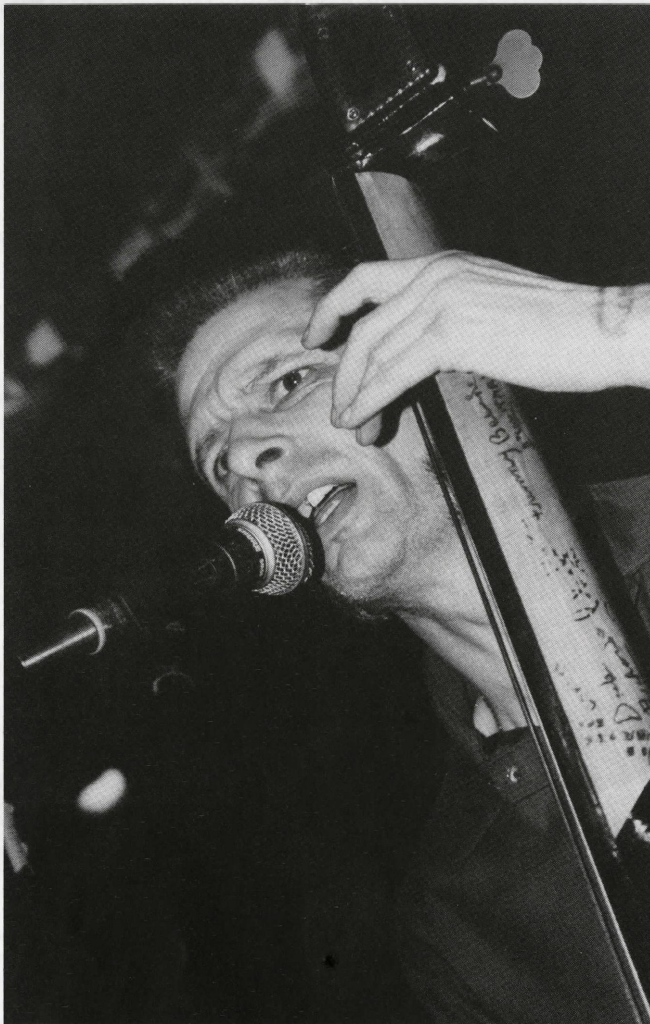
a few years later it was around the time of "The Gift" album and they really were so good live. Because we never really seen any bands when we lived in Belfast, when we moved to London we went out and seen every band we possibly could and most of them were dreadful. You'd think London in '78 you'd get to see all these brilliant bands, but no ... what it brought home to me was how good the Northern Ireland bands were and though they weren't as professional and ten years younger, they had far better songs. Most of the records were terrible though because the studios up here were rubbish and nobody knew how to produce a record. Most Rudi records sound shocking ... The Outcasts were a brilliant live band too but their records also sound shocking ... Protex the same thing ... and then you have all the bands that never even made it as far as putting a record out, leaving us with no recorded evidence to back any of this up unfortunately. That's probably why people rate the Stiffs and The Undertones, because their records sound streets ahead of anyone else's in the North at the time.

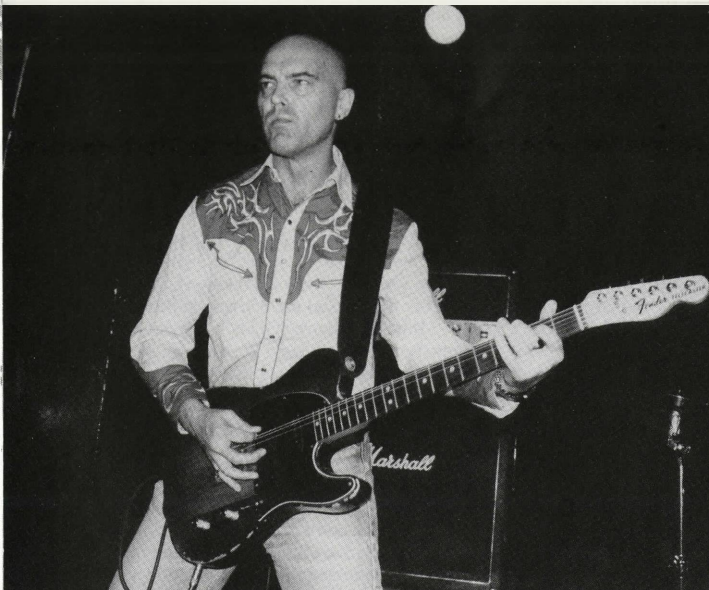
RIOT. 77: **So, you're first gig in Dublin was at the Dark Space festival?**

BRIAN: Yeah we played at that. All these highly-rated Dublin bands were there, but I thought U2 were the only band that had something to set themselves apart because they sounded slightly different. The Virgin Prunes had something as well actually. But the rest were dreadful. Protex and The Idiots from the North came down with us and all the Dublin bands just looked like old R N'B bands in comparison. Not that there's anything wrong with R N'B bands, but they were so much older and had obviously been doing it for years. The Northern bands couldn't play as well, but to me had much more to offer. We'd go and play places like Omagh and I don't think any band has come out of Omagh, but when you'd play there, there'd be ten or eleven bands on the bill and they were all great and aged about fourteen. There'd be maybe two or three hundred kids going nuts in Omagh Town Hall, right at the height of the troubles and no one gave a shit where you came from or what religion you were. That's why Punk was so important up here, because Northern Ireland people were always so quick to put you on one side or the other. The first question they'd ask was, "What's your name?" and if they couldn't make out from your name what religion you were then they'd ask you what part of Belfast you were from, so they could automatically put you in one box or the other. Most of the people in the bands weren't like that, but some of them were and there's no point in saying they weren't ... I read the interview you did with Sean O'Neill and you asked something about sectarianism or whatever ... the truth of the matter was, as corny as it sounds, people were a Punk first and their religion didn't come into it. Yes, they knew what religion you were born into or where you lived, because back then people of one religion usually lived in one area.

RIOT. 77: **It's still pretty much the same isn't it?**

BRIAN: Well, people are a lot more open-minded now. But areas are still very segregated. Where you get the trouble is where you have the interface lines. It's where one community backs up into another - one row of houses is Catholic and the next row is Protestant. That hasn't changed unfortunately. If you were a Punk you'd get a kicking from people the same religion as you, simply because you were a Punk. The reason a lot of people here are into music or into anything for that matter is for an escape from the politics and the religious bullshit and sectarianism. It's not just Punk music, but if people have an interest in anything it brings them together and the interests are usually more important than the things that divide them. If you liked Punk music or Rock N' Roll music or Classical music, then they were people's main interests; they weren't interested in saying, "By the way, what foot do you kick with?" or whatever. I know some young people do get caught up in the paramilitaries but fortunately none of





us were ever involved in any of that stuff, but we did know a lot of people who were. We were just into music; the same way people support a football club or whatever. You picked your friends from the people who liked the same sort of thing. At the start we only gigged in East Belfast because that was the only place we could get gigs, but when the Harp opened in the City Centre and bands started to play there it was so important because people could come from all sides of Belfast and meet in the Harp.

RIOT. 77: With a name like the Harp though, that was obviously an Irish bar, yeah?

BRIAN: Uhhh!! Nobody really wanted to go to that pub, but previously it would have been known as a Republican bar, yeah. It was in the centre of town and nobody went to it, really, so the people who owned the Harp were glad to get anyone through the door. I don't really know where the name came from. The other bar was the Pound ...

RIOT. 77: Which is obviously British?

BRIAN: The Pound? No, it wasn't. It was owned and run by Catholics ...

RIOT. 77: What did they call it the Pound for?

BRIAN: It was an old animal pound, I think.

RIOT. 77: Oh right (laughs).

BRIAN: You see, nothing's ever straight forward up here (laughs) ... never is (laughs) ... The Pound was where all the hippies used to go to and most of the bands who played it all claimed to have been in Them at some stage. In all fairness religion never came into it there either. It was the only bar in the centre of town where you really had live music. We played there with The Outcasts once and were subsequently banned. That was the night Terri Hooley came to see us and started the Good Vibrations label. They didn't want Punk bands until Punk got quite popular and they realised it would draw the crowds in and then became quite happy to put Punk bands on. The Harp was like a seedy pub that people didn't go to, so when bands started playing there everyone was desperate to see live music and went there. Even in Dublin, there may not have been many venues but there were some, whereas we had none at all. You had the Showband circuit, which was hotels and clubs that wouldn't have the likes of us play. So when a Punk band did play everybody went to see them, even if you hated them, because it was such a small scene. It didn't matter whether you liked the band or not, you were still showing your support by being there and being part of the whole thing. It was really exciting and no matter where the gigs were on, you'd be there because you didn't want to miss it. There weren't many of the old regulars in the Harp and they stayed downstairs out of the way and the bands played upstairs. Then when a lot of people started to go to the Harp the old regulars said, "Fuck this!" and went elsewhere (laughs). Most of the people that went to the Harp were from all parts of town, but Belfast being Belfast everybody knew roughly what religion people were or where they came from but they weren't interested in that. At the start the bands would usually consist of your mates from the same area and that's why they'd have been all the same religion.

RIOT. 77: Yeah that's something I noticed ... most of the people in the bands either have all Irish names or all British names ...

BRIAN: I wouldn't even go on that because you can take the wrong name and get the completely wrong idea. Thankfully nowadays things aren't half as bad, but back then if you formed a band it was your first band and probably consisted of your mates you went to school with or whatever and because the school system is segregated up here, which is a very bad thing and they shouldn't have religion in schools anyway, but the people in your school are going to be the same religion. When you go out at night you hang around with those mates and that's who you're gonna start a band with. Once people started drifting out of the suburbs and attending the Harp and places in the centre of town, things began to open up. More bands would have formed in those places that were of mixed backgrounds. Punk did make people a lot more open-minded here, even if it was just for the short term for some people. A lot of my mates now are a different religion to me, but I don't go to church so I don't think in religious terms but people still want to put you in that box, just because of where you come from and what school you went to. Pubs like the Bailey really showed that as well. Those people came from all backgrounds too and one of the rules when you went into the Bailey and something they told you at the door if you hadn't been in it before was, "Leave your politics at the door, there's no religion in here and we don't want any politics talked in here". The one sure way to divide people in Northern Ireland is to start talking politics. There're a lot of people that I knew who were Punks that went back to being sectarian thugs after it, or who were probably sectarian thugs all the way through it but they were the exception. The famous one that everyone talks about was Johnny Adair's band Offensive Weapon, but by the time they came on the scene I wasn't interested in Punk anyway. I'd still go and see The Outcasts though and I did see Offensive Weapon support them. It was all that kind of stuff that made me lose interest in Punk ... to me left and right is two sides of the same coin ... I'm not interested in politics at all really. It's

simply because I'd rather make my own mind up on things, which was what Punk always meant to me in the first place ... it became too much of people trying to ram things down your throat and big slogans for this and big slogans for that. We used to get slagged by English journalists for not writing about Northern Ireland and our feeling towards them was - they're telling us all about Northern Ireland when they don't live there. We do live there and we have to go back there and we're not like The Clash with bodyguards and driving about in record company limousines. We get the bus and are likely to get a good kicking or worse for saying the wrong thing. It was so patronising and at the end of the day people in Northern Ireland know all there is to know about politics and can make their own minds up without being told what to think. Most of the Rudi songs I'm most proud of are the later ones like "Crimson" in which I would say has a political slant, but its not party politics it's personal politics I suppose. A lot of the Rudi songs are like that - they weren't specifically about Belfast, but they couldn't have been written anywhere else. They were written about what we were living with at the time and obviously we were living in Belfast ... something like "Toytown" is a bit more obvious because it talks about buildings falling and that ... but with "Crimson" we weren't looking at right and wrong, we were just writing from the perspective of the individual. They only way you can make something better is down to the individual ... if you want to change something, you have to start with yourself.

RIOT. 77: I noticed with a lot of people from the north, they seem to object to anyone else having an opinion on what's going on there ... it's weird, we can all talk about Iraq or Eastern Europe or anywhere else in the world and no one bats an eyelid, but as soon as you mention a conflict that's going on in your own country, it's all just "Shhhh!!!" ...

BRIAN: Truthfully, you're right ... at the time we hated other people talking about Belfast and giving us their opinions on Belfast. If they've never been here then they don't know what they're talking about. Now I'm a bit older I would maybe have a different perspective, but at the time, no. Everything to people outside Belfast was black and white, you see. There was always a right and a wrong and in Belfast nothing is black and white and nothing is as simple as that. I don't normally spend much time thinking about stuff like this, but there's usually a grey area with everything, if you know what I'm saying? But we definitely hated bands singing about it. Bands like Simple Minds and Spandau Ballet got slated for singing about Belfast and quite rightly so. People used Belfast as a trendy badge and when it came down it, most of them were scared to come here or play here and the ones that did always stayed in luxury hotels and hid away from the reality of it. Again with The Clash, they talked more nonsense than any other band, but the reason I respected them was that they did actually come and play here. I know it annoyed us all when they got their photos taken around barricades n' all ... that was corny and really cheap ... but we met The Clash when they came here and they were genuine people and one of the best live bands I ever saw in my life. I could argue for three days about how wrong they were about some things ...

RIOT. 77: You obviously don't back Joe Strummer's thoughts on the north?

BRIAN: I don't think he had particularly well informed views, no. But I know Joe Strummer's views on Northern Ireland after being here were different than before he came. He also kept very quiet while he was here ... I would have taken to what Johnny Thunders said about the north a lot more than what Joe Strummer said, because with Johnny Thunders there was no bullshit ...

RIOT. 77: What did he say about it?

BRIAN: "Strange fuckin' town!!" Johnny Thunders to me was more real than any other, because there was no bullshit with him. I never saw anyone live in my life as captivating on the stage as Johnny Thunders ...

RIOT. 77: C'mon, he could be absolute horseshit at times as well and that's a well-known fact.

BRIAN: Oh yeah, definitely. But that's the difference; when he was good, he was very, very good - the best! You were never watching a rehearsed show with Johnny Thunders. I just liked his attitude; he loved winding people up and telling them what they didn't want to hear. Take away the audience and the whole persona and he was a very genuine person when he was with ordinary people. I don't think The Clash believed everything they said and a lot of it was misrepresented too. I know when Joe Strummer came here people explained things to him a bit more about what was going on and he realised it wasn't so black and white, but the good thing about Strummer was that he would actually listen. The other thing was he got a death threat for wearing a "H Block" t-shirt and didn't play here for quite a few years.

RIOT. 77: Yeah, the loyalists sent him a death threat didn't they?

BRIAN: Uhhhh!!! Somebody did ... it was meant to be a loyalist paramilitary group but Northern Ireland being Northern Ireland, it could have been anyone. You don't know who made it or whether or not it was serious. He ran about with that Red Brigade t-shirt on him in England for years and I don't know too much about them, but especially if you were a singer in an English band you wouldn't run down the streets of Northern



Ireland with U.V.F. or I.R.A. written on your shirt if you had half a brain. You'd expect there to be some comeback. Like walking around Germany with some ... I dunno ... remember when serial killers were chic for a while? That's another thing I could never get ...

RIOT. 77: What are you talking about ... one of your band members corresponded with John Wayne Gacey (laughs)

BRIAN: Yeah, he did and I don't get that. I don't get that at all ... uhhhhh!! You got me there, didn't you? (laughs)

RIOT. 77: Yep! (laughs)

BRIAN: He has a couple of his paintings and stuff. Liam claims he was trying to get him to confess in letters that he did commit the killings because at the time he said he didn't. I could never really understand that sort of fascination.

RIOT. 77: Have you ever thought about leaving Belfast and living somewhere else?

BRIAN: Yeah we wanted to in 1978. When we moved to London I didn't want to move back. But we had to! Ronnie and Graham ended up in jail (laughs). We were told on no uncertain terms that if we didn't move back immediately then Ronnie and Grimmy would both get six months for what was little more than a driving offence. Needless to say they were rushed straight from the courts into the van and back to Belfast (laughs). It was just because we had funny hair and were seen as these undesirables from Northern Ireland (laughs). It was a real eye opener actually because there were these other people up in court at the same time and it was their sixth offence for GBH or whatever and because they were English and wearing suits n' ties, all they'd get was a slap on the wrist and a suspended sentence. Admittedly Graham and Ronnie were in the clothes they were arrested in which was died hair and leather jackets, but the judge just started calling them spongers from Ireland and started ranting and raving and saying they were going straight to jail. They were remanded in custody for a week just because they were from Northern Ireland, when anyone else would have been out on bail. It's weird how someone can be that openly prejudiced.

RIOT. 77: What do you make of all the old Punk bands reforming ... have you ever considered reforming Rudi?

BRIAN: Rudi will never reform. I'm in a bit of sticky situation here because of the whole Shame Academy thing, but I don't think any old Punk bands should reform. There should also be a rule that if a Punk band doesn't have 90% of its original line up, then it can't reform. Once I left Rudi I never played Rudi songs again ... except once when the Saw Doctors got me up on stage and they actually knew the song better than I did (laughs) ... the Shame Academy thing I was roped into for the "...Spit!" book launch (laughs) ... and I'll hold that against them till their dying day (laughs). The other thing we played at was this benefit for Terri Hooley the other week up here, after the whole arcade his shop was in was maliciously burnt down a few months back and he lost all his stock. It was ourselves, The Undertones, The Moondogs and the Ruefex - all bands who were on Good Vibrations, bar Shame Academy of course. There were a number of other small shops in the same arcade that were also burnt down, but luckily most of them had insurance but Terri didn't. It was all destroyed, all irreplaceable stuff. The place was packed and there was no guest list, so it raised a lot of money for Terri. At the end of the day Terri did a lot for people over here all those years back and he has ever since. It was my way of trying to pay him back a little bit. But getting back to the question about bands reforming and contradicting what I just said, I went to see as many New York Dolls gigs as I could this year and loved every minute of it (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Did you go to those gigs, yeah?

BRIAN: Yeah I went to see them in London with Arthur Kane before he died at the Morrissey thing. Then I went down to Dublin to see them with the White Stripes and then up here again with the White Stripes.

RIOT. 77: I didn't go ... I was contemplating it alright, but who is it, just Sylvain Sylvain and David Johanson?

BRIAN: Yeah. In London they had Arthur before he died. The guitar player's brother stood in then for the Manchester gig and then they had a guy from Hanoi Rocks. The bottom line is, I don't like it but my heart sort of ruled my head on this one (laughs). I mean you'd got poor Mickey Finn from T.Rex going around playing gigs under the name and how can you have T.Rex without Marc Bolan? For him to even attempt to do it was just pathetic. But yeah I did sit up all night worrying about getting tickets for New York Dolls because I'm still just such a fan (laughs). I know a lot of people that didn't go to it, because they felt without Johnny Thunders and Jerry Nolan it just isn't the New York Dolls. Unfortunately I'm that obsessive about them that if David Johanson had been singing in the toilet outside I'd have went along to see it. They were actually very, very good indeed! We went over to see the reformed Stray Cats in London this year too and amazingly they were even better than years ago, because they cut all the flab out and just went straight for the jugular. They're all original members and all still alive too which helps! So I dunno, where does that leave me? (laughs) I'm so glad

The Clash never reformed and I'm not a huge Pistols fan but if I was, then reforming would have ripped the heart out of me. I saw The Clash in '84 I think it was when they played here without Mick Jones and it was no more The Clash ... it could have been anyone. I saw Joe Strummer with the Mescaleros and thought he was good, but his band were shocking. It was just the old songs that people were there to see. I always loved Strummer as a performer, but the band he had with him, the Mescaleros, just weren't worthy of him, but then how do you follow The Clash, you know what I mean? In their day they were the best in the world. There is a certain other thing that bugs me at the same time though and its this white person thing of how you must stop playing when you reach thirty because if you're playing something like the Blues it's the other way around and no one takes you seriously until you reach seventy. I remember a few years back going down to Dublin to see Dick Dale and the same year I went over to see Link Wray and they're two of my all time heroes. Link was, I think, seventy at the time and he could have wiped the floor with people of any age at any time. People can be very snobby about age, but then I remember thinking when I was sixteen that once you hit twenty you shouldn't still be playing in a band!

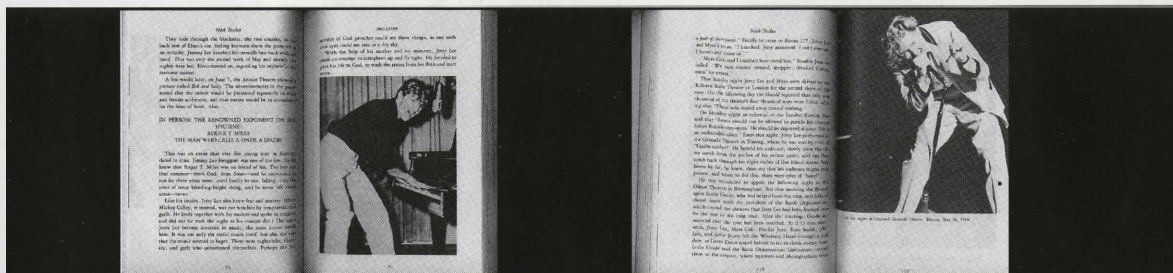
RIOT. 77: Ok this interview was all over the place ... it was supposed to be about The Sabrejets (laughs)

BRIAN: Yeah people ask me why I'm playing Rockabilly now when I used to be in a Punk band, but to me it's the same thing. When I started off it was Chuck Berry, New York Dolls, Eddie Cochran and T.Rex. Bolan played "Summertime Blues" and the Dolls played "Something Else" you know? Johnny Thunders played Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent songs the whole way through his career. Back then there was no difference. I've always liked that sort of music and I don't have to justify it or anything but to me early Rock N' Roll and early Punk have more in common that they don't have in common. To me Rock N' Roll is Rock N' Roll and all that eighties Punk is Heavy Metal to me; its not Rock N' Roll. There's no Roll to it. Eddie Cochran and T.Rex was one step from Chuck Berry and Johnny Thunders is one step from T.Rex and the beginning of Rudi's "Big Time" is Chuck Berry played badly by me (laughs). It's all the same thing and nothing like what Punk became in the eighties, which was just Heavy Metal. Shitty nonsense! It became so boring and predicable and Rudi reacted against being labelled as a Punk band from then on in. We were proud to be a Punk band at the start, but when we started getting lumped in with bands like The Exploited who we had nothing in common with at all, that's when we realised we weren't part of what it had become. I would have gone to see The Cramps around that time, who introduced me to the more obscure Rockabilly. The big connection between the two, like I said before is the small labels ... Punk has them and Rock N' Roll and Rockabilly had and has them and as far as I'm concerned that's where you'll always find the best music and the best bands. They do it for the love of music and are usually run by fans for fans. Throughout history all the greatest and most groundbreaking music has started out on small labels ... If I learned anything out of Punk its don't compromise anything, do exactly what you want and if people don't like it, fuck them. Never do anything you don't want to do just because someone asked you to do it, because you'll regret it. If you stick to your guns, you may not be flavour of the month, but you'll be able to sleep at night and be able to keep doing what you do because you believe in it. That's basically why the Sabrejets do what we do because all four of us really love the music and none of us are into it for anything else apart from the music and to have a good time along the way! Like one of our posters says "Old enough to know better but too far gone to care!"



"HELLFIRE - THE JERRY LEE LEWIS STORY"

BY NICK TOSCHES. (PIEXUS PUBLISHING)



"HELLFIRE" IS CONSIDERED BY MOST TO BE THE DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY ON JERRY LEE LEWIS. THE MAIN THRUST OF THIS BIO IS JERRY LEE'S STRUGGLE WITH GOOD AND EVIL. FOR THE KILLER IS EITHER THE CHURCH ON SUNDAY OR THE HONKY TONKS ON SATURDAY ... YOU HAVE A CHOICE ... ONE OR THE OTHER ... NEVER BOTH. HEAVEN OR HELL. MUCH LIKE THE HANK WILLIAMS BIOGRAPHY "YOUR CHEATIN' HEART" BY CHET FLIPPO, TOSCHES ATTEMPTS TO DELVE DEEP INTO LEWIS'S PSYCHE BY USING LEWIS'S THOUGHTS TO GIVE INTIMATE INSIGHTS TO THE READER. THE OBVIOUS PROBLEM WITH THIS TECHNIQUE IS THAT TOSCHES, OR ANYONE BESIDES JERRY LEE LEWIS, DOESN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT ACTUALLY GOES THROUGH THE MIND OF THE KILLER. NONETHELESS "HELLFIRE" MAKES FOR TERRIFIC READING, DESPITE THE FACT THE KILLER WASN'T INTERVIEWED FOR THE BOOK. IT TAKES A TIME TO GET STARTED HOWEVER AS THE FIRST COUPLE OF CHAPTERS TRACE HIS FAMILY ROOTS BACK GENERATIONS MORE THAN WAS NEEDED AND SERVES NO REAL PURPOSE TO THE LIFE STORY OF THE SUBJECT, IN MY OPINION. BORN AND RAISED IN THE DEEP SOUTH OF FERRIDAY, LOUISIANA JERRY'S FIRST REAL LOVE IN LIFE WAS THE PIANO AND IT WAS EVIDENT FROM AS YOUNG AS TEN YEARS OF AGE THAT THIS WAS HOW HE WOULD EARN HIS LIVING. HIS FATHER ELMO PURCHASED JERRY LEE HIS FIRST PIANO IN 1945; A USED STARKC UPRIGHT THAT HE HAULED BACK FROM MONROE IN HIS PICKUP TRUCK. NOW THAT JERRY LEE HAD HIS OWN PIANO HE ATTENDED SCHOOL EVEN LESS FREQUENTLY THAN HE HAD IN THE PAST AN SPENT HIS DAYS LURCHED OVER THAT PIANO, PLAYING BOOGIE-WOOGIE RENDITIONS OF ANY SONGS HE WOULD HEAR ON THE RADIO. BEGINNING AS A SESSION PLAYER FOR THE LIKES OF SUN'S SAM PHILLIPS AS HIS FIRST PAID WORK, IT QUICKLY BECAME APPARENT TO JERRY LEE THAT HE NEEDED TO BE IN THE LIMELIGHT LEADING THE SHOW AND NOT STUCK BEHIND FAR INFERIOR PERFORMERS, SO THAT'S WHAT HE WENT AND DID. THE BOOK BEGINS TO PICK UP HERE AS IT TAKES US ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE EARLIEST OF THE KILLER'S LIVE PERFORMANCES AROUND SOME OF THE SEDIEST, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, SPECTACULAR LATE NIGHT

DIVE BARS OF THE SOUTH. BY THE TIME LEE HAD REACHED THE AGE OF TWENTY HE'D ALREADY BEEN MARRIED THREE TIMES, DOWNED ENOUGH WHISKEY TO SINK THE TITANIC, TAKEN AS MANY PILLS AS HE COULD GET HIS HANDS ON AND EARNED MORE MONEY THAN MOST PEOPLE DID IN A LIFETIME. THE HIGH TIMES AND HIT RECORDS WERE SHORTLIVED THOUGH AND WHEN IT EMERGED WHILST ON TOUR IN ENGLAND THAT HIS THIRD WIFE MYRA GALE WAS IN FACT HIS THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD COUSIN SO BEGAN THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF LEE'S CAREER AND PERSONAL LIFE. TOSCHES TAKES US THROUGH SOME OF JERRY'S WILDEST YEARS WITH TOUR STORIES OF HIS LEGENDARY HELLRAISING WAYS FROM ANYONE, INCLUDING BAND MATES, THAT WERE AROUND HIM AT THE TIME. THOUGH IT ALL HOWEVER, MIRACULOUSLY THE KILLER MANAGED TO KEEP MAKING RECORDS AND TOURING WHEN IT ALL LOOKED ON THE BRINK OF FALLING APART AT ANY SECOND. HE MADE MILLIONS, LOST MILLIONS, MADE MILLIONS, LOST MILLIONS AND SO ON ... THE GUY'S BEEN THROUGH IT ALL AND STILL LIVED TO TELL THE TALE ... BEEN SUED BY EVERYONE INCLUDING HIS OWN WIFE ... HUNTED DOWN BY THE FBI, THE IRS AND THE U.S. MARSHALS, BUT ALWAYS MANAGED TO ROCK ON REGARDLESS OF WHAT PERSONAL TRAUMAS WERE GOING ON AND WENT ON TO HAVE A SECOND LEASE OF LIFE BY REINVENTING HIMSELF AS A COUNTRY SINGER MIDWAY THROUGH HIS CAREER. HIS INNER CONFLICTS RAVAGED THE MAN CONSTANTLY, CONVINCED OF THE FACT THAT ROCK N' ROLL WAS THE DEVIL'S MUSIC, BUT THE BEAST WAS INSIDE HIM NOW AND THERE WAS LITTLE HE COULD DO TO STOP IT. AT TIMES YOU FEEL TOSCHES MAY BE PROJECTING A FANTASY OF WHAT HE NEEDS JERRY LEE LEWIS TO BE INTO THE MIX, BUT IN THE END "HELLFIRE" IS A SUPERBLY WRITTEN BIOGRAPHY THAT CREATES A TRAGIC MYTH OUT OF A MAN. (PIEXUS PUBLISHING: 30 CRAVEN STREET, LONDON WC2N 5NT, ENGLAND.)

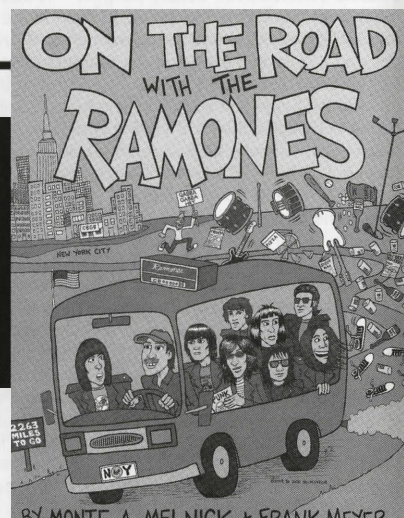
"ON THE ROAD WITH THE RAMONES"

BY MONTE A MELNICK & FRANK MEYER (SANGUARY PUBLISHING)



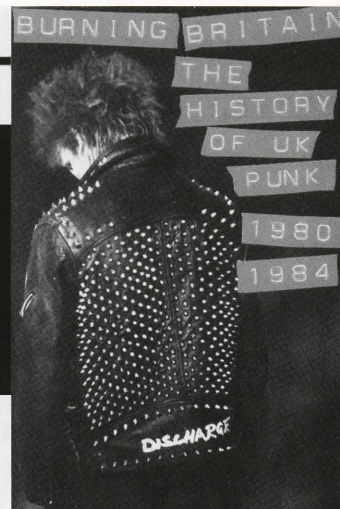
HMMMM!!! THIS IS INTERESTING. AUTHOR MONTE MELNICK AS YOU'LL WELL KNOW WAS OFTEN CONSIDERED TO BE THE FIFTH RAMONE. HE WAS THERE FROM THE BEGINNING AND SPENT TWENTY-TWO YEARS WITH THE GROUP. FROM THEIR EARLY DAYS IN FORREST HILLS, QUEENS THROUGH TO THEIR FAREWELL GIG IN '96, ACTING AS THEIR TOUR MANAGER, PERSONAL ASSISTANT, LAGKEY, WHATEVER ... HE WAS THERE FOR ALL THE TOURS, RECORDING SESSIONS, VIDEOS, HIRINGS AND FIRINGS ETC. ETC. HE GAVE HALF HIS LIFE TO THE RAMONES AND LOST EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE PROCESS. HIS WIFE DIED OF A HEROIN ADDICTION AND HE COULDN'T MAKE IT TO EITHER OF HIS PARENTS FUNERALS DOWN TO HIS COMMITMENT TO TOUR MANAGING THIS GROUP. PRETTY INSANE WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT. HIS CO-WRITER ON THE OTHER HAND GIVES US THE JOURNALISTIC SIDE TO THE BOOK. FRANK MEYER CURRENTLY PLAYS GUITAR AND SINGS IN THE STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS, WRITES FOR A TON OF PUBLICATIONS AND HAS APPEARED ON SOMETHING IN THE REGION OF SIXTY ALBUMS, SO THIS MAKES FOR A GOOD PAIRING. BARE IN MIND THIS BOOK HAS BEEN SLATED BY MARKY RAMONE AND AFTER READING IT YOU CAN KINDA SEE WHY. THE AUTHORS DON'T HOLD BACK AND DISH THE DIRT ON EVERY MEMBER OF THE GROUP FROM A NEUTRAL PERSPECTIVE. THERE'S NO HOLDING BACK AND IT'S ALMOST A FLY-ON-THE-WALL ACCOUNT OF THE BAND'S CAREER, BOTH PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL. MONTE HAS A LOT TO GET OFF HIS CHEST THAT HAS BEEN BUILDING UP INSIDE OF HIM ALL THIS TIME AND NOW HE FINALLY HAS A CHANCE TO HAVE HIS SAY. IT'S BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED THAT THE RAMONES NEVER CARED TOO MUCH FOR EACH OTHER ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, BUT WAS THEIR MUTUAL BELIEF IN THE MUSIC THEY WERE WRITING THAT KEPT THEM TOGETHER FOR THAT LENGTH OF TIME. JOEY AND DEE DEE'S WRITING SKILLS, JOHNNY'S RIGHT-WING BUSINESS IDEALS AND TOMMY'S EXPERIENCE IN THE STUDIO AND GETTING THE BAND TO SOUND JUST RIGHT IN THE EARLY DAYS WAS A COMBINATION THAT ALWAYS SEEMED TO WORK. THE RAMONES NEVER GOT THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVED WHEN THEY WERE AROUND AND THAT'S SOMETHING THAT PLAGUED THE GROUP THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER AND INDEED THIS BOOK. THEY TRIED EVERYTHING

TO BREAK THE BAND, THOUGH IT NEVER HAPPENED, BUT SOMETHING THEY (ESPECIALLY JOEY) ALWAYS BELIEVED WAS JUST AROUND THE NEXT CORNER, RIGHT UP TO THEIR "MONDO BIZARRO" RECORD, WHICH WAS ONE LAST CRACK AT HAVING A HIT ALBUM. ALONG THE WAY THEY BROUGHT IN DIFFERENT PRODUCERS AND SWITCHED MANAGEMENT TEAMS, MADE SOME OVER-POLISHED ALBUMS AND SO ON, BUT IN THE END THE BAND HAD TO MAKE DO WITH CULT STATUS, WHICH WAS ALWAYS JUST FINE BY ME. THE WORLD SIMPLY WASN'T READY FOR THE RAMONES WHEN THEY WERE AROUND. THIS BOOK DELVES DEEP INTO THE PERSONALITY OF EACH RAMONE AND COMES UP WITH SOME ENLIGHTENING STUFF INDEED. OK, WE ALWAYS KNEW JOHNNY WAS A BAD EGG, BUT FUCK ME, A WIFE BEATER AND A CARD CARRIER FOR THE KKK ON TOP OF ALL THE OTHER SHIT????? SOME OF IT IS STOMACH TURNING TO SAY THE LEAST, BUT OF COURSE IT ALL GETS OVERLOOKED BY MOST 'COS THE RAMONES WERE THE GREATEST BAND IN THE HISTORY OF ROCK N' ROLL. THERE'S OVER FIFTY DIFFERENT PEOPLE INTERVIEWED HERE, FROM GIRLFRIENDS, TO ROADIES, FANS, FAMILY MEMBERS, MUSICIANS, PRODUCERS AND BASICALLY ANYONE THAT HAD ANY DEALINGS WITH THE BAND. IT'S A WARTS N' ALL PORTRAYAL OF THE REAL RAMONES AND ALL THAT WENT ON BEHIND THE SCENES. JOEY'S OCD DISEASE, DEE DEE'S BIPOLAR CONDITION, YOU NAME IT, MONTE AND FRANK AREN'T AFRAID TO OFFER ANYTHING UP FOR DISCUSSION. THERE'S TONS OF RARE PHOTOS AND FLIERS AND GENERAL RAMONES MEMORABILIA PICTURED ON EACH PAGE, MOST OF WHICH IS CULLED FROM MONTE'S OWN PRIVATE STASH, SO THERE'S REALLY VERY LITTLE IN THIS BOOK THAT YOU'VE COME ACROSS BEFORE. BAR THE ODD INTERVIEW SNIPPET THAT'S BEEN BORROWED FROM THE LIKES OF ROLLING STONE AND MOJO MAGAZINE. WELL WORTH CHECKING OUT. (SANGUARY PUBLISHING: SANGUARY HOUSE, 45 53 SINGAIR ROAD, LONDON, W14 0NS, ENGLAND.)



"BURNING BRITAIN" - THE HISTORY OF U.K. PUNK, 1980-1984

BY IAN GLASPER (CHERRY RED)



STAMPIN' GROUND FRONTMAN, BLACKFISH RECORDS LABEL OWNER AND GENERAL PURVEYOR AND PLUGGER OF ALL THINGS METALLIC, IAN GLASPER TAKES A LOOK BACK AT THE SECOND WAVE OF U.K. PUNK - AN ERA IN BRITISH MUSIC THAT HE FEELS HAS BEEN IGNORED UP TILL NOW. I'VE NEVER BEEN A SYMPATHISER OF BANDS LIKE THE EXPLOITED AND THEIR SHORT-HAIRED HEAVY METAL MOB OF THE EARLY EIGHTIES, SO A LOT OF BANDS IN THIS WOULDN'T BE OF ANY INTEREST TO ME. BY THE TIME THE MOHAWKS CAME INTO IT, IT WASN'T PUNK ANYMORE AND HAD BECOME AN AWFUL PARODY OF ITSELF. ONE POSITIVE THING HOWEVER ABOUT THIS AGE WAS OF COURSE THE REBIRTH OF THE INDEPENDENT SCENE, WITH MOST OF THE BANDS STANDING ON THEIR OWN FEET - SOMETHING THE ORIGINAL MOVEMENT LACKED AND ULTIMATELY BECAME ITS BIGGEST DOWNFALL. THIS ERA WAS THE BEGINNING OF PUNK ROCK AS A PIGEONHOLED STYLE, ONE-DIMENSIONAL AND ABOVE ALL, JUST NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTING ANYMORE. JOHN FINCH OF LUNATIC FRINGE SUMS IT UP BETTER THAN I EVER COULD IN THE INTRODUCTION TO THIS BOOK - "THE EXPLOITED WERE A GODSEND TO CRITICS OF PUNK EVERYWHERE WITH THEIR "SWASTIKAS ARE A SYMBOL OF PUNK" FIRST INTERVIEW IN SOUNDS, IRRETRIEVABLY HARMING THE MOVEMENT". THAT SAID GLASPER TACKLES IT WITH HEARTFELT INTEGRITY AND IS CLEARLY A HUGE FAN OF IT ALL, WHICH CAN MAKE THIS BOOK AN INTERESTING READ EVEN FOR EXPLOITED HATERS LIKE MYSELF. OF COURSE THERE WERE STILL A WHOLE CROP OF OTHER GREAT BANDS AROUND BRITAIN AT THIS TIME THAT DIDN'T FIT INTO THE ABOVEMENTIONED MORONIC STATUS AND THANKFULLY FOR US PUNK ROCKERS THERE ARE A DECENT FEW INCLUDED HERE. THE BUSINESS, 4 SKINS DEMOB, BLITZ, ANGELIC UPSTARTS, TOY DOLLS, THE ADIGTS, NEWTOWN NEUROTICS, COCKNEY REJECTS AND THE OUTGASTS HAVE A NUMBER OF PAGES DEVOTED TO THEM. NATURALLY A BOOK OF THIS KIND IS BOUND TO SPARK DEBATE OVER WHICH BANDS TO INCLUDE AND MORE IMPORTANTLY NOT TO INCLUDE. ON ONE HAND YOU COULD ARGUE THE ABSENCE OF BANDS LIKE SHAM 69 AND STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME IS THERE REALLY ANYTHING FURTHER TO BE SAID ABOUT THESE BANDS THAT WE HAVEN'T READ A THOUSAND TIMES BEFORE? IN THEIR PLACE ARE SOME MORE OBSCURE AND

LESSER KNOWN BANDS THAT MAKES FOR INTERESTING READING AND MUCH LIKE THE "SPIT ..." BOOK ON NORTHERN IRELAND, SHOWS ALL THE PLAYERS THAT WERE PRESENT AND NOT JUST THE ONES WITH A BIGGER PLATFORM FROM WHICH TO SCREAM FROM, SO NICE WORK THERE. THERE'S A HUGE EMPHASIS PLACED ON IT ALL AS A MOVEMENT AND NOT MERELY THE HANDFUL OF BANDS THAT TEND TO REPRESENT IT IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS. "BURNING BRITAIN" TAKES A SIMILAR APPROACH TO STEVEN BLUSH'S "AMERICAN HARDCORE" BOOK RELEASED A FEW YEARS BACK AND TAKES US ON A JOURNEY AROUND THE COUNTRY REGION BY REGION, SPEAKING TO EVERYONE AND ANYONE WHO HAD A PART IN IT. RECORD LABELS, FRIENDS OF THE BANDS, FANS, FANZINE WRITERS, PROMOTERS AND RECORD SHOP OWNERS ARE ALL MENTIONED IN AN ATTEMPT AT COMING UP WITH THE FULL PICTURE. GLASPER IS A QUALIFIED WRITER TO TAKE THIS BOOK ON AND I ENJOYED THE READ, WHICH MUST SAY SOMETHING GIVEN MY LACK OF INTEREST IN A LOT OF THE BANDS THEMSELVES. HOWEVER BY THE TIME YOU'VE READ THROUGH FIFTY OR SO OF THESE EXTENDED BIOGRAPHIES, EACH BAND'S STORY BEGINS TO TAKE A SIMILAR PATH IN THAT THEY MEET IN SCHOOL, FORM A BAND, TIMES GET TOUGH AND THEY MAKE NO MONEY, GET RIPPED OFF TOO MANY TIMES AND CALL IT A DAY WHEN REAL LIFE ISSUES MAKE THEMSELVES KNOWN ... THEN OF COURSE THERE'S THE OBLIGATORY REFORMATION IN THE NINETIES TO PLAY HITS. YOU CAN ALMOST TELL BEFORE YOU READ THEIR STORY HOW ITS ALL GOING TO END UP, BUT LIKE I PREVIOUSLY SAID IT'S GLASPER'S WRITING THAT KEEPS IT ALL TICKING OVER. THE BOOK IS A MASSIVE READ, WITH SMALL TYPE AND JUST UNDER FOUR HUNDRED PAGES IN CONTENT, MAKING IT ALMOST LIKE AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF UK SECOND WAVE PUNK THAT WILL PROVE USEFUL FOR SOURCING INFORMATION WHENEVER NEEDED. A DEFINITE MUST FOR FANS OF THE GAME, BUT ALSO A RECOMMENDED READ FOR THOSE OF YOU OUTSIDE THE CIRCLE. (CHERRY RED RECORDS, 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 14 WARPIE WAY, LONDON W3 0RG, ENGLAND.)

PSYCHOBILLY REACTION!

WEDNESDAY 13

+ Viking Skull LIVE!!!

03.11.04 Cardiff - Barfly
029 2006 7658

04.11.04 Exeter - Cavern
01392 425 309

05.11.04 London - Islington Academy
0870 600 100

07.11.04 Manchester - Academy
0161 832 1111

08.11.04 Birmingham - Carling Academy
0870 771 2000

09.11.04 Glasgow - King Tuts
0141 221 5279

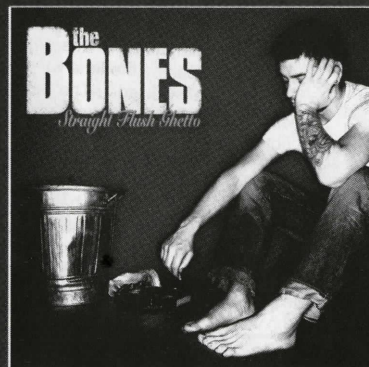
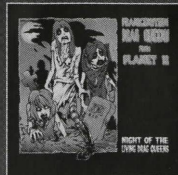
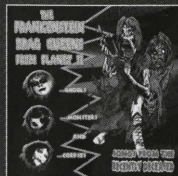
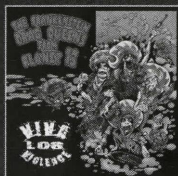
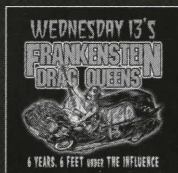
10.11.04 Belfast - Limelight
0870 243 4455

11.11.04 Dublin - Music Centre
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13.11.04 Brighton - Concorde 2
01273 772 770

17.11.04 Colchester - Arts Centre
01206 500 900

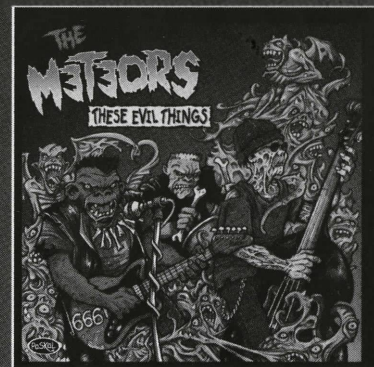
18.11.04 Liverpool - Barfly
0151 707 6171



THE BONES
STRAIGHT FLUSH GHETTO CD/LP

THE BONES LIVE

24.11. Sheffield - NMB
25.11. Edinburgh - Studio 24
26.11. London - Astoria



THE METEORS
THESE EVIL THINGS CD/LP

THE METEORS LIVE

05.11.04 Birmingham - Royal George
07.11.04 London - Lock 17
(Formerly Dingwalls)
19.12.04 Gloucester - Crackers
13.01.05 Manchester - Witchwood
14.01.05 Stourbridge - Rock Café
15.01.05 Sheffield - Boardwalk

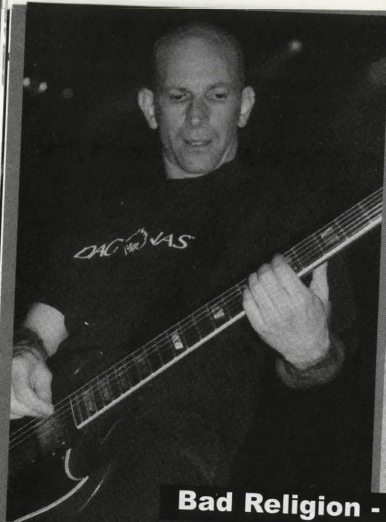


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Fax: 020 7261 4903
info@centurymedia.net

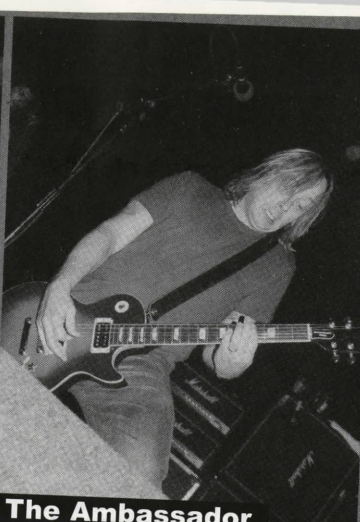
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Bad Religion - The Ambassador



Epoxies - Red Box



Swingin' Utters - Red Box



MAY 2004:

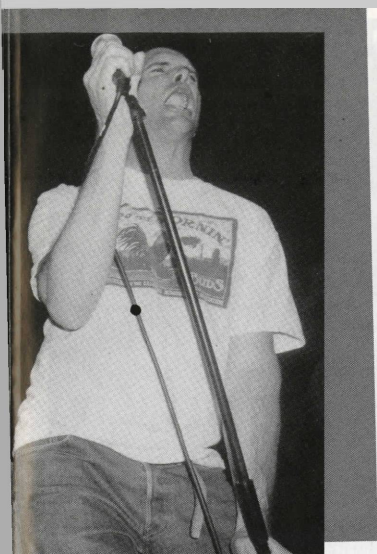
Eager to make up for lost time, **Bad Religion** played their second ever Dublin gig in as many years. The Ambassador once again was the chosen venue, though this time was only roughly half full. This gig would have been killer had it been moved to The Village! It was Tuesday night, upstairs in the venue was closed and support act Randy were a no-show – not the greatest of circumstances for the gig, but leave it up to Bad Religion to rescue us from the depths of mundane as they turned in a five star set, kicking off with “Fuck Armageddon, This Is Hell”, “Supersonic” and “No Control”. Couldn’t ask for better openers and this sort of form would surely be difficult to maintain I thought, but they kept the good stuff coming at us with “Anaesthesia”, “Recipe For Hate”, “Infected”, “Sorrow” “Generator” and “We’re Only Gonna Die”. Hetson’s Bermuda’s were also a no-show unfortunately and clearly Baker’s been at the pork pies again, but they can still kick it live. Encore consisted of “American Jesus”, “Punk Rock Song” and “21st Century Digital Boy”. I’d just acquired their new record that morning and we got a couple off that too to warm us up for its release in June. Great night! A blistering summer’s evening in Dublin was the setting for NOFX’s return here - their first Irish gig in seven years. The Epoxies and Swingin’ Utters were also along for the ride – what a package! I made sure to show up early and catch the **Epoxies**, who are a recent signing to the Fat label and pretty damn handy they are too! Coupling the sound of the Revillos with Blondie with a singer who sounds soooooo like Patti Smith “Radio Ethiopia” era, this band is a refreshing change. Decked out in gaffing tape and wraparound shades, they use a synthesizer to much effect, with sped-up punk tunes. Well worth seeking out. It’s been a long wait, but the **Swingin’ Utters** have finally gotten round to playing an Irish date and looked pleased-as-punch about it. Johnny Bonnel is one of modern day punk’s greatest assets. He’s got a killer voice and can write some of the best lyrics this side of Jimmy Pursey. Shaven-headed and eagerly lashing back the gargle offered to him by a crowd of young fellas side-stage, he roared his way through a vibrant set, made up of tunes such as, “Five Lessons ...”, “Windspitting Punk”, “Pills & Smoke”,

“London Drunk” and “Next In Line”. Max Huber was playing guitar once again ... I dunno, I can’t keep up – the last I heard he’d quit the band and moved to New York, so it was a nice surprise to see him stroll on stage and strap on his guitar. Looks as bent as an S-Hook these days mind you!!! **NOFX** casually walked on stage around half-ten with their usual American goofball antics that no one over ever seems to get over here. “Murder The Government” was what they chose to open the set with, with slightly altered lyrics to fit in with the current situation today. As water began dripping from ceiling with the sweat-box the venue had become at this stage, **NOFX** continued to lash them out one after another. “Sticking In My Eye”, “Green Corn”, “Lynoleum”, “The Brews”, “Kill All The White Man” and “Franco Unamerican” were their best. Absent from their set however were “Longest Line”, “I Wanna Be An Alcoholic” and “Johnny Appleseed”. Sadly I don’t know who was worse for manhandling kids – **NOFX**’s crew or the venue bouncers. “Fuck The Kids” indeed!!!! Fat Mike didn’t mention politics too much either throughout the set which was surprising considering his recent turnaround – you’d assume he’d use **NOFX** gigs as a vehicle for this. Finishing the set up with no encore in typical **NOFX** fashion with “Theme From A **NOFX** Album”, letting Melvin play us out on his accordion with roadies joining in for the finale. Three great bands under one roof on one night!!! It was a night of old time hardcore standards, with 7 Seconds in The Hub, the following Sunday evening. Their first time ever to play the U.K. or Ireland, which is hard to believe, but nonetheless true. Dunno what was going on with the door time on this one, but it was around ten o’ clock by the time we went in as opposed to the 7:30pm advertised. The Steam Pig and Five Knuckle were support acts but I missed ‘em both and am not even sure if The Steam Pig played a set or not. Disappointing that, ‘cos it was a good line up, so it was straight to the main course of Reno’s finest **7 Seconds**, who as you know have gone back to their earlier ways of making records in the traditional hardcore vein and not the mainstream pop sludge they became fondly forgotten about for in their latter days. Second song in and we’re given “Not Just Boys Fun” which caught me on the hop, but it was clear the band

knew “The Crew” is their favourite era for most people and stuck to pulling plenty of songs off that album throughout the night. The crowd was far from capacity, but enthusiastic all the same and made the most out of what was there. Kevin Seconds and brother Steve Youth remain the core of the outfit, lashing out a good supply of venomous vintage hardcore to beat anything that knocks about today in a similar genre. Sham 69’s “If The Kids Are United” was the chosen cover for the night, along with “99 Red Balloons” of course, with it all climaxing marvellously with “Walk Together, Rock Together” as their encore. Can’t get much better than this, kids. Gainesville’s **Against Me!** played an amazing gig in the much under-used City Arts Centre, but hopefully the success of this gig may change that. **Margin Of Error** kicked things off with a catchy and upbeat blend of Hardcore, reminiscent of At The Drive-In at times, but a bit rougher around the edges. For a young band they showed some strong potential. Being in desperate need of food and drink, I popped out for a while and missed Lynched’s entire set, but hope to see them play again sometime. However I did arrive back to catch a cracking set by **Kid Blunt**, who got better with each gig and have built up a quite a large fanbase, who were practically storming the stage as the band belted out a great selection of dynamic Hardcore ala No Means No, which went down well. I’d first heard of **Against Me!** through interviewing Hot Water Music some years back, who highly tipped them and they weren’t wrong. The sound in the City Arts Centre is pretty good to begin with, but from start to finish **Against Me!** just sounded incredible, managing to mix the likes of Woody Guthrie with The Clash, Dillinger Four and Fugazi into their sound and deliver powerfully crafted passionate tunes, certain to appeal to even the most sceptic of Punks. They played mostly tracks off their “Reinventing Axl Rose” and “As The Eternal Cowboy” opuses to an adoring crowd who appeared to know the words to every song. With no barrier or stage security the band and crowd looked to feed off each other’s energy as **Against Me!** constantly switched tempos from full blown Punk assaults like “Pints Of Guinness Make You Strong” to more folk orientated, quieter moments like “Baby I’m An Anarchist”. A band more than worthy of all the hype! - Simon

NOFX - Red Box

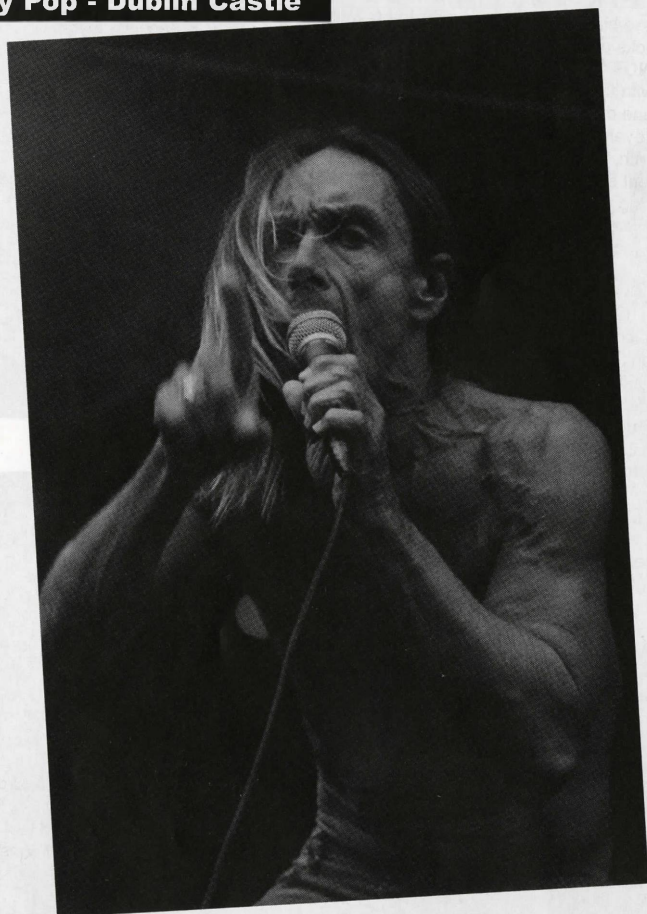




Iggy Pop - Dublin Castle



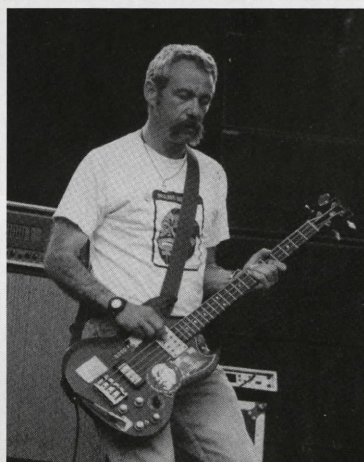
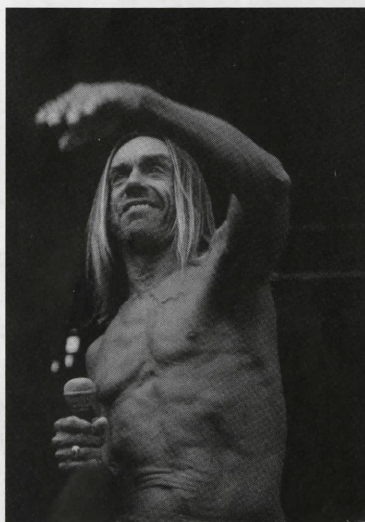
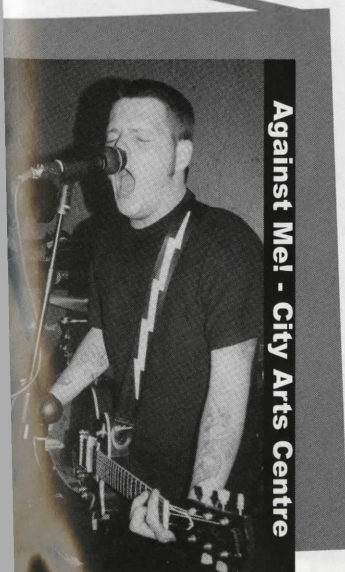
JUNE 2004:



The Heineken weekend was a bit of a balls-up for me. A stack of good music on throughout the city – The Distillers, Alice Cooper, Iggy Pop, Morrissey and the Fleshies. Bad organising on my part meant I only managed to get into town on the Sunday for which I headed straight for **Iggy Pop** as top of that list. Unfortunately photographers were admitted only for four songs and if I wanted to stick around I'd have to dispose of my camera??? Dublin Castle looked great for this. A good size for an outdoor gig and in the beautiful setting of the castle grounds just as the sun was setting over Dublin. Out comes Iggy Pop and The Stooges (at least Ron and Scott Asheton, who were joined on bass by Mike Watt). "1969" sounded excellent with the proper band and that particular intro is one of the all time greats. "I Wanna Be Your Dog" was the last song I got to see, complete with Iggy stage diving – looked like it was all set to be another cracker, but I had to get out of there. It was after ten o'clock and figured a bit late to be heading up the Ambassador for the Distillers set, so it was down the quays to The Fleshies in The Voodoo Lounge. Running drastically behind schedule this thing didn't kick off till about ten o'clock I am told, which suited me fine. The Steam Pig played about a fifteen minute set as the soundcheck band apparently, but it was **Kid Blunt** who were belting away when we got in. Doing their crust punk, screamo meets No Means No jive to much effect, but a bit hard on these ears at times. A slack crowd greeted California's **Fleshies** next for another brief set. Quite an entertainer this singer, who looks like yer man from Lord Of The Rings. Rolling around the floor and jumping on top of people, it was difficult not to note the Iggy comparisons. There's a lot of David Yow in

there also. The music is weird and quirky and well what you'd expect to hear on Alternative Tentacles. A gouged eye with blood splattering everywhere following an incident with a member of the audience brought things to a halt shortly afterwards. Short and sweet, but getting the message across. Checked out the rockabilly night in the Dice Bar around the corner to follow that up for a few nightcaps. Some unbeatable tunes as it happens - Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee, Dick Dale et al.

Dublin's premiere Punk outfit The Radiators got back together in celebration of the Bloomsday 100th anniversary for a gig at The Village. Mainstays Chevron, Rapid and Holidai were joined by ex-Pogues member Cait O'Riordan on bass and Johnnie Bonnie on drums. But to get the ball rolling **Blood Or Whiskey** opened up, fresh from a tour of the states and sounding all the better for it. They've certainly tightened up a lot these past few months and have gotten their sound together a lot more as well. I caught about twenty minutes of their set and it's possibly the best I've seen them since this new line up has gone into place. Donned in 50's rockabilly suits **The Radiators** made their appearance with "Sunday World". "We've suffered for our art; now it's your turn!" was Chevron's opening greeting to the crowd. First thing I noticed and something that remained apparent for the remainder of the set was the slowed down pace all the songs were played at. Not necessarily saying that was a bad thing but a bit odd none the less. They can definitely still play and most of the set was faultless. The week of rehearsals in the run up to this certainly paid off. Steve Rapid adds tremendously to what the Rads do and having never seen the band live before he was a member I tended to overlook. Pete Holidai looked ecstatic to be holding a guitar again and complemented the contrast with Chevron's rhythm strumming just right, particularly on "Johnny Jukebox". "Love Detective" "Prison Bars" and "Enemies" were all highpoints along with Cait O'Riordan tackling lead vocals for "Kitty Rickets" whilst Chevron slipped over to handle bass duties for the song. Johnny Cash's "Ring Of Fire" was their double tribute to both Cash and Joe Strummer. "Stranger Than Fiction" was about the only song I can think of that was omitted and seeing as I appear to be the only Rads fan who likes that song, perhaps it was a good thing in many people's eyes. "Under Clery's Clock" and "Plura Belle" came shortly after, sandwiched between Creedence's "Fortunate Son". "Television Screen" I think finished up the set, with slightly amended lyrics concerning the Iraq war, just so we couldn't sing along to it. Naturally they had to return for "Million Dollar Hero" as an encore. I thought the gig was great and the Radiators never came across as a

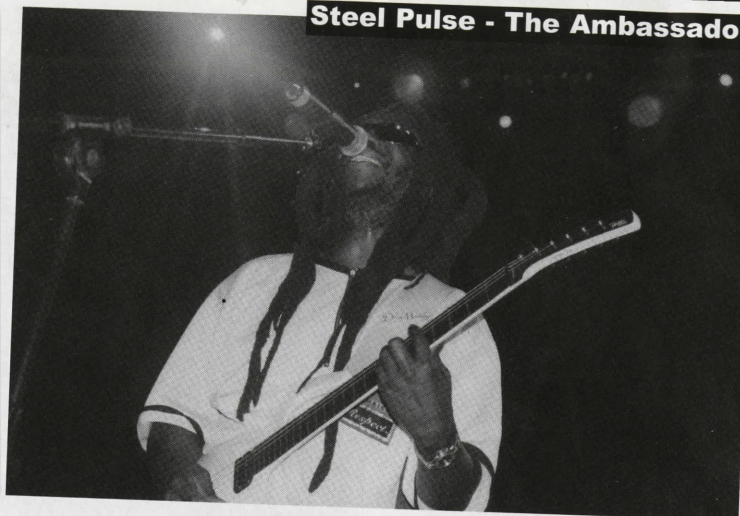


Mike Watt with the Stooges - Dublin Castle

bunch of auld fellas trying to reclaim their teenage years, but look more to have grown old gracefully and are quite content with that.

Last Tuesday in June had me at the **Steel Pulse** gig in The Ambassador. Arrived at the venue to catch the last of a support act DeeJay who was playing mostly Dub and Reggae, but over emphasising the bass beats a bit much for me. The place was loaded with Skangers, which I was a bit taken back by – Celtic jersey's, sovereign rings, the works ... I'm guessing it's the weed connection that has these fuckers attracted to Steel Pulse. With no intermission between acts, the DeeJay simply brought on the band himself whilst still playing as their intro, which was a nice touch. It's been the guts of thirty years since their "Handsworth Revolution" masterpiece and Steel Pulse have moved on somewhat, implementing the synthesized element to their music a lot more as opposed to the straight up Reggae we fondly remember from their great early years. They've still got a good rhythm there and can get some decent Toasting going on at times, but it's often the progression of technology that has bands like this losing their original trademark. When you think about it Steel Pulse pushed the barriers of what was considered roots music with "Prediction" in '78 and in a way are still doing that today with the advent of three female backing singers and that whole "big band" approach to Reggae. Personally I preferred the purer version of the genre they demonstrated up as far as "Tribute To The Martyrs", before going on to enlist a slicker producer, giving the band a glossier, more mainstream appeal. Tonight I could have done with more of that early stuff ...

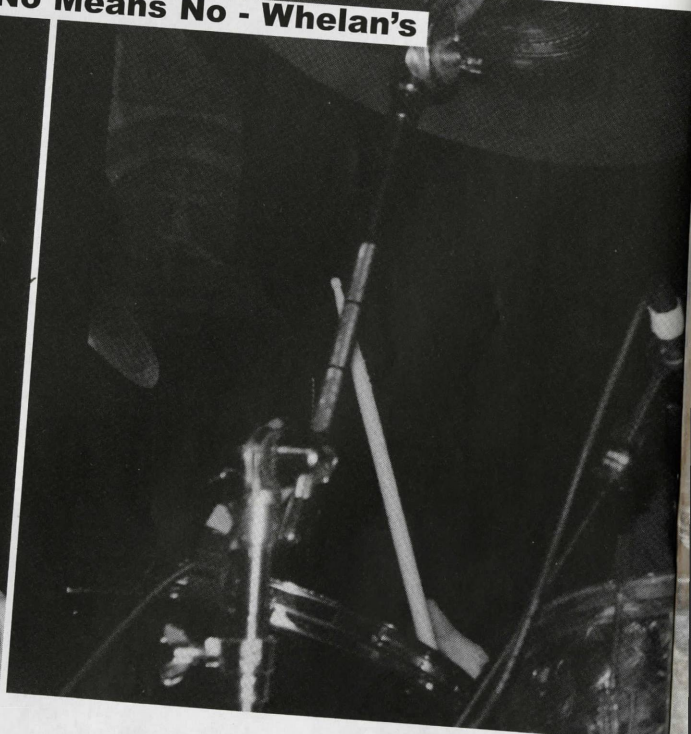
Steel Pulse - The Ambassador



Fleshies - Voodoo Lounge



No Means No - Whelan's

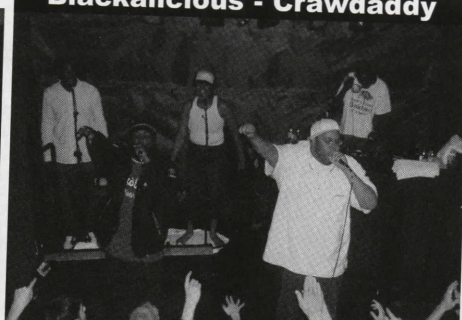


Patti Smith

Mission of Burma - Music Centre



Blackalicious - Crawdaddy



JULY 2004:

Mission Of Burma playing live in Dublin in 2004!! Who'd have thought? One of the most challenging and well-missed bands in Punk history. A two-decade absence down to guitarist/singer/songwriter Roger Miller's worsening hearing disorder that made it look like he'd never play again.. He now gigs with an awkward set of ear-muff headphones, but if that's what it takes to get one of Boston's finest exponents of Punk on stage again, then so be it. I wasn't too sure what kind of a following Mission Of Burma had in Dublin, but they packed a good solid crowd into the Music Centre on a Tuesday night, albeit laid out in candle-on-table format. The Burma are up there with the best of 'em and in a similar ball park to Wire, Velvet Underground, Gang Of Four, Joy Division, Television, early Sonic Youth and Talking Heads. There was a huge delay in getting the band on stage, down to a sound difficulty, which built up the tension nicely. Once Miller struck the opening chord it became clear that little changed in their time apart and they could still belt out the colossal juggernaut tunes that we fondly remember them for. The great thing about bands like this is they done it all when it was new and exciting and twenty-years down the line you can still hear how it sets 'em apart from the hordes of half-arsed clowns that followed. This was one of the best three-piece performances from a band I can remember seeing in a long time. There was an almost fourth member Martin Swope along the way who done some tape-looping and whatnot, but the real powerhouse always consisted of Miller, Conley and drummer Prescott. Early classics like "Academy Fight Song" from '79 and "That's How I Escaped My Certain Fate" drive home Burma's message best. You don't come across bands like this anymore I'm sad to say ... they just don't make 'em like they used to.

Ended up at new venue Crawdaddy the following Friday for a glimpse of Gift Of Gab in action playing as part of the Blackalicious ensemble. Originally proposed for the Red Box, the gig was moved to the far smaller and ten times superior downstairs venue, assumingly down to poor ticket sales, though Crawdaddy itself was a sell out. Not surprised considering it must hold less than a couple of hundred people and was actually NOFX's dressing room when they played here in May!! There was a student DJ kinda guy on when I walked in playing mostly old Hip Hop stuff, which wasn't too bad if he just let the records play as opposed to fucking about with every song. Isn't it amazing how kids will just stand there in awe at these people playing the records as opposed to the actual bands on them? It's like watching some bloke in your sitting room changing CD's over. I can't see the attraction. I retreated to the bar for a much needed alcohol injection. Next up was some Dublin scruffbag doing the Streets/Eminem deal -. He can rap quite good, I'll give him his dues, but with song titles like "Green Blood" he's unlikely to score any points with people of integrity. **Blackalicious** were a breath of fresh air by comparison and demonstrated to the rest of the bill how it's possible to take a redundant form of music that has lost its way and do something semi-interesting with it. Divert your attention away from the hordes of Hobo students moving their hands in the air from side to side Ricky Lake Show style and what you're left with is an early eighties influenced breed of Bay Area Hip Hop with an

acceptable string of tunes and a far cry from what normally passes off as such music in this gene today. You can't help noticing though how odd it is that today's Hip Hop audience is everything this music was a reaction against when it started up, but half of it is the band's fault. Extortionate ticket prices, insisting on private rooms in Four Star Dublin hotels and charging over the odds for any of their recorded output, can you really expect anything other than this type of audience to turn up?? Evidently the lifestyle they sing about is a thing of the past for them and anyone currently still stuck in that rut couldn't afford the luxury of following a Hip Hop band of this nature; so all the wrong people are picking up on the music. There's far better stuff out there for the working classes and I think the tightly packed venue with no stage barricade had more to do with my enjoyment of this gig than the music or the band's message, which to be honest is a complete contradiction. My initial plan for the evening was to go down and photograph this thing, pen a quick review and sharply head to the nearest quality boozier on Camden Street to get pissed, but there was something in Blackalicious which prevented me from doing so ... exactly what, I'm not quite sure yet ... Back to the Rock n' Roll the following night for the always-reliable No Means No in Whelan's. Usually known to stop over at the Music Centre when in Dublin, this time it was a little more compact and bound to add to the energy that No Means No gigs are guaranteed to give off. **Boxes** were up first and we caught about twenty-minutes of their set. The first influence that'll spring to mind of course is tonight's headline and with a song about a River in the set list it all gets a little too close for comfort at times, but a handy enough band all the same. Perhaps if they weren't playing second fiddle to the masters of this style, it would have worked better. **No Means No** were quick to get up and start setting up their own gear as is their typical style and a nice sight to behold as smaller and smaller bands these days will insist on bringing a guitar tech with them wherever they go, when there's clearly no need. This time it was more or less a greatest hits collection of material from the outset, not making us wait till the second half before breaking out the big guns, by playing "The River" about two or three songs in. They've recently released a "best of ..." type thingy so this was the tour to promote it assumingly. The intensity this band can get out is unreal and what a powerhouse they are for a three piece. The Wright brothers are one of the tightest rhythm sections I've ever seen and can read each other so well, it's frightening. They're looking more and more like a bunch of dirty old men, but they can play better now than ever before and never mind your Andy Kerr bollocks, when a band is this good it quickly becomes a matter of "Andy who??". Proceeding to lash them out all night for what must have been a two-hour set, complete with two encores consisting of their all time best moments like "It's Catching Up", "Rags And Bones" "Two Lips, Two Lungs And One Tongue", "Humans" and "The Graveyard Shift". I think we were all waiting to see what choice Ramones cuts we'd get, but instead they blasted through the Undertones "Here Comes The Summer", receiving one of the biggest crowd reactions of the night. One band you can always count on. Another Steam Pig extravaganza in the Voodoo Lounge! Made the extra effort to

get down to this, as I've missed their support slots on the last two occasions. First at 7 Seconds and again at the Fleshes, though I'm lead to believe they played minimal sets on both counts. Opening up the evening was a rare appearance by **Pete The Killer**, which we dragged ourselves away from the beautiful Guinness in the Cobblestone in order to check out. Came in during their opener and all reports I'd heard on the band previously proved true. Very Poison Idea influenced, but they get away with it and have the right approach to old time Hardcore, unlike many of the newer bands around today. There's no recorded work to speak of just yet, but it's one worth picking up if it ever does materialize. **Backhanders** followed soon after with words from their singer that this was going to be their last gig for some time. Getting better with each performance and this time offering us a version of the Upstarts "Never 'Ad Nothing". **The Steam Pig** made their way to the stage and proceeded to open with the first of many new tunes to be heard from the band this evening, showcasing their upcoming new album. Boz's bass intro had a Minutemen/Wire sound off it, whilst Andy joined in shortly afterwards with one of those Randy Rhoads guitar leads that could only work for a Punk band like this. The newer stuff sounds to be less Metal tinged than what we heard on "Potshots" and reverting back more towards the melodic approach of say "Deep Fried Obedience". They mixed it up well and had a fair turnout, but the size of the Voodoo Lounge doesn't do a band like the Steam Pig any favours, who are more suited to a hovel like the Temple. The Voodoo Lounge is a little more conservative than most of the other Punk venues we've had down the years and you almost feel as though you have to be on your best behaviour. I enjoyed their encore of "Sliabh Muc" tonight and also "Stepford Wives". **Patti Smith** brought her band to Vicar Street the following Thursday in support of her recently released "Trampin'" album. No opening act for this, but Patti's lengthy two hour plus set more than made up for it. The photography regulations at this were a joke. Shortly before stage time we're informed we can only shoot from side stage out of Patti's view otherwise she'll get "real mad". Punk Rock huh? Opening with the title track from the above, it built momentum well with its piano led melodic folk structure. The hi-octane rock n' roll came a little later in the set, balancing it out nicely and remaining difficult to predict throughout. "People Have The Power" was excellent, with imagery of union strikes and anti-war demos from across the globe being beamed at us from a giant projector as a stage backdrop. She continued this throughout the evening as a vehicle for depicting what each song was written about, even on more personal notes too as this date was the anniversary of her father's death. "Because The Night" mid set was another highlight for me, but it was more the songs she omitted that stood out unfortunately. No "Rock N' Roll Nigger" or "Ask The Angels". The final two of the night were "Pissing In A River" and "Gloria" which left a lot of people (me included) anticipating a second encore to top it off, that never came. We were kind of left hanging in that sense, but Patti Smith can certainly still cut it with the best of 'em and remains as outspoken and angry today as she was on "Piss Factory" in the mid seventies.

Smith - Vicar Street

AUGUST 2004:

With nearly a month between gigs I was delighted to get back to the fold with **Green Day**'s low key performance in the Ambassador, that sold out in all of ten minutes! This was the first gig of the tour and they'd been on the doss in Dublin since the Sunday, so by the time Tuesday night rolled around they seemed more than in the mood for this gig. No support, just straight on with the main event and getting the ball rolling with "American Idiot", "Longview" and "Geek, Stink, Breath", it was clear this would be a night of firm favourites as opposed to showcasing tons of material off the upcoming album. I sat this one out on the balcony once I was done photographing it as apart from the fact that you couldn't move down on the floor there was also the absence of a bar. The balcony was great as it happens and over a feed of pints you could get a great view of the stage. "2000 Light Years Away" and "Christy Roads" were feature moments for me and of the handful of covers played the best were Queen's "We Are The Champions" and Generation X's "Dancing With Myself". Of course the Tricolour's and pints of Guinness were there and Tre even went to the trouble of dressing up as a priest for the occasion. Midway through the set it was the audience's turn to have a go as three members of the crowd were randomly picked to get on stage and play a tune together, much to the dismay of the venue's security. They kept the hits coming with "Basket Case", "Welcome To Paradise" and "She" before giving us a brief encore dedicated to their president and leaving us soaked to the bone to wander off to the nearest watering hole. Great stuff!

Green Day - The Ambassador

SEPTEMBER 2004:

After a quiet month of August, September was off to a flying start with the second of **PJ Harvey**'s two night stand in the Olympia. On the back of her new "Uh Huh Her" record this was a welcome stopover and greeted as such by a well up for it capacity crowd on a Wednesday night. Knife And Fork were billed as support on both nights, who I didn't bother showing up for, but regretted it later as I heard good reports on them. PJ Harvey took the stage shortly after nine o'clock with her rather impressive backing band that handled the majority of the guitar playing, bar roughly five or six songs, the best of which was the unbeatable "50 Foot Queenie", when we got a brief glimpse of the Polly of old. Nothing close to a greatest hits set, Harvey focused for the most part on more recent works, and even at that avoided a lot of the favourites, though for some reason it seemed to work. You can't help notice the Patti Smith comparisons still, but it's getting less and less so these days compared with her "Dry" or "Rid Of Me" era. Addressing the crowd perhaps only once or twice during the entire evening, this is something you don't see too often from artists these days and it was nice to let the music do the talking and not their politics for once. I'd only swamped one pint down the gullet when it was encore time already, though she did come back on for a second one if I remember correctly, but certainly couldn't be accused of overstaying her welcome. After a lengthy hiatus **Runnin' Riot** returned to the circuit with their album launch in Voodoo. Any excuse to hit the Cobblestone for a Friday afternoon! Having somehow managed to keep the band together through tons of setbacks down the years Colin is still hanging in there and determined not to let **Runnin' Riot** slip by the wayside. Also on hand were special guests **Red Alert**, but up first was **Evil Elvis** who are a new band to my ears, but sounded tight and confident, playing a blend of Hardcore and Oi! with some memorable choruses along the way. I thought it odd that **Red Alert** were out gigging, considering **Leatherface** are in full touring mode and right enough there was no sign of **Lainey** tonight, so the drumming was left in the capable hands of Beano. Steve Smith and Tony Von Frater were the two main members with Gaz Stoker also being replaced on bass. Frater in full skanger attire peeling off those cheese metal riffs is worth seeing alone and could only work for a band like this. **Red Alert**'s crossover of Rock and Punk can hit the spot at times and despite the fact that Smith rarely plays

minus the contents of half a brewery inside him, he can still get the job done. "It's Me Boys" and their cover of the Rejects "Bad Man" were great. **Runnin' Riot** took the stage to cream off a night of top class Oi! with plenty of new material to get through, throwing the odd old favourite in now and again to get the crowd's attention. "Alcoholic Heroes", "Punk And Disorderly", "Keep The Faith" and "P.T.A." sounded as good as ever. The 'Riot really packed them in for this gig and even with the size of the Voodoo there was still a crowd big enough to fill it. There haven't been many gigs like this since the Temple closed, and it was nice to step back into something that's becoming rare in Dublin these days.

Time for the **Hives** return to Dublin at the end of the month and what a show they put on. Monday night in the Ambassador and a full house awaited them. Fellow Swedes **CDOASS** opened the evening offering us a Devo meets Bowie and Kraftwerk style of rock, not a million miles away from what the Hives do, but emphasising the synthesizers and weird elements a lot more than the straight up rock music of their fellow country men. Robotic dancing from the frontman, whilst allowing each instrument room to breathe and not always having the guitar at the forefront made them an interesting listen. They kept it short with just enough to leave most in attendance curious as to what else they may have up their sleeves. The Hives didn't fuck about and launched straight into their high octane set with "Abra Cadaver", "Antidote", "Missing Link" and "Main Offender". I love these type of bands; they just get on with it and crammed more into their 1 hour 15 minute set than most bands would in a set twice its length. Bursting with energy the entire time and without a lull in sight, the venue and band quickly became a sweatbox and by the time "No Pun Intended" and "Hate To Say ..." were aired it was clear the Hives are capable of living up to everything that's been written about them these past few years. Yes, they do mimic the Stones so much it gets cringe-worthy at times, but they can play Rock N' Roll like almost no other mainstream band these days. Pelle's on stage humour is of course hilarious by all counts and the chap doesn't let up at all throughout the evening, topping it off with a stage dive at the finale, that left him shirtless by the time he was eventually dragged out of the crowd.

PJ Harvey - The Olympia

The Hives - The Ambassador

The wettest day of the year marked the debut of Los Fastidios in Dublin. Here for a three day succession of gigs over the bank holiday weekend, Italy's premiere skinhead outfit chose the Voodoo Lounge as their venue for an evening of top class Punk Rock. The numbers came out for this one, which surprised me, given the weather and the long trek down the quays, leaving most of the attendants dripping wet and having to stand in damp clothes for the evening. But this was one gig worth the bother. After a few cosy pints in the Cobblestone we drifted around the corner to see **Moutpiece** in action. Still brandishing a Ramones cum Motorhead solid base, they've refined their sound an awful lot since we last encountered each other at the Supersuckers I believe. Faster and heavier than before, but with a lot more dynamics thrown in. A crusty screamo band played next, who's name I didn't catch, as we'd retreated to the back of the hall and decided to sit this one out. Screamo just ain't my thing! Belfast's **Runnin' Riot** turned in another killer set to warm us up for the headliners and certainly gave them a run for their money. With the new album nicely digested there's a handful of upcoming favourites to look out for in the set these days, including "Buckfast Tonic Wine" and "We Only Came To Dance". Of course they rounded things out nicely with some older numbers like "P.T.A.", "Alcoholic Heroes" and "Victimisation". Another line up change that's slowly working its way into the group and sounding more at ease with each passing gig. The crowd were starting to drift in as we awaited **Los Fastidios**'s set. They had a hard act to follow, but ably took the challenge onboard and proceeded to belt 'em out from their extensive ten year plus back catalogue. From upfront Punk blasts to mid tempo Ska and Reggae moments, Los Fastidios have a well-balanced set list of tuneful Punk anthems. Spanning the years from their first single "Birra Oi! E Divertimwnto" to more recent numbers like "Animal Liberation" and the infectious "Johnny And The Queer Bootboys". We even squeezed an encore out of them that included their football ode "You'll Never Walk Alone". Great crowd here in Voodoo tonight, all eager participants in stage diving and body surfing – something you don't witness so much these days. Goldblade made their annual stopover in Dublin on the 30th for Toxic's Halloween Bash. Decided to chance me arm at getting the Luas in ... bad idea ... took twice as long as the bus!! Thus the pre-gig pints in the Cobblestone were cut short as we pegged it round to catch the opening band **Mr. Blueface**. There's an ex-Stomach member in there and the sound they've chosen to work on is on similar grounds, though on occasion leaning more heavily in the Motorhead direction than the poppier element Stomach would tend to favour. For a new band they demonstrated some strong potential and with a few kinks to iron out here and there, we could be onto a winner. I don't know where they got the next band from! They were like Big Generator or some shit. Calling themselves **The Hounds**, they work on a Skid Row (the Sebastian Bach one!!) meets Cinderella sound, and their singer is a dead ringer for Brian Kennedy. As you've probably guessed, a recipe for complete disaster and a complete disaster it was. Did he really need to take his shirt off and sing the remainder of the gig in just his leather trousers? Certainly not called for. One of many final gigs for **Striknien DC** came after as Deko led the band into "Skrewed", decked out in a GG Allin style war helmet. They've understandably lost some of their bite with age and sounded a little under rehearsed, but the attitude was still there and there's no bands around today that can top it. Looking at the singer from **Goldblade** get warmed up, you'd be forgiven for thinking it was a wrestling match we were here to see and not a Rock N' Roll gig! They've got the Neo-Rockabilly look down quite well, but their music is somewhat contradictory of their image. Goldblade are basically a melodic Hardcore band who have some cracking songs in there, amidst their rather brief set. There wasn't as much of a crowd here as their Whelan's date last year, but they know how to work what's there and made the best of a bad situation. Coming back on to play "Strictly Hardcore" again, as they did last time, I think is a bad move. If you haven't got the songs for an encore then don't play one. Other than that, it was a flawless performance from one of the current forerunners of new Punk Rock.



Gold Blade - Voodoo Lounge



Striknien DC - Voodoo Lounge



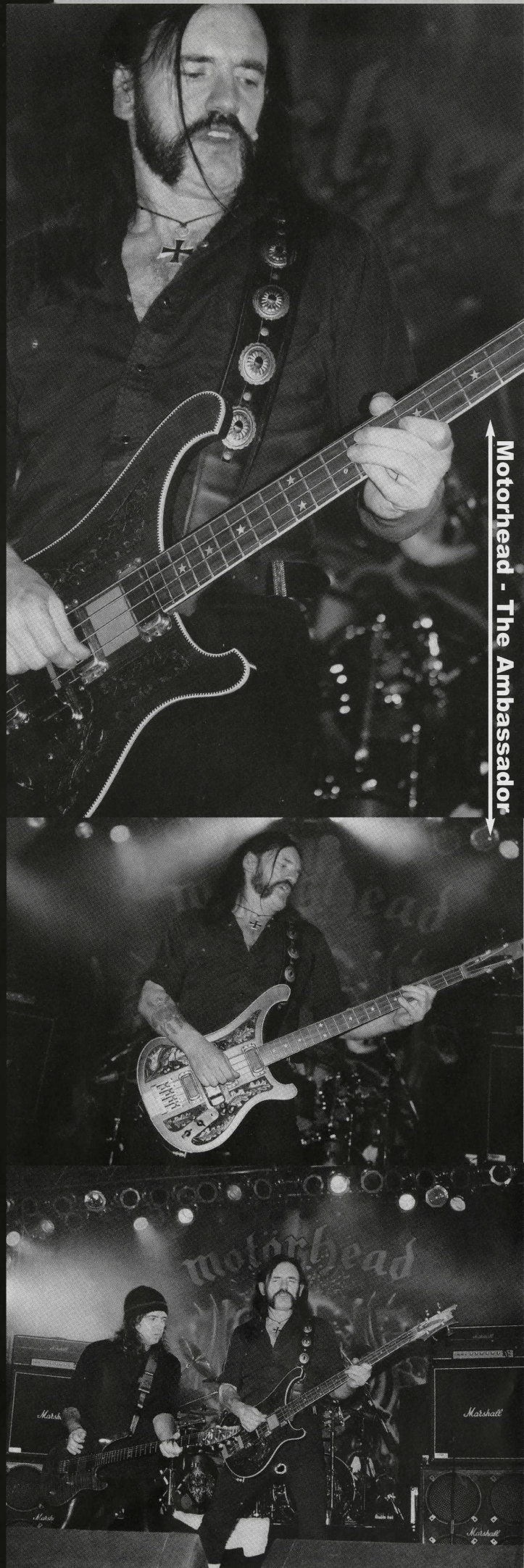
Runnin' Riot - Voodoo Lounge

Nice to see **Motorhead**'s visits to this island becoming a more frequent occurrence. Over for three gigs in the first weekend of November – two in Dublin and one in Belfast, I was along for their second night in The Ambassador. Both were close to, if not, sell-out capacity and they really packed 'em in, with every Rocker, Punk, Skinhead and general weirdo that Lemmy's marauders tend to attract in attendance. Bare in mind this isn't by far the ultimate Motorhead line up and has been trimmed down to a three piece, but still concocts that wall of noise like no other band can. Judging by the enormous stack of Marshalls that decorated the stage beforehand, it was clear nothing was being spared in their attempts to create that landmark live sound. It was difficult to hold a straight face when Lemmy marched out in skintight canvas jeans tucked into a pair of knee-high white cowboy boots, but once they start playing it's clear this band is no laughing matter. There was something about their performance tonight however that seemed a little under par and I couldn't help feeling they held back a touch. With the groundfloor becoming unbearable I grabbed myself a seat on the balcony shortly into their set and proceeded to enjoy this one with a birds eye view. Perhaps not the best circumstance to witness this band under, but I'm getting old! Motorhead rolled out plenty of high-octane moments, though could have been a little more selective with the setlist I felt. "Dr. Rock", "RAMONES" and their finale "Overkill" were key standouts amidst a couple of tame new ones and the absence of "Orgasmatron" is simply not on. As heavy as this band are at times, they never neglect a good groove and to prove how well their songs can stand up on their own without the stack of Marshalls, the threesome sat down and brought out the acoustic guitars to kick off their encore. Nice touch! Good to see them still around and giving bands a quarter their age a lesson in how it's done!

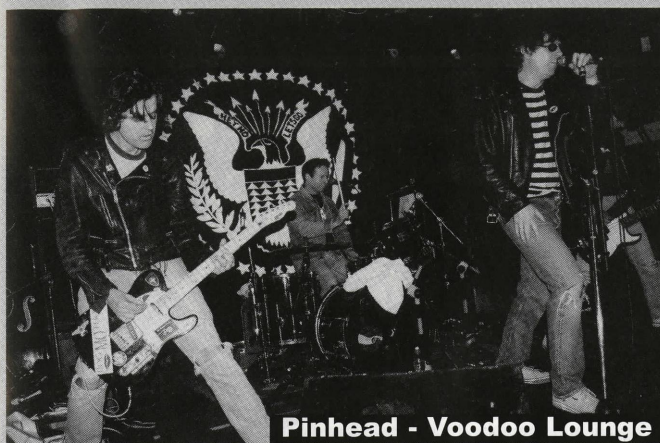
The following night it was back to the old stomping ground of the Voodoo Lounge for a rare visit from Belfast's Sabrejets. Having received the seal of approval from George Byrne in Friday's Evening Herald, I was a bit taken back by the empty venue when I walked in around nine o'clock. That's often the case with this place – you can never tell how many people are in attendance until the band hits the stage and they begin crawling out from the woodwork. Ireland's premier Ramones tribute act, **Pinhead** were first up to warm up the crowd and being my first time seeing them I wasn't too sure what to expect. They have the songs off well and play near faultless renditions of the Ramones first four albums for the most part. Probably best enjoyed a little later in the night and felt a touch strange watching a band like this as an opener. I enjoyed them and if it's all taken for the bit of fun it is, you will too. The come complete with ripped jeans and leather jackets and even brought out the "Gabba Gabba Hey" board for "Pinhead". You gotta love it! The **Sabrejets** soon began setting up to the sound of Joey Ramone's solo record, as we prepared to step back to 1957 for an hour. I reckon they spend as much time in front of the mirror perfecting their quiffs as do they learning their chops from the likes Eddie Cochran, Charlie Rich, Link Wray, the Cramps and Johnny Thunders. They're a fabulous band however and live up to the visual promise. Alongside their handful of covers, their own material stands up just as easily. "Wild For Kicks", "Poontang", "Take It Easy Greasy", and "Leeroy" were all killer, though the unexplained absentee was the excellent "39th And Norton" for some reason. With the presence of a Double-Bass stage-right, the Sabrejets are the complete Rockabilly package. Tributes were aimed in the direction of Van Morrison, Johnny Thunders, the Ramones and Jerry Lee Lewis. With a line up like that, its clear these greasers know their music. A quick glimpse around the dance floor revealed some of the hottest steppers in town, as the Sabrejets had the bar filled within seconds of striking their first chord. A triumph in every sense of the word.

Reggae legend **Horace Andy** paid a welcome visit back to Dublin following his well-received previous two dates here at Crawdaddy. This time it was shifted to the Village, which he still managed to fill to what had to be beyond capacity, making it an impossible task to even venture as far as the toilets. There was a local white mans Reggae act to open, that did little for me and had the auld' watch being checked a couple of times throughout their set, which is never a good thing. I found them boring and unconvincing and luckily for them I can't remember their name! As the crowds began to flock in it became clear the Chav count was inexplicably high for reasons best known to themselves, but I think there's a Massive Attack connection in there somewhere. Shame, 'cos all it'll do is drive away the genuine followers of Horace Andy's music. His band are quite spectacular, particularly the brass section, and opened the set with an instrumental piece prior to Horace's arrival for the second song. He's up to pensioner years at this stage, but can still keep up with the best of 'em and his helium voice remains firmly intact. The Mad Professor was also billed to appear alongside Horace at this particular gig, but I had places to be and with no sign of him after the first half hour I decided the **Blood Or Whiskey** gig in Voodoo might be a better bet this evening, so off I went. The Voodoo Lounge was the fullest I've seen it by the time I made my way down to Smithfield and Blood Or Whiskey were yet to go on, so pints were ordered to the soundtrack of Lars Frederekson's new record. Good atmosphere here tonight for this hotly tipped gig. There's been a lot of action in the Blood Or Whiskey camp of late and part of that involves their recent signing with American label Punk Core, for which this gig was being shot for a DVD release by the label. They could be accused of playing it up a little for the cameras, which really doesn't become them, but for the most part they played as good as could be expected and the crowds response was well above average, even if too many people insisted on giving it the elbow. The set weighed in favour of new material from the yet to be released album, but there were of course the likes "Rudi", "Your Majesty" and "Take Me Along" nicely balanced in there also. The highlight of the night was a surprise guest appearance from Pete Holiday of the Radiators for an excellent run through "Enemies", though irritatingly by this stage I had retreated to the bar and could barely see what was going on. There were a couple of encores from what I remember and I even have vague recollections of a Japanese violin player along the way. The band sounded well-rehearsed and gave 110% for the entire gig... Hands up how many people were expecting Barney to get up for "Bucharest"? It didn't happen!

Monday night was Flogging Molly in the Music Centre. As a bonus they brought along two opening acts well worth turning up early in order to check out. First was fellow Side 1 Dummy label-mates **The Briggs**. They're a Street Punk band from the States and have put out a couple of records which I've acquired – their latest EP being the pick of the bunch if you're curious. They laid down a half hour set or thereabouts, cramming in everything they could, undeterred by the lack of interest much of the crowd showed in them to begin with. Even their Clash cover went unrecognised! Their music is nothing new, but it was the conviction with which they played it with that I found convincing. Next up was the long awaited return of what I consider to be one of the best Punk Rock voices of the past ten years – ex Dropkick Murphy Mike McColgan is back with his new band **The Street Dogs** and expectations were high from me. There were all sorts of rumours of him fucking off to join the Boston Fire Brigade and not being able to hack the hard slog of touring, but actions speak louder than words and tonight's appearance made it clear his heart is still in it. McColgan is a pent up aggressive little man as you may have suspected from any early



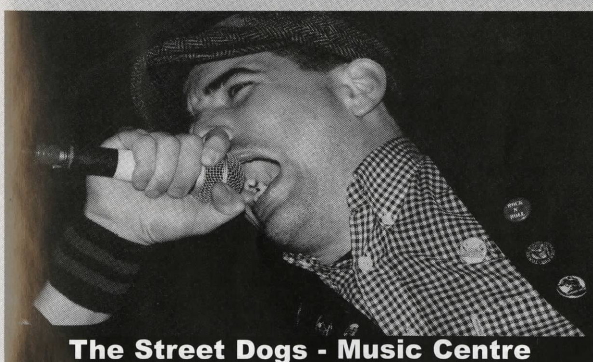
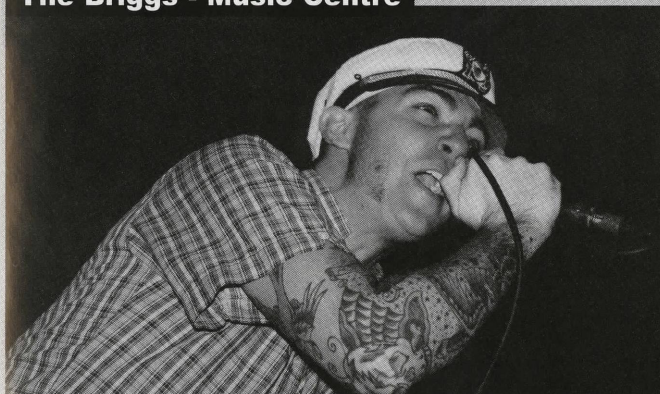
Motorhead - The Ambassador



Pinhead - Voodoo Lounge



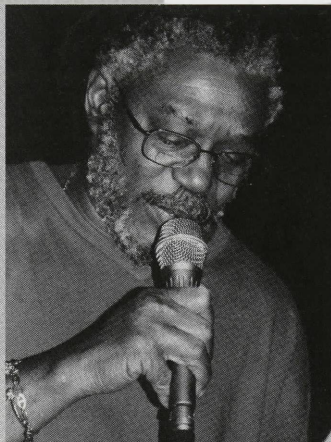
The Briggs - Music Centre



The Street Dogs - Music Centre

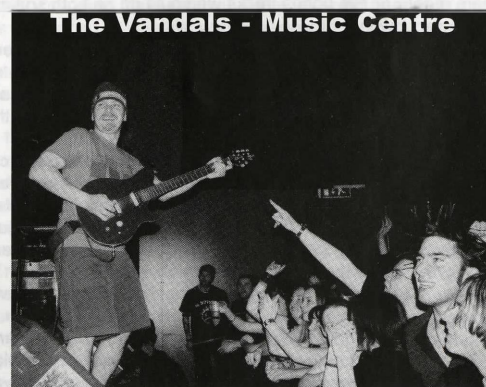


Flogging Molly - Music Centre



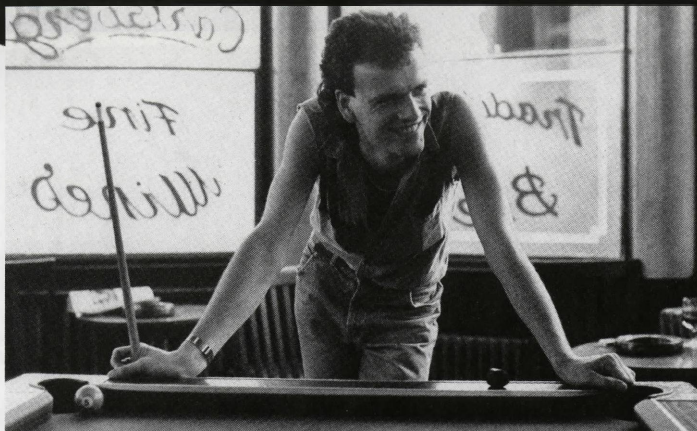
Horace Andy - The Village

Dropkick Murphys footage and he's clearly lost none of that zest. John Lennon's thunderous "Working Class Hero" was their intro tape, before The Street Dogs burst out on stage to a dismal response from the crowd, who were clearly only here to see one band tonight. Not put off by this in the slightest, McColgan showed his true spirit by spending the next fifteen minutes giving it everything in an attempt to rile them up. It worked and showed just how capable this guy can be; by the end of the set he had the audience eating of his hand, with repeated requests for an encore. Soundwise it's back to the stripped down approach of Punk and Rock N' Roll that we remember him for and there's enough excellent tunes in there to warrant an EP of "Boys On The Docks" standards I'm sure. One to look out for. What's it with intro tapes tonight? **Flogging Molly** again chose "Redemption Song" as theirs, before being welcomed by a massive hometown turnout for Dave King and band. He loves every minute of it too by the looks of things and with a shit eating grin stretched across his face, he proceeded to whip the crowd into frenzy, eagerly helped out by the more than accomplished band of Irish American cohorts. There's something cringingly off putting about Flogging Molly on record, but live you can't take anything away from them. They know their music and King has a history that traces back to the early nineties in Dublin playing alongside Ronnie Drew, albeit all too briefly. For a Monday the reaction was nothing short of awe inspiring and there's clearly a healthy batch of diehard Flogging Molly fans about. It may kill me to say it, but they're fuckin' good live. Back to the Music Centre again the following night for a slightly under par gig from The Vandals. Firstly the support bands just weren't up to scratch. Kung Fu have signed some awful garbage of late, none more so than the bloody terrible **Audio Karate**. Emo shite that's so clearly a cheap attempt at a cash in on something hip. I don't think this band would even convince an fan of bleedin' Emo, they're that bad, so it's falling on deaf ears. I couldn't listen to them. I was expecting something from the **God Awfuls**, but they too were hopeless student wank, masquerading as something more real. It wasn't difficult to spot that this band just aren't very good at what they do. In fact I'd have nearly sworn on it that Audio Karate merely spiked up their hair and came back out as the God Awfuls. Horribly predictable and falling knee-deep into every cliché imaginable. Talk about a band living up to their name! With that out of the way **The Vandals** came out to save the day, but were a little out of form. I dunno, there was just something limp about their set this year. It was the end of the tour maybe and they were ready to go home. However, even on a bad night, The Vandals always have the reliable back catalogue to draw from when things turn a little lacklustre. "Supercala ..." was the opener followed by "Café 405" I think and generally a good picking of around four songs from each album, bar their first two of course, which they all but seem to ignore now unfortunately. What I would have given for some "Urban Struggle" or "Anarchy Burger", but it's not to be anymore. Who can blame them I suppose; they've continued releasing strong enough material not to drift too far back into the archives and I guess that makes them all the more viable today. Sterling moments from The Vandals tonight included "Oi! To The World", "People That Are Going To Hell", "Pizza Tran" and "43210-1". It doesn't require much effort on their behalf to turn in a good gig, though when they really go for it you can feel the difference, but sadly tonight wasn't one of those nights.



The Vandals - Music Centre

Audio Karate - Music Centre



CAPTAIN OI!

At the forefront of quality music in 2004 is the Captain Oi! record label. On the eve of its tenth anniversary, the English based operation focuses predominantly on re-issuing vintage, rare and out of print Punk, Oi!, Ska, Reggae and Mod CD's and vinyl. Launched by one Mark Brennan in the mid nineties, following his disillusionment with the music industry and what had become of his previous job over at Dojo Records. Captain Oi! filled the vacant niche in the market for bringing out rare Punk Rock at affordable prices and making these records available again some essential listening that could well have been lost to the ages back the major labels as the Dickies, 4 Skins, the Saints, Cockney Rejects, Toy Dolls and the Outcasts. Mark Brennan's induction into the world of Punk notoriety came via his time spent as bass player for the Business for ten years, before taking the role of releasing other band's records. Each title on Captain Oi! is aimed at like-minded fanatical Punk fans, which never fails to come across in the attention to detail and careful handling of all releases. From liner notes to original artwork, rare photos, lyrics and usually a ton of bonus tracks, its every completist's dream come true. For a decidedly well-established and developed record label, there's been little in the way of interviews given by its chief. I figured it was time to rectify that and spoke to the man one Thursday evening from the Captain Oi! H.Q. in High Wycombe.

RIOT. 77: Seeing as its kind

of topical for this issue, I wanted to start off, by asking you your thoughts on the passing of Johnny Ramone last week and what he meant to you, if anything?

MARK: Well, the one I'd be worried about is Tommy. He's the only one left isn't he? ... and when you look at Tommy, he looks the oldest, it's incredible ... It is a shame though and one thing it makes you realise is how old we're all getting when your own heroes start dying. When I was younger, 55 seemed like an old man, but now I'm 42 and 55 seems quite young (laughs). It is sad when anyone goes like that, but look at the legacy he's left behind. Fifteen or sixteen albums, all of them essential listening, how many people can say that? Toured around the world ... he had a good life and that's what we should celebrate, you know what I mean?

RIOT. 77: Yeah, you done a great job on those reissues of their last four albums there a few months back ... was that a hard one to get?

MARK: Actually it was easier than you might think. EMI are who you deal with 'cos they own all that stuff and they're the best major to deal with. It was hard work doing them 'cos a lot of work did go into it and when you deal with American bands, same with the Dickies, you have to be so careful and make sure you get everything triple checked, 'cos they do love to sue people. Half the time it's for no apparent reason other than to keep their lawyers in business I think. It was a great honour for me to get that, I never dreamed we'd have the Ramones on Captain Oi! and we're trying to get some more of their stuff as well.

RIOT. 77: What ones are you looking at reissuing?

MARK: "Animal Boy" and what was the one after that?

RIOT. 77: "Halfway To Sanity".

MARK: "Halfway To Sanity", yeah. Those two haven't been done properly and there're four or five bonus tracks we could do on both so I'm just trying to track down the correct owner of those.

RIOT. 77: You're happy with how the last four turned out overall?

MARK: Yeah, I think they came out nice. We tried to do 'em along the lines of the first batch of reissues that came out on Rhino a few years ago, where if you're a Ramones collector it will all fit in a series and the only two that haven't been done are the two I said, so they're the two I'm trying to get.

RIOT. 77: Was it expensive to get them done with the cardboard sleeve?

MARK: Yeah the cardboard wraparound and also the sixteen-page booklet are expensive to do, but it fits in doesn't it? Because it's the Ramones we'll probably sell quite a bit more of them than some of our other titles so it justifies the expense. It's probably only going to be done once anyway so we might as well do it right.

RIOT. 77: Have they been selling well, yeah?

MARK: They've been ticking over alright, yeah. I mean everything is slower at the moment; you always have your down period in the summer. There's a lot of uncertainty in the industry generally, but we're still holding our own and that's because we're specialist. I think anyone whose specialist, be it Jazz or Blues or Folk or whatever, if its run by people who are into it, you suit the other people who are into it. Its not fad-orientated music, so it works for us.

RIOT. 77: You keep quite a low profile in terms of interviews about your label and I think I've only read two interviews with you before ... is that intentional?

Do

you shy away from being interviewed?

MARK: Uhhh!! I have done more than two in the past, but yeah I did a lot of that stuff when I was in The Business and I was never really comfortable with that side of it. I mean, I'll stand at the bar talking away to somebody no problem, but a lot of the other things I do tend to be in the background. What I do a lot of the time with the label stuff is get Watford Jon who also works here to do a lot of them, 'cos he still gets that buzz from it all. He's out there playing with his group Argy Bargy, so it's good publicity for that as well and he knows the label inside out, 'cos he's been here six years and he loves the stuff. He's as equally qualified to talk about it as I am. A lot of it as well is that I just don't have the time to do 'em ... I mean, look at me now, it's eight o'clock at night and I'm still here in the office talking to you (laughs) ... I was in here at quarter past seven this morning 'cos the baby woke me up (laughs). It's a long day, there's a lot to be done and then you gotta sit down and answer the same questions over and over again. "Why did you start the label?" (laughs) ... Good god, you know? (laughs) ... I think I'd be as well off to write out a dummy sheet with a history and maybe then I'd get asked some different questions (laughs) ... but you're right, I do try to keep a low profile.

RIOT. 77: You were interviewed in that "Burning Britain" book Ian Glasper wrote that just came out there a few weeks back ... I haven't had a chance to read it yet, but I was just browsing through it ... what did you make of the book?

MARK: Excellent book. The best one there is ... the only one probably ... the best Punk Rock book by miles in my opinion because all it does is talk about Punk Rock. That whole '82 period was a big scene and I think had more of an influence on the big American bands than the '77 scene probably did. Bands like Rancid would probably be more influenced by bands like The Exploited and G.B.H. than they would Stiff Little Fingers, do you know what I mean? I think it's an excellent book and I think Ian Glasper is a good writer. It's about time somebody documented that scene and there's even some really obscure bands and rare photos in there. It's a great historical reference.

RIOT. 77: So you sponsored the Wasted festival again this year ...

MARK: I didn't actually go this year, but Captain Oi! have sponsored it for the past six years, yes. We were about to have our first child and it was a bit too close to the birth and knowing my luck I'd be up in Morecambe and me missus would go into labour, which wouldn't have gone down too well (laughs). Normally it's just a good social gathering and I can understand how some people could criticize it in so much as all you need is some chicken and chips and you've got the whole Butlins holiday camp. But I mean it goes right across the board of people and you've got no trouble - Punks, Skinheads, Hooligans, Ska fans, you name it ... you'd never have gotten that before without a fight. Some of the bands are really good, but I don't think there needs to be as many bands. I think less bands, but better quality. I feel sorry for some of them, playing at twelve o'clock on a Saturday morning. Nobody's up at that time, you know, and the poor buggers have travelled from Japan or somewhere. They're thinking, "This'll be great, playing to all these people at this legendary event we've heard about"

and there's nobody there but the soundman. So, I do feel for them but sometimes less is more, you know? You'll still get the same number of people anyway because it's a big social event.

RIOT. 77: What does sponsoring an event like that actually entail? Is it just giving them money?

MARK: Giving them money, yeah (laughs). We send out a leaflet with all of our CD's so the people know about it, particularly the foreigners. We stick it on our website and a couple of times we did produce a program for them and we paid for that. I think they could make it much more of an event if there weren't so many bands – I don't think you need 120 bands, half of which are absolute rubbish and it detracts from what's good. The money you'd save on those sixty or so bands you don't use, you could probably go and get one of the real big bands to do it and open it right up for people. That's just my opinion.

RIOT. 77: You've been easing up on the Captain Oi! releases the past few months ... are you finally sitting back and slowing it down a bit?

MARK: No, you see we've got about 300 titles in our catalogue at this stage and trying to keep them all in stock is a nightmare. Although we may not have had as many new releases out as usual recently there's always about ten or fifteen represses to be done every month. We try to keep everything in our back catalogue in print. Up to June this year I think we had fifteen or sixteen albums released in 2004. Then we had nothing in July or August, but we've got two in October, five in November and another five in December, so if you add them up over the year we've had an album out every fortnight, which is a hell of a lot.

RIOT. 77: What's happening with the Goldblade album?

MARK: That's coming out in January. There's a CD single coming out next week from them, but it's not really for sale; they'll probably sell it at the gigs or something. It's more just for radio airplay and they've the song "Psycho" on it as the single, which is a really great song. I think Goldblade are just one of the best new bands around at the moment. I actually saw them at the HITS festival two years ago, when I was walking through to use the loo and thought "Who's this?" I stood there and watched and nearly ended up pissing myself and forgot why I went in there in the first place.

I haven't seen a band like that in years that actually made me stop and watch them. I didn't know any of their songs, but just thought they were brilliant so I went out and tracked down some of their records. I'd say each of their albums, half of it is amazing and the other half I could live without, but this new one is really excellent all round and I'm not just saying that 'cos it's on my label. It's more modern Punk, isn't it? It's not just "1-2-3-4", you know? He's a busy bloke that John fella, he gets out and about and I like to support people like that ...

RIOT. 77: Yeah I've seen him on the telly ...

MARK: He's on the telly, he's on the radio, he writes for the magazines, the bloke is everywhere; he grafts. I mean, I'm 42 and he's gotta be around my age and there's no way I could do the amount of things he's doing. I'm tucked up in bed by ten o'clock (laughs).

RIOT. 77: So, like most people of your generation it was seeing the Pistols on television that got you interested in Punk.

MARK: Yeah I saw 'em on late night television when I was babysitting for someone and thought, "What the hell is this?" It was them, Tom Robinson Band and Jonathan Richman's Modern Lovers. Prior to that it was Status Quo, but when I seen this I was completely blown away. I thought it was brilliant, amazing. Then I just started to really get into it by going to gigs at the Roxy and anywhere I could blag off to get out and see something ... buying these obscure records by weirdo bands, it was bloody marvellous ... and I never lost that bug ... I still have a very big record collection and am always looking on lists for some Lurkers picture disc from Japan or something (laughs) ... like a big kid (laughs). I've been lucky that my hobby turned into my living and I've never given any of my

records away; I've got thousands of them.

RIOT. 77: What were you listening to before that? Were you even into music?

MARK: Oh yeah, I mean I grew up on Glam Rock.

Mud, Sweet and TRex and then a bit of the more rocky Status Quo stuff. I didn't like the things they ended up doing, but the rocky stuff I thought was really good. Then alongside that you had your AC/DC, Motorhead and Rose Tattoo and Heavy Metal Kids, which I love as well. Most stuff I'll listen to except for Dance ... I can't stand Dance music at all, it drives me up the bleedin' wall ... I like the attitude of it, you know? People doing it for themselves and whatever, but I can't have all that Drum N' Bass, god almighty! It's music for the deaf I think ... but, then again they'd probably say that about my stuff.

RIOT. 77: You wanted to do something with Slade, is that right?

MARK: Well Slade are my favourite band of all time. Their catalogue has been done on CD twice and I think both times Stevie Wonder did the artwork and a deaf bloke must have done the mastering. There's no bonus tracks, no lyrics, no sleeve, not even any pictures. It's absolutely appalling and it's short-changing the fans. Slade have over fifty official B-Sides that have never been on albums, so there's a box set on its own there. I would love to put them all out with all the foreign sleeves and everything in the booklet – I couldn't get enough stuff in the booklet ...

RIOT. 77: Have you got all the vinyl versions of them yourself?

MARK: I've got 'em all yeah, everything; all the foreign stuff – German, Dutch, French you name it. That's what I do when I go on holiday – travel around back street record shops in Barcelona or Amsterdam or somewhere (laughs) ... it's sad! (laughs).

RIOT. 77: How many studio albums have Slade got?

MARK: Sixteen or seventeen or something like that and that's without your "Greatest Hits" and things like that. I don't want to do those things; I want to do like the first album and all the B-Sides, the second album and all the B-Sides, you know? I'm not even bothered about unreleased stuff; just the stuff that did come out. What's happened is similar to what's happened to a lot of the other Glam bands, where the record companies are just laughing at them and the record companies are actually just shooting themselves in the foot, because what happens is you'll get a fan who'll set up a website and put all the stuff on it so you can just burn it off there. It's criminal really how you could treat someone like Slade like that. It's not as if it's an unknown band or something, it's Slade for gods sake. I've just done it all for Status Quo actually, I've done the first eleven Status Quo albums for Universal and put them all together properly. All the B-Sides and lyrics and sleeve notes with foreign sleeves as well – real nice job they're gonna be, 'cos they're another band who's back catalogue has been treated appallingly. In this day and age with the price of manufacturing a lot less than it used to be, they should all be out there.

RIOT. 77: Do you work for Universal or something?

MARK: I freelance for quite a lot of other record companies as well, yeah. I absolutely love it and I love music in general and will write about most things, except for Dance. It's a privilege for me to get to write this stuff 'cos I enjoy it so much and am very lucky.

RIOT. 77: You started out just promoting gigs in your local pub, is that right?

MARK: Yeah it was a pub in Deptford called the Kings Head, which is long gone now, but it was a right old rough hole. That was around '78 or '79 when there was nowhere left to play. We had the Chords on there long before there was any such thing as a Mod revival, it was marvellous. We'd do 'em on a Friday and Saturday and no charge to get in – maybe just run the hat around to get a couple of quid for the bands and give 'em a few freebies and that was it, you know? So I just sort of built it up from there until eventually we had like All-Dayers with about twenty bands playing (laughs).

RIOT. 77: You were singing in a band around then?

MARK: Yeah we were called Malicious Damage and when I heard our first demo tape I thought, "Hmmm!! best learn an instrument, 'cos I'm never gonna make it as a singer!" (laughs). That's when I learned the bass and I'd always write songs and lyrics and stuff and it was from there that I had a band called The Blackout which was more ... it was quite Clash-like really ... We had a very talented singer actually, I must say, but then I met Mickey Fitz and it was harder edged stuff that I wanted to play and The Business was ideal for that because it still had a melody. There were tunes and stuff going through it, but it just had a heavier guitar to it.

RIOT. 77: How did you come in contact with Mickey Fitz?

MARK: Well we're all from South East London and he'd seen The Blackout play and also the old guitarist from Malicious Damage joined The Business for about ten minutes and I just bumped into him one day and he asked if I wanted to come along to a Business rehearsal 'cos they needed a bass player, so I did. I was doing two or three bands at the same time and just wanted to play all the time. I went along and we got on fine together and off we went. Some great days.

RIOT. 77: So how do you rate The Business in terms of their contribution to the second coming of Punk or Oi! or whatever you want to call it? Do you think they played a big part in coming up with it all?

MARK: I wouldn't say the second coming of Punk, but we were certainly at the forefront of the Oi! scene, though we probably weren't a typical Oi! band. It's hard to say really, I mean I heard a tribute album about a year ago and this Spanish band had recorded all these old Business songs in Spanish and I thought, "God this is weird, these are songs that I wrote in my bedroom ... why would someone else want to ..." you know? That freaked me out a little bit that someone else would take the time to translate all these lyrics into Spanish and learn the bass lines and what have you ... So, I have to say I'm honoured and flattered for that to happen, 'cos you never think about stuff like that ever happening. I don't know about who we've influenced or whether we've influenced anybody, you'd have to ask the bands themselves that ... some bands say they're influenced by us and I can't see it at all. Whatever they get out of it, it's something good, isn't it?

RIOT. 77: Had you become completely disillusioned with all the original Punk groups at the time?

MARK: By 1979 The Clash had turned into the Rolling Stones in my opinion. I was fine with the first two albums but after that I thought it went a bit downhill, but that's just me. The Pistols were split up, The Damned had been on and off and on and off, The Stranglers had reinvented themselves as The Doors really; their influence was coming from there. The newer bands like the U.K. Subs who were coming through at the time hadn't really happened yet, but there was an undercurrent of older bands like Menace and Slaughter And The Dogs that had a harder edge that I really liked and that was really the foundations for the Oi! scene. Cocksparrer was another one too; they were a band that I had seen at the time and thought, "Wow! Yeah!". It was like high energy Rock N' Roll, but it had a Cockney thing about it and all of a sudden there was a batch of these likeminded bands that Garry Bushell saw, probably because he got everything sent to the paper (Sounds), and he kind of christened it. I think at the time some people thought we all drank in the same pubs or something, but we didn't (laughs). It just all happened at once and it was more, what we used to call, "The Reality Punk", because we were all into it and it wasn't a fad. It wasn't a case of "I'm

gonna cut my hair because I used to be in an R N B band and now I wanna be in a Punk band". We were all like that in the first place and in my opinion the Oi! thing was a lot more real than the Punk thing and that was the big difference for me. The Punk thing was more of a fashion thing and more of an art school thing. The original crowd were ... I'm not gonna get into a class issue here ... but they were a different sort of crowd than what we were and we kind of got sneered at and I thought, "How

Punk is that? We're getting sneered at for being Punk; I dunno about this", so we went off and did our own thing and

whether they approved or not it didn't really matter. If they don't accept us, it doesn't matter, we done our thing anyway.

RIOT. 77: You obviously rate Bushell then?

MARK: Well, without him as the focal point, what other outlets were there? There was Carol Clerk at the Melody Maker who did some stuff, but I think a lot of that was pushed because Bushell was doing it. Bushell gave a voice, he gave an outlet to these people, he really did and I can't fault him at all. Yes, we've had our words over the years, but I still have a lot of respect for the fella, without a doubt. We've kept in touch and he's done the Gonads albums and he is still a fan of it all. He's not as in touch with it as he maybe thinks he is, but he is still genuinely a fan of it all and if he thinks he can help push something then he will do. He still tries to stick a bit of The Sun humour in there and a bit of the Gonads, but nonetheless at least he sticks something in there, which is better than nothing I suppose isn't it?

RIOT. 77: What did you make of the Gonads?

MARK: I played on the first two Gonads singles ... it was basically The Business backing him. He was a laugh, he can't sing at all, but the lyrics are funny and that's probably the way it should have stayed. He probably shouldn't have done any more than that (laughs). It was just a joke and there really shouldn't have been any more and now there's a couple of albums out and maybe the joke's worn a bit thin (laughs) ... oh though some of the tracks are really good.

RIOT. 77: You put them out, didn't you?

MARK: Yeah, we done the last two albums ... you gotta keep him happy somehow, haven't ya? (laughs) Some of the tracks I really like. He's a very witty writer and he's even got a second book out now I think, but the first book was called The Face and I thought it was excellent - kind of like a throwaway Gangster novel and if you like that sort of stuff, it's an excellent book. You could see it being made into one of those TV things that you could imagine Ray Winstone or Dirty Den in ... one of these one-off TV specials and you'd be glued to it. It would be a seminal sort of thing. But, yeah a really good book, I thought, if you like trashy novels. If you're looking for something in depth, then don't buy it (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Why did you decide to leave The Business then? You had a hand in writing a lot of their best stuff ...

MARK: Well, thank you ... Uhhh!!! It was about '88 I think when we played the Astoria and that was a funny old time for Punk Rock. The labels that are about now like Epitaph, Burning Heart and Fat weren't about then ... well they probably were, but nobody knew who half of those bands were then ... the scene in the U.K.; there wasn't one. The only label that was really doing anything was what we were doing at Link. There was nobody booking gigs, there was no zines, it was a real dead time for the scene and I was there with Link trying to build it up, the other members of the band were all working jobs anyway and nobody was really bothered, you know? We never really split; we just didn't do anything. "Welcome To The Real World" album came out in 1989 and that was our lot really. It was about '91 or '92 and I was living down in Canterbury when Micky Fitz and Steve Kent came down to see me and said they'd been approached by this German label and were thinking about going to play in Germany and maybe record a single. I was just so busy with Link and I just didn't fancy doing it. I'd had a go of it and done the band for ten years and now I was doing the label and it was time to move on. I don't want to go back, I think we've got to move on. I wished them well and off they went and they've been doing it to this day.

RIOT. 77: I don't think many people would have expected them to end up being as much of a success as they ended up being ... did you expect that at all?

MARK: No, actually. Especially after the first single, "Anywhere But Here", because that was atrocious. Blimey! Absolute rubbish, it should never have been released. I think they let Mickey Fitz mix that one, which is always fatal, especially if the pubs are about to shut. I thought that record would kill 'em and I was just hoping that it wouldn't become embarrassing and they would ruin the half a good name that we had (laughs). But in fairness, particularly Steve Whale, gathered his senses and they got it all together and the first album, "Keep The Faith" I thought was excellent. "The Truth ..." I thought they were trying to go a little too Hardcore, when Hardcore was going into Oi! But "No Mercy For You" - back with a bang, without a doubt, really good album. I don't like the covers album they done. I don't think they needed to do it.

RIOT. 77: The covers album?

MARK: Yeah, they've a covers album out where they do Green Day songs and all that.

RIOT. 77: I haven't heard that.

MARK: Yeah, you don't want to either. Then there's a football album out, "Hardcore Hooligan" which I think is half alright. It probably would have made a good EP. I believe Steve has got some new stuff down for the next album and he's really passionate about the scene and has been for years and lives it. He'll take it the right way when he has the time, because he has a full time job as well; he runs his own business. It's hard work for him to juggle it all and we're not getting any younger either (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Do you ever regret not getting back with them?

MARK: I saw them play one of the Morecambe festivals and I hadn't seen them play before that since reforming and they were halfway through "Blind Justice" before I even realised what it was (laughs). So, no, I did my bit and I don't regret it. But I did see them when they played with Good Charlotte for two nights at the Astoria in London and that was the one time when I thought, "Hmmm!! I wouldn't have minded doing that!". That was a really good gig because it was a totally different crowd to what they would normally get, because no one knew they were supporting them.

RIOT. 77: How did they end up playing that?

MARK: Good Charlotte supported them in America and as they got a bit bigger they remembered that The Business had given them a break and they booked them, which I thought was great. Fair play to Good Charlotte. I know that a lot of the hardcore Punks think Good Charlotte are plastic Punks, but they are far from plastic those lads. They know their stuff and I've got a lot of respect for them. They've got some bloody good songs n' all, it's just probably that they've got more of a teenybopper audience.

RIOT. 77: Working with Link and Dojo were your first steps into the world of releasing records then?

Mark: Yeah, Link was the first label and then Dojo was part of a bigger label called Castle and had been lying quiet for a while, so me and my partner Lol from Link re-launched that. I think it was about 1990 or '91 when it got to the stage where I was just spending more and more time dealing with accountants and V.A.T. and nothing to do with music as such and it was just getting me down. Then one of the releases that landed on my desk one day was to do with Hawkwind and I don't know if it just came on a bad day or what but I thought, "I can't do this!" I'm sure they're lovely lads and all the rest of it, but it was unlisten-able. I took the rest of the day off and had to think about what I wanted to do. Lol was quite keen to keep working with Dojo and extend it and do other stuff. CD was coming in at the time and I thought, "Who the hell wants to buy Punk Rock on CD?" so I stopped Link and started doing stuff for Record Collector and sleeve notes for people and that. I came up with the Captain Oi! collectors idea and thought I'd maybe put twenty records out and do it as a hobby, because writing was my living. Now look at it? It's mad.

RIOT. 77: Yeah I was going to ask you what your aspirations were for the label when you started out, but you were saying it was just to release twenty or so records and leave it at that?

MARK: I genuinely thought I'd get twenty or so records out, mainly of stuff I'd done on Link but that I could do properly. Remaster it all and dress it up with lyrics and original artwork and what have you? I didn't see further than that and going back to your first question, I never in my wildest dreams would have thought we'd have the Ramones on Captain Oi! and here we are ten years later and we've got Stiff Little Fingers, the Dickies and all this wonderful music and I can't believe it. I still pinch myself.

RIOT. 77: Do you remember what the single biggest obstacle was you faced in launching Captain Oi!? Money, I'd imagine?

MARK: No, it wasn't money actually. Because initially I licensed all the stuff from Link, so I didn't have to pay advances there and all the manufacturers I knew from the Link days, so they gave me credit. The biggest problem is trying to get paid by everyone, 'cos everybody is selling them but you've got to just wait for the money to come in. I just did release by release and whatever money I made on each one would fund the next one and so on, which has continued to this day and still the biggest headache I have is accounts. They drive me mad, but without that I haven't got the money to pay Goldblade to do an album or to pay for the Ramones albums, so you've got to be on top of it. This year in particular we've had a few customers go bust, we've had others shut down, we've got a German geezer who's just done a runner and I will find him one day. But in general most of the people in the scene are sound; we do very well with the mailorder and we've got a good crew of people who buy everything. But I want to run it so that everybody gets paid, including the delivery company, phone company, art company and all the other things, as well as the bands themselves. It is a bit hand to mouth, but it's great fun.

RIOT. 77: What things do you look for in something you're about to reissue? Is it just a record that you love or is it something that you feel has been issued poorly in the past and hasn't been done justice?

MARK: There might be something that has never been done, like for instance we're going to do a band called The Straps from '79/'80, who had a couple of singles and an album that are really hard to find. Nice guys and we got people writing in asking if we could do anything by them, so that's how that one came about. The majority of stuff I really like and I got all those records when they came out, so I'm delighted that I get to put The Straps out on CD. For some releases I would pay more than others, like when I done The Starjets album; I loved it and I didn't care if it sold nothing, I was going to do it. Luckily there were people out there who thought the same as me and they all bought it. One thing we haven't done very much of is live albums, because there's enough live albums out there to sink a battleship with. Now I could put out, say for argument sake, the Stiff Little Fingers live album and it would sell a lot more than The Starjets, but I don't really want to do that. I don't want to become the Tesco's of Punk Rock. I like to put a lot of time and effort into the whole presentation and put out some more unusual titles that people might not expect to find on CD, but to do those you have to have other titles that sell exceptionally well to fund it. So the money I'd make on the Dickies or the Ramones means I can put some back into doing The Straps album or the new one by Red Flag 77 or something. Just try to keep it going and

maybe educate some people, you know?

RIOT. 77: What sort of stuff wouldn't you release? ... do you have any guidelines politically on what you won't release?

MARK: Well, I certainly wouldn't release any extreme right-wing or extreme left-wing stuff.

RIOT. 77: What about the Section 5 albums?

MARK: I have done Section 5, yeah. I find it quite amusing about all this Section 5 business, I have to be honest with you. I mean, their first album was on Roddy Moreno's label and you're not going to get a more left-wing guy than Roddy, right? I did three albums on Link by Section 5 and I've yet to see one track that I would construe as right-wing. They might have done one and not told me (laughs) ... but I've certainly yet to hear one. I remember chatting to their drummer years ago at one of their gigs and somebody started the old arm-waving and he got up and battered him and said, "No way, my granddad fought the Nazi's". There's a lot of these Internet and email warriors out there and they have to always be on the Internet because they haven't got any friends or girlfriends and they stay in every night, but they see danger everywhere when there is none. I've known Tosh a long time and I don't doubt that there are people in his crowd who are of a right-wing persuasion, but I've yet to hear it on the records and in fact I think on the last album he made an absolute declaration on the bloody thing, which is more than I've seen most bands doing. I don't know what else the bloke could do other than knock it on the head, which would be unfair on him. I think he gets it quite bad really and people use him as an example. If you want to have a go at Skrewdriver, fine, because that's what they did and that's what they were singing about and we wouldn't put their records out. The Section 5 ones that I've done, I don't have a problem with them at all. I mean, I've done the Newtown Neurotics album and that's left of centre and if you asked me to put out the first Redskins album I'd love to do it because it's a great album and that's definitely left of centre ... The Ruts were left of centre ... I mean, who's to say who's right and who's wrong? I wouldn't put out Skrewdriver or any of that stuff and to be honest with you most of it's crap anyway, and that's a good enough reason on its own not to put it out, regardless of what they're singing about ... I'm trying to think of other left-wing stuff I've put out ...

RIOT. 77: The Upstarts ...

MARK: The Upstarts, yeah ... but you look at the early stuff and is that really left-wing? You look at the track, "England" which I think is a brilliant song, but if that had have been done by Section 5, everybody would have been up in arms over it. "England Belongs To Me" by Cocksparrer, is that right-wing? I wouldn't say so. When the football is on and everyone's out singing "Come on England!!" or something, does that make them all right-wing? I dunno, I think there's just a load of paranoid people out there and unfortunately in England we have a lot of these apologists who are in some position of power, whether it be the local council or the local paper or music papers or something and they've all got a chip on their shoulder. I don't care, I mean if you don't like it, then don't buy it.

RIOT. 77: So, where would you place yourself politically then?

MARK: Ohhh!! That's a good question, I don't know ...

RIOT. 77: I have a quote here from Mensi when I interviewed him and he labelled you a "conservative, Tory, bluenose". How close is that?

MARK: I wouldn't say I was that (laughs) ... I probably have more leanings towards that area than I would towards the out n' out left-wing, because that's just politics of envy. I come from a working class home and there were five of us and all our clothes came from Jumble Sales, you know what I mean? I know what it's like to have sod all, I just got off my arse and done something about it. I can't take these people who are like, "Life's been bad to me, blah! blah! blah!". You've got your arms and your legs, haven't ya? Look at the paralympics! People with no arms, no legs and there they are coming out and doing things that me and you and able-bodied people couldn't do. They're the people that can turn around and say, "Life ain't been good to me", not some lazy bloke who can't be bothered to get out of bed and thinks he should be worth a fortune.

RIOT. 77: Do you vote Tory?

MARK: No. I'm not going to tell you who I vote for, but it isn't Tory.

RIOT. 77: What's your opinion on the current government in Britain today then?

MARK: What, Tony Blair?

RIOT. 77: Yeah, are you happy with how they run your country?

MARK: Uhhhh!! Not particularly, no. I mean, what you'd replace them with is the problem.

RIOT. 77: Obviously Punk is almost exclusively known for veering to the left politically. Do your views cause you much friction within Punk circles? I mean you're adamantly saying you're not left-wing.

MARK: Yeah, I wouldn't say I was left-wing, but I'm not right-wing either. I've not come across it being a problem. I get on perfectly fine with people like Mensi and I've known him for twenty odd years. His views are not always what I would believe in and vice versa, but there's other things we would be totally the same on ... the pensioners issue would be a good example. He thinks they should be sorted out, which is exactly the same as my belief. On street politics, rather than party politics, we would not be that much different. I think politics are a personal thing, but it seems to be such a big thing in our scene, that you've got to justify everything ... like you wouldn't ask the guy from Iron Maiden that, would ya? Years ago I was out with one of my girlfriends ... she wasn't Indian, more Malaysian ... darker skinned, let's put it that way. I was at one of the Ska gigs that we used to organise at the Astoria and a well known face on the left-circle said, "Can I get a photo of you with your missus?" and I said, "Why?" thinking it was going to end up in some porn magazine or something and he said, "No, it's just to show everyone that you're not a racist!" Well I nearly punched his bloody lights out. I said, "Well who said I was?" and he said, "Well if they see you with a ..." and I said, "Whoah! Who's using who now? I ain't having none of that mate". They were trying to make it a positive discrimination, you know? I try to keep away from all of that. I've always had this belief right, that a wanker is a wanker and it doesn't matter if you're black, white, Chinese, rich or poor ... I'm sure there's certain people in your local pub where every time you see them walk in you're like, "Oh no, not him again!" and you'll do your best to avoid him and it doesn't matter how much money he's got or what car he drives; he's just a dickhead and you don't want to drink with him. That's how life is and that's why I prefer to stick to street politics because nobody wants to see an old lady getting mugged, no matter who's doing the mugging or no matter what the reason is. It's not right and that's that. Don't tell me its because you're a drug addict ... in that case if I go out and get pissed and kick your old mother around the place, does that make it alright? It doesn't, does it? No matter where

you're coming from politically and if you stick to those kind of politics, you can't go too far wrong, can you?

RIOT. 77: That's it for politics then.

MARK: Yeah. I'm here to put records out.

RIOT. 77: One thing about Captain Oi! is that you don't do much advertising compared with other labels of a similar size.

MARK: We have done some advertising, but we probably give away more promos than most labels. We also run a bigger mailorder, give away a colour catalogue, which costs a fortune to make. We give that out once a year and quite often we'll give a free CD away with it, which usually has five or six sample songs from the newer albums, like say for example Slaughter And The Dogs new album, people aren't going to know what it sounds like until we put one track on the sampler. At least it gives you a chance to know whether or not you might like it, before shelling out eight or nine quid. I prefer to put the money into that, because you can't play an advert.

RIOT. 77: Obviously most of the bands you work with would be more established, but how do the newer bands feel about that, when you don't take out ads for them?

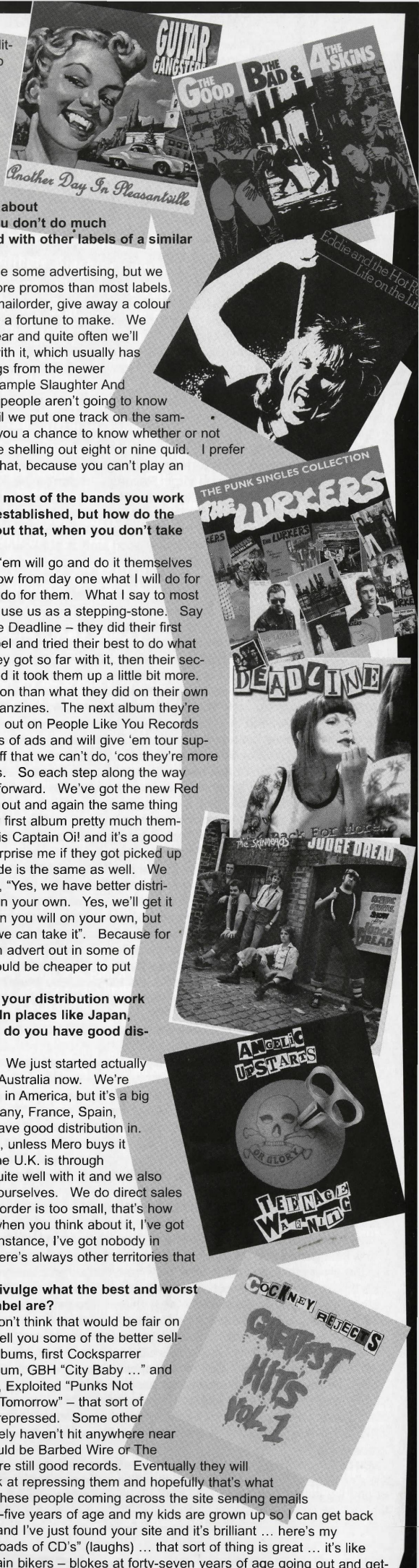
MARK: Well most of 'em will go and do it themselves if they want. They know from day one what I will do for them and what I won't do for them. What I say to most of the new bands is to use us as a stepping-stone. Say for instance a band like Deadline - they did their first album on their own label and tried their best to do what they could with it. They got so far with it, then their second album we did it and it took them up a little bit more. We got better distribution than what they did on their own and we got into more fanzines. The next album they're doing is going to come out on People Like You Records and they take out loads of ads and will give 'em tour support. They can do stuff that we can't do, 'cos they're more geared up for new acts. So each step along the way they've made a move forward. We've got the new Red Flag 77 album coming out and again the same thing there - they done their first album pretty much themselves, second album is Captain Oi! and it's a good album and wouldn't surprise me if they got picked up an move on. Goldblade is the same as well. We tell them from day one, "Yes, we have better distribution than you'll get on your own. Yes, we'll get it out to more outlets than you will on your own, but that's about as far as we can take it". Because for what it costs to take an advert out in some of these magazines, it would be cheaper to put another album out.

RIOT. 77: How does your distribution work outside of Europe? In places like Japan, America or Australia, do you have good distribution over there?

MARK: Not too bad. We just started actually with the distribution in Australia now. We're pretty well represented in America, but it's a big country isn't it? Germany, France, Spain, Holland and Italy we have good distribution in. Not so much in Ireland, unless Mero buys it (laughs) ... and then the U.K. is through Plastichead, who do quite well with it and we also sell a lot to the stores ourselves. We do direct sales to stores all over. No order is too small, that's how we see it really. But when you think about it, I've got nobody in Finland for instance, I've got nobody in Portugal, Greece ... there's always other territories that we'd like to get into ...

RIOT. 77: Can you divulge what the best and worst selling titles on the label are?

MARK: Uhhhh!! I don't think that would be fair on either of them. I can tell you some of the better sellers were the Dickies albums, first Cocksparrer album, first 4 Skins album, GBH "City Baby ..." and "City Baby's Revenge", Exploited "Punks Not Dead" and "Troops Of Tomorrow" - that sort of stuff is always getting repressed. Some other albums that unfortunately haven't hit anywhere near the thousand mark would be Barbed Wire or The Gutterknives, but they're still good records. Eventually they will get there and we'll look at repressing them and hopefully that's what will happen. You get these people coming across the site sending emails like, "Oh God, I'm forty-five years of age and my kids are grown up so I can get back into Punk Rock again and I've just found your site and it's brilliant ... here's my Goldcard ... send me loads of CD's" (laughs) ... that sort of thing is great ... it's like you get these born-again bikers - blokes at forty-seven years of age going out and get-



ting themselves a big bike because they can do and don't have to spend all their money on their kids anymore, which is the same thing as getting all these born-again Punk Rockers (laughs).

RIOT. 77: What's a typical press run for a Captain Oi! release? Do they differ from title to title?

MARK: Yeah, they're all different. Never below a thousand on the first run, because you've got stuff for the bands and the press and what have you? Some of the bigger titles you might do 2,500 – 3,000 straight away.

RIOT. 77: What sort of a deal do you give bands?

MARK: Most of the stuff we do is licensed from other record companies, so we pay them as opposed to the bands. We'll pay them an advance fee and then a royalty fee and they'll then deal with the bands. Like the Ramones for example – I've never spoken to any of them, I deal with E.M.I. I pay E.M.I. and they pay whoever the Ramones representation is.

RIOT. 77: Is there a limit to how much of each title you can press up?

MARK: No, so as long as we keep paying the record companies, we can press as many as we like. Some, we would deal with the bands direct if they own the rights and we'd just pay them direct.

RIOT. 77: Have you been turned down for many reissues you'd like to do?

MARK: Loads. Anything on Virgin Records ... I don't think anybody works there. I think somebody goes in and clocks everybody in and then banks all the money, but there's nobody there. I just get ignored by them and I find that very frustrating. There's some really good stuff there I'd like to do like the Skids first album, Penetration's first album ... some really good stuff ... but I genuinely believe that nobody works there, I think it's a tax cover up. I'd love to get one of those under-cover blokes to go in there and suss it out.

RIOT. 77: So, there's still just yourself and Watford Jon working there, is it?

MARK: There's me and Jon and then in the morning we have a girl who comes in to do the mailorder and then in the afternoon we have another girl come in to do the accounts, so in effect there's three of us. Now that I've got the baby, I tend to be in here between seven and half past seven most mornings and try to finish around six o'clock to spend some time with my little one. Then I'll usually come back in at around eight o'clock and do a couple more hours ... there's always so much to be done. You've got to understand as well that I'm dealing with Europeans who are in an hour before us and then I'm dealing with Americans who are in a few hours after, so your time zones get a bit messed up. But at the same time I don't have the travelling that most people have and I absolutely love it. If this was a job that I didn't like then I wouldn't do those hours ... well, I wouldn't do the job to begin with ... there are a lot of people out there stuck in jobs that they don't like, but they have to do it for whatever reason. I'm fortunate that I'm not in that position and I genuinely love coming in every morning and opening the mail and checking email ... I've got a pile of fanzines sitting here on front of me that need reading, so that's my bit of work for tonight, 'cos I need to know what's going on.

RIOT. 77: What about more collector stuff like that 7 inch single you did of the U.K. Subs ... will you be doing any more of those?

MARK: Yeah, we only did the one 7 inch single and then a couple of CD singles. We've done a lot of vinyl – picture disc vinyl, coloured vinyl and just normal vinyl; a lot of which is for Japan. Vinyl now I think is the biggest selling individualist market, without a doubt. The biggest problem is that you get a lot more returns on vinyl, 'cos if you want vinyl then it's got to be perfect. There's so much things that can go wrong with it and break when you put it in the post, you know? Whereas with a CD if the case breaks, you just get another one. We'll probably just stick with CD's and maybe a DVD in the future.

RIOT. 77: What are your views on downloading music for free off the Internet or burning CD's?

MARK: Well, the industry at the moment is blaming all the downturn in record sales on that and yet it's people like Sony who actually make the machines that you can download and burn CD's on, so I don't think they can have it both ways. I remember as a kid growing up there was a big campaign saying, "Cassette taping is killing music!" and it's just another form of that, isn't it? It doesn't bother me really that much, but what we have to look at is the long term effects of it all and if everyone says, "I'm not gonna pay for music, I'm just gonna download it all off the Internet", at some point who is going to pay for that band to do their album and go on tour? It has to come from somewhere.

RIOT. 77: Do you think music should be free?

MARK: No, 'cos I'd be out of business, wouldn't I? (laughs) If you think about, if music was free, then no musician is ever going to be able to be professional is he? How's he gonna pay for his guitar strings, amplifiers or recording studios? For a lot of the older musicians that's their livelihood, that's their pension you're talking about. It's the only money they get. The majority of people who do that stuff I don't think are really into music; again it's a faddy thing. You get all these CD samplers out there as well, like last week in the Evening Standard, I think it was, they had some free 70's CD, which is ridiculous. If they said it was all unsigned bands, I could live with that. But why give away a 70's CD? What's the point in buying a 70's CD in the record shops now? So, in that respect these record companies aren't helping themselves at all. I still believe that people who are into specialist music, they want the proper thing. They might download something new just to hear it, but they want the proper album with the sleeve notes and lyrics and that.

RIOT. 77: Do you think this will damage the smaller labels or the major labels more?

MARK: It will damage the major label stuff and mainstream pop, without a doubt. But it's not as big as they all think it is and let's be honest, there's so much crap out there these days, which also contributes hugely to the slump in sales I believe. You

can buy all your Bowie albums now for £5.99 and all your AC/DC albums for £6.99, with brilliant booklets and everything. So that market isn't slowing down at all. That stuff is selling well and the growth market is what they call the Grey Market – the over 35's with money to spend and they're getting all their old records on CD again. But a lot of the new stuff ... I mean, what scene is really going on out there now? There isn't one. The teenybopper/Pop Idol thing has had its lot now. The Skate Punk thing hasn't really crossed over; there's a good little scene there but it hasn't really crossed over. The Metal scene comes and goes, so it really needs another movement like Punk Rock, but not Punk Rock. It needs something new to come in and totally revolutionize everything in terms of how you look at album sleeves and peoples clothes and just everything, like Punk Rock did in the 70's ... TV programmes, everything. It needs new blood.

RIOT. 77: You don't actually have any free music available to download on the Captain Oi! website, do you?

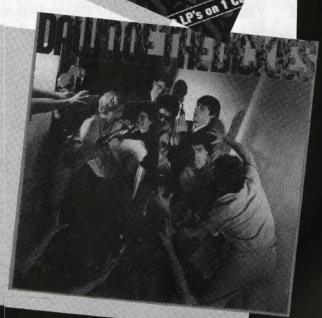
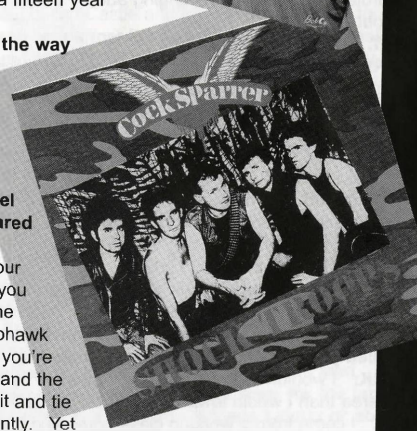
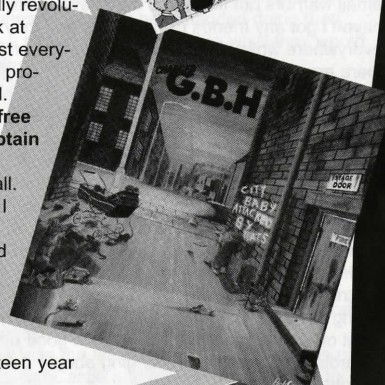
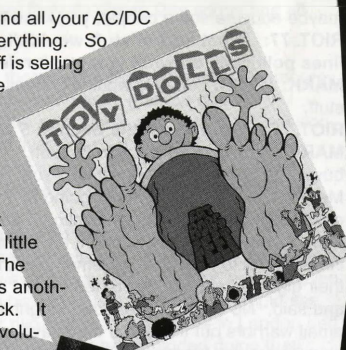
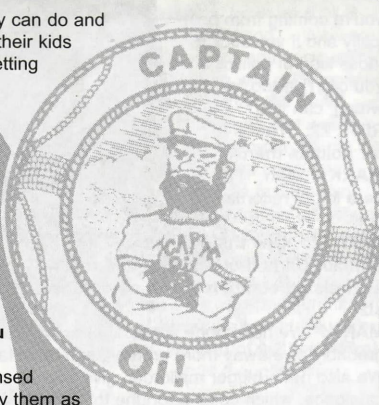
MARK: No. I don't really understand it all. I don't know how to do it, so I don't do it. I find the Internet great for information, but anything else I get bored on. People send me all these emails – "I've got an E-zine!" Every bugger has got an E-zine (laughs). I'm sitting here, I want to read the thing in my hands, not go all bog-eyed on the computer, thank you very much. But a fifteen year old might think differently.

RIOT. 77: Do you think E-zines are the way forward?

MARK: No, it's just another way of doing it. Magazines will still do well and so will E-zines. I don't think they're going to replace magazines.

RIOT. 77: Just to finish up then Mark, what sort of person do you feel Punk Rock represents today, compared with when you first got into it?

MARK: To me it was always about your attitude and how you live your life. If you walk into a bank and the guy behind the counter with a suit and tie on has a Mohawk that would probably shock you. Yet if you're the guy who goes in with the Mohawk and the guy behind the counter just has the suit and tie on then you'll look at him totally differently. Yet he could have the most extreme left-wing views and be more political than any Punk Rocker you know, but you're judging the book by its cover. Punk Rock now is probably safer than it was and it's definitely more commercial, but is that such a bad thing? If it's all about the message and that's what you're trying to put across then surely the more people who hear it the better. I mean, I watched Good Charlotte and they've got some things to say in their songs and they were saying them to a damn sight more people than The Business ever played to (laughs). So, they must be doing something right. A lot of people say these new bands aren't Punk Rock, but what are they then? What are the Offspring? Are they a Jazz band? What about Green Day? Are they not Punk Rock? To me it's Punk Rock. It's just modern Punk Rock. It's more commercial, but I can't see a problem with it. Are the Buzzcocks Punk Rock? What message did they have in their songs then? If you read the lyrics to some of these old bands, it was a load of old gibberish they were talking. I think it's good that its out there and more available and I'd much rather see kids growing up listening to Offspring, Green Day or Good Charlotte than bloody Gareth Gates or something that has absolutely no soul or passion. At least Good Charlotte has a bit of passion and energy and I'd much sooner listen to that.



7SECONDS



Old time U.S. Hardcore – it doesn't get much better than 7 Seconds does it? Some of the best pound for pound, straight down the middle Hardcore music of the early eighties was conceived by these young straights from Reno, Nevada. Brother's Kevin and Steve, influenced by the early Punk Rock they'd seen, and read about in other cities, set about developing their own local scene, spearheaded by the formation of their own group 7 Seconds in December '79. Reno was by no means a Hardcore hotspot and together with about 100 local youths they set up the first Positive Force collective that worked to promote the activities of Punk Rockers in the area and form an alliance with like minded individuals the country over. By 1984 the band were up and running, actively touring the Punk circuit around the United States, on the back of their "The Crew" masterpiece, eagerly promoting themselves on the road. Gaining support from the Better Youth Organisation in Los Angeles and Alternative Tentacles in San Francisco, 7 Seconds went on to achieve notoriety on the Hardcore front that still lives on to this day. In the years that followed Hardcore's demise, 7 Seconds continued to release records, albeit of the Alternative Rock variety, before returning to their sound of old with "Good To Go" in the late nineties. Astonishingly the band had never toured the U.K. or Ireland until summer 2004, which was when I spoke with Kevin Seconds outside The Hub in Dublin, prior to their gig there that evening. (ALL LIVE PHOTOS TAKEN AT THE HUB, DUBLIN - MAY 2004.)

RIOT 77: So this is your third date into the tour ... you played a couple of British dates over the past few days?

KEVIN: Yeah, we played in Newport, Wales last night and Brighton the night before. Both shows were awesome actually, great crowd.

RIOT 77: You've brought Five Knuckle along with you on these dates. Did you handpick them yourself?

KEVIN: I came over and did a solo/acoustic tour throughout the U.K. last October and the guy who brought me over was telling me about a lot of the bands that were playing and turned me onto a bunch of CD's and Five Knuckle were one of the bands that we liked. He mentioned that they were really good and the kids liked them, so we talked about having them play these dates with us.

RIOT 77: Right. Are you the only original guy left in the line up tonight?

KEVIN: Actually I'm not the only original member ... Steve Youth is here ...

RIOT 77: Oh, you're brother is still in the band?

KEVIN: Yeah, he's still there. Troy our drummer has been with us almost since the beginning too. Bobby Adams, the guitar player, has been playing with us since '86 on and off ... so, it's pretty much a long-term band.

RIOT 77: You started the band with Steve Youth in '79, which was a good few years before Hardcore was a recognised term ...

KEVIN: Sure ...

RIOT 77: What sort of stuff were you playing then ... it would have been more Punk influenced?

KEVIN: Uhhhhh!!! ... I dunno, I mean our influences were pretty much the standard ones – Sex Pistols, Ramones and bands like that, but we just really wanted to play fast and that was one of the things that we focused heavily on ... we'd do covers of Sex Pistols songs, but we'd make 'em faster and we kinda realised that that's what we wanted to do. The first time we ever heard the term Hardcore was D.O.A. from Canada with "Hardcore '81" and we thought that sounded great and they were calling themselves a Hardcore band and were our heroes, so we started calling ourselves a Hardcore band. I definitely think we were one of the earlier bands to start calling ourselves a Hardcore band. We just thought it sounded cool, basically.

RIOT 77: Right, because you originally started singing in an English accent (laughs) ...

KEVIN: Oh yeah (laughs) ... any influence we had it always came through in my voice ... I have old demo tapes of us when we were really influenced by D.O.A. and I'm trying to sound like Joey Shithead (laughs).

RIOT 77: Coming from a place like Reno, I'd assume it was difficult at the time to come across the sort of music you wanted to hear and play ... where did you have to look to for that?

KEVIN: There used to be this mailorder company in the states where you could just order a whole catalogue from New York and they'd send it to you and you could order all the cool stuff ... a lot of it was bootlegged live stuff like The Clash and The Damned or Dead Boys ... that's pretty much what we did, 'cos for the first few years you couldn't go into a record store and buy anything, you had to order it. Actually we used to go into one of the local record stores and harass 'em all the time and bug 'em to carry stuff, until finally they started doing it and it would sell, so they'd carry more and more of it. Eventually they started carrying punk rock, but it was hard to find it early on.

RIOT 77: Were there any pirate radio shows or anything like that going on at the time?

KEVIN: Not really ... not up there ... there was a college radio station up in Reno, where a guy was playing a lot of B52's and Blondie and stuff. We used to call him all the time and request something a little harder sounding, which he was relatively open to. We used to drive down with our collection of records and just harass him to play them until he finally started doing it and would get a good response. Every week he would do a show and play more Punk Rock, so that was as close as we got to hearing Punk music on the radio.

RIOT 77: It would have been around '82 when you heard Minor Threat out on

the east coast, which in my mind had very little in common with the punk rock you'd been listening to prior to that. How did you make the connection between the two?

KEVIN: I think it was in 1980 I got a letter from Ian McKaye and he had heard about us through Jello Biafra from the Dead Kennedys and wanted to trade some stuff, so I sent him a cassette because we didn't have a record then and he sent back the first Minor Threat record and something else. After that we just developed this friendship through the course of writing letters all the time and then when Minor Threat came out on their first U.S. tour we set up a show for them in Reno and played with them and they'd do the same thing for us when we went through DC or whatever. We just built up this friendship, which sort of lasted throughout the years. There was a similarity between us and them and we both loved each others bands. We'd play a bunch of shows together on the west coast whenever they'd come out 'cos there was just a really nice connection there ... I dunno, just similar ideas and sound and stuff.

RIOT 77: You thought what Minor Threat were doing was similar to the original ideals of Punk?

KEVIN: Yeah.

RIOT 77: Right, because to me what you and Minor Threat and the whole Straight Edge thing was doing was just a way of a "Jock" mentality gate-crashing the punk scene ... there are striking similarities between the two ... Straight Edge ethics and "Jocks", don't you think?

KEVIN: Oh yeah sure ... I definitely think so. The problem I always had about the whole Straight Edge thing was basically the original idea behind even the song "Straight Edge" was just a personal choice of not doing drugs or drinking, but people just took it too far and got crazy with it, to the point of snatching a beer out of peoples hands, which I always thought was just ridiculous. That's why we always tried to distance ourselves from the Straight Edge crowd, even though we had a lot of friends in that scene. A lot of people in the states still associate us with that scene and view us to be one of the original Straight Edge bands, but it really never was something that we were ever that comfortable with. It wasn't a label that I felt was very beneficial to us at all. I can live with being considered a Hardcore band or a Punk band, but Straight Edge just has so many negative connotations to it, that we don't want to be associated with it at all.

RIOT 77: The original concept of Punk was free thinking and not living your life by any strict set of rules ... which is kind of everything that Straight Edge came out against ... why did you find that appealing, given that you come from a Punk background and what affinity did you feel towards living your life that way?

KEVIN: I don't know if I found an affinity with that. I never bought into the whole image and negative connotations that came with a lot of the earlier Punk stuff ... well, the media coverage of Punk Rock was always kids passed out on the street and stabbing each other or whatever ... I knew that I didn't feel that way and I knew that I wanted to change things or at least change ideas and attitudes through music, so we were definitely going for a more positive thing, which I don't think really gelled with Sid Vicious wearing a Swastika t-shirt, you know what I mean? Even though we loved the Sex Pistols, we were always kinda going in a different direction. But as far as living your life along some guideline that came out of a handbook was just bullshit, I always thought. I don't do drugs or drink or anything, but I still thought a lot of it was stupid. Like you say, it was just an excuse for Jocks and guys who lift weights to go out and kick the shit out of someone on the dancefloor.

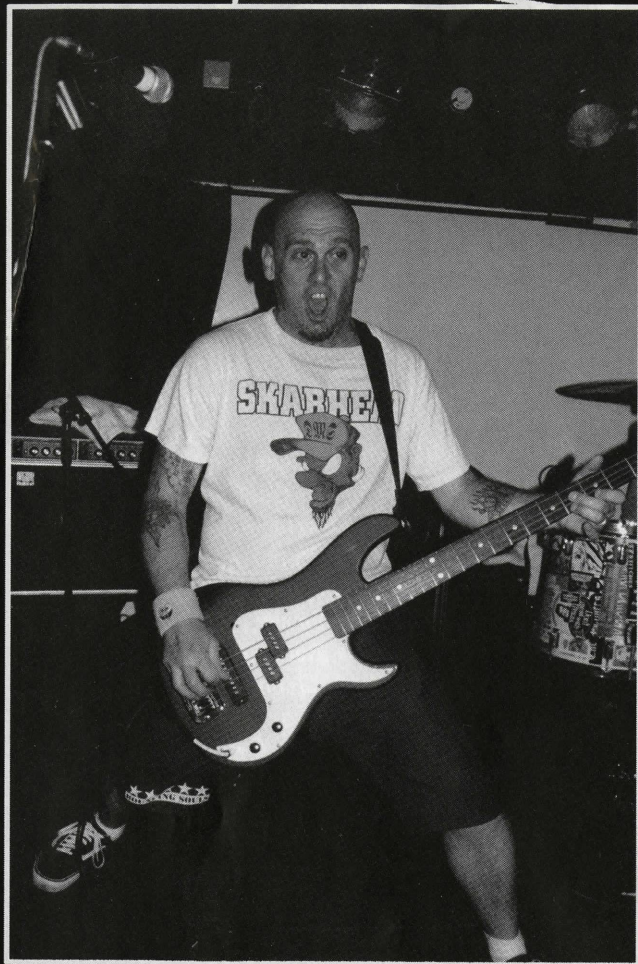
RIOT 77: Have you ever drank or taken drugs?

KEVIN: When I was younger, in high school, I tried smoking pot and drinking just to try and be cool, but drinking just never worked for me ... I'd always get sick (laughs) ... I never enjoyed it, it was never fun (laughs)

RIOT 77: What are you talking about? It's great fun.

KEVIN: (laughs) ... I dunno, man ... everyone else would be wasted and just loving it, but I'd just be sitting there throwing up (laughs) ... I was always the guy that would have to drive everybody home. I was the responsible one (laughs).

RIOT 77: Let me ask you this ... you were the main lyricist in the group and



we
singing
all these
songs
about 7
Seconds
being
sober all
the time
... but
your

brother, bass player Steve Youth, was a druggie standing behind you and playing along to all these songs ... anyone find that a contradiction at the time at all?

KEVIN: Uhhhh!!! ... I dunno if I'd call him a ... he's smoked pot and drank, but I'd never consider my brother a druggie. The only thing I've ever asked of any of the members of my band is that nobody gets drunk or stoned before a show, because we all feel this obligation that if we're going out there and people are paying to see us play live, then they should at least get 100% from us and everybody in the band feels that way. I'm not anybody's parent or babysitter, so I certainly can't lay down any laws and I wouldn't want to. But my brother has never let it get out of control or get in the way of the band. Nor have any of the other people that have been in the band ... actually we did have a couple of guys for a while who played with us and they thought they were going to destroy our image or something by drinking beer on stage (laughs) ... it's so ridiculous ... everyone in the band is an adult, they can do what they want. We all love what we do and respect each other enough not to try and screw it up by being out of control.

RIOT. 77: What's in your rider then? Coke and crisps? (laughs)

KEVIN: I don't even know if we have a rider (laughs). Honestly, like last night before we got there someone was like, "What do you want in your rider? Just bottled water or will I throw a few beers in there?" 'cos our guitar player will drink occasionally ... but we don't really bother, we'll go buy our own shit, if we need anything when we get there.

RIOT. 77: So when you grew a bit older, obviously the thing with Straight Edge is that most of these kids give it up once they're old enough to drink anyway ... which I think is the main reason it never really took off over here 'cos kids can pretty much start drinking at whatever age they want ... did you become disillusioned with it at all when it struck you that it was basically just a teenage thing for a lot of people?

KEVIN: Not really, because I think for years we've been mistakenly put in the Straight Edge category and from early on I always felt this obligation to explain it a bit better, 'cos Youth Of Today and all those bands were way more militant about it. I used to make jokes about that all the time, that when kids can drink, they will drink. I would say the majority of my friends that I knew back then that were the most militant Straight Edgers I ever knew, are the complete opposite now. None of it surprised me. My beliefs are my beliefs and I'd be the same person regardless of whether any of that stuff was around or not. I do it for my own reasons, not because I belong to a movement or a scene. I think it's important to connect and network with a bunch of people with similar ideas, but I could never understand that whole pack attitude and the gang mentality - everybody decides to get together and do the same things, look the same way, act the same way ... I never took the whole Straight Edge thing that seriously so I had nothing to become disillusioned about. I got shit for that too from a lot of those bands like Youth Of Today for not being dedicated to the cause. Dedicated to what cause, you know? I'm not going to be dedicated to something I don't believe in.

RIOT. 77: Straight Edge doesn't even travel that well either I always thought ... that's another reason why it never caught on over here ... it just makes you cringe when you see people trying it ... it's kinda like the Pistols were always a London thing and it was difficult for people in the states to really get what they were doing ... do you find that when you travel outside of north America a lot of people can't figure out what the big deal about not drinking is? It's a very American thing isn't it?



KEVIN: Yeah, I think you're right. It's funny, we went to Japan a couple of times and there's all these kids with Straight Edge written all over them, but then after the show they go out drinking and falling all over the place (laughs). It's more of a fashion thing. I've never seen any evidence of it being that much of a big deal anywhere else but America. These days actually I don't even know if it's that much of a deal in America anymore, either. There's small pockets of scenes in various places, but it seems like its kind of died out a bit. We haven't done a full U.S. tour in over three years, so its been a while since we've been

out there, but ...

RIOT. 77: I always felt it alienated people more than anything else, which is kind of ironic considering half these bands were spouting all this shit about "unity" and whatnot.

KEVIN: Oh yeah, definitely. There're so many contradictions involved. I agree totally with you. That was my whole problem with it too. For us it was just about getting more and more people involved and we always liked that there was a nice mix of people coming to our shows. We never wanted to just have three hundred plus muscle-head guys and maybe a few girls standing at the back. It was never what we were about and that was the one big thing that I hated about the Straight Edge thing - it was just so male. 7 Seconds always had a lot of women coming to our shows who were very involved and it reached a point where it got so out of hand that these women just stopped coming to the shows. It was ridiculous and annoying because that was never what it was about for us.

RIOT. 77: Your first recording as 7 Seconds was the "Socially Fucked Up" tape in 1981 ... that was genuine D.I.Y. I take it?

KEVIN: Yeah, yeah. Recorded on a boom box literally ... we had a practice space and we just played right in front of the boom box (laughs). We done I think thirteen songs. We've recently been trying to clean it up a little bit so we can release it because people always bug us about getting hold of the first two demos. It sounds so bad (laughs). It's really fast, we were a three piece at the time and I was playing guitar and singing with Steve and our drummer Tom. It's so raw, but actually some of the songs are really cool and we have talked about rerecording them and do a proper job on them from time to time ... but yeah, it's really raw and very basement sounding, you know?

RIOT. 77: How far did you go with that? Was it basically you just copying tapes at home and sending them out everywhere?

KEVIN: Yeah we had the whole tape label thing going on that we called Vicious Scam and we just started putting out our own stuff and then eventually some other Reno bands ... it never really got far ... I think a few tapes managed to get into the hands of Tim Yohannon from Maximumrocknroll, but that was about it. When we started to release proper records all of a sudden the demo tapes started to become these little collectors items and people would write to us asking if they could get them ... somehow I managed to lose the masters but I found them again over the last few years ... when I say "master" I mean one crappy cassette tape (laughs).

RIOT. 77: "Three Chord Politics" followed that ... was that more or less the same deal?

KEVIN: Yep! ... same thing. It was recorded a little bit better, I think on a little reel-to-reel two-track, in a friends basement. It sounded slightly better, but not much. There were no recording studios then. The ones they had were like these big huge 24-track studios that cost a fortune to use and we never had a recording budget or anything. We were recording anywhere we could, just to get it out.

RIOT. 77: You were starting to get some outside interest at this stage ... was that coming from people in the locality or did you have to look further a field to find people who could understand what you were trying to do?

KEVIN: At first it was a bit of a struggle to get people ... especially in our home town it was definitely against anything around there. Where we grew up it was just a lot of red-necks and very conservative people. It's changed a little now and is a bit more open. It was almost dangerous at the time to walk around with coloured hair or a Mohawk or even no hair (laughs). You just didn't see people walking around town like that, because you'd get your ass kicked, basically. We knew that there were underground scenes throughout the country that were sprouting up and we wanted to plug in to that somehow. We did a lot of homework and started writing letters to everybody telling them about us and asking if they wanted to come play Reno and we'd throw 'em on in a hall and put 'em up in someone's house. We'd do shows anywhere we could and it just so happened that D.O.A. and Black Flag and Dead Kennedys were always touring and wanted to play in any city. So it was like, "Yeah, give us \$100 and we'll come play". Early on when 7 Seconds started we got the word out and were lucky enough to get

people like Jello Biafra and the Black Flag guys saying nice things about us and just spreading the word and that's how it works. We'd talk about bands from the Midwest that we'd heard about and they'd talk about bands from out there that they'd heard about. It was much more simplified and before we had the Internet, which is kind of difficult to explain to people these days. It was a lot harder to get the word out back then, but once it did get out it really made an impact. There was a really great network there. Then of course you start hearing about all these great bands from Europe and Japan ...

RIOT. 77: It was March of 1980 before you played your first gig, so you'd had a good couple of months in the garage prior to that ... what were some of those early gigs like around Reno?

KEVIN: It was usually us and our friends and family (laughs). Our first gig was March 2nd 1980 in this insanely redneck bar and public townhouse. A friend of mine talked this guy into letting us play. It was horrible, they didn't know what the hell we were doing and we were just insulting the crowd and calling them names (laughs) ... trying to be shocking because our heroes were shocking ... we had all these redneck guys trying to hit us with their pool cues. Our first few shows were in that bar and just playing in basements that friends would let us use and we'd charge a couple of bucks. It was a good year or two before we played any real shows. People just started showing interest then. We figured early on that we could just rent out halls and do our own shows and bring the bands in that we wanted. We started to do that and learned how to promote shows and do fliers and all that stuff and that's pretty much what we did forever. If we played in clubs we knew they were going to make all the money and not pay us. They didn't care about us, or what we were trying to do, or anything like that.

RIOT. 77: What was the craic with putting all that charcoal shit under your eyes?

KEVIN: It was just a look ... we were trying to stand out. I did it because with all the different scenes people had their own look and we wanted to have something that meant Reno Hardcore (laughs). I started doing it, then my brother Steve started doing it and kids in Reno just picked up on it. It was funny because we'd go out of town and see other kids with it done. It got a little out of hand when you'd see kids in California or even New York with it done (laughs). I stopped doing it because I'd turn up at shows without it done and kids would be like, "What's goin' on???" (laughs) ... the first time we played CBGB's I didn't do it and the kids were flippin' out (laughs) ... getting really pissed off (laughs) ...

RIOT. 77: Was Mike Ness not doing that before all of this though?

KEVIN: Oh no, he was doing something totally different. He was going for something a little more fucked up looking I think ... I dunno ... the guy from Motley Crue was doing something like it at the time too, but I think I did it before him (laughs).

RIOT. 77: Next up was the "Skins, Brains And Guts" record on Alternative Tentacles. How did you come in contact with Jello?

KEVIN: We used to go see Dead Kennedys shows in San Francisco, Sacramento and Reno and we brought Dead Kennedys up to Reno ourselves a few times. We gave Jello a couple of those early demo tapes and he really liked them and started telling everyone about us. People like Tim Yohannon, Ian McKaye and even Henry Rollins back in the days when he was Henry Fairfield and he wrote me a letter saying that Jello turned him onto us. We really got into the idea of self-promotion and it would work because people would come back saying they read such and such was mentioning us in some fanzine somewhere or whatever.

RIOT. 77: You started a Positive Force out in Reno ... was that before the DC one or after it?

KEVIN: Initially Positive Force was a group of friends of mine in Reno and before we were a record label we were just a group of people who would do benefits for the homeless and get involved semi-politically. We'd go down and volunteer to work in soup kitchens and try to get involved in the community mainly to show people and the media that Punk Rock wasn't just about fucking things up and being destructive, it was also about being involved in the community and being constructive. We made people take notice of that. I remember getting a letter from someone in Las Vegas soon after that saying they were starting up a Positive Force out there and then there was one in Chicago and then I got a letter from Mark Anderson out in DC and he said he wanted to start one in DC. I never imagined it being anything other than our little thing in Reno and we knew we were going to want to put records out and stuff. The original group of people that I'd started to work with on this broke up so I just concentrated on being a record label and meanwhile a lot of the other Positive Force's around the country started to die out, but DC just kept going. They ended up doing amazing stuff. Mark was great and wrote to me saying he'd really like to use the name if that was cool. I thought it was great idea, if it's getting something done, then I'm all for it.

RIOT. 77: How did B.Y.O. enter the equation, because both Alternative Tentacles and B.Y.O. are two labels that certainly never associated themselves with Straight Edge in any shape or form ... was that important to you that you were reaching a far wider audience just Straight Edge people?

KEVIN: Oh yeah. The whole Straight thing wasn't even an issue until much later, in the eighties, with SSD, DYS and a lot of those Boston bands were doing that thing, but we definitely didn't have that attitude. We liked those bands music, but not the whole Jock mentality. The B.Y.O. connection came when we played down in L.A. and opened for the Youth Brigade and the Stern brothers came up to us after the show and asked us if we wanted to be on this compilation they were putting out and we said, "Yeah sure!". We were originally supposed to do our first album on Alternative Tentacles but Jello had no money at the time and we couldn't pay for it ourselves so we were just hanging around wondering what to do when B.Y.O. offered to put it out. We got along with the Stern brothers and played a lot of shows together so it seemed like a good idea and it just took off. "The Crew" record was the first thing we done that really made a dent and we went on our first U.S. tour and all the kids who were into the Punk Rock scene came out to see us and bought the record, which just continued to this day really.

RIOT. 77: Those labels would have had better distribution than any of the others around at the time too I'd imagine?

KEVIN: I don't think they had anywhere near what they ended up having today. We just like to align ourselves with people who we knew could get the job done. It was about a message and we've never been an overly political band like say the Dead Kennedys. Jello had a strong message that he was trying to get out and it was the same with the B.Y.O. guys, who again weren't really political but did fuse personal politics into what they do. It was something we related to at the time because especially what was going on in America with all the violence that we had to deal with at shows. It just seemed like a natural fit to be involved with those labels.

RIOT. 77: I think "Walk Together, Rock Together" and possibly "New Wind" would be what most people would deem as the end of the classic era of 7 Seconds ...

what happened then that you decided to alter your sound and head toward the mainstream ... were you eager to make a better living or did you just grow out of fast Hardcore music and start listening to different kinds of stuff?

KEVIN: It was a mixture of things. There was definitely no conscious effort to go mainstream because none of us really listen to commercial radio or anything like that so that wasn't the idea behind it at all. We were going through a lot - Steve left the band and we got a guy in to play bass for him, Troy left the band then also and we had to replace him. There were a lot of interchanging band members and we weren't even sure if we were going to carry on. For me personally it was just having every show be such a hard thing to get through. Literally after every song we would have to stop 'cos there'd be a fight, people were getting stabbed at outdoor shows, Nazi skinheads getting in on the scene ... it was insane, there'd be a thousand people at our shows and they'd just be killing each other. It just made me sit back and think about what I wanted to do. We loved the music we were playing but it seemed like we were becoming just a soundtrack for all this idiocy. No one was listening and it was just becoming less and less of what we wanted to do. I think between that and the different influences that were coming through with the new musicians and everybody was trying to do something a little different and maybe there'd be a U2 influence from one guy or a Replacements influence from another guy. We actually started playing a bunch of songs that we'd considered for solo projects and side projects. We tried to use it with 7 Seconds and fuse it with our older, faster stuff to see if it would work. It was a big change for us and we got a lot of crap from the Punk Rock scene 'cos they didn't want anything to do with it, you know? We've always done what we wanted to do - we don't put out records when we should put out records, this out first time ever coming on tour to the U.K. or Ireland, so we're not your typical conventional band. We do things on our own terms and that's always been the same with our music too - if we want to try something then we'll go ahead and do it and so be it. It's weird because all the people were moaning about us doing the mellower stuff, but today it's the songs from that era that we get the most requests for.

RIOT. 77: Really??

KEVIN: Yeah. People change and right now we're having more fun playing fast the way we've always done it in the past. It seems like that's what we want to do and that's the way the band is headed again.

RIOT. 77: The next few records you made flopped ... "Soulforce Revolution" and "Ourselves" Can you understand why now looking back? ... Do you think they were a bad move?

KEVIN: In terms of sales and that they actually did ok. We did an album on our own label alright that didn't have great distribution and that one didn't do that great because people couldn't find it. To this day our top two selling records are "The Crew" and "Walk Together, Rock Together". They still sell really well, but I'm always amazed at how well those other records did when you think about the amount of flack they got. They all sold respectfully and you've got to understand for us that the first time we heard we sold five thousand records we just couldn't believe it, you know? We never dreamed we'd sell that many records. We've never been up there in terms of sales with bands like Suicidal Tendencies and Dead Kennedys. We've sold a good amount of records but never up there with the bigger Hardcore bands.

RIOT. 77: You signed with Epic was it in '95? Seemed an odd time to choose to sign with a major? That was the time of all the majors cashing in on the whole SoCal/Epitaph sound ... obviously you knew what their intentions were in signing a band like 7 Seconds ... hoping for another Offspring or whatever ...

KEVIN: Yeah. We signed with a label called Immortal and had been contacted by a couple of smaller Punk labels, even B.Y.O. again actually, but we didn't really know where to go next. All of a sudden there were these major labels sniffing around because of the whole Offspring and Green Day thing. We'd had major label interest before but we always just blew it off 'cos we didn't want to deal with that crap at the time. We sensed it was a pile of bullshit, but then we met this A&R guy from Immortal and he was coming to our shows and stuff and he was a cool guy. He was like this old Punk Rock kid who wanted to bring more Punk Rock into the label. I just thought, "Why not? We've got nothing to lose!" People were calling us sell-outs and that, even though we charged \$3 to get into our shows and I really didn't care what they considered us. We do what we do, if people like it they like it, if they don't they don't. They were also the only label who would give us the deal we wanted. We didn't want to be tied down with a big seven album deal and we didn't want to have to do all this cheesy stuff to promote ourselves. We didn't care about videos or anything like that and they were really open to all this and let us do whatever we wanted. We did the record and it did ok, but when you're a label that's affiliated with Epic or Sony then anything that sells less than a million records is classed as a failure and we didn't even come anywhere close to selling that many records. The Sony/Epic side of it then weren't that interested in us after that, but Immortal were still willing to put out the next record, but they were cool enough to leave the decision with us and we decided to leave. We'd done it and tried it and I can't say that it was a bad experience 'cos we didn't get dropped and they never treated us bad or tried to make us do something that we didn't want to do. It just didn't feel right and we felt like we could do what they did on our own if we wanted to, which was around the time when we got in touch with the guys from Side 1 Dummy and we've been with them ever since.

RIOT. 77: How did that deal come about? You disappeared after "The Music, The Message" for a while.

KEVIN: Yeah, we took some time off. Steve and his wife had a baby and I had some musical projects of my own going on. We'd toured so much with 7 Seconds over the years that I got so burned out on it. I still wanted to tour but I didn't want to do it as much and I got really heavily involved in the music scene in Sacramento, where I live, which is not even a Punk scene, but more singer/songwriters and that. I started booking gigs at local venues and promoting bands and stuff like that. Joe at Side 1 Dummy then got in touch and we knew him from playing in an old west coast Hardcore band called Frontline who we'd do shows with and we kept in touch. He was telling us about this new label he had called Side 1 Dummy and that he'd love to put out our next record. We talked about it for a while and he seemed really cool so we said, "Alright, let's do it!". So we did the "Good To Go Album" which was 1999. We just got along really well with the label and at the time it was pretty small-staffed and we knew that we were going to get a lot of effort and attention from them.

RIOT. 77: You're doing the new record with them too, is that right?

KEVIN: Yeah, that's on Side 1 Dummy and they're shooting for an autumn release date. The whole week before I came over here I was just designing the artwork and stuff. It's seventeen songs, twenty-eight minutes long, fast crazy Punk Rock. I love it. We recorded it in our own studio and took as much time as we needed and did it exactly the way we wanted to do it. I'm very proud of it, I think it sounds great and really consistent. That's what we're trying to go for.

RECORD REVIEWS

ANAL BEARD "DIN NOIR". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

Those Brighton dossers are at it again with another low-priced CD of fourteen songs to annoy, provoke and in my case, make very happy. In case you don't already know, Anal Beard are a band with a mindframe that could only compare to Wat Tyler. Ridiculous lyrics and song titles but done with a twisted sense of humour and intellect. Refreshing, exhilarating and yes ... charming! (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

THE ANALOGS "KRONIKI POLICYJNE". (JIMMY JAZZ)

Another dose of thumpin' Street Rock from Poland's Analogs. I liked what this band done on their previous CD and this is basically an extension of that. The production is crisper, melodies sharper and harmonics more in key with what the band wish to achieve. I like that they've stuck to singing in Polish and it certainly suits their style, that is a cross between the likes of Chelsea and Cock Sparrer, with a much needed dose of old Hardcore to roughen up those hooks a little around the edges. The band are at the stage now where they could quite feasibly be at the helm of European Street Punk should they set about getting their name around a bit more. If you're into stuff like Klasse Kriminale, Stage Bottles, Los Fastidios and the like, then The Analogs are sure to appeal to you. (JIMMY JAZZ RECORDS: P.O. BOX 184, 71-507 SZCZECIN 5, POLAND.)



ARMITAGE SHANKS "URINAL HEAP". (DAMAGED GOODS)

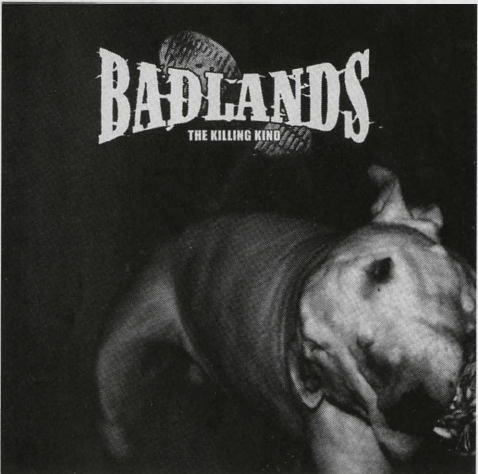
Garage Punk supremos who've had the good taste to name their band after a jax, swiftly offer us a CD of new material following on from their "Golden Shower ..." release last year, which was a superb listen. Armitage Shanks hail from Kent but have the Cockney Geezer slang off to a T. Some of the best raw Punk attitude you'll hear all year and to be placed up there alongside Hard Skin's one and only longplayer. It's that type of music you'll love to listen to over a feed of cans and will never wear thin. Armitage Shanks have a longstanding history of churning out this kind of quality stuff, being linked with Billy Childish frequently along the way, who produced many of their best works. In company like that, the educated amongst you will realise the importance of such a bunch of low lives in your record collection! (DAMAGED GOODS: P.O. BOX 45854, LONDON, E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

AUDIO KARATE "LADY MELODY". (KUNG FU)

Falling into potential Emo trappings here, Kung Fu have drifted from their roots and taken a swipe at signing Audio Karate, who have foundations more in common with Jimmy Eat World than Californian Pop-Punk. Frankly it bores the tits off me and by the third song it's clear we're not gonna hear anything that different for the remainder of the album, but unfortunately for me I gotta stick around just in case. The most annoying part about bands like this is the way they approach the singing. Why has it always got to be that dragged out, whining and whinging tone? If they sang normally it would improve matters no end. Completely unoriginal and predictable throwaway Emo. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 22624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE AUTOMATICS "FORTY VIRGINS IN THE AFTERLIFE". (TRASH 2001)

This is somewhat of a breed apart from what else has been circulating the Punk circuit of late. The Automatics take it way back to the years '72 through '76 in search of inspiration. And that inspiration seeps through The Automatics in the shape of New York Dolls, Ziggy era Bowie, The Faces, The Ramones, T.Rex and even further back again to the Stones first three records. Where the Punk connection comes into this is the fact that ex-Sex Pistol Steve Jones lends his guitar talents to a handful of tunes and who in turn ripped all his stuff from Johnny Thunders, so it all comes full circle and offers an interesting result. The Automatics appear to have been a band that existed many moons ago and have only recently been reactivated with interest in the group stemming from as far as a Japanese label's issuing of an album the band never got round to putting out themselves. Anyway what all this amounts is little if anything as this is my first time to come across the group and you could say I'm impressed. I like bands who appreciate where it all originated from and take the trouble to go back and find out what they're talking about, which is clearly what has happened here. The question however, is does all this make it too retro and kitsch to be taken seriously in 2004? (TRASH 2001 RECORDS: POSTFACH 101653-46216, BOTTRUP, GERMANY.)



BADLANDS "THE KILLING KIND". (REBELLION RECORDS)

Another one from Badlands - their third full length in a very short space of time and they've gone for a different sound yet again. The drums on this aren't as forefronted as they were on their previous CD, but more focus is placed on the guitar licks and melodies, along with Victor's voice. The songs aren't as instantly memorable here, but tend to grow on you a lot more with each listen, particularly "Integrity". Badlands are driven by a Social Distortion backdrop with a Sham 69 attitude and basically played with the skinhead frame of mind. A well kept secret for the Dutch and a band I'd love to see live while they're still playing small venues. (REBELLION RECORDS: MGR. VAN ROOSMALENPLEIN 24, NL-5213 GD'S, HERTOGENBOSCH, THE NETHERLANDS.)

BAD RELIGION "THE EMPIRE STRIKES FIRST". (EPITAPH)

It's that time again brothers and sisters... time for another Bad Religion LP and if you've been following the recent activities and output of this band you'll be fully aware they're going through one of their many good patches. The Gurewitz/Graffin song-writing partnership has been back in action for the last few years and whilst Gurewitz doesn't appear to be performing live with the band (at least outside of north America) his writing talents are evidently on display throughout this record. "Sinister Rouge" and "Los Angeles Is Burning" are the two single tracks on this and particularly the latter is up there with their best stuff on Epitaph the first time over. The often copied, never equalled style of this band continuously makes it a listening pleasure to be in their company time and again and Bad Religion on a good day are one band I'll never tire of. There've been millions of attempts down the years by various parties to capitalise on their signature sound, but there's only one Bad Religion and that Bad Religion is still shining as bright today as ever. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

BAD RELIGION "LOS ANGELES IS BURNING". (EPITAPH)

CD single for one of the strongest tracks from their above full length. "Let Them Eat War" is also on here, lifted from the album too. "The Surface Of Me" is the third song and one exclusive track on this CD. It's a good song, so for the completist, you'll probably crave it. Otherwise, with the price of CD singles these days; just head straight for the album. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

BAIT "ANATOMY OF DESIRE". (IN AT THE DEEP END)

For Fuck's sake ... this is getting ridiculous. I'm beginning to feel like people think this is a Metal magazine or something. Well it ain't, it's a Punk fanzine. How come there's so much of this stuff about and they all appear desperate to cling to Punk Rock as opposed to Metal, which is obviously what it is? Beats me! This sounds like Converge or some such nonsense. (IN AT THE DEEP END RECORDS: 82 BARLOW DRIVE SOUTH, AWSWORTH, NOTTS NG16 2TD, ENGLAND.)

BEATSTEAKS "HAND IN HAND". (EPITAPH)

Three-song CD single from the Beatsteaks. One is the title track, two is an acapella version of this and the third is a nifty piece called "Rock N' Roll Star", though it barely surpasses the one-minute line. There's also a video for "Hand In Hand" in here somewhere. The Beatsteaks go down the same route as The Hives and Murder City Devils. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

BEERZONE "AGAINST THE FLOW". (BEER CITY)

I used to resist Beerzone, but over the past few years you could say I've become somewhat of a believer. This album sees them teaming up with Beer City in America and getting some decent label backing behind them. I had a handful of this stuff on an advance CD a few months back and it sounded promising. These songs represent the band at a slightly more developed stage than on previous outings and there's even a sense of maturity about the writing, but fear not, the Beerzone sense of humour is still fully intact. "Party Animal", "Against The Flow" and "Stupid Little Man" are personal high points. Still maintaining a big Test Tubes influence, Beerzone have soldiered on and come up with an album that sounds as though its the one they've always wanted to make, but somehow kept falling just short of it on past occasions. (BEER CITY RECORDS: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 53226-0035, U.S.A.)

BELVEDERE "FAST FORWARD EATS THE TAPE". (GOLF)

From what I recall I reviewed this band's last record when it came out on Household Name I think. So here we are two years down the line and they're back, this time letting Golf do the honours. Straight off the assembly line SoCal influenced Pop Punk from Canada. They're tight and competent at it though, but do we seriously need yet another one of these bands to add to the already saturated market? Seemingly the answer would be yes, as they've shifted truckloads of records. Are kids just getting easier and easier to please? (GOLF RECORDS: P.O. BOX 159, WALLINGFORD, OXON, OX10 9YL, ENGLAND.)

BENNY "ALL THINGS COME TO AN END". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

End of the road for Benny as their guitarist immigrates to New Jersey. They leave us with this six-track swansong recorded earlier this year. I liked Benny's last CD I reviewed and this here is also quite good if a little over sentimental. First song "Forty Foot" is the killer with a great chorus, but each delve into different territories some as far flung as Country, but for the most part it's lightweight Pop music and that's what they do best. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, U.K.)

BOMBSTRIKE "KAOS OCH DJAVULSKAP". (YELLOW DOG)

Bombstrike certainly don't fuck about. Short, sharp blasts of Thrashin' Hardcore with a definite early Grindcore inspiration. Lyrics loaded with nihilism, hate and fury as you may have guessed. I think they're of Swedish origin and hot on the trail of stuff like early Discharge and Repulsion. This is a short focused album, but it's important to be able to do one thing well and that's what Bombstrike have best achieved here, with every song full of spirit and energy. Bombstrike have, in a way, taken all the best bits from the Death Metal movement and pieced them back together with Punk integrity. They've done to Death Metal what the Ramones did to Rock N' Roll. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550 208, 103 72 BERLIN, GERMANY.)

BOMBSTRIKE "LIVETS LAGA SLOCKNAR". (YELLOW DOG)

How much Bombstrike can I take in one day? Here's another 7 inch of their work, with five songs to beat the band. All of 'em are in Swedish this time and none appear to be on the CD reviewed above, which is one good thing. They play the songs an awful lot faster this time round ... wait a second, I've got this on the wrong speed ... that's more like it ... no, this sounds exactly like their other stuff, but I'm hearing a strong Entombed influence here, circa their "Left Hand Path" album. Taken for what it is, Bombstrike are about the best I've heard. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550 208, 103 72 BERLIN, GERMANY.)

BONECRUSHER "TOMORROW IS TOO LATE". (KNOCKOUT)

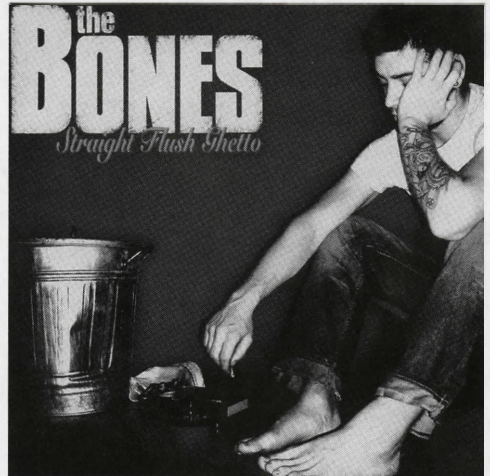
I'm always on for a bit of this lot. Bonecrusher are somewhat pioneers of that sound of integrated Street Hardcore and Oi! music. This particular release from them is the longplaying successor to, "Followers Of A Brutal Calling" which appeared on Outsider Records a number of years back. Since then they've acquired a new singer, in a similar style to their old one, though not as much range. Bonecrusher's style is mostly mid-tempo sleazy Street Rock, not a million miles from what Duane Peters and his Disaster label would tend to favour. There's as much 4 Skins influence here as Agnostic Front, allowing the band to give a heavy-handed Hardcore approach to great melodic tunes. Bonecrusher spew forth twelve songs on this that nicely make up for the extended time it's been since their "Followers ..." album. (KNOCKOUT RECORDS: POSTFACH 10 07 16, 46527 DINSLAKEN, GERMANY.)

BONECRUSHER "FRACTURED". (KNOCKOUT)

... and speaking of which, here we have the boxed version of Knockout's re-issued "Followers Of A Brutal Calling" and "Singles Collection" nicely compiled into two separate releases with a cardboard box twinning the pair together. Not ones to scrimp on packaging, Knockout have made this a substantial reissue job. Originally released on Outsider Records, which is no longer active, but these releases (especially the "Singles Collection", with an extra eight tracks here) are called for if you're interested in taking a quick crash course in Bonecrusher's history. The earlier stuff does it best for me, when the band could twin a low-budget studio sound with so much energy and clout, to get that desired rough n' ready yet catchy as hell result across. You can tell a lot of this was recorded before the regenerated interest in Street Music came about and that makes it all the better for me. File alongside the Dropkick's Mike McColgan years and those early treasures from the Swingin' Uppers. (KNOCKOUT RECORDS: POSTFACH 10 07 16, 46527 DINSLAKEN, GERMANY.)

THE BONES "STRAIGHT FLUSH GHETTO". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)

I've been trying to get a hold of something from this band for a while now, going on the favourable press coverage they've received from what I deem to be clued-in publications. This is every bit as good as I'd hoped ... better in fact. The Bones are a sick breed of European biker scum by the looks of things and don't fall short on living up to exactly what that means. Take the best bits from Motorhead, Ministry, AC/DC, Ducky Boys, Ramones, Sabbath and many other heavy-fuckin'-music bands. The Bones understand there's more to achieving this than just whacking your overdrive pedal up to the max - it's in the blood and The Bones have it in abundance. They make it all look and sound so easy, but rest assured if that were the case there'd be tons of bands as good as this out there and as we all know, that's not the case. A rare treasure! (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)



BOSER TOMSEN "ALBTRAUM". (HOUSE MASTER)

This is an odd one. A German band that bare a likeness to Hawkwind, Sabbath and Rainbow, but there's something unmistakably German about it all and I reckon a lot of their influence may be homegrown stuff I'm never likely to hear. They can certainly write songs and this is way easier to digest than I would have thought. It kinda reminds me of a German stoner version of Kiss. (BOSER TOMSEN: HILDESHEIMER STR. 29, D-31226 PEINE, GERMANY.)

BOTTLEJOB "YOU AND WHOSE ARMY". (REBELLION)

Bottlejob do a reasonable job at picking up where the second Cockney Rejects album left off. Yes, they're from London, yes they're yobs and yes they probably don't listen to anything after 1983. For those of you who like your Oi! unpolished and as rough as you can get, Bottlejob are the band. Some may find it all a bit overly pretentious, but that's your own fault for taking bands like this too seriously. They're not there to be read into too deeply, because if you do you'll no doubt find very little at the end of it. Bottlejob are to be taken at face value. It's quite simple; they hate their jobs, they like their beer and they love their Oi! If anyone can relate, give 'em a whirr! (REBELLION RECORDS: MGR. VAN ROOSMALENPLEIN 24 - 5213 GD'S, HERTOGENBOSCH, NETHERLANDS.)

THE BRIEFS "SEX OBJECTS". (BYO)

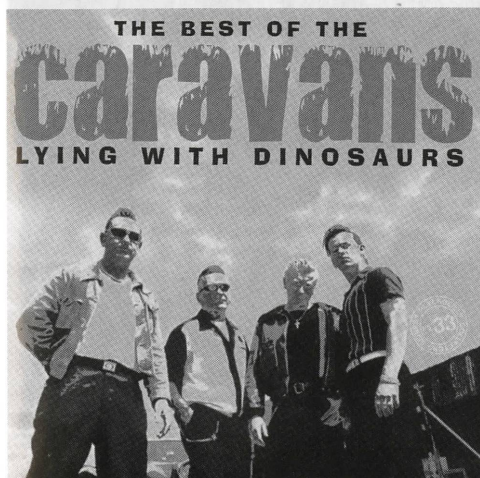
Currently making big waves on the worldwide Punk market are The Briefs. It's easy to understand why, they've got it down and there's no denying their brilliance. A good catch for the BYO folk! There's a good chance mainstream acclaim has passed The Briefs by, as their short lived major label days are behind them ... This band are as New Wave as they are Punk and probably borrow more from Elvis Costello and that era than they do the Clash or Pistols, though there's still an ample influence of each. Meat and potatoes seventies Pop music in the vein of the Rats formative years concocted with the Dickies first two albums. Plastic sunglasses and skinny ties, this CD should work for anyone with more than a passing interest in the best the early eighties had to offer. (BYO RECORDS: P.O. BOX 67609, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90067, U.S.A.)

THE BRIGGS "LEAVING THE WAYS". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

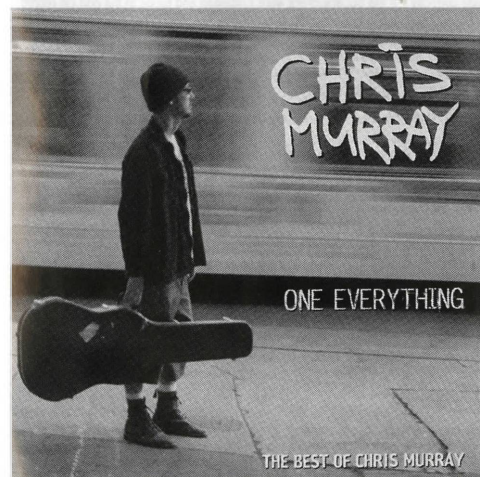
I like this six tracker here from The Briggs. They've really come into their own since their last CD, which lacked any real trademark stamp. If anything the band have actually simplified what they do and focused energy on writing more memorable songs. Pedal to the metal Garage Oi! that rocks hard and cuts deep. Tight yet sloppy in the right places with loose choruses that effortlessly infect us with hook after hook. This is a definite cool listen if power chord Punk with vigour is your particular vice. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

CALL ME LIGHTENING "THE TROUBLE WE'RE IN". (REVELATION)

Fuck, these blokes really do sound like the Minutemen. Most press releases that say that generally constitutes for bad Emo, but Call Me Lightning have managed to take the drive and attitude of bands like Wire, Joy Division, Mission Of Burma and the aforementioned Minutemen to new plains without reverting to the dreaded E word. A lot of it is down to the sound of this record. The vocals have come out sounding great with the Jazzy tones from the backing band being incorporated to much effect. There's an annoying abundance of bands who think they sound like this, but Call Me Lightning are about the only one I can think of recently that actually follow through on their promise. (REVELATION RECORDS: P.O. BOX 5232, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 92615-5232, U.S.A.)



THE CARAVANS "LYING WITH DINOSAURS". (ANAGRAM)
I've been listening to this all week. A fine example of how good Rockabilly can be when approached correctly. There's a beautiful innocence in the music of The Caravans and so much more heart n' soul in their sound that punches way above its weight. Using the backbone of Link Wray, Billy Fury and Duane Eddy to construct their songs, they also at times inject some spirited Punk venom into it. The band have a twenty-year history behind them that stretches all the way back to their singer's time spent in the British Navy. Formed in Portsmouth and releasing their first single "Easy Money" (included here) in '88 amidst the Psychobilly craze over in the U.K. The Caravans never quite became household names in the genre but are a key band in my eyes and better than whole load of other Psychobilly outfits who peddle more hype than good songs. The Caravans by complete contrast have a wealth of quality material and this "Best Of ..." compilation makes it a pleasure to take you pick from the twenty-four cuts present. There's also a heavily loaded CD booklet containing original single and album artwork along with a detailed history written by Alan Wilson and mountains of vintage photographs. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)



CHRIS MURRAY "ONE EVERYTHING: THE BEST OF CHRIS MURRAY". (MOON SKA)
One of the disciples of modern day Ska, Chris Murray turned my head last year when I received a copy of his "4 Track Adventures Of Venice Shoreline Chris". He's had a hard road, but like the best of 'em out there uses this to his advantage by basing a lot of lyrical content on the life story of this acoustic solo Ska artist no one understands or is willing to try out. There is a band accompanying him on some of these tracks, though it's quite possible the instruments are being played by Chris himself. The early 60's Jamaican influences are inescapable and in particular the Skatalites are a difficult one to get out of your head the whole way through this album. Some may argue that a white Canadian may never fully appreciate the hardships bands like the previously mentioned Skatalites were accustomed to, but there's a feeling of genuine momentum here and it sounds to me as though its coming from the heart of a true fan and exponent of one of the 60's most endured music forms. There's a history written by Lol Prior of Moon Ska alongside a detailed explanation by Chris on all of the songs chosen here, as this is a career spanning compilation. (MOON SKA EUROPE: P.O. BOX 184, ASHFORD, KENT, TN24 0ZS, ENGLAND.)

COCKNEY REJECTS "GREATEST HITS VOL. 3". (CAPTAIN OIL)
In what's often seen to be the end of the classic era Rejects Captain Oil reissues their third in the famed first three albums of "Greatest Hits" - each one an essential listen. This is a live album recorded in front of a studio audience, so it's up to you whether that can really constitute as a "live" record in the truest sense of the word or not, but either way it's the golden age of the East End's finest and is a pure belter of a record. "There's only one Stinky Turner" as they say and listening to this you'll understand why. The Rejects really did live it like they spoke it and represented tearaway youths as significantly as possible to the outside world. The Rejects were the next best thing to happen to Punk Rock following the demise of the Pistols and the initial outbreak. They took it back down to where it came from and gave it back its sense of danger and excitement. This CD captures the band at a vital time and closes the chapter on the first era of the group before they went on to twin the sounds of Hard Rock with their Punk roots and as mentioned in the liner notes when you see what bands like Metallica went on to achieve with a similar formula it just shows how ahead of their game the Rejects really were. For the collectors there's an extra two tracks included here - "Hang 'Em High" and "In The Underworld". (CAPTAIN OIL RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)



COFFIN NAILS "LET'S WRECK: THE GRAVEST HITS OF COFFIN NAILS". (ANAGRAM)
Still going strong with nearly twenty years on the clock, Reading's Psychobilly sickos, Coffin Nails have been through the mill getting here, but its all been worthwhile. They also wrote some damn fine songs along the way and here's their first collection CD to prove it. Stylistically Coffin Nails aren't unlike other Psychobilly acts from the U.K. and if this movement is to your taste, they're another essential part to the jigsaw. Most of these type of revivalist bands fell by the wayside as the decade drew to a close, but this crowd managed to hold it together in some form or other and released their latest studio album "Hard As Nails" last year (acknowledged on this compilation). Coffin Nails are fast, mean, angry and full of that spit n' venom we associate with Psychobilly. Anagram have been purveyors of this sort of thing for a long time and have come up with another well constructed slice of modern history here. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

CONVERGE "YOU FAIL ME". (EPITAPH)
I've never understood the popularity of this band. A definite case of image over substance. Maybe it could also have something to do with the hard work they've put into promoting their band and force-feeding us this stuff time and again. Does hard work make up for dull music? Some kids obviously seem to think so. The bottom line is that Converge just aren't very convincing and are incapable of writing a good song. I know that's all the rage right now, but there's little to get into in their music for me. I couldn't sit through an hour of this. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

DARLINGTON "EUTHANIZE ME". (DISASTER)
I'm thinking Emo, you're thinking Emo, right? So anything bar Emo is gonna sound pretty good yeah? Also-fuckin'-lutely!!! Darlington are another find for Duane Peter's and his Disaster record label and hail from Dallas. Its part of Disaster, so it's gotta be snotty Garage Punk and indeed that's what we get. Concealed around '95 with Christy Briggite as the chief exponent behind Darlington who pens most, if not all, of their material. Ramones/Undertones is the namedrop in the press sheet - i.e. fuzzy pop tones with plenty of hooks, very much in harmony with what this label seems to specialize in. No real killer moments here, but enough potential not be ignored. (DISASTER RECORDS: P.O. BOX 7112, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA, 91510, U.S.A.)

DEAD POETIC "NEW MEDICINES". (GOLF)
By the numbers Emo-Punk-Metal, tailor made for the Big Cheese and Kerrang! crowd. Nothing wrong with that, but what it simply comes down to is a matter of taste. Dead Poetic aren't of my persuasion. Big budget, generic stuff like this just doesn't work for me, but there's a huge teenage market out there for it. I generally prefer Rock N' Roll a little rougher around the edges and not so choreographed. (GOLF RECORDS: P.O. BOX 159, WALLINGFORD, OXON, OX10 9YL, ENGLAND.)

THE DEEP EYNDE "SHADOWLAND". (DISASTER)
There's something distinctly A.F.I. about this band. Davy Havok is a bit of a nonce, so using him as a character to mould yourself around is just not a good idea. That's the bad part, but the good part is that Deep Eynde are much more of a back-to-basics band than A.F.I. and if you take away the Gothic imagery of the group, what lies behind is simply good Punk songs. Not great Punk songs, but good Punk songs. Think of a fifth rate Misfits, which lets be honest, is still better than most other bands and that's what this is. (DISASTER RECORDS: P.O. BOX 7112, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA 91510, U.S.A.)

DEKOIZ "A DECOY LIFE". (SELF-RELEASED)
San Francisco Street Punk from an upcoming band. Stands close to Condemned 84, Reducers and Blood For Blood in musical style, but they're quick to distance themselves from any political leanings. There's a strong Hardcore side to the Dekoiz as well as the straight up Oi! mode they slip back into in each song. Some of the pace is a notch too fast for me to be appreciated as Oi! as this type of music is better played mid pace. For a first shot on disc though, it displays plenty of promise. (KONRAD DE RUTTIE, 1701 SHORE LINE DR. 307, ALAMEDA, CALIFORNIA, 94501, U.S.A. choas77@pacbell.net)

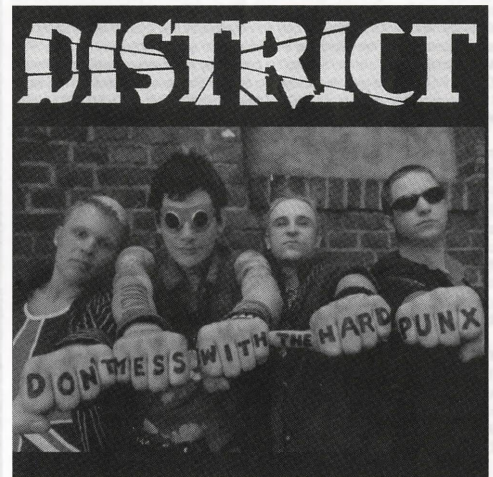
DEMENTED ARE GO "CALL OF THE WIRED". (ANAGRAM)
The CD accompaniment of the DVD issued last year by the same label and it makes a welcome addition to the increasingly essential stockpile of Psychobilly material being released by Anagram these past months. Demented Are Go were from Cardiff and kicked about the scene in the early/mid eighties to much acclaim, with this particular album being recorded live in '84 at The Charlotte club in Leicester. The sound is A1

and captures the band in typical sick n' twisted standards, with barked vocals, stand up bass and pummeling drums. Demented Are Go fused the sounds of early Gene Vincent styled Rockabilly with the more psychotic road it tended to veer down in the eighties with the arrival of bands like The Meteors. It can be one-dimensional at times, but they have a strong back catalogue to draw from and include as varied a set as their recorded history would allow them. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

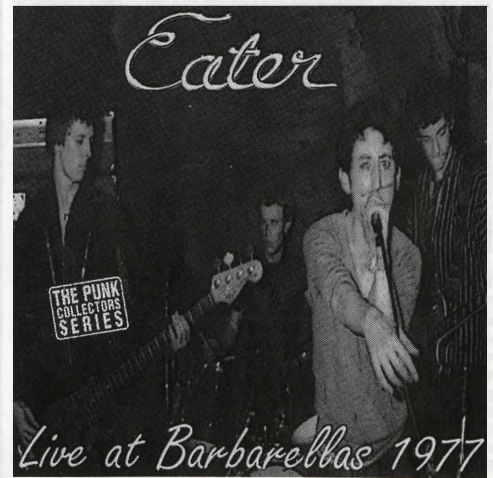
DENNIS MOST AND THE INSTIGATORS "VAMPIRE CITY". (TRASH 2001)
What a catch for the Trash 2001 folk here, with a rerecorded look back at the workings of Dennis Most. This guy has been knocking about since 1972 and I'm not too sure exactly what's he's been doing since then, but his roots are firmly set in 60's Garage Punk and Psychedelia, whilst giving a nod to the more Rock influenced Punk music of the 70's. Turbonero worked on a likeminded idea and just like his Norwegian counterpart's, you can hear the influence of everything from the Who to Hawkwind and Hendrix on here. There's a batch of newly written material intertwined with new versions of his classics from what I can make of it, but each stand up on their own and the guy clearly hasn't lost his knack for what he does. Well worth looking into. (TRASH 2001 RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10 16 53, D-46216, BOTTRUP, GERMANY.)

DEROZER "DI NUOVO IN MARCIA". (MAD BUTCHER)
Meat n' potatoes Punk from Derozer, which sounds just fine by these ears. This is their sixth album no less and comes off the back of world tours, road dogging it and clocking up over eight hundred gigs to date. Definite Punk grafters here kids and they sound like it. Powerful songs, with plenty of that Italian aura about it. Derozer are made of seasoned songwriters and craft some great straightforward tunes along the lines of Bad Religion playing Sham songs. (MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, 37073 GOETTINGEN, GERMANY.)

DISTRICT "DON'T MESS WITH THE HARD PUNK". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)
Since hearing their split 7" inch with Foreign Legion a number of years back, I've been a committed follower of Germany's District, though for some obscure reason could never find any of their other stuff knocking about in record stores. According to the press release here, they've been somewhat of an undeveloped and low-key band until recently. Following some line-up changes the band look set to make a full time go of it at last. Singer Marc Ader and guitarist Pascal Briggs are the two key ingredients in what makes District the reckonable force they are. Grouping the sound of Faces era Rod Stewart and Ronnie Wood with Cocksparrer's snarl and the undeniable melodies of the Buzzcocks and Undertones make this band a real turn on. Plenty of musical range, that should appeal to Mods, Rockers, Punks and the mainstream alike. Truly promising work. (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D - 44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)



EASTSIDE BOYS "DIE LEIT IST REIF". (DSS)
Eastside Boys, what? Sounds a bit gay. But, nah these skinheads are well 'ard and the furthest thing from a bunch of homos!! They must be, they've got loads of photos of them and their skin birds drinking beer in the booklet! I'm guessing they're either Austrian or German and naturally play skinhead music of the Euro Oi! variety. They've got a good lead guitarist who adds a nice touch to all the songs with little nuances here and there. Sometimes a lot of this music can be very one-dimensional and top heavy, but Eastside Boys keep it interesting with dual vocals and different shifts of pace. Sounds like a simple technique, and it is, but it's what this stuff really needs to make it shine. (DSS RECORDS: P.O. BOX 739, 4021 LINZ, AUSTRIA)



EATER "LIVE AT BARBARELLAS 1977". (ANAGRAM)
Yep, you read it right; this is a long lost recording from the prime of Eater, that's has never been released before, not even as a bootleg. Eater were the Punks within the Punk scene if you like and reckoned Johnny Rotten was too old to be playing Punk music. Considering Eater's drummer played his first gig with the band when he was thirteen, you can kinda see where they're coming from. Eater were part of the first wave of English Punk, formed in '76 and often sneered at by the more serious Punks, but at the end of the day they did personally what this music was supposed to represent. T.Rex, Bowie and Alice Cooper were huge influences on them and they

ALBUM REVIEWS

never denied this, going so far as to cover all three. The Dead Boys were doing something similar stateside around the same time, and also have that similar swagger about them. I'd put this down as some essential listening along with their one and only studio album. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 0RG, ENGLAND.)

EXIT CONDITION "1988-1994". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

Exit Condition started life off in the eighties mimicking their fellow Stoke forefathers Discharge, but soon captured the essence of coupling that idea with an American influence and came out sounding like Snuff's or Leatherface's early work. This compilation here marks the introduction of the band to CD, so clearly it's long overdue and well called for. It's been compiled by the band themselves and displays the various different guises they went through on the path to finding their own sound, which came in the shape of their album "Days Of Wild Skies" (included in its entirety here). Exit Condition, down to poor promotion, are somewhat of an overlooked band, but they did play a big part in what was to become that British institution we now hear in bands all the time. It's interesting to hear how they grew and developed from a basic Hardcore group into something with far more impact and intrigue surrounding it. There's even a Peel session on here to top it off. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

EXPLODING FUCK DOLLS "CRACK THE SAFE". (DISASTER)

Dating back to 1991, Orange County California, when the first incarnation of the Fuck Dolls was inceptioned this retrospective CD of 'em brings it all together under one roof. For those if you who don't know, the Exploding Fuck Dolls were a band Duane Peter's played with for a time, prior to becoming the Punk Rock megastar of today. Looking back at old photos of the group contained in the excellent booklet that accompanies this, it appears they started life as a Glam Punk band, something akin to the New York Dolls and the Heartbreakers before going on to ditch the more feminine elements of the band and work on a heavier street influenced look and sound. This collection jumps all over the place date-wise up as far as '97, though the band does continue to operate today. If this came out today you'd pass it off as another Bombs cash-in band, but considering the timeframe it existed in it's clear it was quite revolutionary and fresh compared to what else was around then. A lot of the thoughts on here were later honed into more pointed Bombs ideas, but it's nice to hear where it all started. (DISASTER RECORDS: P.O. BOX 7112, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA, 91510, U.S.A.)

THE EXPLOITED "HORROR EPICS". (CAPTAIN OI!)

This is about as good as The Exploited get, but don't get over-excited, it's still The Exploited and as fervent readers of this fanzine should know, we're no fans of them round here. This is a Digi-Pack reissue of their album from the early eighties, Thatcher era, Britain and includes their rather wonderful tribute to the lady in the form of "Maggie". Although The Exploited are favoured amongst Punk's spiky elite I've never viewed them to be anything more than a cheap Thrash band. Just listen to those drums for fuck's sake ... the only time I can recall that style actually working for a Punk band was on the Oppressed's "Joe Hawkins" and possibly G.B.H.'s more Metal flavoured stuff. Bound to keep the fans happy and clearly a big seller in the Captain Oi! catalogue given that it's getting the Digi-Pack treatment, but just one band I can never get my head around. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

FAT SKINS/LAST LAUGH "WELCOME TO ARIZONA". (STEP-1 MUSIC)

Split CD from two of Arizona's leading lights when it comes to Oi! and skinhead antics. Roughly produced and a bit sloppy at times from both bands, this is slightly under par from what you'd usually expect to hear on Step-1. It's the heartfelt intent that's the strongpoint of bands like this. They don't tend to give all that much of a fuck if it doesn't sound top quality or if the songs aren't exactly great, so long as them and all their mates can get pissed and jump around a bit. You gotta respect them in a sense, but these are hardly the types of bands you'd turn to when you wanna hear some good Oi! (STEP-1 MUSIC: P.O. BOX 21, TENTERDEN, KENT, TN30 7ZZ, ENGLAND.)

FEVERDREAM "FREEZE!". (COALITION)

This is terrible. Bands like Feverdream have a lot to answer for. They've got no ideas and have no clue about music. It sounds like a band trying to tune up over the ramblings of a whiny and annoying git. Sloppy, undignified and a downright pain in the arse to listen to. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTONSTRAAT 212, 2562 KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)



THE FILAMENTS "WHAT'S NEXT". (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS)

Top of the line Reggae/Punk from The Filaments yet again. Doesn't seem that long since I last reviewed them, but nice to be back in good company. On the more upbeat and hard moments there's a strong Conflict vibe going on, with protest lyrics to match. This is a far cry from the sheen of the Ska/Punk outfits and fits more amicably in with the squatter range if there's such a thing. Ex-Cathedral had something similar going on a few years back. The Filaments have tightened up their sound a lot and look set to make their way into the foreground of British Punk. If you're into the Ruts, Clash, Conflict or even a bit of Leftover Crack then The Filaments are another one to add to that list. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

FLOGGING MOLLY "WITHIN A MILE FROM HOME". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)

Poor auld Dave King has been getting it left, right and centre from the critics over here, whilst on the other side of the Atlantic, Flogging Molly appear to be the Irish Americans saving grace. This is the one band doing this sort of stuff that they reckon have credibility since our man is actually Irish after all. I seen 'em playing in Dublin last year sometime and I thought they had a fair bit going for them, but yes of course here on plastic is does all get a bit much and you can't help thinking from time to time, "Jesus! If you love Ireland that much, why the fuck don't you come back and live here??" It's the classic case of there being two types of Irish - the ones who actually

live on the island and the ones who emigrated or are second generation or whatever, which we tend to forget about and sneer at. I guess sometimes it's easy to judge from the outside in, but a band like this could never exist in Ireland. It's an immigrant thing and will probably hit home with fellow immigrants, but on home turf, it's just going over most people's heads. Sorry! (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

FLOOR "DOVE". (NO IDEA)

Hit n' miss low-bass stuff from Florida. And I'm talkin' real low bass here, as in Melvins, Sleep, Cathedral, Kyuss and of course Black Sabbath. There's about fifteen minutes of good music here and the rest is all made up of ridiculous ten minute plus feedback compositions that all these bands tend to do to fill up tape. The first four songs are good and had they left it at that as an EP, we'd be looking at something more promising (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, 32604, U.S.A.)

THE FREEZE "CRAWLING BLIND/FREAK SHOW". (DR. STRANGE)

Two albums by The Freeze on one CD - you can't really go wrong can ya? The Freeze were one of Boston's (well Cape Cod to be precise) best Punk acts of the eighties that outlived most others and as evident on these two releases from 1990 and 1995 they never turned their backs on their original sound during the dark days of Punk and along with Bad Religion were two of only a handful of bands not to do so. Cliff Hanger (who provides liner notes here) was the vocalist of the group who kept it all together through various line up changes, surviving bad habits and dodgy record companies along the way. If you're not familiar with The Freeze I'd probably recommend starting with something a little earlier from the group, but rest assured the band maintained their original outlook and almost anything they put their name to is worth picking up. They're rooted in that authentic Boston sound of the early eighties that fused the European influence of bands like S.L.F. with the Hardcore of D.Y.S. S.S.D Minor Threat and so forth. "Freak Show" is the more aggressive and Hardcore of the two whilst "Crawling Blind" has the better songs but the guitars are turned down more in the mix. I love both these albums and The Freeze are an underrated band that should never be overlooked when it comes to piecing together the big guns in American Hardcore Punk. (DR. STRANGE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1058, ALTA LOMA, CALIFORNIA, 91701, U.S.A.)

FRONTKICK "UNDERGROUND STORIES". (BRONCO BULLFROG)

Frontkick appear to getting a huge push by their label Bronco Bullfrog and look to be big favourites over there right now. I reviewed them before and think they're ok, but in reality it's really another Bombshell Rocks/Voice Of A Generation rendition of the Rancid formula. It's a brand of Punk I do like and could listen to and enjoy, but its never going to break any borders or offer anything new. Frontkick are from Berlin and just crying out for a deal with a U.S. label like Hellcat or T.K.O who arguably pioneered this sound in the late nineties. It may be too little too late for Frontkick, but with the push and hard work being thrown behind them courtesy of Bronco Bullfrog, who knows what will happen. I just think there're far fresher ideas out there today to spend time championing, than a spent force like this. (BRONCO BULLFROG RECORDS: APARTADO DE CORREOS 1474 07800, IBIZA (BALEARES), SPAIN.)



G.B.H. "PUNK JUNKIES". (CAPTAIN OI!)

A long overdue re-issue of the 1996 GBH album, that was scarred with all sorts of business related nonsense upon its initial release. Basically this was one of the more difficult GBH albums to obtain, which is strange considering it's only two albums back down the line. We Bite were held responsible for the complications and the mere mention of that label in Colin's company generally brings about the sound of grinding teeth to this day. There's a frank explanation of all this from him in the liner notes. "Punk Junkies" marked drummer Scott's debut with the band, which brought them back to a slightly less metallic sounding group. The double-bass kick drum is still there of course and as I've said on numerous occasions, GBH are one of the few bands that can actually put that thing to some good use. Again Captain Oi! have done a sterling job on this and included the three songs from the "Punk Rock Ambulance" EP as bonus tracks. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

GET OUT "THE CUTTING EDGE". (REBELLION)

Get Out serve up eleven Oi! tunes with cookie monster vocals. You can feel the rage and ferocity of this band from the opening chords, fueled by fired up guitars and agitated drumbeats. Get Out connect with songs like "One" - an anthemic slice of modern day Street Punk, with boil-over urgency and catchiness. I'm really getting into this CD; they're a band that don't seem to run out of good ideas. Good fist-thumping Punk Rock from a bunch of unsavories that appear to be as big a fans of vintage Rock N Roll as they are the British Oi! bands of the early eighties. Maintaining a solid groove throughout, whilst inflicting some hammering and poignant tunes upon us to hum along too at the same time. One of the better Oi! releases this year! Well worth hearing. (REBELLION RECORDS: MGR. VAN ROOSMALENPLEIN 24-5213 GD'S, HERTOGENBOSCH, NETHERLANDS.)

THE GHOULES "RECLAIM THE WORLD". (ROCKSTAR)

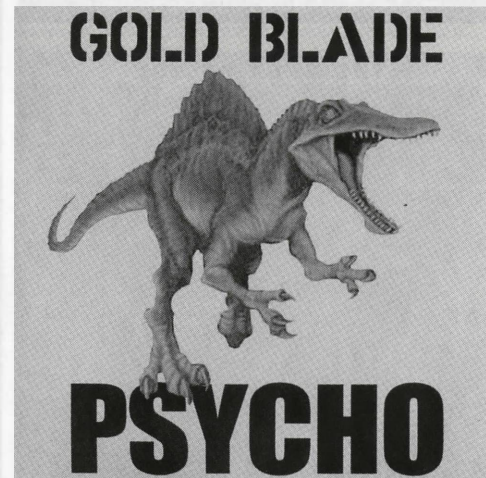
Not to be confused with Sacramento's Groovie Ghoules, this band are of Swedish origin and signed to a German label. As you know the Swedes are bastards for duplicating other bands and this is another example of it. Interestingly that doesn't make for a bad album though. Presumably bands like The Ghoules are on a stricter budget than many of their contemporaries and that works in their favour. "Reclaim The World" sounds like a one-shot chance at recording their album, so they give it full throttle from the word go. Had they got the time to go back and ponce about with arrangements and overdubs and whatnot it would have drastically taken from the finished result we now hold in our hands. The roots of the music lies in many Garage Punk acts from across the water. I'm thinking the New Bomb Turks, Zeks, Dwarves and more recent heroes to these types of bands, the Supersuckers. All good! (ROCKSTAR RECORDS: KURBRUNNENSTRASSE 32-36, 52066 AACHEN, GER-MANY.)

THE GIFT OF GAB "4th DIMENSIONAL ROCKETSHIPS GOING UP". (EPITAPH)

Generally known to strut his stuff with fellow Northern Californian Rap artist Chief Xcel - his partner in Blackalicious, this is Gift Of Gab's attempt at hogging the limelight himself and unleashing his first solo effort upon us, via the Epitaph label. Fuck knows how this partnership was constructed! There's no evident shift in style here from what you'd normally expect to hear from an artist of this ilk, and with guests that include members of Jurassic 5, Hieroglyphics and Company Flow, this should be every baggy-clothed student's dream come true. The market for this kind of stuff is already saturated and whether you feel there's room for another record in this genre or not, is down to personal taste. I could live without it. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE GIFT OF GAB "RAT RACE". (EPITAPH)

Digi-pack CD single of the second track on The Gift Of Gab's above longplayer. Again this is a poor attempt at milking those trendy Hip Hop kids with more money than sense. What you get for your parents money is ... wait for it ... three songs that you've already shelled out for on his album ... but no, wait there's a "radio edit" and an "instrumental" of the same songs here!! These kids will buy anything ... no other scene would get away with releasing something of this nature. If you're stupid enough to buy it, you deserve to be ripped off. Should go down well with the Beastie Boys contingent! (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)



GOLD BLADE "PSYCHO". (CAPTAIN OI!)

The often hit n' miss Gold Blade unleash this rather wonderful six track taster for their upcoming album, scheduled for an early 2005 release. "Psycho" is the lead track and if you've seen them live recently you'll understand that this song along with their handful of other anthems has been dominating the set for some time now. It's catchy, well written and full of power - everything that this makes up a good Punk tune. There's three live numbers from them next on this CD - namely "Black Elvis", "AC/DC" and "Hairstyle". What follows after that is somewhat of an interesting idea. They've included two live songs from two different bands; each of 'em giving us their own rendition of Gold Blade's "Strictly Hardcore". Apparently tons of bands around the world have covered this song and they decided to share two of them with us. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE GRINDOLLS "HATE, LOVE AND GREED". (MAD BUTCHER/KOB)

Germany has had a longstanding reputation for coming up with the answer to what happens when we twin the sounds of old style Rock N Roll with the past twenty-five years of Punk Rock. They're nuts for this type of stuff over there, so it serves to reason that this should generate some decent bands along the way and that's just what we've got here with The Grindolls. Yet another example of how it should sound when done correctly. If the Supersuckers were European and prone to the odd Oi! record here and there, they'd probably sound something like this. The Grindolls make vicious use of the age-old twin guitar attack set against fast tempo Rock N Roll music. In a similar light to bands that stick to a style they know best like Motorhead, AC/DC and Rose Tattoo. (MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, 37073 GOETTINGEN, GERMANY/KOB RECORDS: VIA CANTARANE 63/C 1-37129 VERONA, ITALY.)

GUTTERMOUTH "EAT YOUR FACE". (EPITAPH)

Guttermouth - another one of those bands that always looks as though they were on the brink of hitting the big time on the backs of Offspring and Green Day, but the chance just passed them by. So here they are, ending up on the Epitaph label after being offloaded by Nitro and making some, what has to be said, pretty credible Pop Punk records. This is the second one in a row from them that I thought was quite good. To some a band like Guttermouth could be a breathe of fresh air if you've been bogged down with the over politicising of Punk Rock since 9/11, whilst on the other hand you may also feel that bands like this are out of touch with life and just sound dumb and apathetic in light of what's going on in the world today. Me personally, I guess it depends on what day you ask me on. Today, I'm in the mood for an album like this and one thing's for sure - they're not jumping on any political bandwagon and stick to doing what they've always done. That's non PC Surf-Punk to those of you that don't know. Circle Jerks, Vandalz and Replacements all come to mind. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE GUVNERS "YOP-POP". (TRASH 2001)

I thought this was gonna sound like the Vanilla Muffins, so of course it was a bit of a letdown when it didn't. Having said that once you get into what the Guvners have to offer, it becomes quite an enjoyable listen. They address the likes of Cock Sparrer with Slade and come up with a sound that's basically rough Pop music. Nice to see a 7 inch with five songs crammed onto it! Mid-tempo Punk with guttural vocals and surprisingly melodic guitars. (TRASH 2001 RECORDS: POSTFACH 101653-46216, BOTTROP, GERMANY.)

HATEWORK "THRASH N' ROLL". (BEER CITY)

A mammoth throwback to the eighties Thrash days of skintight black canvas jeans, Adidas runner-boots and bullet belts, Italy's Hatework give us some of the best metal since that time and yes of course it's cheesy as fuck. Songs about headbanging, the devil and drinking copious amounts of Italian beer - they even have a drum solo for fucks sake! "Thrash N' Roll" is quite a good album, but lacks integrity. There again, don't metal metal records? (BEER CITY RECORDS: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 53226-0035, U.S.A.)

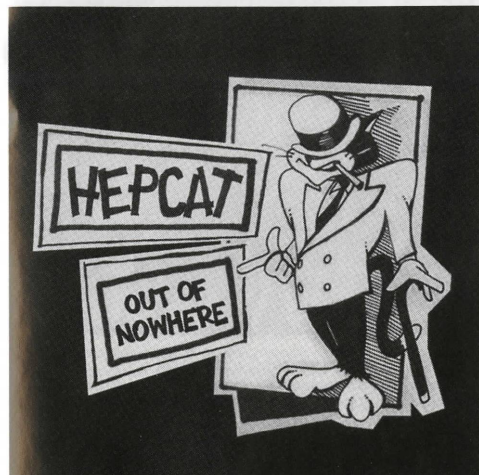
HELLSHOCK "ONLY THE DEAD KNOW THE END OF WAR". (YELLOW DOG)

Crap ... absolute horseshit ... Hellshock are your worst nightmare. They actually

think Burzum and Dark Throne were a good idea, whilst the rest of us all seen it for the high comedy it was. It's difficult to understand the make up of bands like Hellshock and what exactly it is they think they're doing. None of this music was any use to begin with, the last thing we need is another bunch of sad revivalists reminiscing on how great something must have been when they were never a part of it. Those of us that do remember this the first time around would never dream of glorifying such crud. (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550 208, 103 72 BERLIN, GERMANY.)

HEPCAT "OUT OF NOWHERE". (HELLCAT)

A retrospective look back over the earlier workings of Hepcat, who if you don't know, are a prized Ska act on the Hellcat label. Their music is rich in Caribbean and Latin roots, cross referenced with some American Soul of the 60's, but naturally has that unmistakable light from their biggest influence The Skatalites shining through. Many of these recordings capture the band in their purist form, creating a soothing mood and atmosphere reminiscent of Susan Cadogan's "Hurt So Good" opus in places. Hepcat don't hide what they do and have openly come out, proclaiming their whole purpose was merely to bring back to music what their Ska predecessors done to it three decades ago. And on that count it all comes across a lot more honest and heart-felt. Ska music being played by Ska enthusiasts. Nothing more, nothing less, but great on all counts. (HELLCAT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)



HOT WATER MUSIC "THE NEW WHAT NEXT?". (EPITAPH)

Wow! It's already album number six for Hot Water Music and they don't appear to be showing any signs of slowing down. Again this album, as with its predecessors, showcases more of Hot Water Music's barely restrained Hardcore insanity they've had going on since day one. It's a little more pointed and focused some years later, but they haven't really drifted from their original ideal of making hoarse yet melodic underground guitar music. The big Frankie Stubbs influence still shines through the most out of anybody, but we're definitely starting to hear their own defined sound a lot more. They sound comfortable playing together and you get that feeling of a tight unit here a lot more so than other bands. Basically this album is a case of "more of the same" in many instances, they've just gotten better at it. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

HOTWIRED "MAKE IT COUNT". (SELF-RELEASED)

New twelve-song D.I.Y CD from good time Norfolk Punkers Hotwired. Loud, catchy and fun to listen to, Hotwired don't take themselves too seriously and a good indicator of what they sound like is the cover tunes they pick to play here - The Subs "Warhead" and The Business "Smash The Discos". Late 70's and early 80's influenced music. This CD has its moments but a lot of the ideas haven't had time to fully develop at this stage and I reckon the peek is yet to come. The best part of Hotwired is their guitar work and backup vocals, which compliment the no-frills approach to their backing music wonderfully. (HOTWIRED: 23 VICARAGE STREET, NORTH WALSHAM, NORFOLK, NR28 9DQ, ENGLAND.)

HOWARDS ALIAS "THE ANSWER IS NEVER". (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS)

Brass section Punk Rock with a distinctive and memorable vocalist. Howard's Alias have something resembling an agenda and cast my mind back to those days when Voodoo Glow Skulls offered the world something original and exciting in this vein. It was ferocious and hard enough to be quality Punk but always had that backbone of Jazz, Soul and Ska to keep it in touch with the roots of music. Howards Alias aren't a million miles away from this and have chanced their arm at creating something a little less mundane and repetitive. Most of the time the mud sticks, but on occasion it slips back a notch or two. When they're good they can be very good and there's enough attention to detail here to warrant further investment on future releases. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

IMPULSE MANSLAUGHTER "LIVE AT WFMU". (BEER CITY)

Never heard of this band before. Disorder, ENT and the like come to mind. Heavy Metal-edged Hardcore, prone to the odd Discharge record or two no doubt. Not really the type of Hardcore that turns me on, but they do have their moments. The first eighteen tracks on this are where the title comes from and are a mediocre representation of the band in the live environment. It's not till we get into the studio tracks that mostly take up the other half of the CD that we begin to hear the band's sound a bit clearer and can get an idea of what were dealing with here and it definitely outweighs the live stuff. The further in to the CD you delve the better the music gets, which is odd, but more to my personal tastes. (BEER CITY RECORDS: P.O. BOX 26035, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 53226-0035, U.S.A.)

THE INSAINTS "SINS OF SAINTS". (DISASTER)

The Insaints were something along the lines of underground legends around the Bay Area of San Francisco in the nineties. Lead by Marion Anderson, who worked as a dominatrix and fetish model when not in the band, decided it would be an idea to bring her work onto the stage with her and thus we have a female GG Allin on our hands. Naturally this led to all sorts of complications and run ins, being banned from performing at Gilman St, though Tim Yohannon did take it upon himself to release their only recording; a split 7 inch with the Diesel Queens on Maximumrocknroll Records. The Insaints were a fairly decent band as it happens too and worked in a similar field to the Avengers and Black Flag with some more extreme GG moments. Marion passed away in 2001 of a heroin overdose and this is the first collection of the bands material ever released, spanning twenty songs of live and unreleased stuff. The Insaints are clearly a representation of a time when Punk Rock was still dangerous and most weren't ready for it yet. Contains tons of photos and background history on the life and times of the band. Needed now more than ever I reckon. (DISASTER RECORDS: P.O. BOX 7112, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA 91510, U.S.A.)

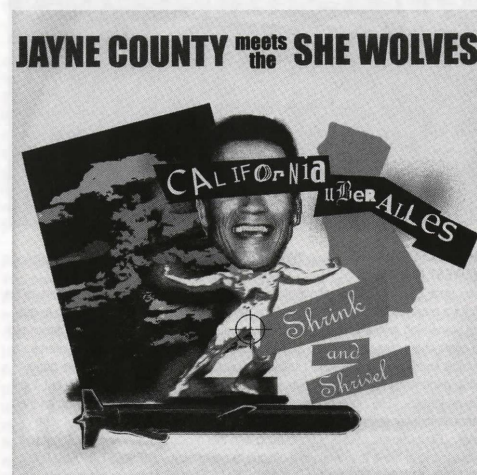
I WALK THE LINE "BADLANDS". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

Finnish band featuring members of Manifesto Jukebox and Wasted amongst its ranks.

You'd assume with a name like I Walk The Line that this band would be some attempt at a trendy Country revival, but that couldn't be further from the truth. They've actually got a rich caucasian of Social Distortion, Leatherface, Snuff and plenty of vintage full-throttle Hardcore in here. They make good use of the Hammond organ that brings Catholic Discipline and Souxsie And The Banshees to mind on occasion. Clearly using this band as a vehicle to explore the more off-beat influences of the members other bands. On "Barren Fields" for example they use a Byrds guitar jingle with a Beach Boys harmony, utilising the band's gift for crafting songs with an impact. I Walk The Line have tapped into something here that is acutely real and transcendently special. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

JAYNE COUNTY MEETS THE SHE WOLVES "CALIFORNIA UBER ALLES". (TRASH 2001)

Excellent 7 inch from the formerly Wayne County, hooking up with a decent backing band called the She Wolves. The A-Side is a revamped version of that old DK's chestnut, this one an ode to Amie. The B-Side is an original working and fair stab at a hooky Punk tune as only this nutter knows how. A throwback to the style of vintage Punk Rock and a nice memoir of how the great bands from the States used to comprise this music. A definite must for all fans of Wayne or Jayne County and anyone else out there not yet tuned in. (TRASH 2001 RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10 16 53, D-46216, BOTTROP, GERMANY.)



J CHURCH "SOCIETY IS A CARNIVOROUS FLOWER". (NO IDEA)

After a short hiatus J Church reemerge as a four piece, having relocated to Austin, Texas from their native San Francisco, due to spiralling rents. It's been a time since I last checked out anything by J Church, but I rate them quite highly as they were there at the beginning and created a style. They stuck to their guns and continue to unleash their significant brand of I guess what you'd call East Bay Pop/Punk. There's some healthy song structure here and thought provoking lyrics to boot. If you remember this type of music prior to the big explosion then J Church will give you fond recollections of melodic Punk before it lost its bite. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, 32604, U.S.A.)

THE JE NE SAIS QUI "SECRET LANGUAGE". (COALITION RECORDS)

I like this. Reminds me a bit of that Call Me Lightening crowd or at least sounds as though they've been influenced by similar bands. Post-Punk/Pre-Punk/seventies New Wave - Velvets, Television, Gang Of Four, Wire strongly come to mind. The more I get into this CD the better it gets. They keep it fresh and change styles and tempos throughout, never neglecting a good chorus either, which is something many of these bands tend to do. There's five songs on this nicely packaged CD as a precursor for their upcoming full length. Should be interesting. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTONSTRAAT 212, 2562, KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE JE NE SAIS QUI "WE MAKE BEGINNINGS". (COALITION)

Quick on the uptake of their mini-CD arrives the full length. The No Wave fanatics are still at it, good n' sharp, eclipsing the abovementioned EP. The sheet metal guitar sound is used with much effect as we hear a huge Talking Heads influence on the second track, "We Make Beginnings". Very convincing and far from playing it safe, this CD is a courageous effort from a band who's musical interests clearly spread far and wide. Hard, tight and original, but ultimately very catchy ... like Big Black with songs. A flawless disc that should have an Emo kid or two scratching their head. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTONSTRAAT 212, 2562 KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

LEE PERRY "DUB-TRIPTYCH". (TROJAN)

With so much shoddy Scratch material out there (a lot of it down to a couple of French geezers), Trojan are one label who've handled his back catalogue with immaculate care. Here we see three rare albums from the early 70's on one Double-CD - "Blackboard Jungle Dub", "Cloak & Dagger" and "Revolution Dub" - the latter being the easiest to obtain, though the original version I have of this may be a bootleg and none of these three works have received a decent CD reissue in the past since their initial release dates thirty years ago, which makes "Dub-Triptych" an essential purchase for any Scratch enthusiasts. Was he the architect of Dub? Wasn't he? Is he off his trolley? This is what people spend their time discussing whenever Perry's name is brought up. None of it matters; what does matter is the man's history of great and some not so great recorded output. The story of these albums takes up in 1973 with "Cloak & Dagger" - by which time Perry had already been a U.K. chart veteran and leaves us with '75's "Revolution Dub", which was the first of his landmark Black Ark Studio recordings. There's also a further three bonus cuts by the Upsetters included here - "Table Turning", "Jungle Lion (instrumental)" and "Cloak & Dagger Horns Dub Plate Pressure" with Tommy McCook. There've been many imitators of this style down the years, but to really get an idea of the magic, you've got to trace back the roots, at the end of which you're sure to find this man. Definitely the top recommendation of all Lee Perry reissues this year. (TROJAN RECORDS: SANCTUARY HOUSE, 45-53 SINCLAR ROAD, LONDON W14 0NS, ENGLAND.)

LEFTOVER CRACK "FUCK WORLD TRADE". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)

Never been too sure if I shared all of Leftover Crack's militant left-wing political views and they seem to get more extreme by the album. It comes across as overly simplistic and naïve at times. I think militancy on either side, be it the far left or far right, is never going to work. Anyway moving on to the album at hand and it's another better here kids. Big into the aid Naseau, Heresy and Ameib, Leftover Crack still inject a good dose of musical leanings into what they do and have a great contrast here between the extreme Noisecore stuff and the more Ska tinged moments. Plenty of breakdowns and shifts of style and pace. This record came out on Alternative Tentacles in the states not so long ago and gets a further European digi-pack issuing here via London's Household Name. I like the artwork in this, something similar to what the Swingin' Utters did on "Five Lessons Learned". The spoken parts over music work particularly well before the singer comes back in with that unmistakable hiss of his. Smashing the system is all fine and dandy, but what bands like Leftover

Crack always fail to do is tell us what exactly they intend replacing it with. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

LEGION DLXVI "SCHEISSE CHRISTUS". (YELLOW DOG)

Pictures of church burnings and the Devil taking a dump on Jesus on the cross, would lead me to believe that this band are not of Christian persuasion, to say the least. They're Canadian, and much like Decide or Morbid Angel, are impossible to take seriously. Somewhat strange that they've chosen the Punk spectrum as their chosen target audience. I can't imagine this being a big hit with Punk fans across the globe, but then again ... People will buy anything if its marketed right ... just look at Emo! (YELLOW DOG RECORDS: P.O. BOX 550 208, 103 72 BERLIN, GERMANY.)



LES HELL ON HEELS "LES HELL ON HEELS". (BOMPI)

People are gonna view this as a cheap Donnas cash in and to be honest its difficult to listen to it and not be the teeniest weeniest bit suspicious. To cut a long description short, Les Hell On Heels basically do sound like a lot like The Donnas and you won't find a closer point of reference. I love The Donnas and I love this band, its that simple 'cos its a wonderful brand of sleazy female Rock n' Roll that the Runaways and Girls School kicked off in the seventies, which appeared an under investigated idea ever since. With regenerated interest in this sort of music of late it's nice to see a few bands let loose and play some high-octane rock music once more, that's more about Saturday night and sex than anything else. Jack Endino twiddles the knobs on this one and is the perfect choice for what they're after. An all round good Rock n' Roll record. (BOMPI RECORDS: P.O. BOX 7112, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA, 91510, U.S.A.)

LET IT BURN "THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE". (CHUNKSAAH)

From the label run by the Bouncing Souls come Let It Burn - the first product I've heard from Chunksaah that isn't Bouncing Souls material. You can hear the similarities here and it's obvious Let It Burn work on a similar ideology to the Souls, though obviously nowhere near the same level. Fusing Hardcore with Punk or 'AC/DC with 7 Seconds' according to the press release, Let It Burn occasionally touch on something worthwhile with the odd decent hook here n' there. Let It Burn, from New Jersey, often sound like a more filtered version of The Explosion, lacking the grit and punch of the great-unsung Boston band. It's hardly reinventing the wheel or anything like that, but given time Let It Burn could metamorphous into something slightly more interesting than their average run of the mill Pop Punk band. (CHUNKSAAH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 977, ASTBURY PARK, NEW JERSEY 07712, USA.)

LUNASULT "SUMMER SEASON". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

This is pretty good. The singer sounds like yer one from that old Brummie band the Sect, and indeed the band have a sound comparable to a modern Sect, but with ever so slight Emo leanings in certain places. Lunasult soar well beyond everything that they'll most probably be lumped in with and if you listen close enough you'll hear them being more inspired by the likes of X or Tilt than anything else. "Summer Season" is a hectic CD that doesn't let up. Far from lightweight and easily one of the better discs I've heard from Boss Tuneage this year. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, U.K.)

THE MAD CADDIES "LIVE FROM TORONTO: SONGS IN THE KEY OF EH". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Modern day Ska rarely works for me and I fuckin' hate The Mad Caddies. Stuff like Hepcat I can appreciate 'cos they understand the origins of the music, but tossers like The Mad Caddies have no clue. Being a big Reggae and Ska fan I find this horribly offensive. If you don't, check out anything by Desmond Decker, Skatalites, Laurel Aitken etc. etc. and get back to me. The Mad Caddies are a pathetic joke. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

MALKOVICH "10 SONG CD". (COALITION RECORDS)

Their last CD wasn't bad, but the singer gets annoying pretty quickly and the same thing applies here. This is actually their debut work from a few years back released here by Coalition in Holland. It's rougher and more in your face as you'd expect. Certainly unrelenting and angry about a thing or two and we can all appreciate that aspect of it. This won't be for everyone or every time, but it does have its place in the world. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTONSTRAAT 212, 2562, KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE MCGILLICUDDYS "KILT BY DEATH". (RETCH)

Difficult to take a band like The McGillicuddys seriously in this day and age. They're another Real McKenzies, Dropkick Murphys, Flogging Molly deal, singing songs about life as a Scottish immigrant in Canada. It may hit home for some people, but not me. They're not a bad band, but the joke's worn thin a long time ago. This may appeal to those of you without prior knowledge of Irish Trad music ... those already up on it will find it comical. (RETCH RECORDS: 49 ROSE CRESNET, WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ, U.K.)

ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES "RUIN JOHNNY'S BAR MITZVAH". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

How many more songs can there be left out there for Fat Mike and his Fat Wreck chums to butcher? Just when you think the Gimme Gimmes are a thing of the past they unleash another album of ludicrous covers on us. As fervent readers of this rag will know, I've always had a soft spot for them and can't help the smile that emanates across my face when I open an envelope and yet another CD of the Gimme Gimmes slides out. I can't imagine ever paying full whack for something like this, but it does serve its purpose with me. This time it's a live album of sorts at some Jewish gathering as the ever-pissed band knock out plenty more cringe-worthy tunes, all given that unmistakable twist of Gimme Gimme humour. There's also additional CD Rom footage on the disc. Say no more, you've no doubt made your mind up by now! (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

MENACE "ROGUES GALLERY". (CAPTAIN OIL)

REGULAR REVIEWS

I was obsessed with Menace's last album, the bloody terrific "Crises" so I was well up for a bit of this. Unfortunately they've parted company with another vocalist and enlisted the abilities of Resistance 77 frontman Oddy. I seen him perform with Menace in Morecambe a couple of years back and from what I remember he got the job done amicably. Opener "Test Of Time" is a slow burner but builds up in time for the cracking follow-up "Don't Patronise Me". It's similar territory to their last record, but lacks some of the vocal range and the songs aren't as instantly infectious as something like "London" or "C&A", but rather focus on a lasting impact that takes a few listens to get a grip of. Still a forerunner on the Punk circuit today, this album should sustain long term listenability and one thing's for sure – there's plenty of fresh ideas on here that leave the future looking bright, should they hold onto this line up a little longer than the last. (CAPTAIN OII: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE METEORS "THOSE EVIL THINGS". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)
The British Kings of Psychobilly are back with another solid dose of thumpin' Rock N' Roll! This band just keep going and twenty-five years later still sound so fresh and vibrant. They've made the vital choice of sticking to a style they emulate best and never drifting into mundane territory. The Meteors offer us a heady blend of volume, soul, sexuality and cathartic freedom, culminating with the minimalism of tracks like "Dog" into freak-out chaos of Judas Priest's "Breaking The Law". Paul Fenach has the voice all Rockabilly singers strive for, that ranges from a croaky Waits drawl, to a howl reminiscent of Gene Vincent. The Horror Rock imagery that has followed The Meteors around since day one is still ever apparent on this, with tracks like "No Reason" bringing us back to the more authentic feeling of earlier albums. This year's essential slice of Psychobilly by which all others should be measured up to. (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147 DORTMUND, GERMANY.)

THE MILWAUKEES "ANGEL WITH A KNIFE". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
I fuckin' hate this band and when I stuck the CD on it all came flowing back to me why. Like nails scraping down a blackboard, The Milwaukeees are torture to listen to. Emo at it's very worst. The best thing about this CD is that it's only five songs long, but when those five songs are spent in the company of The Milwaukeees, it can seem like forever. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

NEKROMANTIX "DEAD GIRLS BON'T CRY". (HELLCAT RECORDS)
Nekromantix have long been Psychobilly favourites on the Hellcat label along with Tiger Army and recent signings HorrorPops. Nekromantix are traditionalists in every sense of the word and cast our minds back to the days of Hangmen, Meteors, King Kurt, Frantic Flinnstones etc. Ridiculous quiffs, horror imagery, slap bass and fast paced guitar jangles. It all comes together just fine for the band, who add a touch of Misfits fanaticism to the mix. The good thing about this CD is that it's going to be bought by a lot of people who won't be familiar with the early Rockabilly and Psychobilly stuff and will hopefully urge them to check it out. As far as new bands doing this go, Nekromantix hold their own. Coupling the 50's and 60's slower American stuff, with the full on assault of the mid-eighties Britain on tracks like "Backstage Pass To Hell", this record works on a low-different levels. Like all the best Rock N' Roll albums, it also clocks in at under a half hour. (HELLCAT RECORDS: C/O P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

NERVOUS TENSION "BULLSHIT AND LIES". (WEIRD)
Ian from Weird Records, with his own band of Discharge/UK '82 fanatics. This is good though and as they've been doing it since '97 they've had time to develop their craft and come up with something a lot more infectious than they have any right to. There's a ton of these bands around, but Nervous Tension are a rarity in that they can write some favourable songs along the way. Socially conscious lyrics with a street urchin flavour to 'em would appear to be the order of the day and who knows, with a few 2 firs. of Old English in me this might just do the job. (weirdrecords@hotmail.com)

NO SUBSTANCE "TEACH KIDS TO HATE". (MILLIEPEED RECORDS)
Southampton Thrash/Crust band, linking to Los Crudos, Discharge and many Scream bands about today. Not for the faint hearted and little more than crash, thud wallop for a half hour or so. By the first thirty seconds of this CD you've heard all they have to offer. Relentless and keeping the velocity up to the max, No Substance still tend to spring the odd good hook on us here and there, particularly on "Coming Back" and "Gentle But Persuasive". They don't have much range musically, but at the same time, it's music like this that can get away with that and essentially focus our attention on the energy and aggression of the band. (MILLIEPEED RECORDS: 3 CEDAR GARDENS, SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 6TG, ENGLAND. milliepeedrecords@hotmail.com)

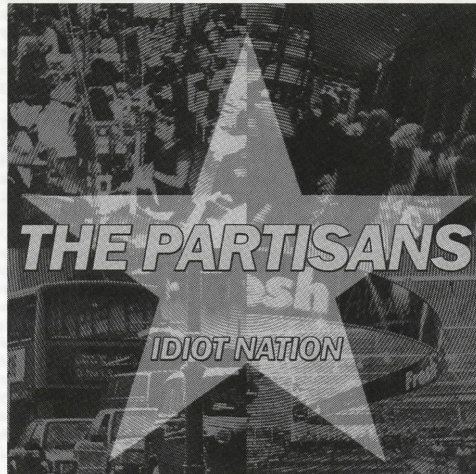
OCTOBER FILE "A LONG WALK ON A SHORT PIER". (GOLF)
Apparently this band don't care what people think and don't care about success, so it begs the question: why sign to a label and then send out promos and bids of the band to the press? Do!!! October File are a listening delight as it happens, though you'd never have guessed it from the steamer photos of themselves. This sounds to me like a modern day twist on what bands like Killing Joke, Ministry and P.I.L. were doing in the eighties. Very bass-heavy and dark overtones cover the industrial leanings of the music, which sounds as though there may be some synthesizers in action there but I can't say for sure. Yeah, this is a strong recommendation. (GOLF RECORDS: P.O. BOX 159, WALLINGFORD, OXON, OX10 9YL, ENGLAND.)

THE ONCE OVER TWICE "SPECIAL MOMENTS TO DETONATE THEMSELVES". (IN AT THE DEEP END)
This is a bit better than a lot of the stuff in At The Deep End has been subjecting me to of late. It was Death Metal overkill twice for a while, but thankfully it's back to the style of old for the label. The Once Over Twice are a Devon based band, heavily influenced by Dischord's music of the late eighties. They're a knack for writing some good tunes and remind me of Bluepit circa "Dischord 101" (i.e. when they were good). Big J Robbins style here too (also when he was good) and managing to keep the dynamics working to their advantage. Using picture perfect Pop tones to contrast the ear bending force of their caustic Hardcore angle, they come up with a formula used by many bands over the years, but this is one of the few who can actually hit the nail on the head. (IN AT THE DEEP END: 82 BARLOW DRIVE SOUTH, AWSWORTH, NOTTS, NG16 2TD, ENGLAND.)

ONLY CRIME "TO THE NINES". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)
Bill Stevenson just can't sit still for a second can he? Not content with having the Descendents back in action and also producing a handful of up and coming bands in his Blasting Room studio, here we witness him reemerge with yet another musical project, accompanied by Russ Rankin (vocalist for Good Riddance), Aaron Dalbec (guitarist with Bane and Converge), Zack Blair (guitarist with Hagfish and Gwar) and Donivan Blair (also from Hagfish). So as you can see it's basically a case of the old backing up the new. Stevenson of course lays the groundwork here for a heavy backbeat with new styled Hardcore guitars and those unmistakable Good Riddance vocals. The timing and arrangement is similar to the Descendents, though the overall sound comes closer to something akin to the Explosion, and we all remember how great their longplayer was right? Stripped to the bone hardcore that relies on little bar the experience of the group's makeup to deliver a colossal batch of heavyweights that looks set to piss over anything else you'll care to check in Hardcore of these times. (FAT WRECK CHORDS: WALDEMARSTR. 33*10999 BERLIN, GERMANY.)

THE PARTISANS "IDIOT NATION". (DR. STRANGE)
Looks like this is the long-awaited new album from The Partisans - their first in about twenty years! I was expecting this to come out on T.K.O. seeing as they done their comeback three song 7 inch thing. The Partisans were an integral part of the early

Punk sound from Wales and have influenced a lot of bands down the years. I've always put them up there with the best of 'em and their first album in particular is a blast. This sticks to their original outlook and whilst maintaining a roots flavoured ambience, it still doesn't sound retro, which is a difficult thing to achieve. For those of you not in the know The Partisans sound is rough n' ready with good strong melodies and comes up drawing a resemblance to the Pistols crossed with Slade. A promising return to the fold. (DR. STRANGE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1058, ALTA LOMA, CALIFORNIA, 91701, U.S.A.)



PHOENIX FOUNDATION "WE NEED TO MAKE SOME CHANGES". (NEWEST INDUSTRY)
A six track CD from the the above-average Phoenix Foundation. They've been on the go for a mere two years but have already made a name for themselves down to getting some high profile coverage and releases out there. The Phoenix Foundation pick up somewhere close to where SST Records left off and bridge the gap between early eighties Hardcore and the Indie Punk that would soon follow. There's some heavy guitar parts with infectious melodies placed over them. Not a new formula, but it still has an impact. The Phoenix Foundation are a more pointed outfit here than on their debut longplayer reviewed a while back and appear to be finding their niche a bit more. Distinction is always a good thing with this music and this is a band that has managed to achieve that, making it difficult to categorise. (NEWEST INDUSTRY: UNIT 100, 61 WELLFIELD ROAD, CARDIFF, CF24 3DG, U.K.)

PISTOL GRIP "TEAR IT ALL DOWN". (BYO)
One of my favourite bands of the last few years, Pistol Grip are back in what seems like no time at all to bring their third album to us. Pistol Grip play basic but crunching Punk, plenty of soaring melodies with almost every song being an instant foot tapper. They've always had a neat mix of Oi! and Pop Punk going on, with such ultra catchy songwriting to compliment Stax's raspy but addictive voice. The band have been at the pinnacle of their career these past years and seem to have an endless supply of quality songs up their sleeves. Makes you wonder how much longer they can keep this sort of form up. (BYO RECORDS: P.O. BOX 67609, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90067, U.S.A.)

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS "UP IN THEM GUTS". (NO IDEA)
Here's something I've been waiting for. Their three-song thingy released last year sometime was quite good and this is the full length to follow it. Planes Mistaken For Stars offer us a range of different styles, from doom laden Sabbath influenced stuff like "Glassing" to the mellow opener "To All Mothers", to more Pop orientated songs like "Dying By Degrees" they cover a lot of ground. The vocals are a bit odd at times however and could probably use a different approach or even singer for the subtler moments. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, 32604, U.S.A.)

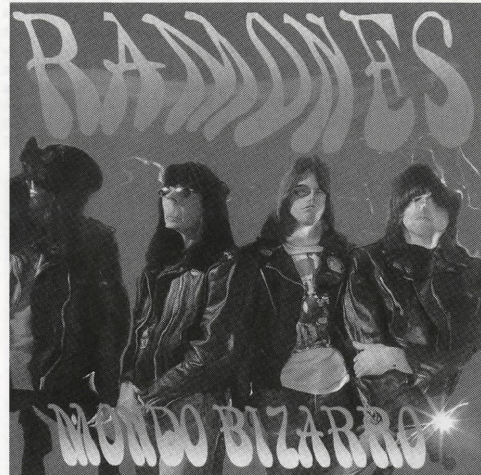
THE POP RIVETS "GREATEST HITS". (DAMAGED GOODS)
Ahh yes, what a release to get a hold of. It's Ian at Damaged Goods yet again demonstrating some exquisite taste by dusting off the first (and only) couple of albums from The Pop Rivets and putting them onto CD for the masses who this band may have bypassed. Billy Childish was the genius behind it all and The Pop Rivets got together in '77 to play their local watering holes around the Kent region of England, before embarking on some self-financed tours of Switzerland and Germany. Childish reckons they were the first truly independent Punk band to put out their own releases, just scraping in past the Swell Maps, but it's all down to you who believe or listen to. Either way this album got the ball rolling for the band and consisted of some down to earth Garage Punk similar to what a lot of half-arsed band are only getting wide to today. Many bands will spend a fortune trying to get their records to sound like they were recorded in a garage, but The Pop Rivets were one of the few who genuinely did record their albums there down to lack of financial assistance. They even had to break at 6.00 pm so the engineer's mother could watch the news for fucks sake!! (DAMAGED GOODS: P.O. BOX 45854, LONDON, E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

THE POP RIVETS "EMPTY SOUNDS FROM ANARCHY RANCH". (DAMAGED GOODS)
The second and final offering from The Pop Rivets takes up where the above left off and continues on in traditional Punk format. Both these CD's go hand in hand with one another, with this one containing slightly better hooks and more confident playing. The production is almost identical and the band appeared eager not to mellow with time or let themselves down as they viewed many other bands doing after their first album. Still as rough out and gloriously nasty as ever, The Pop Rivets are a lesson in how any Rock N' Roll bands should approach the recording of an album. There were plans for a third record which hastily got scrapped following the band's break up. However, they did leave us with these two treasures to fondly remember them for. Billy Childish also contributes sleeve notes to both these releases. (DAMAGED GOODS: P.O. BOX 45854, LONDON, E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

PULLEY "MATTERS". (EPITAPH)
Pulley are one of those bands that carry on regardless, making records in the background of all else that's going, until one day you end up with one of 'em in your hands, thinking, "Are they still fuckin' goin'?" They were one of the earlier Epitaph outfits from what I can remember and rose up alongside Pennywise, when they first began making a name for themselves. The similarities are all here of course, but what you've really got to hand it to Pulley on is sticking in there when I can't think of anyone I know who actually likes them or gives 'em a mention. It's almost like the world has completely forgotten about them and moved on, leaving Pulley stuck back in the mid nineties. They're as good, if not better, than any of those other SoCal bands and who knows, if they continue churning out the records, there'll no doubt be some sort of renewed interest in them in about five years time when they're being hailed as the "Godfathers of Skate Punk!!" or something. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

RAMONES "BRAIN DRAIN". (CAPTAIN OII)
Nice to see the Captain OII logo gracing some Ramones material, as they secure the

rights to reissue the band's essential final four albums. All four CD's have been given the deluxe treatment as only Captain OII knows how. Full lyrics, bonus tracks, photos, cardboard cover and extensive sleeve notes by Monte Melnick and Frank Meyer, authors of the recent, "On The Road With The Ramones" book. First up is Dee Dee's final album, "Brain Drain" from 1989 that also marked Marky Ramone's return to the group after a five-year absence. So, it was all guns blazing once again as the band knocked out another twelve-tracks in classic Ramones style. I listened to this album to death when it came out first and it still stands proud today. Some of the material became staples in the band's live set, such as "I Believe In Miracles", "Pet Semetary" and "Ignorance Is Bliss", whilst other greats like their wonderful version of Charles Barris "Palisades Park" became a classic in its own right. Full throttle moments such as "Zero Zero UFO", and "Learn To Listen" carry their weight better than ever. Bonus track is an alternative version of "Pet Semetary". (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)



RAMONES "MONDO BIZARRO". (CAPTAIN OII)
I remember buying this on vinyl the day it came out. The last great album the Ramones recorded! There's not a bad track on here and its one of those albums that once you put on, you can't take off as the songs just keep coming. From their opening ode to Tipper Gore and the PMRC "Censorshit", followed by Marky's contribution, "The Job That Ate My Brain", straight through Dee Dee's minor hit "Poison Heart", the band just never seem to run out of fuel for this album's entire length. This was C.J.'s first recorded work, following Dee Dee's departure from the band shortly after the "Brain Drain" album was recorded. Released in the wake of Grunge mania, Joey felt the time was definitely right for the world to appreciate the Ramones and finally give them a hit album, but of course the hit album never came and whilst bands like Pearl Jam, Soundgarden and heaps more capitalised on the hard work of the Ramones, the band themselves were once again practically ignored in the eyes of the mainstream. Only downside to this album was the guest appearance of Living Colour's Vernon Reid to lay down a guitar solo! A guitar solo??? On a fucking Ramones record??? I could never figure that one out! There's a wealth of classic songs here, making it near impossible to choose highlights, but how about their version of the Doors "Take It As It Comes", the aforementioned trilogy of openers, the Beach Boys influenced "Tearing", Dee Dee's wonderful "Strength To Endure" sung by C.J. and of course that odd thumper that is "Tomorrow She Goes Away". Take your pick; it's all here. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

RAMONES "ACID EATERS". (CAPTAIN OII)
Spurred on by their well-received Doors cover on "Mondo Bizarro" the band set about recording this album of cover version from the 60's Psychedelic era, released in 1994 – something they'd talked about doing for many years. It originally started out as an EP, but once things got going it became clear the band had enough material for an album's worth of the stuff. Each member chose their favourite songs from the era and away they went. Probably best remembered for their version of The Who's "Substitute" and accompanying video, "Acid Eaters" also boasts tons more quality cover choices. Jefferson Airplane, Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones and of course the Beach Boys are all represented here and there's even a further Beach Boys tune, "Surfin' Safari" included as a bonus that wasn't on the original album. Good fun and an enjoyable listen even ten years on. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

RAMONES "ADIOS AMIGOS!". (CAPTAIN OII)
As the curtain closed on the greatest gift Rock N' Roll ever gave to us, the Ramones left us with one final studio album in 1995. A slightly under par effort, when held up against "Mondo Bizarro", "Adios Amigos!" was still a fine piece of work and contained a handful of cool tunes. The C.J. sung opener – a version of Tom Waits' "I Don't Want To Grow Up" is particularly striking. Elsewhere on the album listen out for, "Cretin Family" and "I Got A Lot To Say". Dee Dee was of course still using the band as a cash cow and wrote a few here, the best of which, is "The Crusher" and the above-mentioned "Cretin Family". There's an ode to Johnny Thunder in the form of the Heartbreakers "I Love You". Also check out their version of Motorhead's tribute to the Ramones with "R.A.M.O.N.E.S." in which C.J.'s genius rhyming, exchanges the line "Marky hits the gas" to "Mark takes it up the ass"! Wonderful! That was pretty much it for the Ramones – the end of the line and bar a couple of farewell tours and a live album of their final gig in L.A. this was their last album, which in itself makes it an essential purchase. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

REBELATION "STEPAS". (DO THE DOG)
There's a definite Beat influence here and the first song "Earth First" reminds of early Steel Pulse. I like this band; they induct a lot of Dub into what they do, which is kinda rare for any band aiming themselves squarely at the Punk faction. Rebelation offer a fresh take on what some revivalists have played to death and bring in other influences outside of the norm. Much like the Pestalaters, they've acquired the ability of injecting some 60's Soul flavour into their music, which gives it that authentic yet enduring substance of some early Walters pieces. (DO THE DOG MUSIC: 26A CRAVEN ROAD, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE, RG14 5NE, ENGLAND.)

RED FLAG 77 "STOP THE WORLD". (CAPTAIN OII)
All new studio album from Ipswich's Red Flag 77. I'm not all that familiar with this band's background, but for the record they're in the traditional spectrum of things, but have enough energy and character not to get lost in a cheap nostalgia trip. Not so sure what kind of kudos they've received, but this is of above average quality and has some Glam Rock influence, along with a huge helping of the Subs first two albums. "Time Has Been Called" pans out well and works a time-honoured melody around Ricki's raspy vocals. You can't help be struck by the band's ear for a subtle melody and efficient arrangements. There's a certain stigma attached to bands of this pedigree of course, in that it probably won't reach many people outside the HITS mafia, which is a real shame. Red Flag 77 offer something pure that is most definitely heart-felt. (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE REGULARS "VEGAS". (REBELLION RECORDS)

Rebellion are on to a real killer with this band. Rockabilly has had a close relationship with a lot of Punk bands down the years, but this is it in it's purest form and traces the roots of the music all the way back, fuses it with Country and Psychobilly and a general knowledge of what makes good Rock N' Roll, regardless of the genre and comes up with a well toned album of brilliance. The Regulars are from Holland and although I've no clue of their history (albeit they formed in '98) they sound to have perfected their craft well. There's five transformed cover versions here amongst the eleven on offer and their own work easily stands it's ground amongst the classics. Greaser fifties music like a lot of the early Sun stuff, but with a definite modern twist. If you like your music unfiltered, then look no further. (REBELLION RECORDS: MGR. VAN ROOSMALENPLEIN 24, NL-5213 GD'S, HERTOGENBOSCH, THE NETHERLANDS.)

REHASHER "OFF KEY MELODIES". (NO IDEA)

Fairly run-of-the-mill Pop-Punk like Dag Nasty's early work. I think this is the singer/guitarist from Less Than Jake with a side band of sorts. There's no Ska on this; just one dimensional straight forward melodic Punk Rock. I could take it or leave it. (NO IDEA RECORDS: P.O. BOX 14636, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, 32604, U.S.A)

RIOT COMPANY "DIRECTORS CUT". (DSS)

More continental Oi! here from one of the fore running labels of the genre at the minute. Riot Company are more Pop orientated than a lot of their contemporaries and appreciate that side to their Rejects influence as much as the harder edged side. They've got the traditional and basic Street Punk thingy here, but also an immaculate display of power and slick production that you don't tend to hear much with bands of this ilk. They also cover, 'Whiskey In The Jar' so I reckon they've got the suss! (DSS RECORDS: P.O. BOX 733, 4021 LINZ, AUSTRIA)

THE RITES "WISH YOU NEVER KNEW". (COALITION RECORDS)

Cut The Shirt, Tear It Up and zillions of other bands is what The Rites sound like. Not surprisingly they're also from New Jersey, which I think has a factory there that makes bands like this. This is perfect for young testosterone fuelled kids who can't stop beating each other up in the pit long enough to actually question if the band is any good or not, so long as the music is fast, aggressive and you can't make out the words, which sums up The Rites. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTONSTRAAT 212, 2562, KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

ROSE TATTOO "ROCK N' ROLL OUTLAWS". (CAPTAIN OI!)

Having clinched four albums from the Ramones back catalogue, Captain Oi! appear eager to outdo themselves again by obtaining reissuing rights to four more of the most sought after albums of the past twenty-five years. I am of course talking about the legendary Rose Tattoo. I had to send off to all sorts of obscure places to get my hands on their early stuff, so if there's any justice in the world every music fan out there will want copies of these. Rose Tattoo came along at the butt end of Punk Rock and drew closer comparisons with AC/DC and the Faces than The Clash or the Pistols. Don Scott nurtured the band in their start up days, they shared a drummer with AC/DC and this, their first album from 1978, was even produced by Vanda and Young – the production team held responsible for the best of AC/DC's work. As you can see there were close ties between the bands, but Rose Tattoo managed to find a niche for themselves at the party. Two elements of the band always stand out – the unmatched charisma of lead whaler Angry Anderson and of course that unmistakable slide guitar technique of Pete Wells. As to this some of the catchiest songwriting in Rock and a heavy taste for the rhythm of the blues and we're left with a guaranteed winning cocktail of raunchy Rock n' Roll. The band are at their untouchable best on this record ... benefiting from the wonderful arrogance of youth and hunger to spend their life in a Rock n' Roll band. This is something impossible to reclaim in the later years of any group, so to capture them at their juvenile delinquent best, put this must-have piece of listening top of your list. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

ROSE TATTOO "ASSAULT & BATTERY". (CAPTAIN OI!)

The first Rose Tattoo album was marred with all sorts of distribution problems, leaving their audience outside of their homeland very much secluded to the underground, buying their albums in on import but still generating quite a fan base considering. By the time this second album of theirs came to a release date, it marked the simultaneous unleashing of their first album in many countries. But things were slowly beginning to work themselves out and a band this good couldn't remain a secret for much longer. Rose Tattoo upped and moved to London, debuting at The Marquee in April '81. This album called back the same production team as their debut, but notoriously lacked a certain punch the original contained ... it was always going to be this way ... how do you follow an album like 'Rock n' Roll Outlaws' without disappointing slightly? They gave it a great crack of the whip all the same and came up with further moments of brilliance here, containing staples such as 'Out Of This Place', and 'Rock n' Roll Is King'. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)



ROSE TATTOO "SCARRED FOR LIFE". (CAPTAIN OI!)

Album number three in the ever evolving story of Rose Tattoo. Having done their time on the London gig circuit and built up a considerable following, even going so far as to obtain a support slot on a Rainbow tour, the band headed homeward bound to record this eagerly awaited follow up, again with the Vanda/Young production team. 'Scarred For Life' marked the debut of new guitarist Rob Riley, following the surprise news that Mick Cocks was to depart the band, breaking up the Anderson/Cocks song-writing partnership. 'Scarred For Life' is also the end of the classic era of the band – this trilogy of albums will always be revered for their importance in Rock history. This album also landed them a U.S. tour with Aerosmith, pushing the band further in that direction, musically drifting from their Street Punk origins. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

ROSE TATTOO "SOUTHERN STARS". (CAPTAIN OI!)

When the time came to record another album the cracks were beginning to show in Rose Tattoo. Angry Anderson had lost all remaining members of the band, including new guitarist Rob Riley. This began the task of assembling an all new line up, following on from the groups introduction into the U.S. market and signing with an A+M subsidiary. Gone was Wells trademark slide guitar, gone were the songwriting partners of Anderson, pretty much just leaving his voice as the only recognisable trait from the glory years of Rose Tattoo. 'Southern Stars' is soft melodic FM Rock, light years away from what one should expect from a Rose Tattoo album and didn't even warrant itself a release in the U.K. It does however complete the picture and proves what they say about the brightest lights ... We'd later hear from Angry Anderson crooning the love ballad 'Suddenly' for Kylie and Jason's wedding in Neighbours, catapulting him to one-hit wonder stardom and gaining more mainstream acclaim in two seconds than he ever did fronting Rose Tattoo for years. Of course the band are back in action these days, but I've yet to catch a performance by 'em. This Rose Tattoo reissuing campaign by Captain Oi! is as good as it possibly could be. All releases are in Digi-Pack format and contain eight bonus tracks between them, as well as liner notes by Derek Oliver and original sleeve artwork. (CAPTAIN OI! RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

RUDI "RADIO ON". (SELF-RELEASED)

It's got Rudi written on the front cover, it's gotta be great right? Yep! This collects all their demos, radio sessions and out-takes together and what a collection that amounts up to being. Nineteen songs of some of their best work ever submitted to the plastic – 'The Pressure's On', 'Who? You!', 'Time To Be Proud' and 'Radio On' all make an appearance here. Rudi were formed in Belfast in 1975 and viewed to be the city's first Punk band. Influenced as much by the Glitter Rock of their time as the harder Punk stuff that was also very much a part of their sound, Rudi had a nice contrast to their songs, that almost sounds like Mark Bolan playing the Pistols, making them one of the more unique bands to emerge from Punk Rock. The band have a vast string of songs that hint at their potential, but this CD of rough cut gems demonstrates how good they could actually write without any of the studio trickery needed to cover up lack of talent that some of their contemporaries tended to shoot for. Rudi were the real deal and should be rated up there with the best music the late 70's gave us. (BRIAN YOUNG: 32 CASTLEVIEW ROAD, BELFAST, N. IRELAND, BT5 7AX.)

RUNNIN' RIOT "BUILT IN BELFAST". (BAD DOG)

Who ever thought this would see the light of day? The all new full-length record from the Riot. Things looked certain to fall apart here over the last couple of years with more line-up changes at practically every other gig. Determined not to let it go under, Colin has kept the Runnin' Riot name alive, albeit with no original members, including himself. This sees the band form an alliance with a bunch of German labels to fund its release. Whoever pressed the vinyl should be shot – my one skips all over the place. This was recorded at the Centre in Belfast and is nice'n' raw sounding, the way we fondly remember their first record all those years ago. The bass and drums could have used a decent sound, but fuck it it's Runnin' Riot and no one gets a Runnin' Riot record for the 'bass and drums' sound, do they? This is good time Oi! music with likeminded lyrics, the way the likes of 4 Skins and Cock Sparrer would do it, only with an unmistakable Belfast presence about the whole deal. Opener 'Buckfast Tonic Wine' is their best song since 'Alcoholic Heroes' and almost a follow up to it in many ways. Other highlights include the guest appearance of Ailla The Stockbroker on 'Armchair Anarchist' and the excellent 'We Only Came To Dance'. Loud, blaring and most definitely Punk Rock! (RUNNIN' RIOT: P.O. BOX 667, BELFAST BT1 2YB, N. IRELAND.)

THE SABREJETS "THE SABREJETS". (SELF-RELEASED)

An excellent round-up of what has got to be most of The Sabrejets recorded works to date. Twenty-six tracks in all, showcasing their unique take on the Rockabilly, Punk and Psychobilly movements, gelled into one uncompromising wall of sound. There's a heavy Cramps influence, particularly on '39th And Norton' – their excellent instrumental piece that closes this album. Other bands worth name-checking as an inspiration would be the formative years of King Kurt and the Meteors, lots of Johnny Thunders (including a cover of 'Little Bit Of A Whore') and countless artists from the Sun Records back catalogue. The Sabrejets have been making their name known around the Rockabilly circuit these past number of years with a string of gigs around their Belfast locality and have certainly come up with something here that's set to turn some heads. Plenty of vigorous guitar strumming and songs about that good old' Rock N' Roll lifestyle. This is neat and tuneful, with more attitude than you can curl your top lip up at. (BRIAN YOUNG: 32 CASTLEVIEW ROAD, BELFAST, N. IRELAND, BT5 7AX.)

S.A. "SAMURAI ATTACK". (ANAGRAM)

Looks like Japan's best kept secret here ... S.A. are quite a band who I don't think have ever had decent distribution over here, but all is set to change with this – Anagram's look back over their career from 1984. They've got enough good songs here to warrant a serious following. S.A. consist of 70's influenced Punk crossed with a little bit of the harder edged stuff The Business played with in '82. They sing in English too, so it's interesting their stuff hasn't found its way over this side of the globe before. It's almost criminal that this crowd have been overlooked as the more I get into this CD they don't appear to be running out of ideas any time soon. S.A. tread a fine line between the singalong choruses of the first wave Punk acts and the chaotic noise favoured by the second. They're probably bigger than Jesus in Japan, who knows? There's twenty-songs on this spanning various timeframes and releases along the way, but each follow a distinctive path with infectious bolts of traditional Punk Rock. (ANAGRAM RECORDS: 3A LONG ISLAND HOUSE, 1-4 WARPLE WAY, LONDON W3 ORG, ENGLAND.)

THE SCABS "PICK 'EM AND EAT 'EM". (SELF-RELEASED)

Straight to the point, three-chord strutting from Australians, The Scabs. I like the spirit on this and the raw energy is second to none. It's rougher than rough Garage Punk along the lines of early Dwarves and Mentors. There're four songs on it with titles like 'Political Jargon' and 'Drink Too Much', which is a good indication of where this band stands. (www.reaper@bigbutton.com.au)

SCRAPY "UNSTEADY TIMES". (MAD BUTCHER/KOB)

Scrappy have a history of bringing a smile to my face and just about anything that comes through here with their name on it is guaranteed five star listening. Bavaria's Scrappy have been studying the roots of Punk, Reggae and Rocksteady for some time and handle it with great attention to detail. They use the reference Street Ska to define their sound, but that's quite broad and could be used to describe many bands. Scrappy's key ingredient is their Punk spirit that's never too far from any of these songs and gives it the kick in the arse it needs time and again. There's a clear later-phase Clash influence but it goes deeper than that, bringing a lot of the early Trojan stuff to mind. This band continually come up with goods and keep it fresh, topping each release with another corker to follow. (MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEIS-MARSTR.6, 37073 GOETTINGEN, GERMANY/KOB RECORDS: VIA CANTARANE 63/C 1-37129 VERONA, ITALY.)

SEDACED "EH". (NEWEST INDUSTRY)

Ha! What about that? The drummer from Hard Skin getting his band mastered by Jeremy Dubois (New Found Glory) and actually including it in the press sheet as a selling point! Oh, the shame! Sedaced is more of Scott's longstanding fascination with Emo. Who the fuck know's why. This is much like Shonben. It's not the worst Emo I've heard (is there a good Emo?) but it's still fuckin' Emo after all, so I'll pass thank you very much. (NEWEST INDUSTRY: UNIT 100, 61 WELLFIELD ROAD, CARDIFF, CF24 3DG, U.K.)

7 SECONDS "TAKE IT BACK, TAKE IT ON, TAKE IT OVER!". (SIDE 1

DUMMY)

As was previously tipped, this is another slice of what 7 Seconds does best and takes up the story where "Good To Go" left off us. It's under a half hour long and packed as packed can be with hooks, riffing, singalongs and generally everything that makes a real Hardcore album great. If there's one band that know how to do this, it's 7 Seconds. Gone are any Alternative Rock or Indie leanings of their best-forgotten-about records they went on to make following their departure from Hardcore and back are all the key ingredients of albums like 'The Crew' and 'Walk Together, Rock Together'. "Take It Back ..." is basically a modern day 'The Crew' played by better musicians with superior technology ... a different time and a different place for sure, but you can't help loving it and if you're looking for an album of fists-in-air pit top Hardcore, you won't beat this! (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

SHAME ACADEMY "CD MIXES". (SELF-RELEASED)

In what can only be described as a Belfast Punk super-group, Shame Academy are a trio made up of Brian Young from Rudi, Petesy Burns of Stalag 17 and Greg Cowan from the Outcasts. This CD collects together new studio versions of choice songs from their previous bands. Featuring such timeless Belfast Punk tunes as the Outcasts 'Self Conscious Over You', 'Magnum Force', 'You're A Disease' and 'Seven Deadly Sins' and Rudi's 'Time To Be Proud', 'The Pressure's On', 'Big Time' and their much celebrated 'Cops'. As far as I know Shame Academy aren't a fully functioning band and don't appear to have written any of their own new material, but this is a great way to remember that quality tunes never reach a sell-by-date. (BRIAN YOUNG: 32 CASTLEVIEW ROAD, BELFAST, N. IRELAND, BT5 7AX.)

SICK 56/HIGGINS ++ "OUT OF A BLACK POOL". (J.S.N.T.G.M.)

Limited pressing of 500 7 inch records for this split here. Up first is Higgins with his summary of the Iraq war and the truth behind it, laid over the DK's 'California Uber Alles' music, renamed 'Cool Britannia Uber Alles' here for the occasion. I'm sure Jello would be proud! The flipside is fellow Blackpool Punks Sick 56 with two of their well-honed ditties, staying true to what we'd expect from them. It's the format and information that really send this one home and coupled with the quality of music on board, makes it difficult to fault. (£3 + P&P from - J.S.N.T.G.M. RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1025, BLACKPOOL FY3 0FA, ENGLAND.)

SINCE BY MAN "A LOVE HATE RELATIONSHIP". (REVELATION)

There's so many of these bands right now, that it's difficult to know what to say or how to tell them apart. Some make more song-orientated noise than others, but Since By Man aren't really of that variety, bar the odd breakdown such as 'What You Got Is Gold' which is the best track of the four here and packs a solid groove. Before long it's back to the over-the-top screaming and bawling again though. They're capable of being a good band when they want to be, but are too caught up in the noise just yet to get the message across. They could do with taking a few lessons in how to channel aggression ... couldn't we all! (REVELATION RECORDS: P.O. BOX 5232, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 92615-5232, U.S.A.)

SMOKE LIKE A FISH "SURVIVAL OF THE HIP'EST". (DO THE DOG)

Pumped-up Ska with echoes of Madness and the Selector, but clued in enough and not as throwaway as they first appear. They actually played in Dublin recently if I remember correctly. The infectious numbers here take them close to the source and the bass player in particular has a knack of leading the melody into soothing choruses. Smoke Like A Fish play ear-pleasing Ska music with bright and innocent harmonies, but in spite of that these guys don't come across as limp at all. This is well-established third wave Ska with honest-sounding expression that appeals to this listener. (DO THE DOG MUSIC: 26A CRAVEN ROAD, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE, RG14 5NE, ENGLAND.)

SMUT PEDDLARS "COMING OUT". (T.K.O. RECORDS)

Continuing to dabble in the Garage Punk spectrum of things T.K.O. hook up with the Smut Peddlars to bring us their fifth full length release. I'll cut to the chase - Everything about this band is great apart from the fact that they obviously have a right-wing agenda. The amount of bands I hear talking like this since 9/11 is scary. It appears this type of nonsensical outlook is on the rise again. A couple of years ago bands with views like this simply would not have been accepted in Punk. Maybe we got too comfortable and assumed everyone involved in this little subculture of ours was on the ok side. I'll let the band speak for themselves - 'You missed the Holocaust and you never owned a slave - you live on the street, not a cotton plantation - Every panhandling bum on the street has athletic shoes and a fuckin' sag - the man on the street and the people you meet say you're homophobic if you're not a fag - Illegal aliens living high on the hog in the latest styles with a new cell phone - you paid for his car yet you live like a dog'. It goes on but I think you get the picture. Dumb fuckers, learn your history. America was built by so-called 'illegal Aliens' and I'm sure if you trace your family tree back a couple of generations that's exactly where you come from. Aimed at the Punker with an IQ that equals that of a ham sandwich ... and I thought Punk was supposed to be smart music??? (T.K.O. RECORDS: 3126 W. CARY STREET, 303, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, 23221, U.S.A.)

SOCIAL COMBAT "ROCK 'N ROLL REBELS". (BRONCO BULLFROG)

I wasn't all that taken on the last CD I got from this band, but for whatever reason this sounds a little more promising today. From what I remember they were more of a Metal-Edged Oi! band, whereas on this it's clearly American influenced Street Punk we're talking. They can get the good chorus hammering it up every now and then, in particular on the title track, but it's all on well trodden ground. Not to say this is a bad album and if you haven't picked up something in this ballpark in a while, I'd recommend it. It's just with me, every second album I review these days seems to slot into this mode. The vocals are rough, the guitars spend a lot of time peeling off leads and the music generally sticks to a mid-tempo velocity. It's predictable, but good. (BRONCO BULLFROG RECORDS: APARTADO DE CORREOS 1474 07800, IBIZA (BALEARES), SPAIN.)

SOCIAL DISTORTION "SEX, LOVE AND ROCK N' ROLL". (KUNG FU)

It's been some wait for this to come out. Social Distortion's last album, 1996's 'White Light ...' was widely regarded as legendary in its own lifetime and for once popular opinion proved right. A lot has happened since then, not least of all the death of guitarist Dennis Dannell (to whom most of this album is referenced) and the shift of label, from Sony to independent Kung Fu. They were label-less for a while as far as I know and even contemplated putting out this record themselves, so it looks as though Kung Fu was a last minute decision, though Ness himself has been linked with the label in Europe in the past, choosing to release both his solo albums under its wing. Inevitably there's a lot of ground for Ness and co. to cover here and a lot of time to make up for. Johnny 2 Bags stands in, in Dannell's place, whilst Charlie Quintana steps in on drums. Pity they didn't hold on to Chuck Biscuits for a little longer, but it's of little importance really, as anyone knows it's Mike Ness who leads this band and always has, keeping the name alive through thick and thin and the dark years of the late eighties. Ness co-produced this time out this also and it's certainly more refined, if a notch slicker, than its predecessor. As was always the norm with Ness, even on the earliest of Social Distortion recordings, his lyrics are filled with regret and backward glances at days long gone. He's got that great knack for writing Punk Rock ballads and making them sound good ... it's as if sentimentality sits well on his shoulders. The difference between what Ness does and what many others attempt is that this guy is for real and it shows. He's lived it and that's what touches home most on any of his work, a convincing romantic, with heartfelt Punk aggression whenever it's called for. Each song on 'Sex, Love And Rock N' Roll' is built to last, as that back catalogue of essential listening continues to expand; a landmark by which all other Punk records have to live up to. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NIJHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

SOLEA "SOLEA". (GOLF)

RECORD REVIEWS

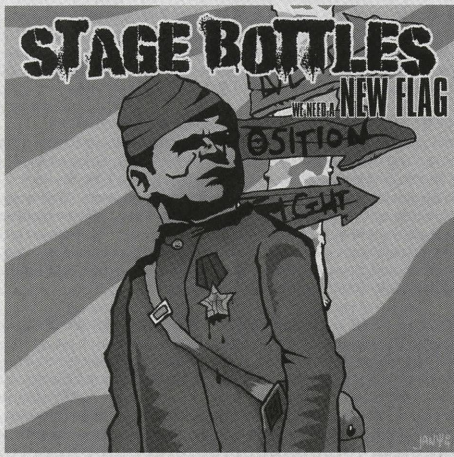
Containing ex members of Emo veterans Texas Is The Reason and Samiam, Solea carry on the tradition here of singing boring songs about nothing. Is an Emo CD ever likely to get a good review from a Punk fanzine? Doubtful. (GOLF RECORDS: P.O. BOX 159, WALLINGFORD, OXON, OX10 9YL, ENGLAND.)

SONIC BOOM SIX "SOUNDS TO CONSUME". (MOON SKA)

Lightweight Pop-Ska from Britain, with helium female vocals for the most part. No Doubt and Dancetall Crashers would be a good point of reference, but there's a further Hardcore bite to a lot of it also. At times they can get quite a decent groove going and sound a touch superior than you'd tend to give them credit for, but when they introduce Dance-Beats into the third song it all gets a bit much and comes across as a juvenile attempt at something far more complex. (MOON SKA EUROPE: P.O. BOX 184, ASHFORD, KENT, TN24 0ZS, ENGLAND.)

STAGE BOTTLES "WE NEED A NEW FLAG". (KNOCKOUT)

Eleven years on the clock and Frankfurt's Stage Bottles are still around, knocking out their continuous fine line in anti-fascist Euro Punk n' Oi! I'm a big follower of them and strongly recommend this band to anyone who hasn't yet heard them, if that's possible. Laced with the usual trimmings of Saxophone, "We Need A New Flag" sees the band take it up another division and tighten up on the playing and production. English song titles and lyrics to reach a wider audience as is a main aim of the Stage Bottles, make this CD's message all the more clearer. This is probably going to be the bands most accessible release to date, combining powerful crunching riffs with massive singalong choruses, straight off the German football terraces no doubt. Still one of most unique sounding Oi! bands out there today, Stage Bottles pioneered this sound along with Italy's Los Fastidios a long time ago and continue to lead the way in Punk and Oi! on the European circuit. (KNOCKOUT RECORDS: 10 07 16, 46527 DINSLEKEN, GERMANY.)



STAND AGAINST "UNTIL THE END". (MY OWN WALLET)

Always nice to get these CD's released on faraway small labels I've never heard of. Stand Against are a new Hardcore group from California that stay true to traditional Hardcore methods for getting the message across. With Sick Of It All being the most apparent influence it makes it difficult to deny Stand Against's intensity and energy. They clearly put everything into a style of music held close to their hearts. Sticking to what they know best and writing well-structured songs that rally against all forms of authority and oppression imaginable to mankind. The fury levels are set to full as they butcher their way through fourteen stompers with little let up. (MY OWN WALLET: 11233 ARROYO AVE. HESPERIA, CALIFORNIA, 92345, U.S.A.)

SUPATONES "UNITY AVENUE". (DO THE DOG)

Lightweight Ska Punk, something similar to Dancetall Crashers and No Doubt. This is the debut mini-CD effort from the Hull based band. A little too over-polished and clean cut for my own tastes, but there's clearly a big interest in this kind of thing right now. There's something missing to my ears, no substance and a little synthetic, but at the same time they don't attempt to convince us of something they're so obviously not. Not really geared toward the underground or Punk market, this is better suited to the mainstream as the difference between this and what Smash Hits would cover is difficult to see at times. (DO THE DOG MUSIC: 26A CRAVEN ROAD, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE, RG14 5NE, ENGLAND.)

SWINGIN' UTTERS "LIVE IN A DIVE". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)

Fat's celebrated 'Live In A Dive' series comes up with another winner here. The band that launched a thousand revivals! Not only are the Swingin' Utters a cracking band on record, but live they're also one of the tightest units around and can really give their catalogue that extra lift when it's face to face. Generally known to mix their drinking ability with their playing ability and come out on top, it's evident from the slurred speech of the group on this that they wouldn't have it any other way for their first steps into the world of live albums (assuming this is their first live release and I'm pretty sure it is). Max Huber was absent, but other than that this is a faultless collection of their best moments from over the years. "Pills & Smoke", "Five Lessons Learned", "Windspitting Punk", "15th And T", "London Drunk", "Next In Line" and so on ... it's an endless supply of top notch Punk Rock from start to finish with a couple of covers from S.L.F. and Cocksparrer to finish it off. The Utters can effortlessly unleash quality songs like this time and again and it all sounds so easy. A true testament to how inventive you can get with live instruments without resorting to bland and overindulgent tactics of so many other bands. The Utters have always kept it fun and interesting and here's hoping they stay that way. (FAT WRECK EUROPE: WALDEMARSTR. 33* 10999, BERLIN, GERMANY.)

TEXAS TERRI BOMB! "YOUR LIPS ... MY ASS!". (PEOPLE LIKE YOU)

Formerly Texas Terri And The Stiff Ones, this is her back again to fill us with another dose of hi-octane sleazy Punk n' Roll. Up there with The Plasmatics Wendy O' Williams, Joan Jett and (it has to said) Brody Dalle from the Distillers in terms of her favourable vocal technique, that snarls it's way over menacing and muscular hard rock music, ala early Aerosmith, Rose Tattoo, AC/DC and Thin Lizzy post first three albums. Terri is a hot chick stateside and has become quite the face, appearing in various flicks and the like, but it's the music that often gets overlooked and that's what we're here to discuss. It holds it's own certainly and with the production talents of Jack Douglas enlisted (Alice Cooper, Patti Smith, Cheap Trick) alongside the likes of Wayne Kramer (MC5) and Cherrie Currie (Runaways) guessing, it's a sure-fire bet of being in good company and onto a winner release. (PEOPLE LIKE YOU RECORDS: SCHAFERSTRASSE 33A, D-44147, DORTMUND, GERMANY.)

TEXAS THIEVES "KILLER ON CRAIGS LIST". (DR. STRANGE)

A newbie from the Doc. in the form of San Francisco's Texas Thieves. Not sure what kind of history this band has behind them, but the sound happens back to the original breed of rough-assed Skate-Punk from the early eighties. JFA, Jerry's Kids, Murphy's Law and all that bad skate doing something similar way back when. Alternative Tentacles recently released a compilation of real Skate-Punk that sounded a lot like this. Basically this is the proper deal, pre-Warped Tour etc. "Back when skateboard-

ing was just a crime" I think is how the saying goes. (DR STRANGE RECORDS: P.O. BOX 1058, ALTA LOMA, CALIFORNIA, 91701, U.S.A.)

TEXTBOOK "SMOKE 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM". (BOSS TUNEAGE)

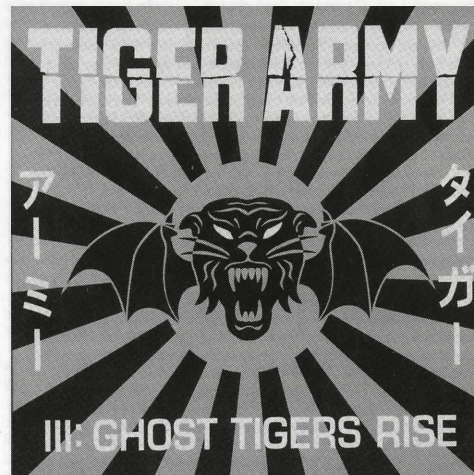
Textbook is certainly a fitting name for this Emo-by-numbers wimpy ass band. An uncomfortable listen and the repetition sets in before the first song is even completed. By the third song the singer is already telling us about his broken heart. Next. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)

3CR "WANKERED IN WAKEFIELD". (SELF-RELEASED)

Still on the anti-PC rampage, Manchester's Three Corned Rug are eager to rub as many Punks up the wrong way as possible. The music is quite good and they work hard at it, clocking up a multitude of gigs per annum. The Mac Lads I'd assume are their biggest influence ... that and everyday life in the northwest of England. The sound quality of this live album is average, but the energy and attitude gets across well. There's sixteen tracks of bad taste on here that will appeal to a certain element of the Punk fraternity and more than piss off the remainder. (DAVE COOPER: 67 SHAWHEAD DRIVE, FAILSWORTH, MANCHESTER, M35 0SD, ENGLAND.)

TIGER ARMY "III: GHOST TIGERS RISE". (HELLCAT)

The Tiger Army animal is once again let out of the cage for this, the band's third instalment, if you don't include the "Early Years" CD released last year. You may have heard the news of Tiger Army drummer Fred Hell being shot four times following a home invasion on a friends house he was in at the time. He survived but is still recovering and thus Mike Fasano fills in here for the time being and does more than a good job. There's always been that certain tacky element to what Tiger Army do and if you're into the original era of this music (Roots Rock n' Roll, Rockabilly or whatever you want to call it) you'll find it a tad sentimental and kitsch at times, but for the most part Tiger Army manage to rise above it with such a passionate and full throttle bunch of songs they come up with each and every time when it comes to turning in the goods. The groundwork has been done by a lot of bands in the fifties and with the whole Misfits crossover thing that followed in the eighties - Tiger Army pick up the style somewhere in between the two. Most probably the type of band raised on Punk that went so far as to ferret out the roots of the genre that took them back to the Rebel Music of their forefathers. None of this really matters of course; the important thing is that Tiger Army have come up with another highlighter to match their already impressive back catalogue. There is a history lesson to be learned in their music, but luckily it comes second to the strong craftsmanship of songwriting this band have obviously been blessed with. (HELLCAT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)



TOM WAITS "REAL GONE". (ANTI)

Waits was a scream this evening on the Dave Fanning show. I don't think he understood a single question being put to him and sounded fed-up after an hour and a half of listening to Fanning's ramblings queries that inevitably don't appear to have any question at the end of them. I got a taster for this album about a month back in the form of a two track CD sampler and had a rough idea of what lay in store. But you never really know what an artist like Waits is going to spring on you until you actually hear it, do you? "Real Gone" follows his landmark two albums released on the same day in 2002, "Alice" and "Blood Money", having made his debut for the Epitaph subsidiary in 1999 with "Mule Variations". It's another step forward into the weird and quirky world of Tom Waits, co-written by his Irish wife, Kathleen Brennan. His latest personal analysis on what he does is described as "human beatboxing" and "cubist funk". As anyone who's spent quality time indulging in Waits' back catalogue, there's no words out there to put a name on his brand of music and since practically reinventing himself following his excellent stretch of prolific records that finished up with "Hearattack And Vine" in 1980, he's gone on to charter new territory with each subsequent album. Sometimes too heavy for people to handle at the time, but generally acknowledged and rated some years later, as was the case with "Rain Dogs". This time round Waits has decided to detach himself from the piano, and "Real Gone" is his first album ever to attempt this. It takes a few listens to get into, but rest assured it's always worth the effort as he continues to push the boundaries of what people expect from a Rock N' Roll record in 2004. As with much of his other work, "Real Gone" can often be viewed as a movie or book, with a beginning a middle and an end and is not the sort of album you can walk away from midway through and continue the session at a later date. To be appreciated at its highest level of brilliance "Real Gone" is a record you have to sit down and give your undivided attention to from start to finish, making it another monumental success. Without doubt one of the year's savoured releases. (ANTI RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE TRADITIONALS "DEAD SOCIETY". (KMG)

Pro-Bush Oi! music from Pennsylvania. The music is great, their politics are up their arse. On "The Day The Eagle Bled" the band support the U.S. going to war following 9/11. The song title is bad enough on its own and would make a great Skrewdriver song, had they been American. You get the idea. It's interesting how Skinhead values sometimes get lost when they cross the ocean, but bands like 4 Skins and Cockney Rejects were smart, bands like The Traditionals aren't and it's just that simple really. (KMG-HARALD KULOSA: AM MARKT 1, 47229 DUISBURG, GERMANY.)

TSUNAMI BOMB "THE DEFINITIVE ACT". (KUNG FU)

The sophomore effort from Tsunami Bomb - a band currently turning heads on the Warped Tour and over at Kung Fu, so you've got a good idea of what this is. Personally I like what they do, even if it's been done a thousand times before, they're still good at it and most bands who attempt this style simply aren't. Without wanting to make too big a point of it, Tsunami Bomb have a female singer and that's really their strongest point, whether that's politically correct or not to say is irrelevant. Their music isn't half bad, but it takes the vocal strengths of their singer to elevate the band above the crud. There's the obligatory Tilt comparison, but this is probably a little

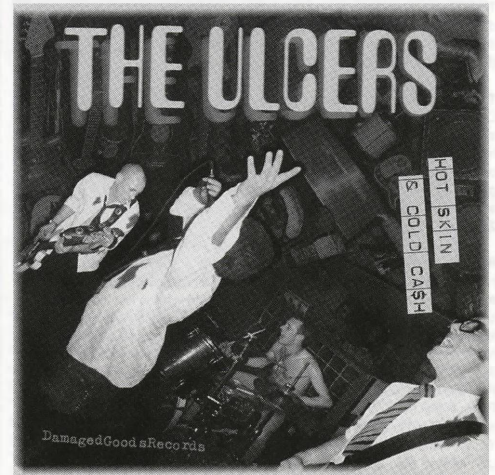
more one-dimensional than Cinder Block and the boys. If you're looking for some high quality Warped styled stuff, Tsunami Bombs aren't to be missed. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NIJHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

TV SMITH "XMAS BLOODY XMAS". (DAMAGED GOODS)

The alternative Christmas anthem here from TV Smith? It could very well be! Of course the lyrical content exchanges the soppy romanticism of Christmas for the greed and gluttony that many other people see it as. It's a great song actually and was well worth giving it a single release. There's a couple of old live Adverts standards played by TV with Die Toten Hosen as had backing band here to round out the CD (also available on coloured 7 inch), so it's all good fun. (DAMAGED GOODS RECORDS: P.O. BOX, LONDON E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

THE ULCERS "HOT SKIN & COLD BEER". (DAMAGED GOODS)

It's on Damaged Goods, it mentions the New Bomb Turks in the press release and the cover looks like a bunchy of scruffy cockney Garage Punk layouts - it can only be The Ulcers. The Ulcers are a fresh and vibrant take on an old tested formula. They've gone through all the line up issues since forming in 2002 and have come forth with this, their debut piece of longplaying material. You can tell its coming from the gut and being their first shot at making a dent in the recorded market, they don't hold back and give it their all. No time for backtracking and mending mistakes here, this is the real deal, warts n' all, take it or leave it. There's no big budget behind it, just four geezers hammering them out in a room with more snotty attitude than anything we've seen this side of the Turks. (DAMAGED GOODS RECORDS: P.O. BOX, LONDON E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)



UNDERMINED "HAIL UNAMERICAN!". (KUNG FU)

You'd wonder what in the Jaysus is going through Kung Fu's head sometimes. This is awful and the press release tends to suggest they signed the band on mere hype alone. Surely never a good thing? I bet they're kicking themselves now, what? Undermined are doing today what Pantera did about ten years ago, only marketing it to the trendy elite who wear those black button ear rings and have tattoos of stars on their elbows. Ponces basically. (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NIJHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

U.S. ROUGHNECKS "TWENTY BUCKS AND TWO BLACK EYES". (HELLCAT)

One of Lars Frederekson's Bastards here back in his own stamping ground, as part of the U.S. Roughnecks. Street Hardcore with twitches of Oi! and Blues riffing shining through from time to time, ala the Bastards themselves. No surprises really as they turn in a handful of belters in the vein of Motorhead, AC/DC, Bruisers, Rose Tattoo and the Business's harder edged stuff. Skinhead Rock N' Roll, dipped in traditions of old time Punk, I really got into this one. Look out for 'Saturday' and the best track on here, "Skinhead Blues". (HELLCAT RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

THE VANDALS "HOLLYWOOD POTATO CHIP". (KUNG FU)

Just as The Vandals were beginning to get a bit predictable and assembly-line-like they come up with this scorcher. Yeah its way more Hardcore sounding than anything they've done in years and the first track in particular, "How They Getcha" has more in common with Sick Of It All than Orange County Pop-Punk. The second song is a surprisingly successful stab at Queen's "Don't Stop Me Now" in similar speedy-fast-paced Vandals formula. They keep things as tight and compact as always with one of the best rhythm sections in Punk, miraculously cramming thousands of ideas into a single song and still making it listenable. The Vandals have always had that certain something magical about them that other bands lack and get away with playing the goofy American card better than anyone else. Of course they've got plenty to say if you look for it - check out "Christian Or Canadian" for some real class!! The Vandals remain at the pinnacle of this scene and set the standards for other bands to follow. The bollocks!! (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NIJHOFFLAAN 2, 2624 ES DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "BREEDING DISLOYALTY". (HOUSEHOLD NAME)

Seventeen song sampler of all that's hot on Household Name. Look out for the Filaments, Antimanix, Da Skywalkers and John Holmes. Most tracks are lifted from each band's respective album on the label, whilst a few are from upcoming releases. (HOUSEHOLD NAME RECORDS: P.O. BOX 12286, LONDON, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "DAMAGED GOODS: THE CHEAP SAMPLER VOL. 3". (DAMAGED GOODS)

I remember picking up the first one of these Damaged Goods samplers when it came out and it's still something I listen to today from time to time. There's just been so much great music released by this label since their inception in 1988. The Manics 'New Art Riot' EP for fucks sake - an essential piece of listening. It goes on, believe me ... take a look at the line up: Buzzcocks, Armitage Shanks, Hard Skin, Ozono, Helen Love, Budget Girls, Pop Rivers, Pork Dukes and The Headcoats - class!! Comes with a great booklet and liner notes by Ian Damaged - should be top of your list! (DAMAGED GOODS: P.O. BOX 45854, LONDON E11 1YX, ENGLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "DIRTY HALF DOZEN". (MILLIEPEED)

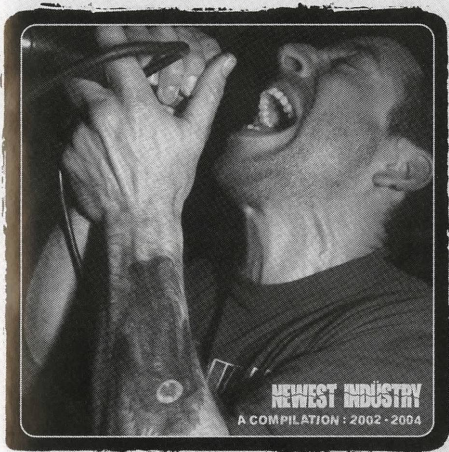
Twenty-one tracks divided between six bands, namely Pilger, Humans The Size Of Microphones, Circus Act, Disoma, Intent and You're Smiling Now But We'll All Turn Into Demons. Most of it full-force driving Hardcore and Thrash, which is not something I'm always prone to, though Pilger sound decent enough... Circus Act veer more towards the Emo spectrum and down to lack of budget assuming they actually have quite a bit of fury and passion about them, but comes across well in this minimalist recording environment. I'd imagine most of these bands are doing the rounds on the D.I.Y. circuit over in the U.K. and sound as though they'd be worth checking out at a dinky pub near you. (www.milliepeedrecords.co.uk)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "EASTPAK'S RESISTANCE TOUR COMPILATION". (SIDE 1 DUMMY)
A compilation of gargantuan proportions here to promote the upcoming Eastpak Resistance Tour, which to my eyes is something similar to the Warped Tour and will shortly be making its way across Europe. Line up-wise we're looking at the likes of 7 Seconds, Slapshot, Sick Of It All, The Bones, Mad Sin, Discipline, Deadline, Agnostic Front and Kill Your Idols. Basically a relatively fair mixture of Street Music and Hardcore, with more than a few of the bands sharing quite a bit in common. I probably wouldn't touch the tour itself with a ten foot bargepole judging on how its being marketed, but the CD is a good listen and features a handful of rare tracks being sold at budget price. (SIDE 1 DUMMY: P.O. BOX 2350, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 90078, U.S.A.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "FIGHT! OX COMPILATION # 55". (OX FANZINE)
Up to # 55! That's some accomplishment for this longstanding German fanzine I can tell ya. It sits there right near the top of independent publications the world over. Here we see a ton of Punk goodies compiled and slotted onto one disc so the joyous listeners out there can take their pick of what's on offer to the Punk record buyer. The greats here include the Sperrbirds, Zeke, Texas Terri and our own Knifed - yep Mero's managed to blag his way on here too! (OX FANZINE: P.O. BOX 10225, 42766 HAAN, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "THE INSTANT SINGLES COLLECTION VOLUME 2". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
This is another one of those weird CD's that comes in 7 inch packaging. What we get on board here is six different bands with a handful of songs each that amounts up to sixty-five minutes of music. The best band is Baby Little Tablets and all are in the power Pop and Emo vein. Some good listening here at times, but a lot of passable stuff also. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, U.K.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "NEWEST INDUSTRY - A COMPILATION: 2002 - 2004". (NEWEST INDUSTRY)
Two years on the clock already for the Welsh label. Fracture and Assembly Line music distro have given way for Newest Industry to become more established, so in a way this is the beginning of a new era for the label and closing the chapter on the first leg. Four Letter Word open this low priced label sampler of twenty-seven songs with a cracker called "Johnny Foreigner", wearing their influences on their sleeves and baring a strong Youth Brigade slant. Some killer moments throughout this CD by the likes of No Choice, Phoenix Foundation and NRA. There's a handful of passable stuff veering towards Emo along the way too, but for the most part it's the expected Leatherface/Husker Du/Dillinger Four influence, which doesn't mean they sound as good as these bands, but that's the general comparative term thrown around these days for bands like this, so you get what I'm saying, right? (NEWEST INDUSTRY: UNIT 100, 61 WELLFIELD ROAD, CARDIFF, CF24 3DG, U.K.)



VARIOUS ARTISTS "OFF TARGET: A COALITION RECORDS SAMPLER". (COALITION)
No explanation required here; this is simply a summary to celebrate ten years of Holland's Coalition Records. There's a great deal of variety on the label. Some great, some not so great. The Je Ne Sais Quoi are perhaps my favourite band of theirs, as reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Feverdream of course are this year's pet hate for me and sound suitably monotonous on here. All bands are evidently big Fugazi and Shellac fans, though on occasion it's more Fugazi and Shellac's own influences that shine through, which is probably unintentional but gets the old foot tapping now and then when I hear Gang Of Four's sheet metal guitar style frequently through this sampler. JR Ewing bring Devo and Elvis Costello's early work to mind, while the likes of The Rites and Tear It Up are where Coalitions roots and humble beginnings lay, with Thrash/Crust 100mph music. (COALITION RECORDS: NEWTON-STRAAT 212, 2562 KW DEN HAAG, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PROWADZ MNIE ULICO!". (JIMMY JAZZ)
A sampler from the Jimmy Jazz camp. The Analogs are starting to sound really fuckin' good and open this disc marvellously. Elsewhere it's the usual suspects you'd expect to see on anything with the Jimmy Jazz stamp on it. I've a hunch this CD is being given away free and with twenty-eight songs of well-produced Punk strumming contained, you won't go far wrong. (JIMMY JAZZ RECORDS: P.O. BOX 184, 71-507 SZCZECIN 5, POLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNK-O-RAMA VOL. 9". (EPITAPH)
The mother of all Punk compilations is back with its ninth contribution in the "Punk-O-Rama" series. Each one gets better in terms of what they're offering the punters for their money. This is a double-CD. The first disc is all the music by bands like Bad Religion, Bouncing Souls, Dropkick Murphys, Pennywise and heaps more - I'm sure you know the roster by now. Epitaph continues to put on an impressive spread and as if that weren't enough for the price of a CD single, the second disc is a DVD of twelve videos! Some great stuff here and such an effort has gone into putting it all together, when they could have so easily made this yet another half-arsed label sampler. (EPITAPH RECORDS: P.O. BOX 10574, 1001 EN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNK ROCK IS YOUR FRIEND 5". (KUNG FU)
Kung Fu's fifth installment of their label sampler. Basically a promotional tool for their live DVD series in a lot of cases, as all the live tracks on here from the Adolescents, Pistol Grip, Matches and Guttermouth are lifted from such, as are the three video tracks from Neil Hamburger, Gofffinger and the Vandals. That aside we've also got six unreleased songs from No Use For A Name, Tsunami Bomb, Useless I.D. and the Vandals, a handful of demos and some previously available material to round it off. The real surprise here is the inclusion of Stiff Little Fingers, after their recent signing with Kung Fu in the states. Should be interesting to see how that one works out! (KUNG FU EUROPE: MARTINUS NYHOFFLAAN 22624 ES DELFT, THE

NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "PUNKS, SKINS & RUDE BOYS NOW! VOL. 11". (GARAZ FANZINE)
Here we go again with another round up of all that's turning heads over at Poland's Garaz Fanzine/Jimmy Jazz Records. Generally this tends to centre round Rockabilly, Punk, Ska and old fashioned Rock N' Roll. Featured this time are the Analogs, The Bones, Blisterhead, Los Fastidios, Komety and tons more. Up there with any other comp you'd have to shell out money for. (GARAZ FANZINE: P.O. BOX 184, 71-507 SZCZECIN 5, POLAND.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "RECKLESS LIFE RECORDS PRESENT ..."
A D.I.Y. 7 inch single from Australia here divided between four bands - Charter 77, Run For Cover, The Worst and Change Over. Each bands gives us two songs of fast-paced Hardcore reminiscent of early Descendents and Circle Jerks/Flag. The production is spot on, focussing on the energy and aggressive nature of the bands. Great minimalist packaging also, though some lyrics wouldn't have gone amiss. The Worst would probably get my vote on here, if I were to narrow it down to single favourite moment. (E.C. PRODUCTIONS: P.O. BOX 602, NORTH ADELAIDE, 5006, AUSTRALIA.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "ROCK AGAINST BUSH VOL. 2". (FAT WRECK CHORDS)
Hot on the heels of the first installment of "Rock Against Bush" comes number two in the series. You've got to hand it to Fat Mike, he's certainly looked well on the way to achieving what he set out to do with this whole thing and personally backed it all the way, through appearances on Howard Stern, Dennis Miller, CNN and ABC World News amongst others. He's took the whole "Rock Against Bush" army of bands on the road to promote it and even updated the profile of bands backing the cause, successfully breaking out from the Punk underground to the likes Sleater Kinney, Green Day, No Doubt, Foo Fighters and Rancid who all contribute a tune here. They've offloaded in the region of a quarter million copies of the Vol. 1 and this here looks set to outdo it. Once again loaded with information - full colour booklet giving each band a chance to have their say as well as an introduction by Justin Sane. The second DVD disc again accompanies it all, with videos by Flogging Molly, NOFX, Alkaline Trio, Bad Religion and Thought Riot and tons of political snippets from comedians and activists. Unfortunately it didn't get the job done. (FAT WRECK CHORDS: WALDEMARSTR. 33*10999 BERLIN, GERMANY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "SKANNIBAL PARTY 4". (MAD BUTCHER/KOB)
Another one worth adding to the high-grade collection CD's of Ska released via the Kob and Mad Butcher labels. I've liked all the "Skannibal Party" albums to date and am pleased to say this keeps up the level of quality we've come to expect from the series. It's a worldwide Ska compilation, representing countries from the U.S. to Germany, Italy, Netherlands and England. Both these record labels have a background in Ska and Rocksteady and can appreciate a good Ska band when they hear one. A lot of this is upbeat fast-tempo stuff, mixing the old with the new. Using Desmond Decker and the Skatalites as a base influence and incorporating the more recent Two Tone style into it also. What you end up with is very Euro-Centric Dancehall rhythms, with the exception of Shots In The Dark, who bare a stronger Dub influence with their song "More Easily" that could easily have been lifted off Augustus Pablo's "King Tubby's Meets Rockers Uptown" record. Rich in the Kingston street flavours of Big Youth or even Tapper Zukie, there really is some cracking work on this CD. (MAD BUTCHER RECORDS: KURZE GEISMARSTR.6, 37073 GOETTINGEN, GERMANY./KOB RECORDS: VIA CANTARANE 63/C 1-37129 VERONA, ITALY.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "SONIDOS DE LA CALLE". (BRONCO BULLFROG)
A Bronco Bullfrog sampler, rounding up the last pile of releases they've put their name to. There's a chunk of stuff to get through, with twenty-five tracks of Punk Rock, spanning the genres of Oi! Skatepunk and Hardcore. Most are familiar names if you've been paying any attention to the exploits of the label recently. Social Combat, Frontkick, Wallride and Johnny Gerriwelt are all present and offer more than a couple of songs each. Offering a broad palette with delvings into the more obscure and less straightforward arenas at times. Some inspiring moments are here courtesy of the above mentioned bands and when you give you their best three songs as opposed to an albums worth of material in one sitting, it can give you a more positive view of the band. I still have an affection for this style of Euro Punk and it gives me a break from today's dominant assembly line Emo crud. (BRONCO BULLFROG RECORDS: APARTADO DE CORREOS 1474 07800, IBIZA (BALEARES), SPAIN.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "STREETPUNK WORLDWIDE". (REBELLION RECORDS)
A selection of tracks culled from the libraries and surrounding areas of the Rebellion vaults and it has to be said, there's some fine moments on here, especially the first one "It Starts With You" by Dirty Water. The vast majority of this is inventive and well thought out. Homegrown label regulars such as Badlands, Razorblade, Knockdown, and Hateful join forces with the likes of Weekend Warriors, Sperrzone, Antagonizers and Vogelfrei to bring us a well rounded compilation that doesn't wear thin a few songs in. A strong representation of another European label on the up. (REBELLION RECORDS: MGR. VAN ROOSMALENPLEIN 24, NL-5213 GD'S, HERTOGENBOSCH, THE NETHERLANDS.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "TALES FROM THE STREETS". (KNOCKOUT)
Released in conjunction with Hooligan Streetwear, this is a football themed anti-fascist compilation sold at mid-price. As with all comps on Knockout this is exceptionally well put together with no effort spared in either the tracks and bands chosen or the presentation of the CD itself. The booklet gives a page to each band, allowing them their say, but it's all in German. This is a great collection of songs on its own right, whether the football side to it interests you or not. Take a look at the line up - Discipline, Vanilla Muffins, Stage Bottles, Broilers, Argy Bargy, V8 Wankers, Attila The Stockbroker, and plenty more. The kind of mixed CD you'd put together yourself of the best European Oi! out there. Great stuff! (KNOCKOUT RECORDS: POST-FACH 10 07 16, 46527 DINSLAKEN, GERMANY.)

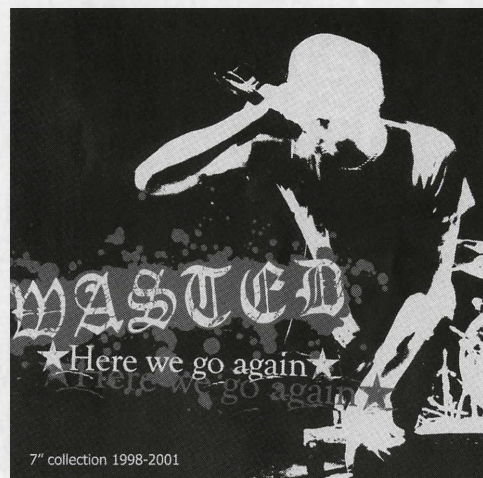
VARIOUS ARTISTS "YA CAN'T POLISH A TURD: AN AUSTRALIAN TRIBUTE TO THE ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE". (NOISE POLLUTION)
This can be quite good and accurate at times. What we have is a collection of eleven bands and each contributes one of their own songs along with an Anti-Nowhere League cover. I'm not sure if this type of thing has been done before, but it's a good idea. They sound quality is acceptable and most of the bands play good versions of some of the League's more fondly remembered moments. The A.N.L. were a great band for a short space of time and then proceeded to torturously drag it out to this day where we're left with an embarrassing bunch of has-beens, making it difficult to remember them in the good days. Thankfully that's exactly what this comp achieves and brings us back to better times, before they became a hideous parody of themselves. (NOISE POLLUTION RECORDS: P.O. BOX 2096, PARKDALE, VIC 3195, AUSTRALIA.)

THE VIBRATORS "PURE MANIA". (CAPTAIN OII)
Contrary to popular belief, The Vibrators are actually a fantastic band. Bridging the gap between Johnny Thunders/Dread Boys and the Pistols more British sounding influence, The Vibrators came up with an instant winning chemistry in my book and continued this form over both albums reissued here via Captain Oi!. Up first is their debut from 1977, originally issued on CBS. There were arguments within the band during the recording sessions for this over how the production should sound and whether or not it was too polished, but I think it's spot on and has stood the test of time well. Their Glam Rock influence shines through with plenty of Bowie, New York Dolls and

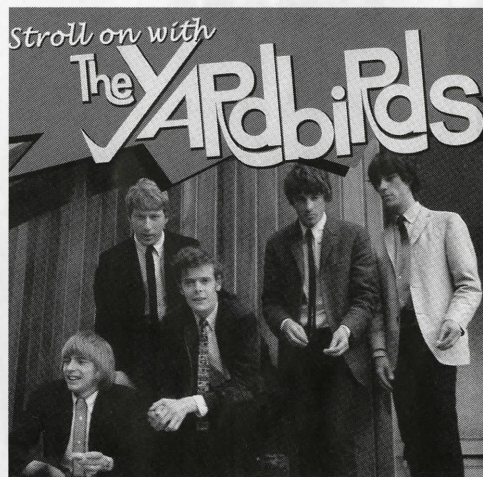
Slade likes to be found throughout the album. Also contained are four bonus tracks - two from their first 7 inch and two live ones. Some of The Vibrators best stuff is on this album - "Yeah Yeah Yeah", "Sweet Sweet Heart", "Baby Baby" and of course "Stiff Little Fingers". (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

THE VIBRATORS "V2". (CAPTAIN OII)
Ironically kicking off with the title cut from their debut "Pure Mania", this was the bands' follow up that boasted a slightly slicker production and scored them a hit with the excellent "Automatic Lover" that remains one of my favourite Vibrators tracks to this day. Entering the New Wave market with this attempt and in my mind up there with some of the other greats from around this timeframe such as Elvis Costello's debut "My Aim Is True" and the Stranglers "No More Heroes". The Vibrators maintained the bitter snarl and attitude of their formative years, but added something extra to it that again comes off sounding just as fresh over twenty years later. Look out for two bonus cuts - "Judy Says (Knock You In The Head)" and "Pushing Too Hard". (CAPTAIN OII RECORDS: P.O. BOX 501, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND.)

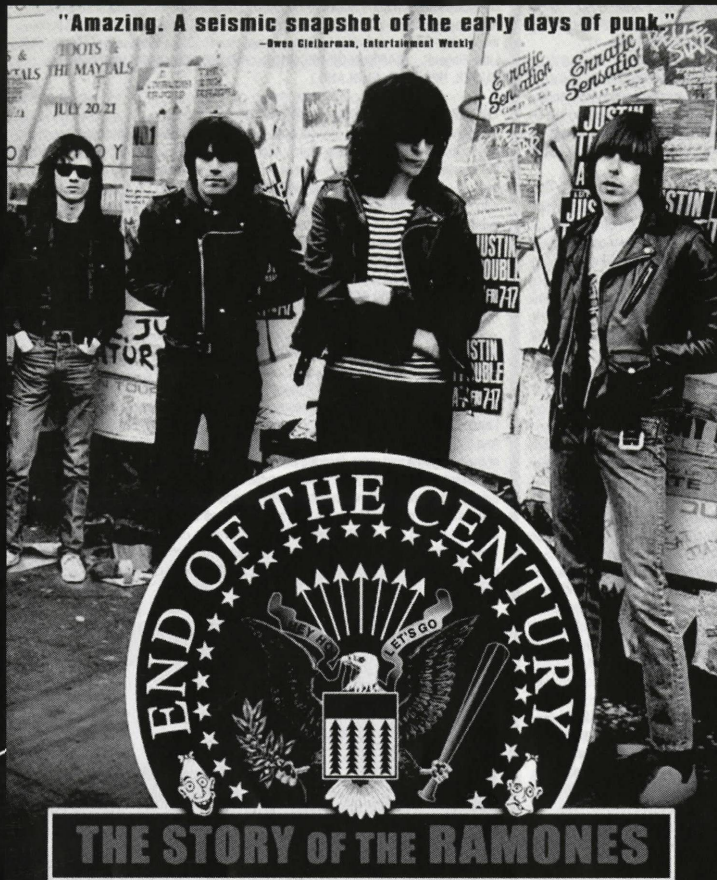
WASTED "HERE WE GO AGAIN: 7 inch COLLECTION 1998-2001". (BOSS TUNEAGE)
A much called for round up of all Wasted's 7 inch and compilation tracks to date, plus "Fight Back" which is previously unreleased and some live versions of "Barrel Of A Loaded Gun" and "Disconnected" with two video tracks - "In The Suburbs" and "Down And Out". This starts off with eight from their "inside Out" EP in '98, seeing the band at their roughest and most distorted and is almost bordering on Thrash/Punk and not the Street Hardcore they later became so fond of. You can hear the band begin to develop their sound with each subsequent EP and it isn't long before we're into better structured and memorable songs with a catchier rhythm. This is a great collection of stuff and seeing as I've only managed to get my hands on dubs and drabs of their material, this will round out things nicely. Includes full lyrics, brief history and some photos. (BOSS TUNEAGE: P.O. BOX 74, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND.)



WHITMORE "SOLSTICE RISE". (MOON SKA)
The name Whitmore sounds familiar ... I think I must have reviewed them in a past life ... no, wait here we go, it was issue #6 and apparently I didn't find them all that bad. I must have caught me on a rare diplomatic day!! You usually have a fair idea of what these bands are gonna sound like before you even play the CD and more times than not that perception turns out to be accurate. Unfortunately for Whitmore that's certainly the case here. This isn't Ska to me and would appeal to people who have never heard what real Ska sounds like ... when you measure bands like this up against some Trojan reissue or other that gets released frequently, its laughable. Again, aimed at the teenybopper Punk enthusiast who likes the odd bit of Ska on the side. (MOON SKA EUROPE: P.O. BOX 184, ASHFORD, KENT, TN24 0ZS, ENGLAND.)



THE YARBIRDS "STROLL ON WITH THE YARBIRDS". (ATOM MUSIC)
Ahh yes ... some vintage Yarbbirds to review ... it doesn't get much better than this. Along with the Small Faces and the Who, the Yarbbirds are possibly my favourite R'n'B band of all time. Their legacy is well known, having given birth to the likes of Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page and Eric Clapton. The Yarbbirds formed in '63 and went on to make an unparalleled string of records in the mid 60's, that are still savoured today. Looking in the direction of American Blues music to draw their inspiration from, the Yarbbirds made their first recording backing a Chicago Blues artist named Sonny Boy Williamson, before going on the make their mark on the London R'n'B scene with blistering tunes like, "For Your Love" and "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" amongst others, (both included here). This is a two-disc set; the first looking at their strongest singles, whilst the second is mainly excellently recorded live material from the mid 60's. A decent starting point if that's what you're after, but also head for their album "For Your Love" while you're at it. I'm off out for a spin on me new Vespa. (NO CONTACT DETAILS)



"It's accurate. It left me disturbed."
-Johnny Ramone

by MICHAEL GRAMAGLIA & JIM FIELDS with JOHNNY JOEY DEE TOMMY MARKY C.J. RITCHIE
DAVE FIELDS TERRY HARRY RICK BERN LES MONEL SEYMOUR STEIN JOE STRAMER AFRICO VEGA
story by JOHN GRAMAGLIA & JIM FIELDS script by ROSEMARY QUIGLEY & MICHAEL GRAMAGLIA & JIM FIELDS
music by the RAMONES produced by MICHAEL GRAMAGLIA & JIM FIELDS

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RAMONES: END OF THE CENTURY a film by MICHAEL GRAMAGLIA & JIM FIELDS

Feature documentary on the bowl-haired Punks from Queens, released a week after the death of Johnny Ramone and part of a renewed interest being shown in the band recently, with a slew of books, movies and DVD's being unleashed on the public in the past six months. This, I believe to be the pinnacle of it all, containing, for the most part, exclusive interview footage with all members and ex-members, conducted specifically for this film. Each are interviewed separately of course and offer a wide range of theories on the group's legacy, some eight years after calling it quits. In a nutshell, "End Of The Century" chronicles the Ramones' unfruitful quest for mainstream acceptance and a record that would catapult the group into the charts. Missing the point you could argue; was this why any Ramones fan had an interest in the group? - Probably quite the opposite in fact. Had they been Top 40 material it would have greatly detracted from everything we seen in them, and whilst it's clear from most of their interviews given here and elsewhere, that yes, a hit record or two along the way wouldn't have gone amiss, it's still not what this band were all about in my book and ends up belittling what they stood for and what they meant to millions of people. Aside from the underlying theme of failure in this movie, there's still a healthy batch of fresh footage and opinions for us to sink our teeth into. "End Of The Century" adapts a different angle on the band and shows them in a truer light than any piece in the past. We get an in depth look at the make up of each individual's character; Dee Dee comes across as a complete nutjob and though you cringe at plenty he has to say, he still has that childlike innocence about him that made him the Dee Dee we all know and love in the first place. His mental health had clearly been deteriorating in the years leading up to his death and the last of this footage leaves him just two months before his heroin overdose. Johnny on the other hand has never been the nicest of people and stays true to that here, though at times comes across more logical and honest than we'd like to give him credit for. Joey is just Joey of course and offers us little we didn't already know about the guy. The film delves deep into the many power struggles within the group and the bitter jealousy that existed between them, with each of the quartet thinking themselves the only indispensable member. "End Of The Century" is a great story about an important band that no one understood. The key ingredient in just exactly how they managed to survive as long as they did, being as dysfunctional as they were, is anyone's guess. Ironically the band's final public appearance was an induction into the Rock N' Roll Hall Of Fame and being honoured by an industry that ignored them for their entire career.

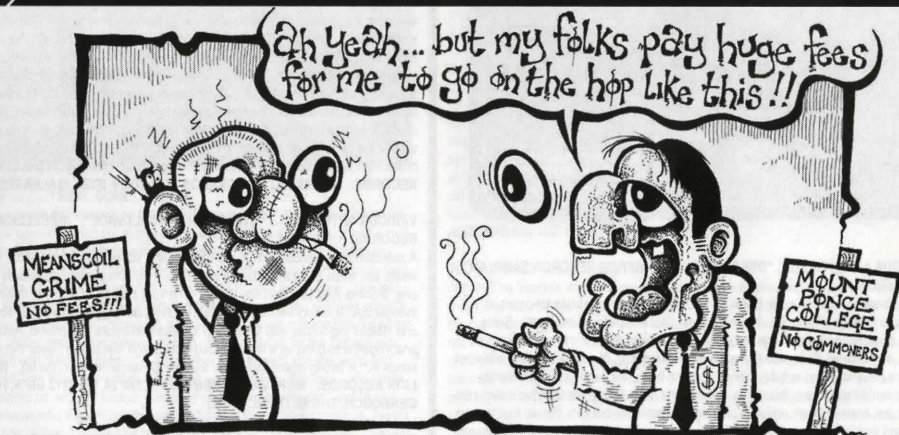
Johnny Ramone

1948-2004, guitarist

Johnny Ramone was guitarist of the Ramones, the punk rock band. Born John Cummings in New York, he was 25 before he picked up his first guitar and worked on his stance in front of the mirror before playing a note. "I learnt how to play after I got the guitar looking right on me," he said.

The band took its name from an early alias of Paul McCartney, Paul Ramon. On one early tour, their manager was accosted by a filling station clerk. "Mister," he was told, "it sure is nice of you to take care of these retarded people."

— The Times



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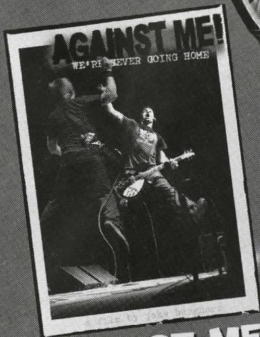
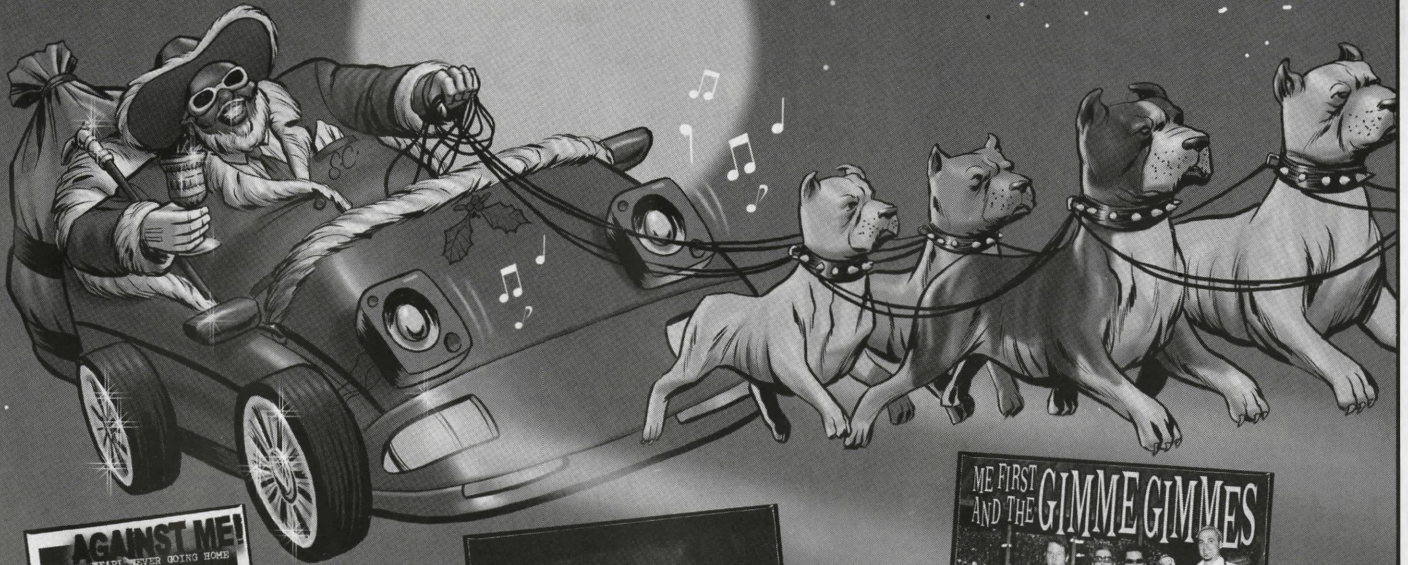
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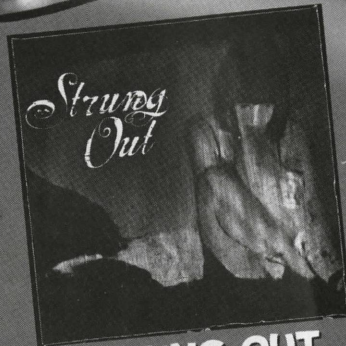
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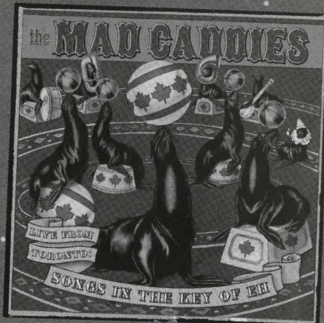
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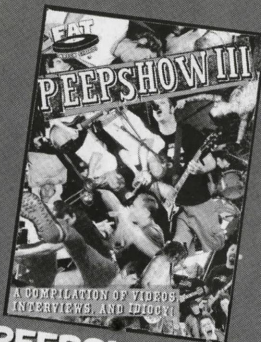
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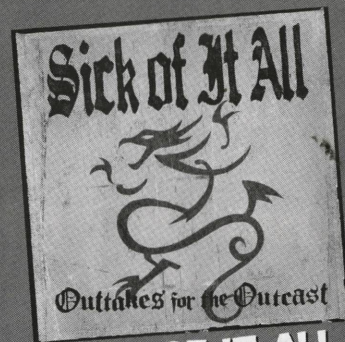
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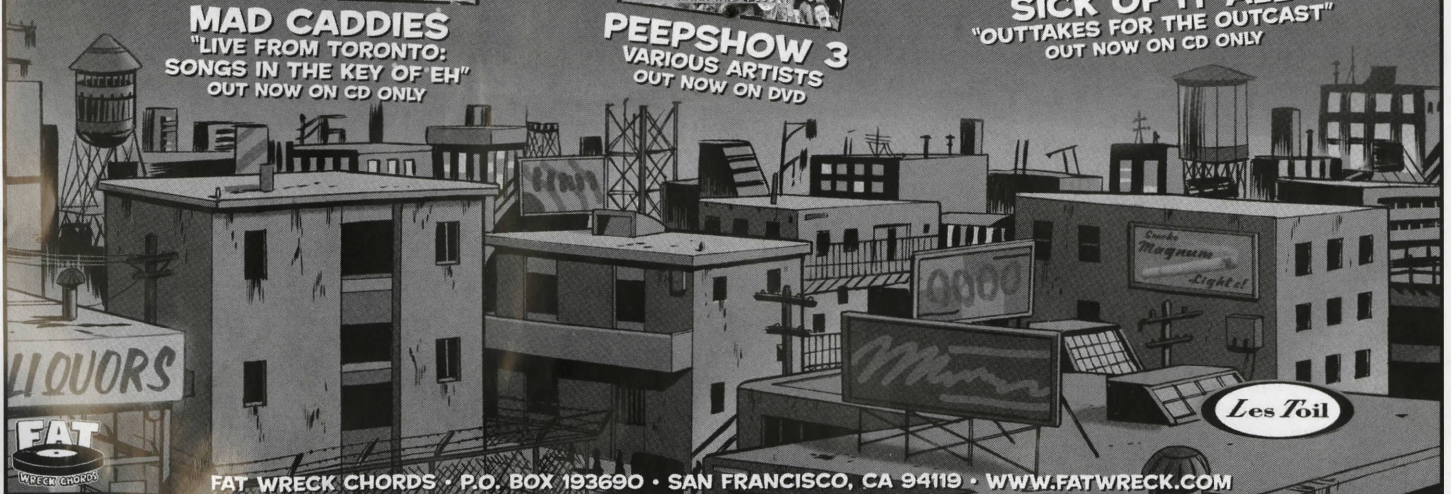
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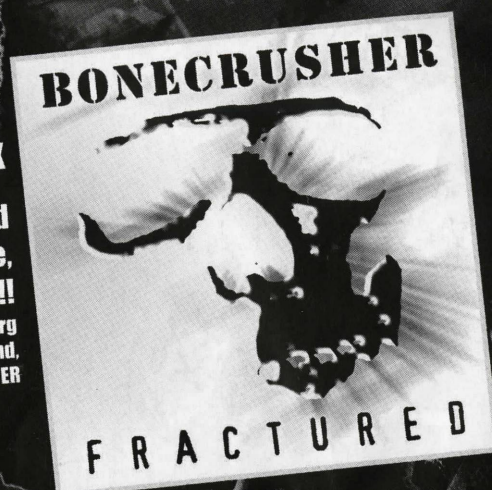
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