

ISSUE #14

# RAZZORCAKE



\$3

AVAIL

SAINT  
OF  
FIGHTERS

**AVAIL**  
THE ORPHANS  
BROKEN BOTTLES  
THE STITCHES  
AND  
DID THE CIA  
KILL MARTIN  
LUTHER KING, JR.?



KN THE DM



## This Lie Is True

When I was a kid, my older brother used to always recite a crazy poem about "one bright day in the middle of the night, two dead boys got up to fight." The two dead boys faced off back to back, shot each other with swords, heard the cheers from the crowd of mutes, and so on. I don't remember the whole poem, but I remember the end: "If you don't believe this lie is true, ask the blind man; he saw it, too." I also remember that, when I was seven years old, I thought that poem was the funniest thing in the world. It cracked me up. It didn't matter how many times I heard it; I laughed my ass off every time my brother started in on the two dead boys fighting. That's probably why my brother always recited that crazy poem.

As I got older, I think that poem had more of an effect on me than it should've. It added to my weird sense of humor. It made me notice things that seemed a little off; it made me very aware of contradictions. Now and then, I would hear things, and it would set off my two-dead-boys meter. This would get me in trouble sometimes. I remember being in high school and my social studies teacher was talking about John F. Kennedy, and she said something about JFK's famous quote, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." And the class I'd had right before social studies was civics, where we'd just gone over all that talk about "a government by, for, and of the people." So - not trying to be a smart ass at all - I raised my hand and said, "If the government is for the people, shouldn't we be asking what the country can do for us? Isn't that the whole point of having a government: so that it'll do stuff for us?"

Five minutes later, I sat in the Dean's office, learning the hard way to never criticize JFK to a woman who had a crush on him when she was in college.

As I've gotten older, I've learned to stifle the two-dead-boys meter. I realize that people get annoyed whenever you point out contradictions, and, basically, we're all walking contradictions. It doesn't matter how well-intentioned we are, we're all hypocrites in a million ways. We're all vegetarians in leather jackets or anarchists on our way to vote. We all believe gossip even though we know it's not true when people gossip

about us. We're all disgusted that slavery once existed in our country, yet don't think much about our Chuck Taylors being sewn in a sweatshop. We're all struggling to find some kind of common ground between our beliefs and the way we live our lives. And none of us want to be reminded of this too often. Then again, sometimes these contradictions are so great, and on such a large scale, that we can't stifle them. We can't ignore them.

Lately, my two-dead-boys meter has been going nuts, and it's not the kind of thing I want to stifle. Our current political situation is starting to read like my brother's childhood poems, only not nearly as funny. Every lie is true and the blind man is our eyewitness. We have a president who was not democratically elected, yet is fighting for "democracy" in other parts of the world. We have a House of Representatives who are all rallying to show their support for US troops overseas, yet they just pushed through a tax bill that cuts over \$9 billion from veterans benefits. We have an army of soldiers fighting for "freedom" in the Middle East, and an army of police officers in the US who are arresting anyone who exercises his freedom of speech by protesting the war. And so on. It's weird. Everywhere I turn, someone is shooting off their sword.

It's confusing times like these that make me happy that we have zines and we have this strong network of underground rock'n'roll. It gives us something tangible. Something that's real: a thought, a noise, a

melodic shout, a raw ideal, a little bit of honesty in fictitious times. And I know that our shout can hardly be heard over the wall of feedback that is popular culture, but I don't care. I'm happy to be one more mute, screaming his head off.

-Sean

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June 1st, 2003

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August 1st, 2003

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• Sean <sean@razorcake.com>

Todd <retodded@razorcake.com>

• Rich Mackin <richmackin@richmackin.org>

Nardwuar <nardwuar@nardwuar.com>

• Designated Dale <DesignatedDale@aol.com>

Rhythm Chicken

<rhythmchicken@hotmail.com>

Everyone else can be reached c/o Razorcake.

Razorcake and razorcake.com are picked, licked, and flicked by:

Sean Carswell, Todd Taylor, Felizon Vidad, Megan Pants, ktspin, and Skinny Dan.

Cover stencil by: Kiyoshi Nakazawa, <knakazawa@earthlink.net>

Thank you list: Why can't Macs and PCs just get along thanks to Julia Smut Peddler for her help with our cover; pronounce her name like the place we bombed thanks to Nam for her Orphans interview and Kat Jetson for the stomach-showin' pics; cut his beard and no longer looks crazy and homeless thanks to Dan Monick for both the Stitches and Broken Bottles pics; straight shooting thanks to Joe Biel for his piece on Martin Luther King, Jr.; Papercut thanks to zine reviewers Joe Biel and Josh Lane; record reviewing will probably get you punched before getting you laid thanks to Puckett, Aphid Peewit, Cuss Baxter, Jimmy Alvarado, Donofthedeath, Kat Jetson, Josh Lane, and Namella J. Kim; Cuss Baxter for sitting through a crappy video then reviewing it; The Knockout Pills for masterfully replacing our broken toilet seat; Todd shouldn't drink so much and get so excited that the Arrivals are over and forget to pick up the inserts in time thanks to Harmonee for coming over and sticking in the subscription cards; Rest in peace Little Eva, the most famous babysitter in the history of rock and roll; no thanks to the Milwaukee Brewers for resurrecting the Rally Rabbit, live, without the motherfuckin' Rhythm Chicken. That shit ain't right.



Davey Tiltwheel in Vegas. Moments later, he just stood there and shook his belly for minutes on end, happy as a clam.

# RAZORCAKE

Issue #14, June/July 2003



Fuckin' Awesome, Stupid Ass

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

## Table of Contents



* * * * *	
The Rhythm Chicken .....	The Dinghole Reports ..... pg. 4
Art .....	'Lil Beez's Fun Page ..... pg. 7
Maddy .....	Shiftless When Idle. .... pg. 8
Ayn Imperato .....	94103 ..... pg. 10
Money .....	Lazy Mick ..... pg. 12
Rev. Nørb .....	Love, Nørb ..... pg. 16
Nardwuar The Human Serviette .....	Who Are You? ..... pg. 24
Gary Hornberger .....	Squeeze My Horn ..... pg. 30
Designated Dale .....	I'm Against It .....pg. 32
Felizon Vidad .....	Shark Bait ..... pg. 36
Sean Carswell .....	A Monkey to Ride the Dog ..... pg. 40
Ben Weasel .....	That Iron String ..... pg. 44
* * * * *	
The Orphans .....	Interview by Namella J. Kim ..... pg. 46
Broken Bottles .....	Interview by Todd Taylor and Sean Carswell ..... pg. 50
Broken Bottles Tiger-Beat Style Centerfold ..	by Dan Monick..... pg. 52
Avail .....	Interview by Sean Carswell ..... pg. 58
The Stitches.....	Interview by Todd Taylor ..... pg. 64
The Assassination of MLK .....	Article by Joe Beil ..... pg. 70
* * * * *	
Record Reviews .....	Catchier Than a Venereal Disease in Baltimore ..... pg. 80
Zine Reviews .....	Shitting in a Frat Boy's Jeep ..... pg. 98
Book Reviews .....	Fatter Than Butcher's Dogs ..... pg. 102
Video Reviews .....	The One Foot Stomp ..... pg. 104

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**Wisconsinism is ordering a pitcher of Pabst just before closing time and having the bartender empty the Slim Jim jar on the backbar to fill it with your Pabst so you can take it home in your car!**

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

(Hey kids! It's me, Francis Funyuns! For those of you new to this ball of literary crotch-rot, I'll clue you in. The Rhythm Chicken and his Hen moved to Krakow, Poland on New Year's Eve for reasons unknown. What a nut! Meanwhile, I still live in Milwaukee and Dr. Sicnarf still lives in Door County, four hours north of here. Every two months, he comes down here to brewtown so we can huddle around the ham radio and put in our two cents worth with the Chicken for these Dinghole Reports. The Email channel has been exhausted since the Chicken realized that his Polish internet server was run by the Atari 2600. Anyway, please won't you crack open a Pabst and join us! -F.F.)

—Dr. Sicnarf enters with two deeply bloodshot eyes, holding a Polish/English dictionary—

[Good morning, Funyuns. Please excuse my slow reaction time today. Ruckus Thomas kept me at JJ's La Puerta till closing time this morning telling me about his visit with the Chicken in Krakow. Dave and JJ kept our Blatz mugs full as we kept them empty. -Dr. S.]

(Oh yeah? What did Ruckus Thomas have to say about his time with the Chicken? -F.F.)

[Well, it sounds like it was a big blur of Zywiec and pierogi with a little Budapest, Slovakia, and Germany thrown in. -Dr. S.]

—The ham radio starts lighting up as a Polish clucking comes through the airwaves—

Hello? Czeszc? Chicken to Funyuns and Sicnarf, Hello?

[[Chicken!!! You're still alive!!! -Dr. S. & F.F.]]

Yes, yes, I'm still scratchin'. Ruckus Thomas recently brought us a coffee percolator, a case of Pabst, some Mac & Cheese, and Pop Tarts, so we're clucking happier these days. Thomas and the Chez weren't in Poland for five hours before the Chez was stealing beer glasses from our neighborhood beer joint, and the Wisconsinism campaign continues! WISCONSINISM!

[Okay, Mr. Chicken. I was hoping you could shed some light on this Wisconsinism of which you speak. Funyuns and I still LIVE IN Wisconsin

and we still haven't the slightest idea what Wisconsinism is. -Dr. S.]

Ah, Sicnarf. Sometimes you can't see the forest when you're standing in the trees. Soon after moving to Poland, I became aware of an enormous lacking in my surroundings. It wasn't just the lack of Pabst Blue Ribbon, quality dairy products, and Packer merchandise as far as the eye can see. It was difficult to pin down, but something was definitely missing. I have named it Wisconsinism, and its definition is a constantly growing collage of tales and legends. What is Wisconsinism, you ask? Wisconsinism is ordering a pitcher of Pabst just before closing time and having the bartender empty the Slim Jim jar on the backbar to fill it with your Pabst so you can take it home in your car! Wisconsinism is ordering Pabst by the pitcher with no glasses or mugs! Wisconsinism is twenty-below-zero temps with blinding blizzard conditions not keeping you from doing ANYTHING! Wisconsinism is the ice-fishing shanty with NO HOLE! Wisconsinism is the two-story ice-fishing shanty! Wisconsinism is the colony of ice-fishing shanties on the frozen bay just off Dykesville having more plowed roads than Dykesville! Wisconsinism is having a small town named Dykesville! Wisconsinism is getting kicked out of a Sturgeon Bay bar, so you steal everyone's snowmobiling gloves on the way out! Wisconsinism is bar hopping with a backpack full of Pabst on your snowmobile! Wisconsinism is a rural tavern having more snowmobiles parked in the lot than cars! Wisconsinism is finding your car keys in your belly button! Wisconsinism is hearing Blatz 40-ouncer empties rolling around in your trunk! Wisconsinism is getting kicked out of a Stevens Point bar so you and your buddies decide to steal an entire bolted-down table, ripping it out of the floor, simply walking out the door with it, and parading the ill-gotten booty around Stevens Point in a drunken frenzy! Wisconsinism is the Packers winning the Super Bowl! Wisconsinism is peeing on your roommate's bedroom floor while waving to him in bed saying that you "got no choice"! Wisconsinism is beer and bratwurst for breakfast! Wisconsinism is booyah! Wisconsinism is meat and cheese with everything! Wisconsinism is deep-frying fucking globs of cheese! YES, DEEP FRYING FUCKING GLOBS OF CHEESE!!! Deep fried cheese curds are a major component of Wisconsinism! Wisconsinism is driving for an hour to find a rural tavern full of rednecks so you can play the Village People on the jukebox and make your own dance floor where there is none! Wisconsinism is making nude snow angels in

your front yard during halftime! Wisconsinism is shoveling the snow out of your driveway in May! Wisconsinism is waking up everywhere but on your bed! Wisconsinism is your band playing a show in Cincinnati and stealing a 300-pound cement coin and bringing it back to Wisconsin because it seemed like a really good idea! Wisconsinism is Washington Island having some 680 year-round residents and only twelve last names! Wisconsinism is Ruckus Thomas being his OWN 3rd cousin! Wisconsinism is Vern Nussbaum, Freddy K, Ned....

(Okay, okay, we get it! Mr. Chicken, you're living in Poland and you're telling US about Wisconsin! Tell us more about Poland, will ya? -F.F.)

[Indeed, Rhythm Chicken. I am WELL AWARE of Wisconsinism. My throbbing hangover is a constant reminder, compliments of Ruckus Thomas and JJ's. -Dr. S.]

Hey! It's good to hear that he's back to work! I'm sure that the Wisconsin Tavern League is working double time to keep their profit margins up in my absence. So far, I've only witnessed three signs from Wisconsin here in Poland. Last night, my Hen and I went to see David Lynch's *The Straight Story* at a local movie house. At the end of the movie Alvin Straight rides his lawn mower over the Mississippi into Mt. Zion, WI and walks into a rural tavern. Above the door inside hung a sign that read "PACKER COUNTRY." It made us quite homesick. How can you NOT like the one David Lynch film that is also a Disney film and rated G? Next, while waiting in the Auschwitz train station, I was window shopping at a junk-merchant kiosk, surveying the goods: "Hoop" soft drink, Kodak film, Orbit gum, plastic water pistols, bad Polish porn, ice cream bars, Snickers, perfume, Polish *Newsweek*, deodorant, toilet paper, eggs, Pabst key chains, towels, salt and pepper shakers,... wait, wait, WAIT! BACK UP!... There they were, two zlotys apiece... PABST KEY CHAINS!!! In the Auschwitz train station in Oswiecim, Poland! I asked the kiosk lady in Polish if she knew what Pabst was. She said "nie" so I told her it's the best beer in America. She said, "Jest cudownie. Prosze dwa zlotys" (That's wonderful. Two zlotys please). Two zlotys = 50 cents. I think I can swing that. But, now my greatest Wisconsin find in Poland... I FOUND MARCO POGO!

(Marco Pogo? I thought he lived in Madison, here in Wisconsin. -F.F.)

Rhythm Chicken

For those *Razorcake* readers not knowledgeable of Wisconsin punk lore, Marco Pogo is/was one of Madison's greatest assets. He appeared to be in his mid-thirties with short brown hair and beard and little wire rim glasses. He would attend most Madison punk shows and the man was a non-stop dancing machine! Tall, thin, and gangly, he would stand by the PA speaker dancing in place to the pre-show music from the PA. The first band would play and he would dance, hop in place, run around the venue, swing his arms, jog in place, run through the crowd, etc... He would dance between songs. He would dance between bands. He would just dance non-stop! Dance, dance, DANCE! Nothing would stop Marco Pogo! Sometimes he would change shirts a few times throughout a show because of sweat. He just would not stop moving or dancing. Some kids mosh. Some sell merch at their distro tables. Some sit back and complain about the punkness of one band or another. Some just stand and bob their heads. Marco Pogo would dance. It's just what he did, and it always seemed as if all the Madison punks respected his right to dance, and DANCE HE DID! I would get tired just WATCHING him! All this dancing left him with 0% body fat, slim and trim, a pure, lean dancing machine! He was always a very nice, soft-spoken guy who just loved to dance, almost uncontrollably. I don't mean to talk about him in past tense, but I haven't seen Marco in about five years, since about the last time I went to Madison! I always wondered what became of Marco Pogo. Then, a few weeks ago, my Hen and I went to see a performance of the Krakow Filharmonia.

(Filharmonia? What are you, SYMPHONY SNOBS? -F.F.)

I think it's funny when we're the only people in the whole theater in T-shirts, blue jeans, and sneakers. All of Krakow's yuppie music snobs are there with their opera glasses and hand-held fans, looking very much like a bunch of Thurston and Lovey Howells... and the tickets are only about three dollars! Also, the theater is about a ten minute tram ride from the Jaja-Dom. Anyways, the soloist that night was a tall, thin violinist who I SWEAR is Marco Pogo! He looks just like him! Marco's Polish identity is Janusz Pisarski, and his bio reads that he used to study at the University of Akron. AKRON! Home of DEVO! The Midwest! That was close enough for me. He IS Marco Pogo, and I FOUND HIM! He's playing violin for the Krakow Filharmonia!

[Mr. Chicken, this is a punk rock magazine. Please tell us what punk rock things you've encountered in Poland thus far. -Dr. S.]

Well, there's this trendy diner downtown called the "Rozowy Slon" (Pink Elephant) with huge comic book murals on the walls. The Hen and I were enjoying our pierogi there one day when the Muzak started playing "Here Comes the Summer" by the Undertones! I just freaked out and wanted to go totally Marco Pogo! It was like hearing N'SYNC doing a Minor Threat cover - just plain weird. It was sandwiched between Lionel Richie and Enya. I had to convince myself

expecting the Droids from Manitowoc to hit the stage and do their Polish version of "Sex and Violence," which was "Spac I Jedzenie," which actually translates to "sleep and food," huh! Actually, the whole night I felt like I was at a punk show in Upper Michigan, except all the Yoopers were speaking in Polish, which is a little easier to understand than "Yooper-speak." But yeah, we get NO English news here. We have no TV. The Polish radio news breaks into programming every five minutes to say, "bla bla bla Amerykanski prezydent George W. Bush bla bla bla Saddama Husseina bla bla bla Koowaitaska bla bla bla" and we know nothing about the war until Ruckus Thomas calls us from Sister Bay, WI to inform us! In desperation for news, I slowly scanned the entire radio dial on AM and FM. Suddenly, under layers of ear-piercing static on the AM dial, I FOUND AN ENGLISH STATION! They were announcing themselves as the only English radio station in all of Lithuania... LITHUANIA? No English radio station in Poland, but Lithuania pipes out the English over the airwaves, and it's at 666 KHZ on the AM dial! It's true! The Hen and I sat quietly listening to authentic English speaking radio, in a trance of disbelief. Soon, they were speaking about life insurance and we remembered how boring English is. How could it be anything BUT 666-AM? That might explain all the Iron Maiden shirts we've seen in Eastern Europe. It's like I'm back at Washington Junior High School. Our Polish friend, Tomek, told us about how last year the Scorpions played a free outdoor concert at the Krakow airport and 600,000 people were there! 600,000 PEOPLE???

For the SCORPIONS??!! I think Great White should have been touring Poland instead of burning down 300 capacity clubs in Rhode Island. I mean, COME ON! 600,000 people to see the Scorpions? There were about 300 Polish punks at that

Apatia/Zlodzieje Rowerow show, but there were no fireworks. This brings up my new philosophical debate concerning the dinghole vs. the egg-hole, chicken anatomy and analysis...

(WHAT? Okay, Chicken, but can you give us a Dinghole Report first? Todd and Sean have been breathing down OUR necks in your absence. Your reports have been dwindling in both size and number. -F.F.)

[Yes, Mr. Chicken. We're still waiting for some NEW Dinghole Reports. Has there been much progress in your Polish campaign, Rytm Kurcze? -Dr. S.]

Actually, I've been plastering the town with my new visual propaganda, the Rytm Kurcze warning poster! Now they know I'm ~~back~~ 5

**Rhythm Chicken**

**UWAGA! wszędzie!**

**RYTM KURCZE!!!**

**RYTM KURCZĘ TERAZ MIESZKA W KRAKOWA.**

**TO JEST RUCKUS! szalony!**

**TO JEST PUNK ROCK! zwirowany!**

**PUNK RUCKUS W WISCONSIN!**

**RYTM KURCZĘ GRA NA WSZYSTKO!**

**DUZE KONCERT ZARAZ!!!** BUTTONS.....2 zlotys!

OK THIS ONE HAS US COMPLETELY, TOTALLY BAFLED! "KONSERWA TURYSTYCZNA" TRANSLATES LITERALLY TO "CANNED TOURIST"!!

**CANNED TOURIST!**

HERE IS MY NEW RECIPE FOR MY POLISH CAMPAIN. IF YOU KNOW HOW TO COOK POLISH, IT'S GRAMMATICALLY HORRIBLE & KINDA FUNNY (SMILE)

Konserva Gral  
turystyczna  
napelniona mielonymi  
porkami 200 g

**2.49**  
1/3

that I really didn't hear it. Seeing as how we hear next to NO ENGLISH in Poland at all, the mind starts to play tricks on you.

(But how was that Polish punk show you saw? -F.F.)

About two months ago, we saw our only punk show in Krakow thus far. It was Apatia and Zlodzieje Rowerow (Apathy and Bicycle Thieves). I enjoyed some Kroliewski (Polish Blatz) through the opening bands and handed out Rytm Kurcze newsletters to confused Polish punker-types. Zlodzieje Rowerow were great, kinda like Verbal Assault meets Dag Nasty singing in Polish. Apatia are one of the oldest still-playing Polish punk bands. They sounded like Life Sentence singing in Polish. I kept

here! Now they know whom to fear! Uwaga! Patrz!

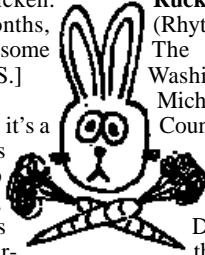
Chicken. I suggest you sit on it. —Dr. S.]

(What? One lousy poster?! What about the gigs, the actual Wisconsin thunder, the RUCKUS? —F.F.)

Z kurwa syn! Morda w kubel! Zamknij sie!

[Really, Rhythm Chicken. You've had three months, now. Surely you have some progress to report. —Dr. S.]

**Dinghole Report #30: Ferry Ruckus, Ferry Rock!**



Well... to tell the truth... it's a complicated issue. It's not too easy to scratch up a drumset in these parts, and my Chickenhead is still trapped in my parents' basement in Krakow, Wisconsin, and my parents are watching Sha-Na-Na at Cypress Gardens, and my Pabst rations are running dangerously low, and... and ... and.....

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #X2) The previously mentioned Washington Island is in Lake Michigan, just off the tip of Door County's peninsula. 680 year-round residents (TWELVE LAST NAMES!) connected to civilization (well, Door County anyway) by a thirty-minute ferry ride. In

the summer months, the ferry drops off about twenty cars every hour on the mainland and then carries another twenty back to the island. On the Chicken's first DC tour of '99, I decided that a ferry-load of cars would be a prime captive audience! Also, the line of cars waiting to board the ferry could surely use some relief in the form of ruckus rhythms. The ferry was about one hundred yards from the dock and fast approaching. The waiting cars watched in interest as I set up the Chickenkit and pulled on the Chickenhead. Commence ferry-dock ruckus! I pounded out rhythm ruckus like never before. My chicken ears flapped in the Lake

—Suddenly Todd and Sean break in on the ham radio frequency from Razorcake HQ in LA—

{NO MORE EXCUSES, CHICKEN! This is your FINAL WARNING! — Todd and Sean}

Uh... Hi guys!... uh... how about another blast from the past?

[The egg's in your nest, Mr.

Michigan breeze, which carried my riotous rhythms down the shoreline. Tourists stepped out of their cars to run up and take snapshots of the Chicken show. One lady even caught the show on her video camera. Soon, the ferry had docked and the cars began rolling ashore, slowly filing past the Chicken gig, and honking in joyous approval. Soon, there was a chorus of car horns! What had I begun? RUCKUS! The car horns grew in number and volume while my rhythms continued. The lakeshore ruckus symphony hit a crescendo and then full-blown audio ruckus was achieved when the huge ferryboat joined in with its deafening foghorn "WHOOOOOOOOOOOMMMF!" The car horns ceased and everyone cheered. My work was done and it was time to move on. As I tore down my kit, a busboy from the nearby Northport Restaurant ran up and gave me a can of beer saying, "My boss loved the show and wanted you to have this." An eight-year-old girl ran up from a car and gave me a quarter. It's funny how sometimes twenty-five cents and a can of beer can seem way better than a backstage deli tray and a string of drink tickets. Have Blink-182 or Weezer ever done a duet with a ferryboat?

—Dr. Sicnarf is frantically flipping

through his Polish/English dictionary—

[...kurtka, kurtuazja, kurtyna, a-ha! Here it is! KURWA! ...hey, FUCK YOU, TOO! CHICKEN-ASS SON OF A BITCH! FUCK YOU! —Dr. S.]

(Yeah, yeah, your Polish insults are REAL cute, Chicken. Now what was that dinghole vs. egghole debate you hinted at earlier? —F.F.)

Well, the Hen and I have been having a rather heated discussion concerning the female dinghole, or as she calls it, the egghole. We are currently gathering scientific information to differentiate between the dinghole, dunghole, egghole, peehole, poohole, and the beak. However, all of this will have to wait till next time, kids.

[Okay, Mr. Chicken. I can't find it in here. What does "Morda w kubel" mean? —Dr. S.]

All right, Sicnarf. It's a Polish cutesy way of saying, "Shut up." The literal English translation is "Put your face in a bucket." Yes, the Polish are quite Polish!

—The Rhythm Chicken  
<Rhythmchicken@hotmail.com>  
<www.rhythmchicken.com>



LIL' BEEZ'S

# FUN PAGE!



YAY!  
ART. 01-02

## LEARN TO DRAW LIL' BEEZ!

GRAB A PENCIL IN YER SWEATY LITTLE HAND AND FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS!



① DRAW YERSELF A CIRCLE.



② ADD SOME LINES FOR THE EYEBROWS.

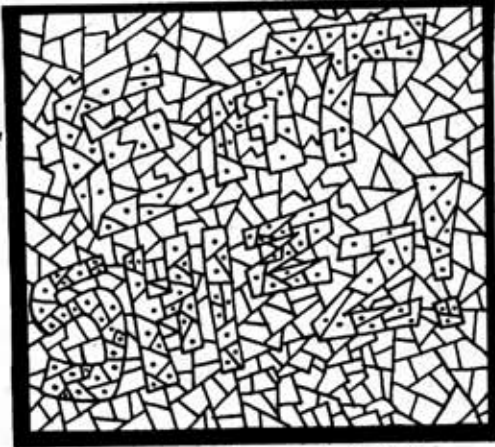


③ ADD EYES, NOSE, EARS, MOUTH, HORNS, AND A BEARD.



④ CLEAN UP THE DETAILS AND... VOLA! YER A BIGSHOT CARTOONIST!

FILL IN THE SPACES THAT HAVE DOTS AND READ A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM LIL' BEEZ HIMSELF!

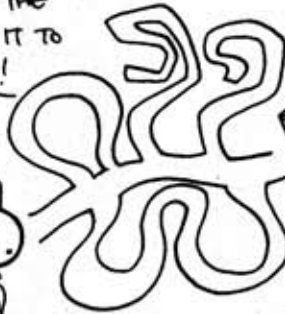


FILL 'EM IN TOUGH GUY!!!

DID YOU KNOW:

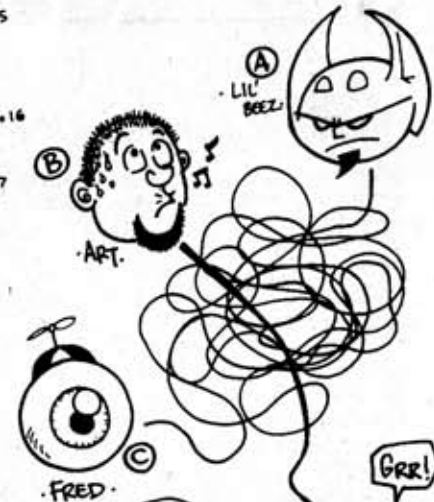
BOWLERS HAVE AN AVERAGE IQ. OF 129?  
Bowl on!!

SNAP ON YER CHINSTRAP JOCKO, AND HELP THE WHIZZ KID MAKE IT TO THE CAN IN TIME!



WHO?

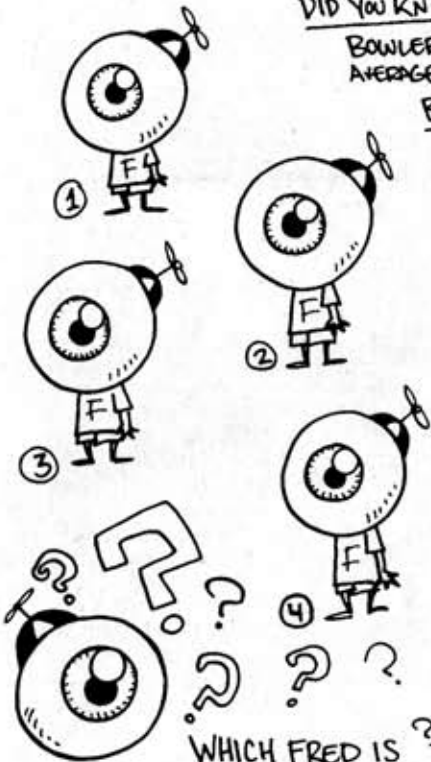
PISSED OFF THE RAZORCAKE EDITORS?



E-MAIL LILBEEZ.COM@YAHOO.COM

## CONNECT THA DOTS

LIL' BEEZ HAS SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU.



WHICH FRED IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER FREDS?

ANSWER: #3. #3'S EYE IS GREEN. FRED'S EYE IS BLUE. DUH!

ANSWER: ⑧ BECAUSE INSTEAD OF TALKING IN A DECENT STRIP, HE TURNED IN THIS SHITTY FUN PAGE!



Maddy

# Shiftless When Idle



*Coal mining, as you probably know, is even less fun than explaining what punk rock is to your relatives.*

## Depressed, Poverty-Stricken, Labor History Spring Break 2003!

Hey everybody! It's spring break time! Par-tee! Woo! Yay! Alright! Beer, girls in bikinis, and tropical delights! Cancun, the Bahamas, Florida! MTV! MTV! MTV!

Unlike most spring breaks spent looking at my wallet and then looking at the ceiling of my room, this time I actually went somewhere! And, in the grand tradition of exciting, beer-drenched spring breakers of these United States, I went to... the Appalachian Mountains! Home of small island paradises, piña colada flavored girl drinks, and... oh, wait. Yes, my boyfriend Aaron and I packed up his car with necessary road trip supplies (cheese doodles, the Germs discography, and a change of underwear) and went south... to the mountains!

For me, the Appalachian Mountains rank up there with Lucky Charms, the Dillinger Four, and the collected works of Studs Terkel! Yes, I love the Appalachian Mountains! There is not a more attractive piece of America anywhere (with the possible exception of the area encompassing Dr. Frank circa 1994)! Hills, winding one-lane roads, tiny valleys, huge skies!

There is also not a more impoverished and completely destitute area of America, as far as I know. Burnt-out trailers, poor access to electricity and running water, no jobs, no public transportation, roads in horrible conditions, rivers drained and used as a dumping ground for junked cars, the tops of hills being literally cut off in preparation for strip mining (one of the few jobs left in many of these areas), and the general feeling that this is a place America has forgotten. You always hear about ghettos and urban poverty. When was the last time you saw a photo of a West Virginian man living in his car? Or a collapsed one-room home in Kentucky, with clothes and broken furniture spilling out onto the yard?

So, if you really want to be shocked and awed (in a more appropriate sense of the phrase!) come to Appalachia. Now, onto the story! Warning: if you're looking for some stupid "gee, these people are such Hicks!" stories, go fuck yourself! Moving on!

Our first stop? Matewan, West Virginia. I am such a ridiculous creature of habit, that, not only do I always go to the same restaurant and order the same thing, or only listen to the same Cleveland Bound Death Sentence record for weeks, I also go to the same small town in Appalachia. I think I am one of the few Midwesterners who can say, "I have been to Matewan - twice!" To protest against allegations of insanity, allow me to explain!

## Stop the Jokes! Hold the Presses! It's a (Very) Brief History of Labor Conflict in Matewan!

For us labor history geeks, Matewan is quite an important little town. In the 1920s, it was the center of a huge uprising of coal miners. Coal mining, as you probably know, is even less fun than explaining what punk rock is to your relatives. Lots of people who worked in coal mines died in their 30s and 40s - exhausted after working six or seven days a week for most of their lives. Matewan, in the middle of the West Virginia coal fields, was at the center of the action.

In January of 1920, the newly elected President of the United Mine Workers of America, John L. Lewis, announced a big organizing campaign for the southern Appalachia region. Since the town was so small and isolated, it was easy to prevent union organizers from traveling there. The coal operators hired the notorious Baldwin-Felts detective agency to police the town, spy on suspected dissidents, and disrupt any union organizing. Those who joined the union were fired, harassed, and kicked out of their company-owned homes. Unfortunately for the detectives, the Matewan police chief was Sid Hatfield, a skinny former coal miner and rather violent guy who completely supported the unions and resented the disruption of the small community by the detectives. The Mayor of Matewan, C. Testerman, also supported the union campaign and made sure the union meetings were protected.

So, when thirteen detectives came to Matewan on May 19, 1920 to evict striking coal miners and their families from the company-owned homes, the mayor and the police chief of Matewan decided to act. Right on the railroad tracks, off of the main street, gunfire erupted (it is still disputed who fired first). Townspeople grabbed their guns and ran to the battle, firing as they went. The whole battle only lasted only a few minutes. Seven detectives, two miners and Mayor Testerman were killed.

Sid Hatfield became a folk hero for miners all around the United States. He even ended up marrying the deceased mayor's wife a few weeks later! On July 1, the miners went out on strike. Over a year later, while Hatfield walked down the McDowell County courthouse steps in the nearby town of Welch, the Baldwin-Felts detectives got their revenge by killing him.

The murder of Hatfield, the increasingly violent anti-union tactics, and the horrific working conditions resulted in the biggest armed insurrection in the United States besides the Civil War. About 10,000 striking miners formed an army and decided to march through Mingo and Logan Counties. The march began on

August 24 when the men, wearing red bandanas around their necks - earning them the nickname "rednecks" - basically took over the region militarily. It was total chaos (uh, punk, dude!). The local police could not control thousands of miners who were hiding out in mountains, firing on officers, and refusing to work.

After a few days, the miners attempted to conquer Blair Mountain, on the edge of Logan County. As the strikers marched (shouting "On to Mingo!") the federal government sent in the army to fight against them, and even dropped bombs!

Of course, the miners could not match the military strength of the U.S. government, and by September 4, the march was over. Several strikers and organizers were tried for treason against the United States. Only one person was convicted on the charge, and he promptly skipped bail. The government also charged 325 strikers with murder. Most were either acquitted or pardoned. The union was defeated; it did not gain significant strength again until the 1930s.

## End of History! More Dumb Stories!

So, we traveled to Matewan, birthplace of the Second Civil War, to poke around and see what could be seen! Since I had already been there before, I directed Aaron to the railroad tracks. Across from the tracks is a big brick building that still has bullet holes from the battle! And, if you press a button on the side of the building, you get to hear an (embarrassingly loud) collection of oral histories about the battle. Punk rock! We put our fingers in the bullet holes and were stared at by two local teenagers, and then made our way out of town.

We pulled into a gas station on the Kentucky side of town and asked the woman at the counter if she happened to know where Sid Hatfield was buried. "Nope," she said, and gave us a brochure to help us out. The brochure didn't have any information, but then, as we were leaving the parking lot, Aaron looked up the hill and said, "Hey, doesn't that look like a cemetery?" Indeed, it was! And it was the eternal home of none other than Sid Hatfield himself, overlooking the gas station! Alright!

We walked around the tiny cemetery, staring at the graves of dozens of Hatfields. But Sid's grave was the best! (Note: The next time someone tries to tell you that G.G. Allin is the most punk dude ever, point 'em Sid Hatfield's way!)

## Pikeville Is Go!

After we left Matewan, it was on to Pikeville, Kentucky! Why? Who knows! Note: If you travel to Appalachia, do not pay any attention to the different sizes and bolding of city's names on the map. West Virginia and

Maddy



Kentucky's idea of a big city is roughly equivalent to Dee Dee Ramone's idea of a rap album. So, although Pikeville was in bold and large font on our map, it was still pretty small. We drove around, looking for a place to stay. The first few motels we found charged at least fifty-five bucks a night! For Pikeville? I don't think so! So, we kept looking, until we came upon a small hotel in the center of the "old downtown." Upon inquiring, we found out it was just \$32 a night! Yes! Punk rock!

We walked upstairs with a guy carrying a case of Budweiser. Alright! Clearly, this was a permanent residence for most of its occupants. And then we saw the room. Or, rather, we smelled the room. I have never encountered a stronger sense of air freshener in all my days on this air-freshened planet! Whatever smell it was put there to mask – mildew, rotting food, decaying flesh – NOTHING could have been as bad! And of course, the sheets were covered in cigarette holes and stains. But then the place redeemed itself when Aaron opened up a drawer and found eleven bucks! Alright! A \$21 night in Pikeville! After walking around downtown (full of deserted buildings and absolutely no people anywhere minus a few teenagers "whooping it up"), we headed to Little Caesar's for pizza, and to the liquor store (to spend our eleven bucks on high quality vodka!). Note: When faced with a horrible smell, let's say, the smell of an air freshener, do NOT, I repeat DO NOT allow that pre-existing smell to cross paths with the smell of pizza. Oh, the horror! Oh, the nastiness! Oh, the unbelievably gross sticky sweet smell! Eeck!

#### Harlan County, Here We Come!

The next morning, we were up early and on our way to Harlan County, Kentucky, scene of many a violent labor struggle! While riding around on tiny, winding mountain roads, we came across one of the single greatest finds of my young life. A tour of a coal mine – given by an old coal miner! I cannot possibly explain how cool this was! The tour guide, Bob, who was around seventy years old, called Aaron "son" and "boy," gave us all a lot of hugs, and kept pulling Aaron aside to explain "something technical, son, that I think you'll be interested in."

When we were inside one of the outlying buildings, he pointed to a framed photo on the

wall. "Do you know who that is?" he asked. "That's John L. Lewis. The greatest man who ever lived, that's who." Come on! Does it get any cooler than that?

Bob told us about how his father had worked in the coal mines seven days a week, before the union won a contract. He showed us coal miner's hats, tools and cars.

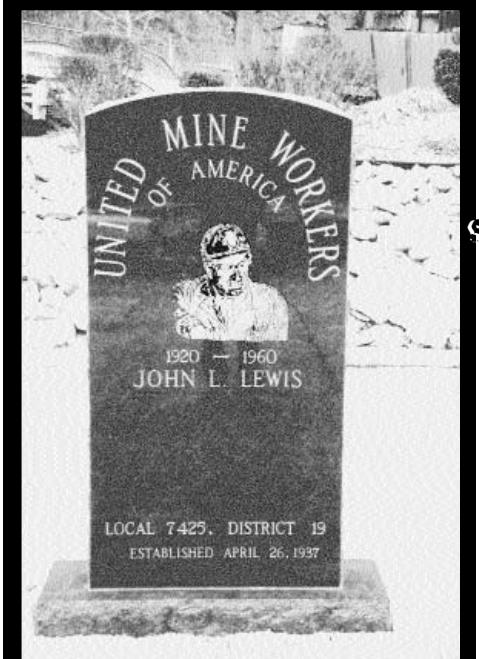
After showing us around the buildings, he took us into the coal mine itself. It hadn't been in operation since the 1960s, so the entrance was closed off by a series of fences. When we got to the last fence, well within the coal mine, Bob said, "Well, I can't really take you any farther. Insurance reasons, you know." We stood there for a while, in the darkness, trying to peer off to the side, where the tunnels began. "Aw what the hell," he finally said. "Come on, just don't tell anyone." And with that, we went further into the mine! It was really dark – the tunnels were no more than three feet high – and went back for miles into the earth. There we were, peering into a small hole where dozens of men had died (and several bodies had not been recovered) and where thousands of men had once spent most of their lives. And now it was empty.

Bob started sloshing around the mine. "You want some coal?" he asked. "Sure!" we said. He grabbed a big chunk – the size of my head, and handed it to me. Then he went to get another one – running around, trying not to fall amongst the water and the coal rocks. I now own a chunk of Kentucky coal! After saying goodbye to Bob, we drove around some more in Appalachia, and then headed north for Pittsburgh, leaving the deserted coal mines of Appalachia for the deserted steel mills of Pittsburgh. Do I know how to have fun on my spring break or what? Anyway, I got to touch bullet holes, hear people talk about battling it out in the streets with labor spies, and got a chunk of coal. Cancun, eat your heart out!

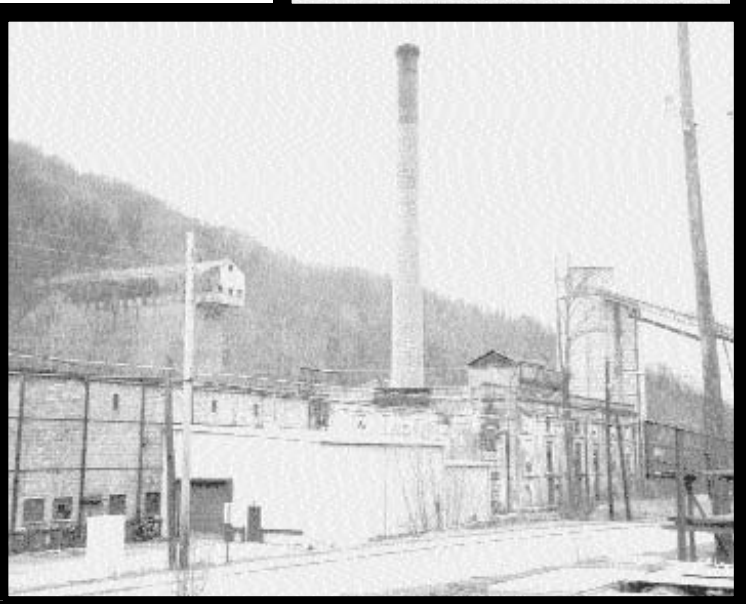
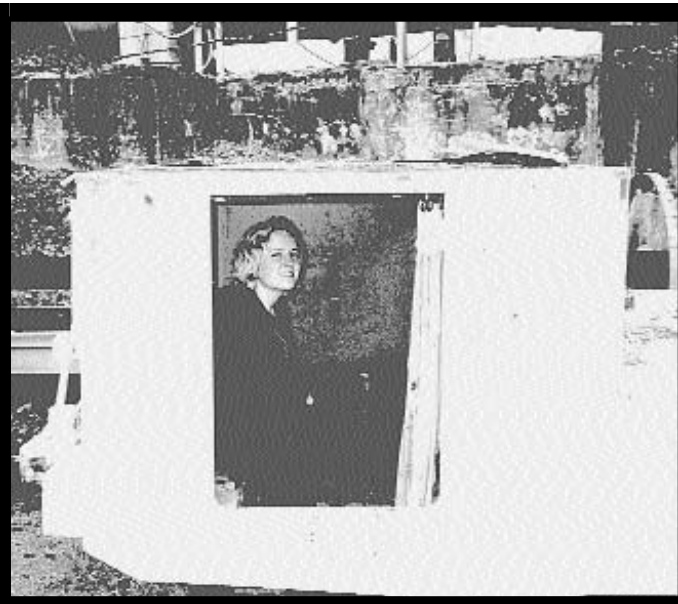
–Maddy

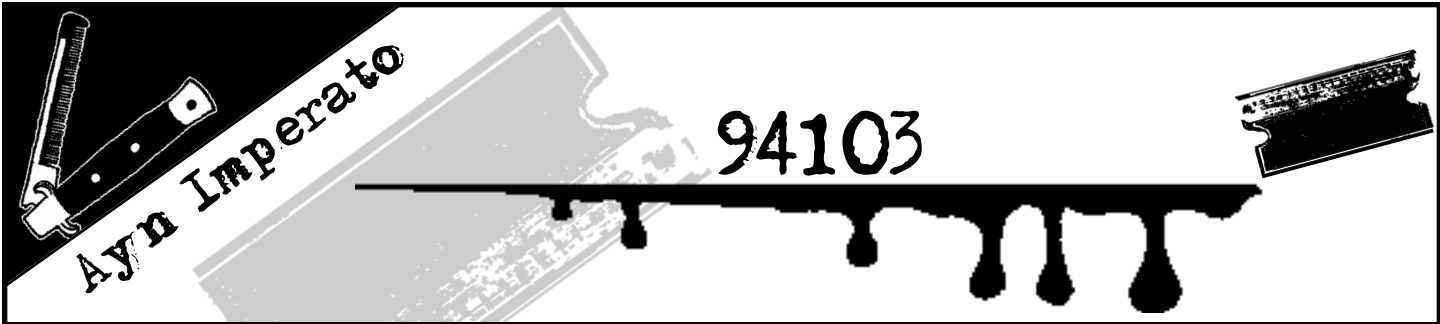


P.S. Tight Pants #10 is out! Order it from [www.razorcake.com](http://www.razorcake.com). I'm going to Russia and France from May to August, so if you don't hear back from me for weeks and weeks, that's why. If you need to contact me (for cereal-shopping advice or to find out how I can manage to continually write such stupid columns) you can email me at: [cerealcore@hotmail.com](mailto:cerealcore@hotmail.com).



Maddy





Maybe that's why all the little kids in my new neighborhood are fat little butterballs - they are eating Mickey Mouse shaped ice cream treats at 8:30 in the morning.

### Far From It

It's time to move. Again. It seems like that's all I've done this year. First it was a move further down into the Mission, after a many-year stint near Market and Valencia. It was hard to leave a rent-controlled apartment in San Francisco, especially one with an odd, bittersweet charm. We would have to pay nearly double to live anywhere else in the city. But after a while, you just give in.

First it was the three-month-long construction in the building. There's only so much banging, sawing, and drilling you can take before you finally throw in your rent-controlled towel. It's the one legal thing a landlord can do here that you can't protest. They're allowed to make improvements to the building after all and those things just take time and noise. *Lots and lots of time and noise.*

Then it was the birds. I mean the pigeons building nests was sweet, but these giant black crows took control of the building, perching on the wires outside. They glared in the windows at me, giving me the hairy eyeball. My neighbor told me that the crows were a sign of change, which just seemed to me all the more reason to split. And when the local coffee shop, Friends Café, got hi-jacked and cleaned out by local crack addicts, I knew it was truly, finally, time. We boxed everything up and drove our packed pickup truck past the boarded-up café to our new tiny, sparkling expensive-as-hell apartment.

I still think about the old place though. It's strange the things you miss. It's the little weird things. The circa-'70s brown, swirled bathroom linoleum. The tiny stained glass windows tucked into the closet and bathroom. The sink that separated from the wall and hung precariously towards your nether regions every time you used the john. The recycling truck that would pour the

glass bottles into the back of its bed in a thunderous clatter every Thursday morning. The cool curved Victorian-style bay windows. The way the heater would always crank on full blast in the middle of the day when you least needed it, and would shut off cold in the early morning before work, so in winter you could nearly see your breath in

carved glass doorknobs. The bald crazy woman in green jellies who used to walk underneath our bedroom window at like six in the morning.

The smallness of the old place created some troubling problems. Our old apartment was so small, every time my boyfriend and I had sex the front curtains would start to

uration - the floor in every room seemed to be connected in some way to the windowsills in the bedroom. Only the far reaches of the kitchen would not trigger the shimmying curtains, and there was only a cold hard table there. It was privacy or comfort, and comfort won most of the time. I think I'll miss those trembling curtains most of all.



This new place is different, and cool in its own way. There are kids around here. Some of them set up a makeshift basketball hoop on a telephone pole, and after school a bunch of chubby kids start shooting wildly from the sidewalk, narrowly missing the cars parked along side it. Other days they have water balloon fights, and nearly bean the innocent people passing to buy a quart of milk at the corner store. In the morning, from the front room, you can hear the man with the *Michoacana* ice cream cart roll by, playing a little tinkling song. It's nothing like the blaring circus songs we used to hear from the ice cream trucks in Jersey. It's almost like a subliminal sound that only children can hear. I can't imagine how many ice cream-on-a-sticks and cones he will sell on a foggy Tuesday morning, with all the little kids already in school. Maybe they buy one while waiting for the school bus in the morning. Maybe that's why all the little kids in my new neighborhood are fat little butterballs - they are eating Mickey Mouse shaped ice cream treats at 8:30 in the morning.

But things still move too fast in this town. The days sneak and slide by sometimes like dirty little thieves, stealing time. Nights of working too much to survive in a town that requires a lot. You gotta slow down to even see it.

It's my new ritual in this new place - first thing in the morning, making the coffee, then sitting in the brief silence of the morning on the couch in the front room, listen-

some rooms. The peeling, most likely lead-based paint. The way the peeling, most likely lead-based paint began to bubble out on one wall, when the guy upstairs left his bathtub faucet on too long. The

shake and tremble. So every time we did it, our neighbors and everyone walking by knew what we were up to in there. It didn't matter what room we were in - it was some weird floorboard to window config-

ing to that tinkling ice cream bell. The sun streams in unbelievably bright, the coffee hot and potent. During these little moments, everything is all right and you can see and hear a little bit of life.

It's like sitting in the eye of a storm. Outside of the living room, the streets explode in war protest. Outside of the city the world moves, fights, struggles, and dies like chess pieces in a meaningless struggle for economic control. With all this going on I feel uneasy, angry, and more often, powerless. Though as long as I have this little quiet space to go to, I still feel okay. I feel lucky to even be able to feel peace in a big city in an even bigger world. Though I know much outside this room is not and will never be okay, I'm still glad to have this couch in this little home. It makes me feel not so far from the world.

One night I drove up to Potrero Hill where you can get the best, clear view of San Francisco. I never knew I could feel as much at peace as I do when I'm sitting up there in the dark. When I'm up there looking at all the lights, I can get perspective on my life and my city. I like to get a good look at where I live, in all its loud, glittery, and polluted glory. The bridge

strung like an electric necklace of lights across the water, with its red flashing cherry lights on top. The light-up "Yahoo" sign with one or two bulbs burnt out, a relic from its internet boom-and-bust past. The clock tower, the ships sailing by, the headlights of cars moving across the city. But I realized it one day – I would never be able to see San Francisco from this view in my own house, or possibly any decent view ever again. I'd never get ahead here, always looking at it from a distance. I would never be able to afford this town. It was like a beautiful thing I couldn't touch.

I knew then that I had to leave not only my old apartment, but the whole town. I had to find a view of a city that I could see up close, one that wouldn't break me. I had something of a home, but it was starting to feel more like I was enduring, than experiencing it. I think you have to find your place in the world to be happy. It might not even be a place, but the process of constantly moving. That place where you feel inspired, yet comfortable. Just home. It might take a lifetime to find it but that's what we have.

–Ayn







Money

# Lazy Mick



*I felt bad. I wanted Raquel to come back and touch my penis again. I thought it was something I could probably get used to without much difficulty.*



*The war in Iraq has caused me to reflect on my own experiences as a cog in the industrial military complex. When I was just a wee little mickie, I enlisted in the navy and was sent overseas where I did my patriotic duty in whorehouses and brothels all over the Western Pacific. Here is the tale of my first visit to such an establishment.*

Ah, spring. When a young sailor's fancy turns to thoughts of poontang.

One of the paradoxes of the seaman experience is that while there is a great deal of truth behind the stereotype of the philandering man-of-the-sea with a girl in every port-of-call, in our home ports we are regarded with the contempt typically reserved for mentally retarded sex offenders. San Diego was no exception.

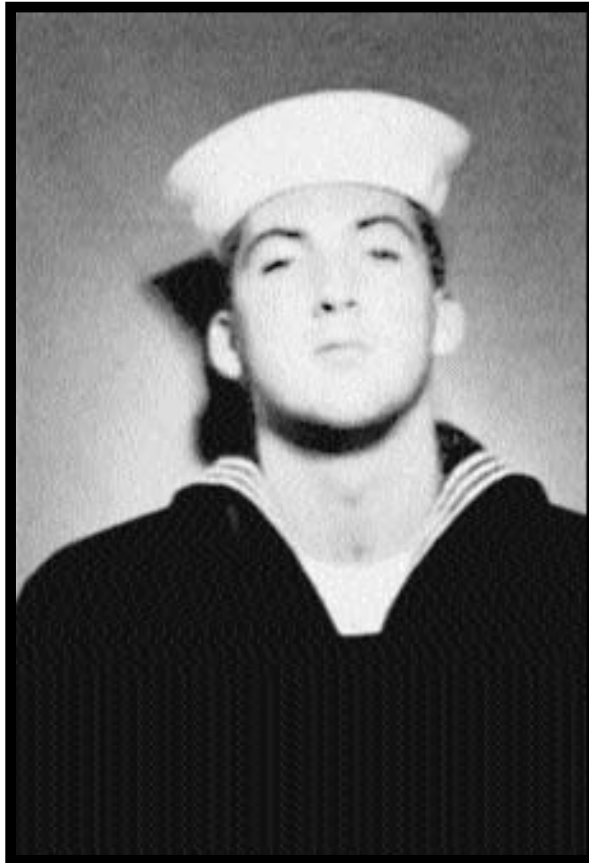
It didn't matter that we were young, virile and carried large sums of cash. Indeed, our youth worked against us. We couldn't get into bars or buy the booze we needed to loosen our tongues and embolden our courage. We tried to disguise ourselves. We dressed in black at all-ages goth-rock clubs. We tried to blend in by associating with jocks, frat guys and skinheads - anyone with short hair; but the girls always managed to sniff us out as if we were doused in Eau de Squid. To your typical San Diego girl, we might as well have had dead albatrosses hanging around our necks.

To add insult to injury, Spring Break was right around the corner, a time when booze-crazed coeds flocked to the beaches in droves. I went to sleep each night thinking somewhere in southern California a dozen tequila-addled college girls were consenting to be doused by a foaming torrent of Coronas spurting from a hundred longnecks in an amateur wet t-shirt contest. For the sex-starved sailor of the seventh fleet, the solution was obvious: Tijuana.

It was the answer to all our prayers. Liquor was cheap, the laws were lax, and thousands of California girls poured over the border every Friday and Saturday night to drink, dance, and go wild. TJ was also a place where things could go terribly wrong. Muggers, hustlers, and whores knew the navy pay schedule and learned to identify the country bumpkin, the pockets of their Wranglers bulging with cash. We heard stories of sailors getting beaten, stabbed, or el-kabonked and having their wallets lifted, but **RAZORCAKE** 12 they were apocryphal tales passed

from shipmate to shipmate that got embellished with each retelling.

No one loved Mexico more than Carter. Everybody knew he had a thing for Mexican whores, and whenever someone accompanied Carter to TJ, they always came back with lurid stories about the things they'd seen. Many a sailor's knowledge of human sexuality was expanded by listening to these improbable tales of debauchery, but I will always be grateful to Carter for accompanying me on my first, unforgettable trip south of the border.



It was the day before payday and I was flat broke. I'd resigned myself to an evening with one of the books from the cardboard box in the after crew's lounge that constituted the ship's library. Carter prowled the berthing compartment, looking for someone to accompany him to Tijuana.

"Yo, Ruland. Come with me."

I told him my financial situation, but he wouldn't take no for an answer and offered to pay for my drinks. We weren't what you'd call

friends, but free drinks were free drinks. I agreed to go.

We walked to the main exit and caught a trolley to San Ysidro. We walked across the border and jumped in the first cab. I'd heard a lot about Tijuana, how poor the people were, how badly it smelled, but the only thing I could smell was Carter's cologne. We got out, paid the driver, and stood before a door with a smoke-streaked sign above it that read "Bedfellows." A greeter pinwheeled his arms to get us to come inside.

"Here?"

Carter nodded and the greeter ushered us into the bar. It was not at all what I expected. There was no stage or dance floor, just drab tables and wobbly chairs and some booths along the wall. It was a sad bar, maybe the saddest I'd ever seen.

"Have you been here before?"

"I can't remember," Carter said. "I think so."

Carter was a black guy from Alabama. He spoke in the clear, unaccented voice of a professional actor, and if I closed my eyes while he talked I'd never guess he was black or from the south. Carter didn't have many friends on the ship. I think people suspected that he thought he was better than them, but I didn't pretend to know much about it. This was my first trip to TJ and the only thing I was interested in was having a good time.

We sat in a booth. A waiter came and took our order and immediately brought back our beers - cold Tecates in red, sweaty cans. A big woman stuffed into a gaudy blue dress sat down next to me in the booth. Her hair was thick and shiny. Her make-up was intense. She told us her name was Raquel.

"You have pretty eyes," she said.

"Thank you," I said.

"So blue."

"Thank you."

She put her hand in my lap. Her long, lacquered fingernails danced on my thigh. "You want to make love to me," she said. It was not a question.

I did not want to make love to Raquel. Her ass was wider than mine. Something about her fingernails, the questions that were not questions, intimidated the hell out of me. I didn't want to tell her I had no desire to have sex with her because I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

I smiled.

Raquel grabbed my penis.

"I am the best," she said.

Please go away, I wanted to say, but I had been stricken speechless. Carter came to my rescue.

“We don’t have any money.”

It was as if someone had zapped Raquel with a smile eraser. Her eyes went dead. Her interest in us had been reduced to negative nothing. She slid out of the booth and moved on to the next customer. I felt bad. I wanted Raquel to come back and touch my penis again. I thought it was something I could probably get used to without much difficulty. I told Carter what had happened.

“Did she take it out?”

“No,” I said. “She just kind of grabbed it.”

“That’s probably a good thing.”

“Why’s that?”

“Because she’s a he.”

“No!”

“Yes!”

We argued. Carter presented the evidence.

“She’s wearing a wig. She has huge hands. She has an Adam’s apple.”

“What’s that got to do anything?”

“Only dudes have Adam’s apples. That’s why they’re named after Adam.”

“Really?”

“Are all white people from Virginia as simple as you?”

I shook my head. I refused to believe I’d been fondled by a man.

“Look,” he whispered, “here she comes again.”

Raquel made a big show out of ignoring us as she walked past our booth. She had huge feet. Protruding below her belly was the ghost of what I hoped was not a bulge. She was mannish as all get out.

“I can’t wait to tell everyone you got felt up by a dude!” Carter laughed and laughed. I’d made his night.

I buried my head in my hands. The incident brought the number of people who had touched my penis to two, and one of them was a man. I wondered if having a man touch my penis meant I was technically gay. There was no way I could ask Carter about it. Not now. Not ever.

“Let’s go somewhere else,” I said. “Someplace with real women.”

“I know just the place.”

We left Bedfellows (duh!) and went to a roadhousey looking joint around the corner called G-Spot. There was a green neon sign that read

GIRLS  
GIRLS  
GIRLS.

Music and laughter and cheers poured through the open doorway. This was a much happier bar, I thought. The ushers – “Amigos! Amigos!” – ushered us inside and left us with a man who took us into the saloon. The place was packed with a hundred or so screaming marines going apeshit over a woman in a red bikini dancing to “Highway to Hell” on a raised stage. Pesos were flying. Bartenders brought the leatherneck platters of tequila shots in little plastic

cup. They drank and pounded the table with their fists. Woo-ha! Woo-ha!

“I don’t know about this,” I said.

“Relax. If anyone asks, we’ll say we’re in the Corps.”

“I’m not going to impersonate a marine.”

“All of a sudden you’re proud to be a squid?”

“No.”

“All right then. You’re a jarhead.”

We found a pair of stools parked on the edge of the stage. The bar had a Tecate and tequila special and we ordered one of each. We set our beers down and drank our shots. My stomach

and attractive, and there wasn’t a big-footed, man-handed imposter among them. They danced three songs and selected a man from the audience, whom they took upstairs to their dressing room and let him pay for the pleasure of fucking their brains out – but only if they felt like it. It was not unusual, Carter explained, for the girls not to invite someone upstairs. Looking around the room at the bellowing marines I could see why.

“So they pick you?” I asked.

“That’s how it works.”

“What if you’re ugly?”

“Then you better throw down some money.”

“What if you don’t have any money?”

“You go to Bedfellows and hope some dude cops your crank.”

The dancer in the red bikini finished dancing and the marines thundered their approval. She climbed the stairs to the dressing rooms – alone – and the marines booed.

The next dancer took the stage and for a few seconds I forgot to breathe. I’d never been to a strip club before, and I’d always imagined the dancers as sultry seductresses with exquisite costumes. I expected veils. Diaphanous, jasmine-scented veils. And veils are what I got. The dancer whirled and twirled and left veils floating in the air. She used every inch of the stage. Her skin was the color of candy apples. Gold chains with tinkling charms adorned her ankles. Another slender chain encircled her waist and a pendant dangled above the soft cave of her navel. She was the most enchanting partially naked person I’d ever seen.

“She’s amazing,” I said.

“She’s something,” Carter agreed.

She made the marines lose the few faculties that remained in their possession. They jostled one another to get closer to the stage, spilling drinks all over the place. One marine was so excited he emptied an entire beer over his own head. I never wanted to be that drunk, or that stupid.

In between songs they clamored for the dancer’s attention, whose name, the DJ told us, was

Isabella.

“Isabella,” I said. “What a great name.”

“Fuck a name,” Carter said. “Look at that ass.”

Isabella was down to her last two veils – one bound her breasts, the other was tied like a sash around her hips. She was all shadows and curves in a thin, gauzy bikini. The song was a Mexican song; the words were in Spanish. I wanted to know what the words meant so that I could tattoo them on my heart. I was starting to wonder how long Carter and I would have to wait before it was Isabella’s turn to dance again when the song came to an end. She stood before our table with one hand on her hip, and the other pointed at me. She curled her finger into her fist.

Come.

To.

Me.



felt like the inside of a carburetor.

“So this is a whorehouse?”

“Yes.”

“It’s my first one.”

“Congratulations.”

“I appreciate you bringing me here.”

“No problem, just don’t ask me to touch your dick.”

“Will you cut me some slack with the penis touching?”

Some marines were looking at us funny, so we whistled at the dancer. We did not want a hundred skilleheads thinking there were gay sailors in their midst.

Carter explained the dynamics of the G-Spot. Technically, it was a whorehouse but the emphasis was on the dancing. The women were much better looking than the women at Bedfellows. They were young, supple, slender

Money

The marines shouted, "Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!"

I couldn't believe it. I was in a room surrounded by grunting, sweating men who would probably be breaking bottles over their heads if prior experience with this form of entertainment hadn't convinced them that the negatives, which were many, far outweighed the positives. Of course she'd picked me! But there was a problem: I didn't have enough money. I didn't have any money.

Carter pressed a wad of bills into my hand.

"You have to do this," he said.

"I know."

"Thank me, you fuck."

"Thank you."

"Go."

"How much do I give her?"

"All of it."

"Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!" the marines insisted.

I mounted the stage. Isabella took me by the hand and led me up the stairs. She took me to a tiny room with no windows. There was no bed, just a mat with a blanket on it and a sink.

"You pay me now."

I paid her.

"What you want?"

I wasn't sure. Like most people, I wanted to be loved, but I was pretty sure this wasn't the place for that. I was in Tijuana, Mexico, desperately trying to look like I knew what I was doing, as if never having paid for sex was something to be embarrassed about. Luckily, Isabella had some experience in these matters. I was grateful for this, but I secretly wished she'd smile at me again, and I tried not to be too disappointed when she did not.

"You get suck or fuck," she said. "Not both. What you want?"

"Suck," I said.

Isabella knelt on the mat.

"Come here."

I went to her. She unbuckled my belt and unzipped my jeans and pulled down my boxers.

"Put this on."

She handed me a condom. I unwrapped it and put it on.

She sucked. She sucked and sucked and sucked. She sucked until her mouth was tired.

"Did you come?"

"No."

"Fuck me," she said.

She lay down on the mat and spread her legs.

We fucked. We fucked and fucked and fucked. We fucked until I came. She rolled away and went to the sink. I heard water running. Splashing sounds. I caught my breath while she cleaned herself. She came back to the mat.

"Thank you," I said.

"You go now."

"That was really great."

"I have to get dressed."

"What was the name of that song you danced to?"

"'I Want to Know What Love Is.' Please go now."

I was making her uncomfortable. I did not want to make Isabella uncomfortable. I slipped on my shoes and picked up my shirt.

"Goodbye, Isabella."

"Goodbye."

"Thank you."

"Go."

I descended the stairs. The marines – My brothers! My amigos! – rose to their feet and cheered. I pumped my fists in the air and reveled in their exultation.

Carter shook his head.

"Did you just say 'Semper Fi, do or die'?"

Carter asked.

I shrugged sheepishly.

"You simple fuck."

Marines clapped me on the back. They wanted to know what I was drinking. I smiled the smile of someone who had just had sex for the first time in over six months, and didn't have to tell a soul about it because everyone already knew. Carter was clearly envious. How could he not have been?

"I don't want to hear about it," he said.

"Just tell me it was good."

"It was good."

"Fucker."

We did not stay much longer. Carter was nearly out of money and he feared some of the marines had caught on we were squids. We walked across the border to San Ysidro and took the trolley back to 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. The next day Carter told everyone on the ship what had happened and no one heard the story of a how a man had touched my penis. It occurred to me that I'd had my penis touched by two people in one night – another first. Some snipes I didn't like heard about my experience and wanted to know the name of the whorehouse.

"Bedfellows," I said. "Ask for Raquel."

–Money





Rev. Nørb

# Love, Nørb



*Christene, at this point in time completely drunk off her ass, spins around on her barstool, loudly slurs “yyyYOU’VE GOT TH’ BIGGEST COCK!!!”*

Dear Twins fans:

You will, no doubt, be “stoked,” as the kids say (or, perhaps, said), to learn that, following last issue’s installment of “Love, Nørb” (America’s most rampantly unsuccessful advice column!), i A. put pants on; B. had the purple dye come out of my hair; (thusly rendering my trainwreck of a coiffure [sorry, midlife crisis] a bleached-out mop that apparently causes me to resemble The Little Dutch Boy [that, i guess, plus my staunch refusal to remove my finger from the dyke]), and C. had the rubber Elvis sunglasses, silver girls’ jacket and pink plastic peace sign necklace i was so strikingly depicted in last issue stolen from my vehicle when hoodlums intent on befouling my Valentine’s Day even more than it would be intrinsically befouled broke into my car and heisted my Powerpuff Girls™ backpack (which also included my “The Knack... Is Back!” long sleeve t-shirt i got when my band opened for the Knack and the Figgs on Memorial Day 1994 and my cool tie-dyed pants [and, of course, you’re saying “how in the living FUCK can tie-dyed pants be COOL?” – which, is, of course, the great tragedy of the situation: They actually really WERE], not to mention my rubber Elvis mask and a quantity of an illicit substance to be named later) (although, on the bright side, they did leave me the champagne and Justice League of America fruitsnacks). So, ha! The last laugh is thine! Twins-instigated karma was visited upon my head (actually, more like visited upon my passenger side karma window) in swift and sure fashion! You win! I lose! Whip me with Bud Selig’s liver lips! Enjoy the backpack! I give! And any time you want you can tell Kirby Puckett to stop pissing in my driveway; i’ve learned my lesson! Yessirree, from this day forward, i, Rev. Nørb, America’s Greatest Living Advice Columnist™, solemnly vow to never again use my position of great power and influence to demean, defile, and otherwise cauterize other people’s sports teams (further, all my ranting and raving how the Minnesota Twins could suck my dick and what-not caused me to forget to pass along the anecdote about how when we were in sixth grade, my friend Pat DeGroot told me that his older sister would dress up like Woody of the Bay City Rollers and sing “Saturday Night” into a hairbrush in the mirror – which isn’t really that great of a story, but he also told me that once her boyfriend wanted to get it on, and she apparently didn’t, so, under cover of darkness, she slathered her palm with Vaseline™, presented said hand as The Vaginal Orifice, and the neophyte male joyfully humped away, thinking he had gotten full-on Hot Coital Action. Now, obviously, one must make

allowances for a certain modicum of unfamiliarity and confusion in these situations, but, all the same, i can’t help but wonder how the guy didn’t notice that there was, say, oh, i don’t know, NO TORSO attached to the alleged vagina? And how did the guy reconcile the presence of, say, knuckles and such? What was he thinking, “wow, five amazingly erect clitorii, surely today i am a man!”??? And, continuing in this same throbbing vein, an ex-girlfriend of mine once told me a story about how some classmate of hers, in a drunken swoon, fucked a CARSEAT – which i can understand, after a fashion [desperate times do, after all, require desperate measures], except for the part where the guy thought the car seat was a real person’s pussy. I mean... ? How confused are you allowed to be in these situations? And what was he thinking during foreplay? “Wow, spare change! And here I thought that was just the punchline to an old joke!” I mean, i admit that i’ve – quite by accident, i can assure you – thrust my manhood a few times into the alternate non-vaginal aperture in the female pelvic neighborhood, but somehow that doesn’t seem quite as ludicrous as, i dunno, aiming for the vagina and scoring the carseat or a hand [‘course, it actually IS pretty funny, in a slapstick kinda way, except no one else involved but me ever sees the humor in such comedic anal blunders]). But, yes, no more of the bully pulpit! No more belittling of enemy sports teams, nor their fans! Hell, i’ll even embrace soccer as a real sport! I’ll support Division-I lacrosse at pricey liberal arts colleges! From this day forward, i, Rev. Nørb, will channel all energies formerly used to castigate Sports Teams I Really Fucking Hate into bringing YOU, the reader, the BEST DAMN ADVICE COLUMN money can buy! And that’s my promise to YOU, America! Now, on to the mailbag...

Hey Nørb.

A quick question. Last year, the Cincinnati Bengals were a horrible 2-14, and all my friends down at the bar made fun of me all year for being, what seems, the ONLY Bengals fan in the city (they made it out to be the world, but I know there’s another one out there somewhere... there has to be!). Now seeing as I know more about hockey (being Canadian and living in a smaller city in northwestern Ontario) than football, I just need some advice on what to tell my friends to make them believe, like I do, that the Cincinnati Bengals are going all the way next year. Thanks Nørb.

poorman collective  
apparently somewhere in Canada

Dear Mr. Collective:

Look, Jack, i’m an advice columnist, not a goddamn miracle worker. Give you hope that the Cincinnati Bengals are going all the way next year? Gee, what the fuck ELSE can i do for you while i’m up, publish a recipe for a miracle salve that will grow back Rwandans’ amputated limbs? Imbue you with super-strength and the power of flight? Add three inches to your penis overnight, guaranteed? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU EVEN WRITING IN FOR, MON??? You don’t need an advice columnist, you need a goddamn Mental Health Center! Call your local Crisis Intervention Hotline! Possibly your local Poison Control Center!! And for God’s sakes, don’t drive anywhere or operate any heavy machinery!!! Thanks for the letter, raving lunatic!

Love,  
Nørb

...and THAT, my friends, is the complete and total extent of the letters this issue. I’ll be leaving now for a nice, relaxing evening of drinking Pabst™ with a lemon wedge out of a martini glass and watching basketball highlights... oh, wait... operator error. There WAS one more letter in the ol’ Rockin’ Rev Mailbag! To wit:

Dear Rev. Nørb,

American Airlines™ recently sent me a letter offering me five free magazine subscriptions if i cash in my (and my bandmates) frequent flyer miles today. Should i do it?

Very truly yours,  
Rev. Nørb  
Green Bay WI

Dear Nørb:

Oh yeah, totally. They’ll never know. I just did the same thing recently, got subscriptions to a whole shitload of magazines, many of which i’ll never read even once. I got like *Time*, *Rolling Stone*, *Wired*, *MacWorld* and this *Maxim* music spin-off called *Blender*, totally free. Why the fuck not, i guess. *Rolling Stone* has always bothered me (to this day i have never purchased an issue, although free copies have occasionally come into my possession), something about their readership voting (1979’s *London Calling* as the “Album of the Decade” – for the eighties – always seemed cruelly fitting. *Blender* – modestly subtitled “The Ultimate Music Magazine” – kind of bothers me in the same way *SPIN* does: apart from the given that i, as one might expect, do not honestly give a fuck about the comings

Rev. Nørb



**THE ROCK GODDESS 50!  
(REV[NØRB]ISED VERSION)**

and goings of Eminem, Avril Lavigne (or whatever the fuck that chick's name is), or Audioslave, just the ads and the format alone make my fucking skin crawl. Allow me to illustrate: Inside front cover: Guess™ ad. Page 1: Another Guess™ ad. Pages 2 & 3: Calvin Klein™ ad. Pages 4 & 5: Fila™ ad. Pages 6 & 7: American Eagle Outfitters™ ad. Pages 8 & 9: Hyundai™ ad. Pages 10 & 11: Sony Playstation™ ad. Pages 12 & 13: Arizona Jean Company™ ad. The first even vaguely music-related item is page 14's SXSW ad. The first actual bit of music-related content other than a table of contents or something is on PAGE 26. The back cover is a Giorgio Armani™ ad. I mean, WHAT the FUCKING FUCK has this society come to? Ads for fucking DESIGNER CLOTHES and COLOGNE and – jeezus say it ain't so! – FUCKING JAPANESE AUTOMOBILES in “The Ultimate Music Magazine???” And nobody kicked their ass yet???. This is something VILE and UN-RIGHT, to say the least. I mean, when i was like 13, 14, 15, i used to read *Creem* magazine, where they would actually have ads for things like GUITARS and AMPS and HEADPHONES and RECORD CARE PRODUCTS and OTHER ITEMS SOMEWHAT PERTINENT TO THE ROCK CULTURE. *Blender* has ads for Nissan, Reebok, and Ralph Lauren. I mean, obviously, a magazine of *Blender*'s ilk is founded sheerly as a profit-making venture; i don't have a problem with that. However, the fact that the people who read *Blender* are, as far as anybody can tell, likely the type of people to whom Guess and Calvin Klein and Giorgio Armani products can be effectively marketed completely and utterly blows my mind (and not in a good way). I mean, picture a bunch of red and blue cop lights about as big as watertowers and a Leslie-like loud-speaker approximately the same dimensions as Busch Stadium, but occupying an other-dimensional space inside the friendly confines of my mind. Now picture me reading *Blender* (pants on or off, sweeten to taste). Now picture ALL THAT SHIT GOING OFF IN MY HEAD. Not a pretty picture, to say the least (and, by the way, D'YA MIND KEEPING IT DOWN, JERK-ASS???. I'M TRYING TO WRITE AN ADVICE

COLUMN HERE!!!). It's like “music as lifestyle accessory” or something – which, if you think about it, points to a fair enough theory as to why a large segment of the population is perfectly content to download music off the net without ever actually feeling a compulsion to actually own the recording: Having no tangible connection to Rock Culture (of any kind), they have no appetite or need whatsoever to actually possess its artifacts. Music is something to be used, then dumped when it no longer accessorizes well with their new, i dunno, Ralph Lauren suspenders or whatever. THUSLY, the whole magazine is, like, automatically invalidated from the get-go as far as i'm concerned (though, in fairness, the record reviews are pretty well-written and the captions to a lotta the pictures are *tres amusant*, likely a result of them having a bunch of old *Creem* writers from my misspent youth on the payroll [such as it is]). However, in the interests of, uh, Science, i took a bit of interest in their “Rock Goddess 50” article, just to make sure it wasn't at all right (it wasn't at all right). Subtitled “The Sexiest Women in Music Today!” (first bone of contention: Are they ranking them as “Rock Goddesses” OR as “Women in Music Today?” I mean, isn't there a substantial distinction between being a “rock goddess” and a “woman in music today?” I mean, the flute player at my brother's wedding is a “woman in music today,” is she not?) The “Rock Goddesses” who came immediately to (this scientist's) mind were nowhere to be found (not even the Caucasian ones); instead, the list was littered with a bunch of chicks i never heard of: “Chilli?” “Christina Milian?” “Norah Jones?” “Samantha Mumba?” “Melissa Auf Der Maur?” Are these really even real people? I never jerked off thinking about ANY of these chicks even once (except, okay, for the Donnas, and i think i was only thinking about two of them at a time)! Therefore, in the interests of correcting THIS GREAT WRONGNESS within the pages of a music-oriented publication not fatally tainted with blatant Giorgio Armani corruption, might i take this opportunity, genital reader, to present a piece which i wistfully entitle...

(oh, but first, lemme state my prejudices, so's you, the merry reader, can adjust your views of my views accordingly: 1. I like Asian chicks. Perhaps you've heard this before? Since my statement years ago that part of this attraction is seemingly based on my theory that Mongolian eyefolds are subliminally reminiscent of vulvas [or did i say “vulvii?”] [oh well, like we say in Gein Country: “Shoebox full of vulvas – that's not news. Vulva full of shoeboxes – THAT'S news!"], i will sidestep that particular shitstorm by offering two other rationalizations for my preferences: a. i like the flatter, broader faces common to Asiatics more than i dig more 3-D kind of heads like on Caucasians; whilst a particularly stunning Caucasian lass might impart one with the desire to chisel her likeness on Mount Rushmore, a fetching Asiatic female is more likely to cause one to draw her as a cartoon character. Cartoons are cooler than mountains, Asian chicks win. 2. Asian girls' flesh [well, the stuff i've sampled] is kinda like Silly Putty™, minus the amazing stretchiness and the ability to reproduce newspaper comics backwards; Caucasian girls' flesh is more like Play-Doh™, minus the intoxicating aroma. I can't explain it any better than that. Asian girls win again. The end. 2. I kind of am not into short chicks. They just sorta weird me out. Like, i have a hard time really believing that an entire person can be fit into such a compact unit. Midgets and shit i have no problem understanding; they seem totally normal to me. Short girls though – i dunno. Just strange. They make me feel even more awkward than usual; as a result, i don't think i've ever dated anyone under 5'6”, ever, and have only gotten my wild freak on with two girls [lifetime total] whom i can say with certainty were definitely much shorter than that [verdict: one stellar performance, one, uh, “otherwise.” Got VD from the former. Beware! Beware!] [there may have been one or two others who were shorter than 5'6”; the Bureau of Weights and Measures tends to play it a bit fast and loose {no pun intended} in these matters]. I mean, i guess they'd do in a three-

Rev. Nørþ

way, if i had a few of 'em crawling over me like kittens or baby harp seals or something; in general, however, anytime i try to hit on a short chick i always feel like i'm putting the moves on Piglet [if it makes you feel any better, vertically challenged damsels, Corey Parks of Nashville Pussy once gave me a hug, and that was fucking weird, too, so no girls over 6'5" or so made the list either] [note: where prejudice #1 and prejudice #2 are at variance, prejudice #1 oft-times wins out]. 3. I tend to like tall, slender chicks as opposed to the more "full-figured" variety. What's it to ya?). Prejudices duly noted, anyone who's still reading... READ ON! (P.S. My records are gettin' kinda old, so forgive any empirical obsolescence which may accrue)

#### 50. SHEENA RAMONE Cancer Kids

Why She's Sexy: I dunno, but a few years ago, there was some suitably nondescript Mutant Pop band who did a song called "Sheena Ramone," which contained the less-than-affable chorus of "She's ugly/but she likes the Ramones" (i think?), which, to me, seemed like one of the most uselessly mean-spirited things i'd ever heard in a punk song (and that's coming from a guy whom Tim Yohannan once called "really mean," just because i said Jeff Bale looked like the stunt double for Larry from the Three Stooges [i'm like, "Yeah, but he does!" and Tim goes, "I know! That's why it's so mean!"]), so, ha, i avenge thy honour, fair Sheena, ROCK GODDESS thou now officially art! Projects image of stary-eyed thirteen year old trying to play dress up and look like Riff Randall, but is actually significantly older and, i dunno, i don't really see anyone else looking much like Riff Randall these days, and there's gotta be a market for that sort of thing. Nobody's Perfect: Might be on a number of those prescription drugs the Ramones wrote songs about. What I'd Dress Her In: If part of the joy to be extracted from the act of dressing one's partner as a Catholic schoolgirl is derived from the notion of corrupting the innocent, Sheena would yield evil in a league with Satan. EVIL IN A LEAGUE WITH SANTA!

#### 49. SINDI Lunachicks

Why She's Sexy: Yeah, okay, she's short. Fine. But i always thought she was cute, kind of in a pet turtle sort of way. Also, i think the first time my band played with her band, Sindi was wearing a skirt that was even shorter than she was, and i'm pretty sure she wasn't wearing underwear, 'cause a couple times throughout the course of the set i'm virtually certain i saw protruding twat-lip (ladies, if you take away but one useful insight into the male psyche from this column, let it be this: It's all about results, bay-bee! Amen, man). Nobody's Perfect: I met her husband, and he didn't seem at all insane. What I'd Dress Her In: Crotchless Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle costume.

#### 48. RYAN Kill-A-Watts

Why He's Sexy: Um... well, he's not. He's not even a chick. He wouldn't even make a good chick if he were. But he does have that one-drink-drunk thing down to a high art (plus the fellatio technique i'm sure he refined on Greg at Rip Off would probably make him a good cellmate if push came to shove). Nobody's Perfect: He's a frickin' guy. What I'd Dress Him In: Ball gags: The gift that keeps on giving!

#### 47. 54 NUDE HONEYS

Why They're Sexy: Hmm... let's see... five young Japanese women, dressed in black latex and/or leather... hmmm... "why they're sexy"... gosh... heck... boy... i'm sorry, this question is too hard. Nobody's Perfect: The maximum number of women i can conceptualize myself having sex with at one time is four. What would the fifth member do? Serve drinks and work the turntable? What I'd Dress Them In: More latex! More latex! Masks and suits and gloves and shit! Bring out the gimp! Bring out the gimp!

#### 46. SARAH The Flip Tops

Why She's Sexy: Fishnets and Chuck Taylors™. I mean, that even looks good when i do it. Nobody's Perfect: Kind of looks a little bit like the Joker on the front cover of their album. What I'd Dress Her In: Fishnets, Chuck Taylors™, denim jacket, possibly a bra if we wanted to get all fucking ornate and shit.

#### 45. FABIENNE DELSOL The Bristols

Why She's Sexy: As i understand it, she's a non-native English speaker singing in English; further, she's got a voice that sounds like some sort of direct-to-brain transmission from a mysterious microscopic planet where all the inhabitants have developed amazing mental powers – she could probably be singing about how you should go to the gas station right now and buy a 12-pack of Pepsi™ Blue and you'd wind up doing it and have no idea why. Nobody's Perfect: I dunno, you could kind of visualize her in a Grateful Dead t-shirt without undue mental strain. What I'd Dress Her In: Anything anyone was wearing on the first Fools album cover.

#### 44. THE 5.6.7.8's

Why They're Sexy: Ninja charm! Plus Kay™ basses, because we deserve the best! Nobody's Perfect: Drummer kind of looks like she knows secret martial art form whereby drumsticks can be used as lethal weapons if anyone ever gives her shit for occasionally wearing hair in a bun (boooooooooo). What I'd Dress 'Em In: Waitress' uniforms from Chinese restaurant my ex-ex-girlfriend used to work at.

#### 43. KATHLEEN HANNA Bikini Kill or whatever

Why She's Sexy: I'm not exactly sure, really. Nobody's Perfect: She's gonna win that Mötley Crüe mirror if it kills me. What I'd Dress Her In: Mark Chmura jersey. No pants.

#### 42. CANDY DEL MAR Andy G and the Roller Kings

Why She's Sexy: Dude, sometimes she wears a tie. Chicks in ties are hot. There was this photo of a stripper i used to have on file at work (yes, that is actually my job) whom all my co-workers were lambasting as being a yucky coke whore, etc., but i was completely transfixed by the image simply because she was wearing a tie. Dangit, ladies, try it out on yo' man once and tell me if i speaketh not the unvarnished truth! Hell, try it out on me! Nobody's Perfect: In pictures where you can't see the tie, my interest drops significantly. What I'd Dress Her In: Tie. Duh.

#### 41. DIRT BIKE JEANIE Dirt Bike Annie

Why She's Sexy: Asian, plus band does occasional synchronized stage movements like kicks and right-angle-turns and such, which can't

help but make a fella dizzy with desire (don't even get me started about what those old Freddie & The Dreamers videos do to me). Nobody's Perfect: *Hit the Rock!* CD includes photo of her at her own wedding. Talk about fucking buzzkill... What I'd Dress Her In: Red DEVO flowerpot, yellow Booji Boy suit, possible bandana made out of divorce papers.

#### 40. NORA Ditz

Why She's Sexy: Somehow manages to look smart, friendly, and pretty at the same time which tends to happen with the same frequency as one hitting the \$1 trifecta at the race track. Also, her previous band, Blue Sunshine, contained a hottie female guitar player whose name escapes me at present (the other member being Bart, now drummer of Bleed – leading to one of my more fondly embraced comedy jokes, to wit: "Why is being a female Blue Sunshine groupie a lot like spending the week in Berkeley? Either way, you're gonna spend most of your time riding BART!"), and, the first time our bands played together, between songs, Nora, the brains of the outfit, looked over at said hottie guitar player, and said, for no apparent reason, and i quote: "Take your pants off." Which she did. Nora then followed suit. They played the duration of the set with their pants at their ankles. I was totally into it, but, yet, i was kinda like "oh THANKS, guys. How the fuck are we supposed to follow THAT? What am i supposed to do, 'hey Paul, take your pants off'?" Some people got no respect! Nobody's Perfect: Once, Nora and i were exchanging phone numbers for some purely business-related affair, and, unbeknownst to me, the guy standing behind me copied down her number by looking over my shoulder... and i think they wound up getting married and shit. Girls love that story. I'm more like... hmmm... damn. What I'd Dress Her In: Those boxers she was wearing the night she dropped her pants on stage were curiously enthralling.

#### 39. BUFFI AGUERO The Vendettas

Why She's Sexy: There is something intensely alluring about a girl who can pose with a guitar and look totally rad and cool and doable – yet without visually complying with any predetermined aesthetic mandates as to what constitutes an acceptable rad and cool and doable pose for a female guitarist. Nobody's Perfect: There is also something intensely alluring about your CD not sucking. What I'd Dress Her In: The white lace-up boots, white terrycloth bikini (or whatever it is), Gretsch and iron cross depicted on the *Can't Stop* 7-inch will do just fine, thank you very much.

#### 38. MIKA KANAYAMA Mikabomb

Why She's Sexy: What part of the "Asian Girls Are Hot" thing do you not get yet??? Nobody's Perfect: CD insert photo depicts her looking emaciated at almost Mandy Smith-like levels; then again, Bill Wyman is a very underrated pervert. What I'd Dress Her In: "Motor City Baby" sleeveless t-shirt. No pants.

#### 37. TOBI VAIL Bikini Kill or whatever

Why She's Sexy: Kind of looks like a bug on back of one of their albums (bugs are sexy); is potentially showing Beave on *The CD Version of the First Two Records* cover (hard to say for sure). Nobody's Perfect: If that IS Beave and not panties on the cover, she's gotta hit the Lady



Bic™ on the PDQ. What I'd Dress Her In: Well, if she IS showing Beave on the cover, i'll just go with that. If not, i say dress her up like one of the Penguin's henchmen from the Batman TV show and i'll take my chances.

**36. FRANCOISE CACTUS or BREZEL G(™)RING** (whichever is the chick) Stereo Total

Why She's Sexy: Wears glasses and sings songs about how she likes to have threesomes (which is pretty much almost as good as being Asian). Nobody's Perfect: Did not invite me to participate in any threesomes which may or may not have occurred since my purchase of their record.

Perfect: Resembles my cousin Dee Dee, who was pretty much the first female i ever saw nekkid. What I'd Dress Her In: Black & white horizontally striped top would work; i would have to see her both with and without pants in order to decide where we would go with that part of the outfit. Really, anything that more or less said "I RESEMBLE, BUT CLEARLY AM NOT, YOUR COUSIN DEE DEE" would likely work.

**33. LISA Bobbyteens**

Why She's Sexy: Appears to be the active ingredient in strawberry milkshakes made flesh. Nobody's Perfect: Strikes me (without any

her stage stance from studying Billie Joe of Green Day. What I'd Dress Her In: Green mini-dress era costume that Marvel Girl wore from X-Men #39 thru #66. Or Billie Joe from Green Day.

**31. COURTNEY CLARK** The Tears or the Teras or the Terrors or whatever the fuck their band is called

Why She's Sexy: Well, she's certainly got that whole tit thing goin' on. Nobody's Perfect: The first time i heard her talk about her band, i thought they were called the "Terrors," then, the more i listened to her, the more it sounded like she was saying "Teras" - then i get an e-mail



What I'd Dress Her In: Skintight silver body suit, possibly with NASA logo over left breast.

**35. "WORK WITH ME" ANNIE** Les Sexareenos

Why She's Sexy: Appears to be tallish and slim, also appears to drink beer and own a Farfisa. Definitely has bangs and wears tight pants. Might not be adverse to engaging in doggy style coitus whilst playing Joe "King" Carrasco songs on the Farfisa, just to humor me. Nobody's Perfect: Looks kinda like the Wicked Witch of the West on back cover of *Live! In The Bed* LP. What I'd Dress Her In: If the pants on that record cover are as tight as they look, i'll take 'em. Matching bra will round out the ensemble nicely, unless she wants to wear my purple and orange horizontally striped turtleneck or something.

**34. GUITAR PLAYER WHO RESEMBLES MY COUSIN DEE DEE** Kill-A-Watts

Why She's Sexy: Resembles my cousin Dee Dee, who was pretty much the first female i ever saw nekkid. Also jumps around. Nobody's

empirical basis, i might add) as the kind of girl who would smell kinda funky. What I'd Dress Her In: '60s era Phantom Girl costume (with Legion of Super-Heroes flight ring!).

**32. GUITAR PLAYER CHICK** The Flipsides

Why She's Sexy: I have never seen nor heard this band, but Metal Mike sent me some photos of her during some manner of debate we were hosting on the highly intellectual topic of "what kinda chicks are the most hot." I believe Mike's contention was that this girl was the type of girl who WOULD be hot, if she weren't tall and skinny with no butt. I, of course, took the position that she WAS hot BECAUSE she was tall and skinny with no butt, and, in fact, was so smitten with the images he provided that i downloaded them to my hard drive, an honor generally reserved for pornography (and particularly fetching scans of '71-'72 hockey cards). Further, while i don't have a redhead fetish like some folks i know, once one of 'em gets that redhead mojo goin' like Margaret from Dennis The Menace, look out, bro' - your capitulation is imminent. Nobody's Perfect: Apparently learned

announcing the release of their 45, and it lists the band as the "Tears." Now, how long do you think you could ride in a car with someone who couldn't say "tears" to your satisfaction without punching them out? What I'd Dress Her In: Any manner of too-tight ringer t-shirt as long as it had numerals on the front. No pants.

**30. COURTNEY CLARK'S SISTER** Same Band

Why She's Sexy: Wicked eyes, man. Wicked eyes. Some people should just be forced to wear sunglasses constantly, in order to prevent innocent victims from falling prey to their insidious opto-psychic weaponry. Nobody's Perfect: The fact that i didn't rate the sister bandmates as one equally ranked collective unit clearly indicates that i am not a sane individual and am therefore unable to comment lucidly on this point lest my own imperfections be brought under closer scrutiny. What I'd Dress Her In: Sport bra, Chuck Taylors™.

**29.5 MUMMY THE PEEPSHOW**

Why They're Sexy: Finally made me realize

Rev. Nord

what God was thinking when He invented lip gloss. Nobody's Perfect: Okay, these girls are way too short and little to be Rock Goddesses (note: other allegedly full-fledged rock goddesses listed herein may be equally as short, but anyone whose shortness i have not yet empirically documented gets the benefit of the doubt), they are actually more like those wee little elfin fairie twins who sang the song to summon

Ramones™"? "Mrs. Rev. Nørb-to-be" would be my guess. Nobody's Perfect: Weird perm or crimping iron thing or whatever goin' on; appears to have inhaled lethal amounts of helium at least once. What I'd Dress Her In: Well, i dunno what's with kids today, but a lot of them simply refuse to acknowledge the fact that the Sex Pistols were a fucking GREAT band for about sixty-two different reasons, and, as a

before Lee Hazelwood or whoever popped a cap in my ass.

#### 24. LULU GARGIULO Fastbacks

Why She's Sexy: Are you kiddin'? She's a fuckin' doll! Like Betty Rubble, or maybe someone who used to be on Sesame Street or the Electric Company, or perhaps even an acquaintance of the teenage Pebbles on the old

*I mean, i admit that i've – quite by accident, i can assure you – thrust my manhood a few times into the alternate non-vaginal aperture in the female pelvic neighborhood, but somehow that doesn't seem quite as ludicrous as, i dunno, aiming for the vagina and scoring the carseat or a hand*

Mothra in that one Godzilla movie. What I'd Dress Them In: Never seen Boris The Sprinkler t-shirts put to better use than on these ladies!

#### 29. MIKA HANDA Mikabomb

Why She's Sexy: Oh, i almost forgot – Asians are sexier than the various other flavors of humanity because they look the best in black, which is the best color to look the best in. I mean, i can't even think of anything else new or interesting to say on the subject. Nobody's Perfect: Their record kinda sucks, or so i remember from the one time i listened to it. What I'd Dress Her In: I have no business telling a hot Japanese girl in fishnets, a cool skirt, a cool belt and a sleeveless black t-shirt what to wear. In point of fact, i think that if we ever went on a date, i'd just wear what she's wearing. *La meme chose, garcon!*

#### 28. CHRISTENE The Chubbies

Why She's Sexy: Well, apart from the fact that she oft-times drums (drummed? dram?) in dresses so short that i could clearly see her undies, once, when our bands played together at the Fireside Bowl in Chicago, my band was so late that i changed into my stage garb (i believe a wrestling singlet, with something clever like "100% PURE FUCK" or "BULGE PHYS. ED. DEPT." on the front) in the van as we were pulling in, and, consequently, after the show, upon removing my sweaty wrestling togs, i found that i was quite devoid of street clothes to change back into – ergo i was walking around in underwear, shoes, and my double-breasted lavender suit coat. As i entered the bar area to get the van keys from whatever bandmate might've had a set, Christene, at this point in time completely drunk off her ass, spins around on her barstool, loudly slurs "yyyYYOU'VE GOT TH' BIGGEST COCK!!!" and, in order to drive her point home most emphatically, forcefully sends an uppercut into my privates, grabbing my, uh, goods with enough impact to cause me legitimate pain (remember, i have no pants on to thwart the impact). Apart from the fact that, uh, demolishing my testicles is not a particularly effective way of showing appreciation, that was pretty rad. Nobody's Perfect: Made out with LP! (according to LP) What I'd Dress Her In: Them undie-revealing drummin' dresses seem to working a-okay; handcuffs also might not be a bad idea in this case.

#### 27. MASUMI TOSHIKAWA Banana Erectors

Why She's Sexy: What do you call a Japanese girl who wears a Sex Pistols t-shirt, covers Herman's Hermits, and lists the Ohio Express as one of her favorite bands "except for

hideous corollary to this nonsense, do not buy into the hard cold empirical fact that *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols* is like, one of the five or three best albums of all time. Needless to say, with that in mind, i'm gonna say "her yellow God Save The Queen t-shirt, black Chuck Taylors™, no pants." Amen!

#### 26. CHELA MISCHKE The Peeps

Why She's Sexy: Although i did in fact state that i was generally not impressed with the "full-figured" look in and of itself, i will admit that when the figure in question is used to fill out cool clothes to great effect, my Scientific Probe responds accordingly! The one and only time i saw the Peeps, Ms. Chela was wearing this amazingly magnificent purple-sparkly-kind-of-like-the-cover-of-the-*Cars-Greatest-Hits*-double-CD-set french-cut top, with a big red-sparkly Shazam!-like lightning bolt coming down from the front, and i was just like, fuuuu-uuck! That shirt is soooooo fucking cool! So, after they finished their set, i kind of forgot i was a loser geek and just ran up to her yelling "WHERE DID YOU GET THAT SHIRT???" WHERE DID YOU GET THAT SHIRT???" THAT SHIRT IS SOOOOOOOOOO COOL! IT'S LIKE CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE CARS GREATEST HITS COVER AND AND AND AND AND..." and she's like "oh, I got it at Wal-Mart™!" And i counter by telling her, excitedly, how i actually occasionally buy clothes from the girls' section of Wal-Mart™, etc., and next thing ya know we're both gabbing away about clothes shopping at Wal-Mart™, until it suddenly dawns on me that i'm – oh no! – talking to a girl, so then i kind of freak out and run. What a fucking cool shirt. Nobody's Perfect: Favorite color is orange. What's up with that? What I'd Dress Her In: Amazingly magnificent purple-sparkly-kind-of-like-the-cover-of-the-*Cars-Greatest-Hits*-double-CD-set french-cut top, with a big red-sparkly Shazam!-like lightning bolt coming down from the front, anything else is just gravy.

#### 25. PAULA MONARCH The Peeps

Why She's Sexy: I dunno, i don't even hardly remember her because Chela's shirt was so cool, but in the Peeps CD booklet she's astoundingly gorgeous. I like girls who have hair like members of Sweet, sue me! Nobody's Perfect: Does not, to my knowledge, have an amazingly magnificent purple-sparkly-kind-of-like-the-cover-of-the-*Cars-Greatest-Hits*-double-CD-set french-cut top, with a big red-sparkly Shazam!-like lightning bolt coming down from the front. What I'd Dress Her In: Anything i could dig up out of Nancy Sinatra's closet

*Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm Show*, if you remember that one. Also, when my band played with her band in Chicago (factual note: the Fastbacks first ever show east of the Mississippi), the crowd kept, naturally, demanding encore after encore... unfortunately, poor Lulu had to tinkle rather severely, and after every request for an additional unit of extra rocking, she'd be like "But i have to PEE! REALLY BAD!", finally grabbing her crotch and remarking "I wish i had a weiner, i could just squeeze it or something!" I mean... how can ya not love that? Nobody's Perfect: Couldn't stop picturing her with a weiner after that. What I'd Dress Her In: Single-strap Betty Rubble dress, necklace composed of rocks.

#### 23. THE STUCK-UPS

Why They're Sexy: Apart from the obvious merits of girls who pen songs with lyrics like "Baby's Got a Hard-On (Just for Me)," they also already dress themselves up like Catholic schoolgirls, saving me the time and trouble of having to procure a wardrobe for them. Nobody's Perfect: Where is the challenge in dressing people up like Catholic schoolgirls if they're already dressed up like Catholic schoolgirls? What I'd Dress Them In: Fuck it. The Catholic schoolgirl thing simply isn't evil enough in their case. I'm dressing them like Girl Scouts. No, Brownies!!!

#### 22. PENNY TRATION The Dirty Sweets

Why She's Sexy: Goofy sunglasses, horizontally striped shirt, lipstick, bangs, and looks like a girl whom i may or may not have shot fairly interesting home videos of once or twice or so. Nobody's Perfect: Front cover pic of their album is clearly taken with a digital camera (or is merely of such a low resolution as to give that impression); Mom said not to associate with people like that. What I'd Dress Her In: Goofy sunglasses, horizontally striped shirt, lipstick, no pants (duh).

#### 21. AMANDA FAIRCLOTH Vyvyan

Why She's Sexy: Um, i kind of have to go do something in the bathroom right now. You figure it out yourself. Nobody's Perfect: Only 5'5"! The horror! What I'd Dress Her In: High heels, smile.

#### 20. ROXY EPOXY The Epoxies

Why She's Sexy: Her band's debut album was my favorite release of 2002, she's got a great voice, dresses in wack-ball new wave fashion, and works out so she can gyrate and defibrillate with vigor and aplomb on stage. This is what the kids call "the total package." Actually, they

don't say that any more, never mind. Nobody's Perfect: I finally figured it out: Roxy looks kinda like Anne Frank, which is disquieting on several different levels. What I'd Dress Her In: I dunno, three strips of electrical tape oughtta do the trick.

**19. THEO** Lunachicks

Why She's Sexy: Come on, man, she does runway modeling and was in *Vogue* and shit, she's a fucking knockout, AND she makes herself look like a total ree-tard on stage (sort of like how Superman™ always had to pretend he was that hapless milkop Clark Kent, i mean, it kinda don't make any sense, do it?). Plus she's tall and not quite as bitchy as you'd think. Nobody's

work very nicely for my purposes, thanks.

**17. JANELLE** Panty Raid/Tourettes

Why She's Sexy: Blonde chicks have two quick options to my heart: One is to wear their hair in a cute li'l bob; the other is to buzz it off in some manner of neo-fascist crewcut. Janelle did both (not simultaneously). She's also got that damn smile! It ain't right. Nobody's Perfect: Prone to sudden, unexplained bouts of food poisoning; will likely kick whatever's left of my ass after Gina gets done for involving her in such a stupid column. What I'd Dress Her In: Let's see that damn 8<sup>th</sup> grade cheerleader outfit, woman!

presuppose my request and have record pictures taken wearing a Ramones t-shirt, high heels, and, indeed, no pants. Excellent work, Jeannette.

**14. HEATHER** Teen Idols

Why She's Sexy: Christina "Kelly Bundy" Applegate as Dee Dee Ramone – and some say there's no God! Further, someone or another i knew in Italy told me that the band stayed over at his house, and, in the morning, Heather was watching pornos with the rest of the dorks just like one of the guys. I got a soft spot in my heart for such activity on account of one of the better days of my life started when i woke up one Saturday morning with a girl in my bed, and



Perfect: I always thought her insistence on always trying to "really" sing was one of the Lunachicks' great undoings on record. What I'd Dress Her In: *Jerk of All Trades*-era nurse costume, minus the blacked-out tooth gag, et al.

**18. GINA** Lunachicks

Why She's Sexy: I always thought she was the nicest and coolest Lunachick, plus she's really pretty in a non-runway model sorta way, plus i owe her one because she works/worked at Go-Kart Records, and, when i was having... uh... problems... getting my phone calls returned there, i would resort to all manner of comedic duplicity to get my calls thru to Greg, the owner... sometimes the person who answered the phone would ask who's calling, and i'd say (completely straight-faced) "Christina Aguilera," which maybe worked once... anyway, one day i decided to adopt a British accent, and claim i was Captain Sensible, and i'm pretty sure it was Gina who answered the phone, she was like, "OH MY GAWD, IT'S CAPTAIN SENSIBLE!!!" and of course put my call thru to Greg, which is, uh, funny for me, anyway... Nobody's Perfect: Is likely going to beat my ass with a baseball bat the next time she sees me over the Captain Sensible incident. What I'd Dress Her In: *Luxury Problem*-era silver-and-blue suit will

**16. FIFI** Fifi & The Mach III

Why She's Sexy: If the Ramones were Japanese and had a female singer, Fifi would be Joey. End of fucking story. She also wears fingerless black leather gloves, which i am a big fan of, especially the ones you get at the cycle shops with the reinforced palms (hmmm... and, come to think of it, i might need to "reinforce my palms" right now). Nobody's Perfect: What if she's really Fifi from Teengenerate in drag? Actually, fuck it, you only live once. What I'd Dress Her In: Fingerless black leather gloves. End of fucking story.

**15. JEANNETTE KANTZALIS** The Chubbies

Why She's Sexy: She's got that which the kids down at the playground euphemistically term "star quality" – kinda like Janeane (whatever) Garofolo (whatever) crossed with Mary Tyler Moore. Also owns (or, more correctly, owned) the coolest guitar of all time; i don't even remember the make and model, but she painted the frets different colors with nail polish because she didn't know the names of the notes. Let me call you sweetheart! Nobody's Perfect: Did not forcefully grab my crotch like her bandmate; got her cool guitar ripped off in Italy. What I'd Dress Her In: With all my wardrobe requests of "no pants," it's refreshing to see someone actually

asked her what she wanted to do that day. She replied, "I don't really feel like doing anything. Can we just lie in bed all day and smoke pot and watch pornos?" to which i replied, "Why, yes. Yes we can!" Umm, worked out pretty good. Yup. Yup. I don't even wanna tell you what she did for an encore. BUT ANYWAY, get hip to this kindly tip: If you're gonna watch porno movies with a girl 1. Make sure no movie you watch is more than, i dunno, ten years old or whatever. Girls will be repulsed utterly if a female who by virtue (?) of her career is presented as "sexy" is not reasonably au courant looking. '80s big-hair porn is right out; i don't even know what the official cut-off date is, but ya can't be too careful. 2. Don't watch the good movies – the ones that are just compilations of sex scenes – together. You gotta watch something that actually has the stupid plot parts that you normally fast forward thru while you're jerking off. Girls actually follow the plot. They will even ask questions like "Hey! Why did she just give the TV repairman a blowjob when she had seemingly reconciled with the plumber?" Act like this is a valid question. 3. If you're delving thru a pornography collection that you are unfamiliar with, jeezus god stay away from the Spanish-language stuff!!! My limited experiences with the genre indicate that such movies are gen-

REV. NORB

erally pretty heavy on the rape and ass-fucking (like, “yeah, i’m gonna break into your house and fuck you up the ass, ‘cause you DESERVE it, but, after a while, you’ll like it, ‘CAUSE – I’M – SUCH – A – STUD!!!” i mean, how lame can ya get? I actually kind of recommend giving said stuff a pretty wide berth, period [if i’ve misjudged the genre on my limited encounters, i apologize and await correction] [but please do not break into my house and ass-fuck me, thank you]). Other than that, be ready, baby, be ready. Nobody’s Perfect: Heinie appears constructed more for appeal to “urban” demographic. What I’d Dress Her In: 1970’s era Black Canary costume. Well, that or Phantom Lady (who is a completely different character than Phantom Girl).

### 13. CECELIA The No-Talents/Cece et ses Ennuis

Why She’s Sexy: This question is striking me as progressively stupider and stupider. Nobody’s Perfect: This stupid war has even stripped me of the ability to default to the usual “well, she is French” gags in good conscience. What I’d Dress Her In: I dunno, how does one say “Daisy Duke” en Français? Alternate Answer: “Gimme Whipped Cream.”

### 12. NIKKI CORVETTE Nikki & the Corvettes

Why She’s Sexy: Belated role model and/or aesthetic template for a full latter-day regiment of tight-jeans-and-horizontally-striped-top-wearing Rock Nubiles! Nobody’s Perfect: Think Kid Rock is cool and sexy. Actually, i guess he is – after all, he does take de southern, ROCK, and then he mix it wit de hip, HOP. I retract the allegation! What I’d Dress Her In: You totally know that if you went on a date with Nikki Corvette and she didn’t dress pretty much exactly like she did in 1981, you’d be, like, bummed – potentially to the max!

### 11. TUULI

Why They’re Sexy: Slim, gorgeous rock waifs who wear just enough pink to get the point across (i’m not sure what exactly “the point” is – something about being pinker than me; certainly pink to Bob), yet rock hard enough that when you and the Dragons convince them that they should walk down to the strip bar with you, you’re not particularly shocked when they accept (let the record show that hot pink girls look a lot cooler when they hold a dollar bill in their teeth and the dancer comes around and collects the tip via samwiching it between her boobs and pulling it out than guys do doing it). Also, when i told the singer that the band name looked like one of the first two scrambled words in Jumble™, she knew what i meant and agreed with me (though unscrambling “TUULI” proved eminently fruitless). Nobody’s Perfect: Something about the one ex-boyfriend buying plane tickets in order to come out and play drums on their tour as some form of Extended Stalk kinda creeped me out a twinge. What I’d Dress Them In: ‘70s/’80s era Saturn Girl costumes. F-u-u-u-u-u-u-uck yes!

### 10. LILI Z. The No-Talents/Splash Four

Why She’s Sexy: I had spent much of my lifetime contemplating the theoretical question of whether or not Ian Hunter would be sexy if he was actually a hot French chick who played guitar and recorded heplu primitive solo records in

her bedroom. I can now state with some conviction that Science says *oui!* Nobody’s Perfect: The same French gag i would’ve opted for earlier under normal circumstances is still unusable at present. What I’d Dress Her In: Batgirl costume from Batman TV show. *Avec le Bat-rop!*

### 9. ROACH Groovie Ghoulies

Why She’s Sexy: Come on, if all vampire chicks were smiling, upbeat and friendly during the whole process of being otherworldly, invulnerable and beguiling, the world would be a much better place. Nobody’s Perfect: Yeah, i can just see it now, Roach invites you up to her weird old house on the hill, and you think you’re gonna be in for a swell evening of black licorice and ouzo under a full moon, and next thing you know Kepi jumps out of the broom closet or the wine cellar or a suit of armor or something, clamps some manner of electrode-laden device on your head, then they strap you onto some kinda sinister machine and put similar electrode-laden devices on their own heads, then pull some big switches and take turns feasting on your life essence and vitality; thirty days later the cops find you as a desiccated husk who appears to have died of old age while Kepi and Roach are out playing racquetball or something. I know a little bit about how the world works, lady! What I’d Dress Her In: Spacesuit, with helmet and antennae.

### 8. TOMOKO Supersnazz/Tweezers

Why She’s Sexy: Being in both the all-time greatest Japanese chick-punk band (that i can think of) and the all-time greatest Japanese power pop band (that i can think of) pretty much punches my groupie ticket just on principle, but the fact that she is depicted on the back of the Tweezers album in a (black) shirt and (white) tie (a color combination that looks totally inane on males) pretty much guarantees her she-is-to-die-for-ness for life. Nobody’s Perfect: Regardless of what preconceptions i may or may not have formed regarding certain anatomical aspects of the Japanese male vis-a-vis their island nation’s pornography, the fact that she dated/dates/whatever a member (uh...if you’ll pardon the... oh, never mind) of Teengenerate cannot help but make one feel a copious dollop of inadequacy. What I’d Dress Her In: Black shirt. White tie. Or maybe just black shirt. Or, then again, maybe just white tie. Or, hmm, no, white tie with black thigh-high boots and that’s it. Yeah. Oh, and a gun and an eyepatch.

### 7.5 JANIS TANAKA Stone Fox/Auntie Christ

Why She’s Sexy: This double duty Asiatic cutie first came out and played a set with her, i dunno, “rock” band, then followed that by playing bass for the Exene/D.J. Bonebrake-infused Auntie Christ thing – meaning that i got to essentially got to stand directly in front of her and ogle for like two hours straight, making her very possibly the girl whom i have stared at for the longest almost-uninterrupted interval, ever (‘cept for maybe figure drawin’ class or something, but that’s art, and this is ROCK). And, inasmuch that pretty much anyone would come off a hot-tie if they were standing stage right of Exene Cervenka (loaves of white bread, Woolworth’s cosmetics), i can tell you that i stared at this girl long enough to discover that she’s even got sexy armpits (ooh, wait – do armpits look like pussy? i may be on to another brilliant declaration of

Nørb-Genius!). Verdict: Sugar-glazed rock & roll fire hydrant of Love! Nobody’s Perfect: I think she actually might be in L7 now??! (plus she might be kinda short too, now that i think about it, but that’s less stressful to me than the idea that i might accidentally come into contact with that fucking “Pretend We’re Dead” song one more time. I’ve been PRETENDING! I’ve been PRETENDING!). What I’d Dress Her In: Girly t-shirt, leg warmers.

### 7. ELKA ZOLOT Spastics/Trashwomen

Why She’s Sexy: Seems to pretty continually look like you wish more girls would look like before you’re even aware that you wished more girls looked like that; also has cool initials and can play “Sling Rave Corvette.” Nobody’s Perfect: Three words: Shane White Germs. What I’d Dress Her In: Playboy™ Bunny suit, white sunglasses.

### 6. WENDY YAO Emily’s Sassy Lime

Why She’s Sexy: This girl is so beautiful that when i saw her, she made me think in punctuation marks instead of words – like, you know, “...?!!!!!!?!!!!!!?!!!!!!” – and THEN when i got to see her undies while she was drumming, i was thinking in punctuation marks, AND in bold, AND with more exclamation points – “..?!!!!!!?!!!!!!?!!!!!!?!!!!!!?!!!!!!” – and then, of course, when she and her band were sitting around my living room taping my Ohio Express records, i could only think in dashes “————!” – and, finally, when everyone got ready for bed and she came out of the bathroom in raging full-on PAJAMAS, i couldn’t think at all, and just choked out a few asterisk noises before running the other way in mortal panic, lest my vast unworthiness make itself manifest to even greater extent. I think she might come equipped with some kinda aura of bluebirds, duckies and bunnies perennially orbiting about her person, but i’m not sure, because i tried to kind of avert my eyes whenever possible so as not to get turned into a pillar of salt (hey, i’m just as disappointed as anyone that i couldn’t get a more salacious yarn out of the time that three Asian girls, myself, and a member of Bikini Kill spent the night under the same roof, although that night is the night when i logged my perhaps more-than-mortal observation that amplifiers, and the dimensions thereof, are to the female genitalia what cars and guitars are assumed to be to that of the male’s. And i think they were like 50 watt amps or something, so... you know). Nobody’s Perfect: Band maybe shoulda just sold empty LP jackets with their photos on the front. What I’d Dress Her In: My God... those PJ’s...! I am unclean! I am unclean!

### 5. SPIKE Supersnazz

Why She’s Sexy: ‘Cause she’s a goddamn kamikaze sparkplug, dynamo or mitochondrion of Relentless and Jubilant Rock Intensity, that’s why! And whom amongst us can refrain from speculation on what the results might indeed be if said Relentless and Jubilant Rock Energy spilled over in various other undertakings? Plus, in every photo taken of her, she’s secretly making goo-goo eyes at me (although i am sure she will deny this). Further, if she ever plays guitar, i bet she’s got about a 20 watt amp, max. Nobody’s Perfect: Might be short. What I Would Dress Her In: Since i already took “Catholic Schoolgirl Uniform” beforehand, i will modify that logical request by saying



“Custom Designed Catholic Schoolgirl Uniform Made Out of The Same Gross Red Stuff They Make Edible Panties Out Of.”

**4. DONNA R** The Donnas

Why She's Sexy: Come on, man, that Derriere Unit was surely hand-turned upon the lathe of mighty Zeus himself! (i have a feeling that, if i were ever called upon by the American People to put Operation: Donna R. Liberation [I'm not invading, i'm liberating! Don't you feel better already?]) into play, there might be a few unfortunate instances where a certain metaphorical cruise missile goes astray from its allegedly intended target of Vaghdad and instead strikes the no-fly zone to the south – likely resulting in some injured and screaming women and children! Zeus also did a very nice job on the eye-

stand it, sisters, you will be absolutely paralyzed by the fact that HERE, IN ONE PLACE, AT ONE TIME, stand THREE of the type of human you would consider yourself lucky to encounter ONCE in your life. Damn you, John Sebastian, free me from your stoopid song!!! Nobody's Perfect: I heard they have some kinda weird phobia about germs, and i'm obviously fucking filthy. What I'd Dress Them In: Exotic lingerie and a plastic bubble!

**3. REUTER SUYS** Nashville Pussy

Why She's Sexy: Contorted herself into immodest rock postures whilst adorned in not only the haircut o' The Nuge, not only the hip-huggers o' The Nuge, but in the brassiere o' The Nuge as well! Then made out with Cherokee Parks' sister during guitar solos on a nightly basis! Works

**1. GOD DAMN MOTHER FUCKIN' JOAN JETT!**

Why She's Sexy: Cause she's GOD DAMN MOTHER FUCKIN' JOAN JETT, ASS-HOLE!!! She is a ROCK GODDESS practically by DEFINITION OF THE TERM!!! 'Cause she's got ULTRA-MEGA-BEWITCHIN' EYES that make Donna R's peepers look like Sammy Davis Jr.'s by comparison!!! 'Cause she's got washboard abs that make Cheryl Tiegs (circa 1978) look like a member of the Shags!!! 'CAUSE NO ONE ELSE ON THE PLANET CAN WEAR LEATHER PANTS WITHOUT SOME MANNER OF AT LEAST MILD JUSTIFICATION!!! 'Cause she looks HOT in a bleached blonde crewcut!!! 'Cause she looks hot NOT in a bleached blonde crewcut!!! 'Cause "Bad Reputation" only has three



balls. Nobody's Perfect: Might request listening to Mötley Crüe or something else yucky whilst "doing it." What I'd Dress Her In: I'd say the American Teenage Rock 'n' Roll Machine-era pink "Donna R" t-shirt – with or without the pink vinyl pants – oughtta 'bout do it. Actually, since a photograph i once shot made it look like her shirt said "Donna F" (which is, in fact, not the case), and i, in fact, publicly uttered misdirected lascivious comments in the name of the wrong Donna as a result, maybe i'd dress her in the yellow American Teenage Rock 'n' Roll Machine era "Donna F" shirt instead. It'd certainly get the neighbors talking.

**3.5 THE EYELINERS**

Why They're Sexy: These are three of the hottest, nicest, coolest female quasi-Ramone-rockers i've ever stumbled across in all my years of scientific inquiry; their swell live show more than makes up for the fact that i've kinda never really thought much of their records, their pleasant and charming demeanor more than makes up for the fact that they come from Albuquerque (a city, mind, you, whose Chuck E. Cheese has NO FUCKING TUBES – i mean, what the fuck kinda Chuck E. Cheese ain't got tubes??), but nothing compensates for the fact that if you spend any time with these, as i under-

for me! Nobody's Perfect: Road miles, firearms. What I'd Dress Her In: Rhythm Chicken head, hiphuggers.

**2. KIM SHATTUCK** The Beards/The Muffs

Why She's Sexy: This was covered in such embarrassingly excruciating detail in the '90s that i don't even think we really need to bother to go into it, but one thing i noticed since then is that she always has a very nice haircut (further, when my band and i once claimed ignorance of the meaning of the term "camel toe," she quickly furthered our education most memorably). Nobody's Perfect: This girl strikes me as "high maintenance" in ways i've never even bothered to conceive of yet. What I'd Dress Her In: Julie Newmar-era Catwoman costume from Batman TV show.

...and, the moment you've all been waiting for... the god-damn-mother-fuckin' SEXIEST WOMAN IN ROCK AND ROLL TODAY... OUR SURVEY SAYS:

**1. MEG WHITE** The White Stripes!

Uh, not.

Kidding aside, OUR SURVEY SAYS:

chords in it!!! Wait, i forgot about the key change!!! 'Cause if it weren't for her all the chicks in bands would be trying to look like Tina Weymouth or somebody!!! And, most MYSTIFYIN' OF ALL, because SHE DIDN'T ACTUALLY LOOK THAT HOT WHEN SHE WAS SIXTEEN, and now she's in her forties and TOTALLY! FUCKING! KICKS! MY!! ASS!!! Also because Blender didn't have her in the "Rock Goddess 50" at all, so one would imagine my public correction of their heinous oversight will shame them into discontinuing their publication without undue delay. Nobody's Perfect: Might be short, and, uh, perhaps somewhat uninterested in the goods and services i have to offer (don't worry, ma'am, i'm not above ordering out for specialists in these cases). What I'd Dress Her In: Saliva.

Thanks for the letter!

Love,  
Norb



Keep Those Cards And Letters Coming, Folks: Rev. Norb, POB 1173, Green Bay WI 54305 USA Earth, or nrevorb@greenbaynet.com! Thank you and good night.

Rev. Norb



**Nardwuar**

# Who Are You?



## NARDWUAR the human serviette VS elijah wood



**Nardwuar:** Who are you?

**Elijah Wood :** I'm not really sure.

**Nardwuar:** You're Elijah Wood!

**Elijah:** Yeah, yeah.

**Nardwuar:** Frodo!

**Elijah:** Yeah, otherwise known as Elwood by friends.

**Nardwuar:** And what the hell are you doing right here? You were DJ-ing tonight, Elijah.

**Elijah:** I was DJ-ing the wrap party of a movie that a bunch of us filmed here in Vancouver, called *Try Seventeen*.

**Nardwuar:** So, Elijah, you were in *Back to the Future II*. *Back to the Future II!*

**Elijah:** Not many people know this. Nardwuar, you've done your homework.

**Nardwuar:** I'm very excited by *Back to the Future*, though, because did you realize Crispin Glover was shooting a movie in town just recently?

**Elijah:** No!

**Nardwuar:** Shooting the movie *Willard*. He was in *Back to the Future*...

**Elijah:** Two?

**Nardwuar:** He was in *Back to the Future I*.

**Elijah:** Oh.

**Nardwuar:** I think he was in *Back to the Future II* and he had to sue to get himself out of it.

**Elijah:** Yes, he was, he was.

**Nardwuar:** So, what were you doing in *Back to the Future II*, Elijah? That's pretty strange. You must've been very young.

**Elijah:** I was young.

I was eight years old, and it was one of the first movies I ever did, actually, and it was cool, man. I was on, like, this futuristic set, and I played a kid trying to work *Duck Hunt*. Remember the old video game, *Duck Hunt*? You don't remember *Duck Hunt*?

**Nardwuar:** No I don't, help me.

**Elijah:** Aren't you a child of the '80s, or the '70s?

**Nardwuar:** Maybe the '60s, eh? [laughs]

**Elijah:** No!

**Nardwuar:** How old are you, by the way, Elijah?

**Elijah:** How old are you?

**Nardwuar:** How old are you Elijah?

**Elijah:** [very geeky laugh] I'm 21.

**Nardwuar:** Welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

**Elijah:** Thank you.

**Nardwuar:** So, *Back to the Future II*. Crispin Glover was in town. You could have had a little reunion with him. He was shooting the movie *Willard*.

**Elijah:** I could have, but I don't think he would have remembered me. I worked for a day.

**Nardwuar:** What exactly were you doing again? You were just playing a video game, that's it?

**Elijah:** Trying to work an old video game in a thing called the "Café '80s."

**Nardwuar:** Now you're in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and you were staying at the Sutton Place Hotel under a little

"assumed name." I won't give it away...

**Elijah:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, the Sutton Place seems to be little Hollywood.

**Nardwuar:** That's what I was curious about. Who have you, like, bumped into since you've been in town here Elijah?

**Elijah:** Who have I bumped into... I've seen a lot of actors, none that I can name...

**Nardwuar:** Like, Ivana Trump was in there?

**Elijah:** She was!

**Nardwuar:** What the hell's going on there, Elijah?

**Elijah:** Franka Potente, who was working in the movie as well, spotted her. I didn't notice her, but she spotted her.

**Nardwuar:** So who have you bumped into in the lobby, you know, in the Sutton Place. Must be some people...

**Elijah:** Oh man... trying to think! I've bumped into people but I've not said anything to them. I tend to keep to myself. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** You've done a lot of...

**Elijah:** I'm terribly boring.

**Nardwuar:** You've done a lot of exploring of record stores, though. Sing the praises of Scratch Records if you could.

**Elijah:** Oh, absolutely. Do you want me to literally sing? I can.

**Nardwuar:** Oh, if you could. Please, Elijah.

**Elijah:** [sings] Scratch [sings an octave higher] Scraaaaaatch [sings another octave higher]

Scraaaaaatch.

**Nardwuar:** So they provided you with *Trail of Dead* records.

**Elijah:** They did, yes! And Clinic and all sorts of other things as well. And two *White Stripes* bootlegs.

**Nardwuar:** Really? And what other sort of music are you into? 'Cause, like, people are probably gonna freak out when they find out you're into the *White Stripes* or you're into the *Sonics*. Are you the only Hollywood dude into the *Sonics*?

**Elijah:** Maybe. I hear that's your favorite band.

**Nardwuar:** They are! I love the *Sonics*!

**Elijah:** The *Sonics* are awesome!

**Nardwuar:** Are there any closet punkers in Hollywood? Have you come across anybody with cool music tastes - 'cause I understand you want to take your music tastes and even turn it into a record label.

**Elijah:** I'd love to, eventually yeah...I don't know many actors who are that into music, to be honest.

**Nardwuar:** You also went to some gigs here, too. The *Von Bondies*!

**Elijah:** The *Von Bondies*! And, the *Soledad Brothers* who opened up for them, who I think are better.

**Nardwuar:** Really? You heard it here first, from Elijah Wood!

**Elijah:** Oh, God, I hope they don't hear that. I'd... oh, that's terrible.

**Nardwuar:** Okay, well what else would you like to sing the praises of there Elijah, like what other music did you pick up in

Vancouver? What other gigs did you go to?

**Elijah:** Ummm... I haven't been to any other gigs. That's the only gig I got to make it to, but... other bands... you know, I'd love to give some press to Verbena, I'm a huge Verbena fan. Do you know Verbena?

**Nardwuar:** No, I don't. Explain them to me, please, Elijah Wood.

**Elijah:** [stifling a laugh] They are a band from Alabama. They're very blues-y, kind of rock'n'roll. They put out an album in 1997 called ummm... *Souls for Sale*. It's brilliant. And the record after that, *Into the Pink*, was produced by Dave Grohl, of Foo Fighters and Nirvana fame.

**Nardwuar:** For *Try Seventeen*, Elijah, are you going to have any input on the soundtrack?

**Elijah:** Believe me, if there's anything I can say about it, it's not going to be terrible.

**Nardwuar:** Have there been any movies you've had input in?

**Elijah:** Umm... no, no, there hasn't, but I – I plan to do something with this, hopefully.

**Nardwuar:** Now, you don't like metal do you?

**Elijah:** Metal?

**Nardwuar:** I heard you don't like heavy metal.

**Elijah:** I like old metal.

**Nardwuar:** But I heard you don't like heavy metal or country music or rap.

**Elijah:** Oh no, that's old news. I love rap...

**Nardwuar:** I'm glad you've changed.

**Elijah:** Yes, uh... I love country, actually. Old country. And heavy metal... Black Sabbath is probably where my heavy metal...

**Nardwuar:** Exactly, that's what I was going to ask you about...

**Elijah:** Yeah.

**Nardwuar:** I was going to ask you about the Osbournes, like how could you hate metal and you were on the Osbournes?

**Elijah:** I love the Osbournes.

**Nardwuar:** Now, when you got on that show, did you ever think it would end up being the number one rated show in America?

**Elijah:** I wasn't surprised! [laughs] They're absolutely fascinating to watch and to be a part of. They're great people.

**Nardwuar:** On that particular episode, you were cleaning up, was it, dog urine?

**Elijah:** Dog urine. Yeah. One of the – they've got many dogs that like to shit and urinate everywhere. And uh... yeah. They urinated on the couch so I had to clean up.

**Nardwuar:** And you ended up going to a Smashing Pumpkins gig, which is pretty ironic, too, because doesn't Sharon Osbourne hate the

Pumpkins?

**Elijah:** She hates Billy Corgan. She used to represent Billy Corgan and now hates him. But I actually went and saw Zwan that night, which is Billy Corgan's new band.

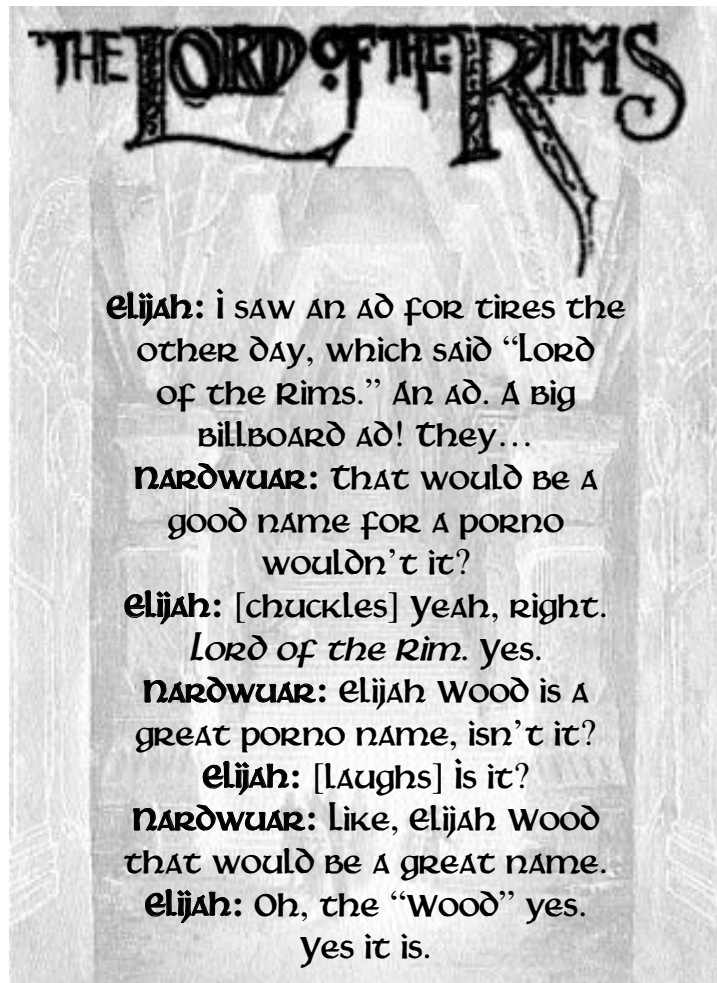
**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood, here in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, did you see that the Fox Cinema had a little presentation of

film that is!

**Elijah:** Amazing. Amazing. And *Heavenly Creatures*, for that matter. Brilliant. He's a brilliant director.

**Nardwuar:** It's made all out of puppets, *Meet the Feebles*, isn't it? Do you know where he keeps those puppets?

**Elijah:** They're all housed in the



*Meet the Feebles?*

**Elijah:** No! When?

**Nardwuar:** Yes, the Fox Cinema, an old porno theater in Vancouver – actually, they do the porno during the week – and they do Criminal Cinema on the weekends, and they had a special exclusive of Peter Jackson's *Meet the Feebles*.

**Elijah:** Oh my god!

**Nardwuar:** What can you tell the people about *Meet the Feebles* and Peter Jackson, Elijah?

**Elijah:** Well, *Meet the Feebles* is basically the Muppets on acid. Uhhh...

**Nardwuar:** The Muppets doing porn.

**Elijah:** And that as well... and eating shit and all sorts of other wonderful things. It's a really early movie of Peter Jackson's, and it's all Muppet sort of stuff.

**Nardwuar:** How the hell did he get *Lord of the Rings* out of *Meet the Feebles*? What an amazing indie

WETA effects building. WETA is a company that he made with Richard Taylor, back during *Meet the Feebles*. So, they're all there. They're all in New Zealand.

**Nardwuar:** So, does he shower much?

**Elijah:** [chuckles] Ummm... [laughing] Yes, yes he does. I think he has to! He works very hard.

**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood, you've been here in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, working on the movie *Try Seventeen* and I was wondering if you'd like to comment at all – if you could hold this please [Nardwuar hands Elijah a newspaper clipping], Elijah, on the cover of the Province newspaper here, and if you notice the headline, what does the headline there say?

**Elijah:** [cheesy announcer voice] Uhhh... "Hobbit and friend snuggle at game! *Lord of the Rings* Elijah Wood and actor Franka Potente step out for the playoffs."

**Nardwuar:** I love when you open the paper it has... "He's the *Lord of...*"

**Elijah:** ...The Rink." They just love to do those cheesy tag lines in relation to that film don't they? It's fantastic. In fact, I saw an ad for tires the other day, which said "Lord of the Rims." An ad! A big billboard ad! They...

**Nardwuar:** That would be a good name for a porno wouldn't it?

**Elijah:** [chuckles] Yeah, right. *Lord of the Rim*. Yes.

**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood is a great porno name, isn't it?

**Elijah:** [laughs] Is it?

**Nardwuar:** Like, Elijah Wood that would be a great name.

**Elijah:** Oh, the "Wood" yes. Yes it is.

**Nardwuar:** Like Elijah...

**Elijah:** I don't know whether to be offended or to go with that, but I understand...

**Nardwuar:** "Elijah, teach me about your sword."

**Elijah:** Yes. [stifles a laugh]

**Nardwuar:** "And your little stinger."

**Elijah:** Yes. [stifles a laugh]

**Nardwuar:** But, I was just curious. Can you comment on what's it like when you roll into town. You go to the hockey game, which I also understand you were a bit repulsed by – it was a bit rough, wasn't it for you?

**Elijah:** Uhh, it was a sad game. Sad game. Sad to see Vancouver lose the title.

**Nardwuar:** But did you realize that you'd be, like, photographed in the box. Did you think that was a private box?

**Elijah:** Oddly enough, it was a press box we were sitting in, so we were kind of asking for it, I guess, but for some reason you just assume that you have some ananana-anonymity... anonymity? Yeah, anonymity. Umm... but yeah, I don't know. It's weird to see that.

**Nardwuar:** Have a lot of people come by the set of the movie? I heard, like, about a thousand kids have come by the set of the movie. I know we're bugging you here at the wrap party of *Try Seventeen*, but did a lot of kids come by the set?

**Elijah:** A lot of kids.

**Nardwuar:** Like a thousand kids?

**Elijah:** Maybe if you counted them all throughout the entire filming schedule, probably.

**Nardwuar:** And they were all looking for your autograph.

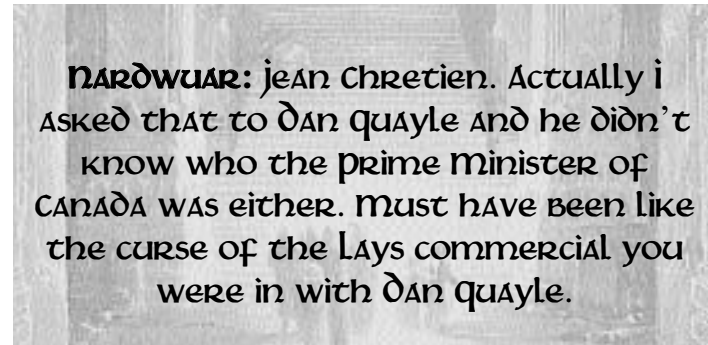
**Elijah:** Yeah. [stifles a laugh]

**Nardwuar:** Were they all dressed as hobbits too, or what was... Were there any interesting people who showed up there?

**Elijah:** Well, they were all – incidentally, they were

all Catholic school girls.  
**Nardwuar:** Which is very convenient for you.  
**Elijah:** [chuckles] I don't know. [giggles]  
**Nardwuar:** What other stuff did they present you with?  
**Elijah:** [still giggling] What's that?  
**Nardwuar:** What other stuff did they present you with? Like, did you get any neat gifts from them at all Elijah?  
**Elijah:** Yeah well... there's actually an interesting gift. Umm... [chuckles] you'll remember this. There was an interview that I had in *Rolling Stone* magazine...  
**Nardwuar:** Where you mentioned The Sea and Cake?  
**Elijah:** Yes! Which I love!  
**Nardwuar:** It's amazing to give them props!  
**Elijah:** Aww, massive props.  
**Nardwuar:** And the Hives, too!  
**Elijah:** Yeah, massive props! Good things!  
**Nardwuar:** And Amoeba Records in LA!  
**Elijah:** GOOD THINGS! Have you been there?  
**Nardwuar:** No, I've been to the one in San Francisco and Berkeley but not the LA one.  
**Elijah:** LA!  
**Nardwuar:** I would love to hook up with you and go record shopping. I understand you know all the clerks there, too.  
**Elijah:** [laughs] I, well...  
**Nardwuar:** We could go to the Pasadena swap meet together, too!  
**Elijah:** There you go! Anyway, what was I talking about?  
**Nardwuar:** You were talking about the *Rolling Stone* article. About the gift.  
**Elijah:** So all right, all right, so, the gift. So in the *Rolling Stone* article, I mentioned this thing about Viggo Mortensen who was in *Lord of the Rings* with me, and he had this fascination with the word cunt. I don't know if this is going to air on television. I don't know if you can say that, but anyway, I described this story. The word kind of became a joke on the set and so these girls, who had read the article, brought me a t-shirt that said "cunt-couver."  
**Nardwuar:** Woah!  
**Elijah:** I'll never – I'll never wear that shirt, just so you know.  
**Nardwuar:** It's your influence. You're a role model.  
**Elijah:** [serious] That's terrible, though [chuckles], to influence girls with something like that. But anyway, that was their idea of being "in on the joke" but I think it offended more Vancouver-ites than I thought.  
**Nardwuar:** And some of the girls, or people, or boys... were there many boys who came by to get your autograph at all, Elijah?  
**Elijah:** [serious] That's terrible, though [chuckles], to influence girls with something like that. But anyway, that was their idea of being "in on the joke" but I think it offended more Vancouver-ites than I thought.  
**Nardwuar:** And some of the girls, or people, or boys... were there many boys who came by to get your autograph at all, Elijah?  
**Elijah:** [serious] That's terrible, though [chuckles], to influence girls with something like that. But anyway, that was their idea of being "in on the joke" but I think it offended more Vancouver-ites than I thought.

thankfully.  
**Nardwuar:** [laughing] What do the boys usually look like?  
**Elijah:** Oh... [laughs]  
**Nardwuar:** Aside from me.  
**Elijah:** [laughing] Umm... I don't remember.  
**Nardwuar:** How far did they travel from, these people, to get your autograph?  
**Elijah:** There were actually two girls who traveled – was it from Edmonton? Yeah, two girls drove from Edmonton to drive to the set to meet me, and then literally drove right back home again. And I told them, I said, "So you've driven all the way from Edmonton. Are you



gonna be in Vancouver for a couple of days and enjoy the city?" and they're like, "No, we're gonna get right back home," and I was like, "Well, at least make it worth your while."  
**Nardwuar:** [people start to appear in the kitchen] And here we have co-stars from your movie.  
**Elijah:** Yes.  
**Nardwuar:** Introduce them, please, if you could there, Elijah Wood.  
**Elijah:** Oh, oh sorry that's my job. This is Franka Potente, and then here we have Jessica who – who provided fantastic wardrobe for the movie.  
**Nardwuar:** And these are all the people gathered together here at Section Three...  
**Elijah:** This is Charles, the writer of the film...  
**Someone in the background:** Is there anything to eat back here?  
**Elijah:** [laughing] This is Julie from production. This is all the people from *Try Seventeen*.  
**Franka:** We want to be on TV, too!  
**Nardwuar:** So, did you also venture to Douglas Coupland's house for dinner?  
**Elijah:** I was at Douglas Coupland's house for dinner, yeah.  
**Nardwuar:** And what was that like?  
**Franka:** Ohhhh, I don't know. He didn't even cook, he didn't change... I don't know, he was a nice guy.  
**Elijah:** He's a nice guy, he's a great writer.  
**Julie:** So, what did his house look

like? That's the important thing.  
**Franka:** Too much art!  
**Elijah:** It was very 1970s, uh...  
**Franka:** Too much, too much!  
**Elijah:** [geeky laugh]  
**Franka:** Nice, nice art. He had a Brillo box from Andy Warhol.  
**Elijah:** He did. That was very cool.  
**Franka:** I was impressed by that.  
**Nardwuar:** A pillow box from Andy Warhol?  
**Franka:** *Brillo* box. [laughs]  
**Nardwuar:** Shows how much I know, eh? [laughs]  
**Franka:** [laughs]  
**Nardwuar:** [to Franka] Were you "discovered" in, like, a washroom?  
**Franka:** Yes, I was.

**Nardwuar:** Like some guy followed you in there?  
**Franka:** Some girl followed me, a casting agent followed me.  
**Nardwuar:** And now you're here with Elijah Wood, starring in the movie *Try*...  
**Elijah:** *Seventeen!*  
**Nardwuar:** [to Elijah] You like sandwiches, don't you?  
**Elijah:** I love sandwiches. How does he know?!  
**Nardwuar:** What type of sandwiches do you like? Like, I love cheese.  
**Elijah:** I know you like cheese. You know, I love Club Sandwiches. Those are my favorite.  
**Franka:** With my salami...  
**Elijah:** Well she, she made this fantastic thing, the salami bagel with – basically it's margarine, salami, and a toasted bagel. Unbelievable.  
**Franka:** We all enjoyed the salami bagel.  
**Elijah:** [to Franka]: I think you should patent that.  
**Nardwuar:** One day on the set of *Try Seventeen*, I understand Blondie visited.  
**Elijah:** This is true.  
**Nardwuar:** And what exactly did Blondie do, Franka, there with your friend Elijah Wood?  
**Franka:** She fucking kissed him. And I wasn't there you know.  
**Voice in Background:** That bitch! [Franka then laughs]  
**Nardwuar:** Elijah what was it like making out with Blondie? That's incredible! Like how old are you Elijah again?

**Elijah:** Uh... thirty-five? Twenty-one.  
**Nardwuar:** And how old is Blondie?  
**Elijah:** I'm not really...  
**Nardwuar:** Fifty-seven.  
**Elijah:** Is she?  
**Nardwuar:** Like, you have a wet dream fantasy scene with Blondie. That's incredible Elijah!  
**Elijah:** It was very surreal, it was great.  
**Nardwuar:** And *Try Seventeen* is about?  
**Elijah:** *Try Seventeen* is... oh my God, it's sort of a coming of age story about this kid named Jones, who moves to a house which is basically sublet into various apartments, and the story is basically about the relationship he has with the tenants of this house and what that does to his life and how that changes his life. You know, the journey that that takes him on, basically.  
**Nardwuar:** Where does the wet dream sequence fit into everything? There's a lot of jizzing and wet dreaming going on, isn't there Elijah?  
**Elijah:** Well there... there certainly is with Blondie. She plays a character named Mom who is very voluptuous and very forward that Jones dreams about, yeah.  
**Nardwuar:** And you are the guy who dreams about her?  
**Elijah:** Yes, I am.  
**Nardwuar:** And you actually got to make out with her as well?  
**Elijah:** Yes, I did. Yeah. [geeky giggle]  
**Nardwuar:** Continuing on here Elijah Wood, I was curious, and again we're backstage here with Elijah Wood, backstage at the Section Three in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, at the wrap party for *Try*...  
**Elijah:** *Seventeen*.  
**Nardwuar:** With *Lord of the Rings*, you all got group tattoos, didn't you?  
**Elijah:** We did, yeah.  
**Nardwuar:** You can't show me your group tattoo from *Lord of the Rings* 'cause it's in an awkward place, right Prince Albert?  
**Elijah:** It is. It's in a, it's in a, lower region. But we, yeah we all got tattoos. It's elvish for nine. It means the nine members of the fellowship.  
**Nardwuar:** So will everybody for *Try Seventeen* be getting tattoos at all there, Elijah Wood?  
**Elijah:** [laughs] I don't think so! Maybe down the road.  
**Nardwuar:** Tell me about Paula Abdul.  
**Elijah:** The first job I ever had was a Paula Abdul video for "Forever Your Girl."  
**Nardwuar:** And what did you do?  
**Elijah:** I played an executive at a



table, and I broke a pencil because I was angry and depressed that I'd, uh, ended a relationship.

**Nardwuar:** And how old were you?

**Elijah:** Eight. And David Fincher directed the video.

**Nardwuar:** Winding up here, with Elijah Wood, tell me this, working with Dan Quayle...

**Elijah:** Yes! In the Wavy Lays commercial!

**Nardwuar:** Potato chips.

**Elijah:** Yes, that's right. For the Super Bowl commercial. That was good fun.

**Nardwuar:** Super Bowl?

**Elijah:** It was a Super Bowl commercial, yeah. He was a good sport. 'Cause it was the whole potato joke, because he had misspelled potato and put an 'e' on it in a classroom, so it was a way to poke fun at him and he dealt with it very well. He was a good guy.

**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood, I know you're kind of bored of the Rings, bored of the Rings, but can I ask you something about *Lord of the Rings*?

**Elijah:** Sure.

**Nardwuar:** Have there been any games associated with *Lord of the Rings*? Like drinking games. I've heard that there's some drinking games, like every time like a hobbit cries, there's a drinking game.

**Elijah:** Is there?

**Nardwuar:** Yeah, have you learned about this sort of thing?

**Elijah:** No. I'm sure there's a... there's a whole subculture of *Lord of the Rings* that I don't know about.

**Nardwuar:** Now, Franka Potente, you're also in the movie *Try Seventeen*, are you not?

**Franka:** No. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** Yes, you are. Please don't try to get out of it that way. Now, what was it like working in *Blow* with Pee-Wee Herman and Anastasia Blue?

**Franka:** Anastasia who?

**Nardwuar:** Anastasia Blue, the porn star. You worked with, like, Pee-Wee Herman and a porn star, Anastasia Blue, the ex-porn star in *Blow*.

**Franka:** [laughs] Who did she play?

**Nardwuar:** I'm not sure, but she was in there!

**Franka:** [laughs] Well, I didn't meet her but Pee-Wee was cool.

**Nardwuar:** How much running did you do for *Run Lola Run*? Did you prepare a lot, did you run a lot?

**Franka:** No.

**Nardwuar:** No training?

**Franka:** No. I smoke too much. [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** I mean, right now you've got a movie coming up with Matt Damon?

**Franka:** Yeah. *The Bourne Identity*.

**Nardwuar:** Now what's this about the sex scenes being edited out of the movie? How dare they!

**Franka:** You and your papers! There's actually, you know what, I don't know, there's no sex scene though. There's a kissing scene...

**Nardwuar:** And I was watching you on the TV as well. Now, what's the deal with Ian McKellan holding his boyfriend's hand and you looking away?

**Franka:** [to Elijah] Did you look away?

**Elijah:** I looked away?

**Nardwuar:** There was a shot of you, Elijah. You were looking away from Ian McKellan when he was holding his boyfriend's hand. And I guess I was just curious of what was going through your mind at that time.

**Elijah:** I think what was going

**Nardwuar:** The show, yeah, *Mr. Show*, yeah.

**Elijah:** Yeah. Have you ever interviewed David Cross?

**Nardwuar:** No, I have not.

**Elijah:** Good guy. You should try and interview him if he comes to Vancouver. But David Cross is a big, kind of, punk fan.

**Nardwuar:** *The Goonies*. Sean Astin...

**Elijah:** I know where you're going with this!

**Nardwuar:** *The Goonies*!

**Elijah:** [laughs] Incredible! Sean Astin! Awesome. One of my all-time favorite movies.

**Nardwuar:** And that means you're connected to *ET* and *Star Wars*.

**Elijah:** [laughs] Yes I am, I guess.

**Nardwuar:** So there's a connection between Elijah Wood, *ET* and *Star Wars* and *Lord of the Rings*. I mean, you've got it all!

**Elijah:** That's pretty cool. I can quit my job now.

**Nardwuar:** And in the movie, *Lord of the Rings*, is there a scene where you can be seen in your brown shoes?

**Elijah:** I never wore shoes.

**Nardwuar:** I thought there was, like, a scene where you were wearing shoes, like if you look really closely, you can see brown shoes.

**Elijah:** It may have been... scale doubles, 'cause we had people who were really small...

**Nardwuar:** What, they were paid scale to be your double?

**Elijah:** No, just really small people who were of scale for the hobbits.

**Nardwuar:** How could they be - I mean, no offense Elijah - but how could they be smaller than you? 'Cause you're pretty small.

**Elijah:** I am pretty small Nardwuar...

**Nardwuar:** Would they have...

**Elijah:** [sulky voice] Thank you for mentioning that.

**Nardwuar:** I didn't mean to. I mean, uh, sorry you're big. Yeah, I mean, uh, I'm, uh, well, actually, I...

**Elijah:** I've accepted it. It's fine Nardwuar.

**Nardwuar:** I'm 7 foot 5, so you're 6'1". Yes.

**Elijah:** Exactly.

**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood, winding up here, you're in Vancouver shooting *Try Seventeen*. You've done a lot of movies. It's incredible. I just am so honored to speak to you! You were in *Internal Affairs*...

**Elijah:** This is true.

**Nardwuar:** With Richard Gere. Now, I know that **27**



**Nardwuar:** I heard it was edited out! I wanted to see you have sex with Matt Damon!

**Franka:** I want to see that too! But we never shot it! [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** Oh damn!

**Elijah:** I-I-I have no comment on that. I don't particularly want to see that, so...

**Nardwuar:** Elijah Wood, *Try Seventeen* is the movie you're pumping now, however, the movie *Lord of the Rings* still rings strong with a lot of people. Some Tolkien fans have said, "I've stopped trying to figure out Elijah Wood. He simply is 'too weird.'"

**Elijah:** I take that as a compliment. I like being too weird.

**Nardwuar:** What is your relationship with those super-doooper Tolkien fans? What is your relationship with those people?

**Elijah:** Um... there's really no relationship, but uh... [laughs] no, I... look, I think we made a movie that was for the fans, and any of their kind of appreciation for the film and the books, I totally respect and love, so...

**Nardwuar:** At the Oscars this year, were you there, Franka?

**Franka:** I was watching Elijah on the TV in LA.

through my mind was, "Oh my God, there's another two hours of this."

**Nardwuar:** Did you notice Jello Biafra at the Oscars?

**Elijah:** Was he there?

**Nardwuar:** He was played in a little clip beforehand, one of those little vignettes. Jello Biafra was at the Oscars.

**Elijah:** Oh, he was in those, those things talking about movies and stuff.

**Nardwuar:** Isn't that incredible? Jello Biafra was there.

**Elijah:** Oh, God bless Jello.

**Nardwuar:** He's in your record collection, too, isn't he?

**Elijah:** Uh, I don't actually have any Dead Kennedys in my record collection, which is terrible.

**Nardwuar:** We saw Fugazi tonight. I saw Fugazi's CD tonight.

**Elijah:** I do have some Fugazi.

**Nardwuar:** And are there many other punkers in Hollywood? I asked this before, but I mean you know Jello at the Oscars, I mean, have you bumped into Rollins or any of the other punkers or anything like that?

**Elijah:** I haven't. But you know, do you know who David Cross is? Do you ever watch M...

movie because Richard Gere had anal sex in that movie!

**Elijah:** [shocked] He did?

**Nardwuar:** Yes, he did.

**Elijah:** I don't remember that.

**Nardwuar:** There was a scene of him coming from behind!

**Elijah:** Wow! I had no idea!

**Nardwuar:** Now you also were in *Black and White* with Robert Downey...

**Elijah:** Junior.

**Nardwuar:** And you were in *Paradise* with Don Johnson!

**Elijah:** [chuckles] Yeah.

**Nardwuar:** Now, what do you remember about Don Johnson and Robert Downey Jr.?

**Elijah:** Uhh... Robert Downey Jr. is a brilliant, uh...

**Nardwuar:** Like the first thing that pops into your head about that movie. There must be some little scene...

**Elijah:** Yeah! Well, there was a scene that was cut out of *Black and White* where Robert Downey Jr. was actually masturbating to Michael Tyson.

**Nardwuar:** You were also in *The Good...*

**Elijah:** *Son*.

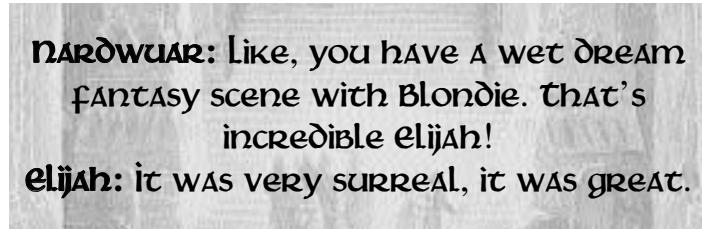
**Nardwuar:** With Macaulay...

**Elijah:** Culkin

**Nardwuar:** Now, *The Good Son*, that's a weird title isn't it, because Macaulay Culkin wasn't the son

and he wasn't good. He was the nephew. What's going on there? Why was it called *The Good Son*?

**Elijah:** Uh... because he was the son of his mother, and he uh, maybe it was *The Good Son* because I'm the good son? I don't



know.

**Nardwuar:** Did you go to his wedding? Macaulay Culkin's wedding.

**Elijah:** [stifling a laugh] No, no.

**Nardwuar:** Have you been hanging out with him?

**Elijah:** No, I haven't seen him in years.

**Nardwuar:** Are you jealous though, Elijah Wood, 'cause Macaulay Culkin got to be in a Sonic Youth video?

**Elijah:** Yes, that is pretty damn cool. Off of, uh, which album?

**Nardwuar:** "Sunday."

**Elijah:** Yes! And that was from the... what, how, what record was that? That was their last record.

No, it was not their last record, never mind, never mind. I'm sorry.

**Nardwuar:** And all you got to be in were a Cranberries and Paula Abdul video?

**Elijah:** [sulky voice] That's true.

**Nardwuar:** So he's kind of beat you there, but you're gonna change everything because aren't you

servicing answer that's gonna be. Ummm... I don't know.

**Nardwuar:** Because you know the Prime Minister of Canada.

**Elijah:** Do I?

**Nardwuar:** Yes, you do.

**Elijah:** I do?

**Nardwuar:** His name is...

**Elijah:** I don't know.

**Nardwuar:** Jean...

**Elijah:** Pierre?

**Nardwuar:** Jean Chretien.

**Elijah:** Oh, okay.

**Nardwuar:** Jean Chretien. Actually, I asked that to Dan Quayle and he didn't know who the Prime Minister of Canada was either. Must have been like the curse of the Lays commercial you were in with Dan Quayle.

**Elijah:** Well, people should like me because I know Nardwuar now.

**Nardwuar:** Well thanks very much. Anything else you'd like to add to the people out there Elijah?

**Elijah:** Nothing else.

**Nardwuar:** *Try Seventeen!*

**Elijah:** *Try Seventeen.*

**Nardwuar:** Please try it.

**Elijah:** Please?

**Nardwuar:** Keep on rocking the free world. And doot doola doot doo...

**Elijah:** Doot doo.

To hear this interview go to <<http://www.nardwuar.com>>





# Squeeze My Horn

## FELLATIO'S: THE CANDY BAR THAT'S CHOCK FULL OF CREAM AND NUTS.

In a mad rush to fill my fading weekend with the last enjoyable remnants of relaxing, mindless humor, I settled into my couch for Fox's barrage of Sunday night TV. As I watched, I felt as though there was an almost political and/or religious theme going on.

First off was *King of the Hill*. In this was the religious theme. It seemed that a bevy of men decided to take up bible study at Luanne's pool. Now all the viewers knew that not a one of these guys was there to get closer to God; they were there to get closer to the bikini clad chick. It seems that the idea was that people in general use God for their own personal agendas. We've all seen this before, the

junkies or the politicians who say they've found religion, but who do they think they're fooling? Sure, let's use religion as a front so that no one will ever suspect that I'm smoking crack. To me, that's blasphemy. If you remember in the Old Testament, God was a real bad dude. He'd burn you to ash just because you forgot a step in the management of entering the holy temple. In a way, I feel this is a poke at the current situation that Mr. Bush has us in. That's right, the new holy war over the almighty dollar, which both sides are covering up behind God/Allah. A former manager once told me that he would not believe in anything that was based solely on faith and that,



**MY FAT IRISH ASS!**  
Issue No. Minus (-) 4 Price: Don't Ask!

**COMIX**

**Contents:**

- Editor's Notes: 1
- Reviews: 2
- D. Giancoli/CotA Interview: 7
- Fuck you, Dale: 10
- Comix Section
- Dumb-Ass Band Idea: 12
- Ace McTiles Comix: 15
- Famine Cervix/Penis the Menace: 26

This Issue's Fat Irish Ass: "Gator" Collins



**SYNTHETIC UNIVERSE**

by Alison Elizabeth Taylor

NUMBER 3 - FOR MATURE READERS  
U.S. \$1.95 - CAN \$5.95

Gary Hornberger

if you gave him something concrete, then he'd give it a chance. Yet, in today's world there are many who go in just the opposite direction.

Anyway, the next show was *The Simpsons* and I think we all know what these writers are capable of. This episode was filled with mob mentality and pecking order. There's a scandalous director making a documentary at Springfield Elementary and, after exposing Bart to be the lesser bully than Nelson and the gang, the director actually puts Bart on the lowest rung of the playground. Yes, even lower than Milhouse. At the same time, the director has told Lisa she has no direction, which sends her off to the museum to find her passion to become an astronomy major, which makes her an activist against light pollution where, of course, we find the Springfield

Mob against her when she turns off all the lights. More of a correlation to the war? Let's see: mobs forming just because? Who's the biggest kid on the playground? I'm telling you Fox is up to something.

Finally there's the new show, *Oliver Beene*, which plays the race card. Granted this show takes place in the '60s. I don't quite understand making light of this subject given the current global fragility. The show starts out by showing the black father giving his son a pep talk not to take any shit from the white kids on his first day at school. Of course, the Beene kid is trying to clear a wall on the swings and lands on the black kid when he clears it. The black kid cries racism and the Beene family tries to set things right by inviting them over for dinner. As things go, everyone has something in common and everything is going fine until they

catch the older brother with the sister and interracial fondling is taboo. Now, what I find humorous is that the Beene family is Jewish, so you're talking about two supposedly persecuted groups. Now, maybe in my paranoid feelings toward the war, I'm reading too much into Fox's programming, but this is what I see. In general, Sunday night is the only time I watch TV anymore, what with all that reality shit that flows down the airwaves, but don't send me over the deep end. Don't take away my security blanket. I need to laugh at something in a world where I'm slowly being forced to stay in the comfort of my own home because someone out there wants to kill me by association. Why is it now that even the cartoons and comedy programs are reminding me of the world that I live in, even if it is a parody? Half empty or half full, whatever your thinking, let's just be thankful that we can take a sip. Now that I got that out of my system and I've had my Stuart Smally daily affirmation, let's do some comics.

#### **PUBO #1**

\$2.99 U.S., \$4.99 CAN

I've got to be honest, the cover made me get this one. That and the title. Come on, Pubo a guy with heat miser hair, big lips, hands, and big feet all in a two foot frame, talking to a butterfly who says, "You funny looking, fellah-man." That wouldn't make you interested? It seems Pubo is for Physically Unipolar Biogenic Organism. In other words, he's a lab rat. He's being transported on a airplane with a couple of industry goons who foolishly open the door and Pubo makes a jump with the only parachute onboard, landing somewhere in the forests of the state of Washington. For some reason he is able to converse with the critters of the Forrest and they lead him to an old Obi Wan character who basically riddles Pubo into a state of anger. So he leaves with no real information and an empty stomach, back into the woods where he meets the butterfly who talks like Yoda. Is there some kind of *Star Wars* thing going on? Anyway, he finds some honey and with that he finds a pissed off bear. This is where we're left to buy #2. Truthfully, I like this story, kind of Doctor Dolittle meets the mushroom people with a dash of *Star Wars*. The characters are likeable too. It's a 1 of 3 so I'm hoping that we find out who made our little character and why he is able to talk with the animals. If you like height challenged characters then you might be interested in this mag. (Dark Horse Comics, 10956 SE Main Street, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222.)

#### **EVERYTHING CAN BE BEATEN, \$3.95 U.S.**

It seems as though one of the kids from *Nightmare before Christmas* has escaped and gone on a bloody romp in the outside world. This, by far, is one brutal comic. It is all in color to show all the blood. It seems this little monster has been confined to a room to mash the kittens that come down a chute, with his hammer. Then, in his who-am-I? pondering, he spots an open door in the back of the room. He goes out and into a colorful world of happy creatures who want to become his friend, but he only knows one thing, so he starts smashing everything in this world. He smashes the trees, the creatures, and even the clouds until all that is left is a barren wasteland of red. He sits down to ponder all that has happened, but mostly he just sits, for millions of years pass and all the happy color comes back, so he starts on his reign of terror again. Then, in the middle of his hammering, he muddles with the purpose of all that he's doing and stops and goes back to his room of kittens where he finds that in his absence he was replaced. He thinks that it will be great to have another to share his experiences with, when all of the sudden, the other whacks him with an axe. Let me tell you, this is no kid's story. Visually, this book can give grownups nightmares. However you interpret this story, you feel remorse for every character in it. Even after reading it twice, I can't make a call for or against. It's like a car wreck: it's horrific yet you can't look away. Visually the artwork is stunning yet the story is heart wrenching, so I'm just going to say read at your own risk. (SLG Publishing, P.O. Box 26427, San Jose, CA 95159-6427, www.slavelabor.com)

#### **MY FAT IRISH ASS #4**

\$ ??

It's a zine of mostly comics. So let me just say I suffered miserably looking for anything humorous. Lot's of bathroom humor in this rag. Seems somewhere along the lines, Sarah Ferguson pissed someone off. Then there's the scribbling of the scorched scrotum society, and finally there are the redo's of the *Family Circus* and *Dennis the Menace* comics. None of these are funny, so I guess we are all going to have to kiss the fat Irish ass.

#### **THAT'S JUST WRONG**

HEY! This is Free

A small collection of short comics that the author thought would never make it to regular comics, cutting room floor stuff. If you read the precursor to these shorts, they can be funny. The author claims that

this is a collection of shorts that, for some reason or other, didn't have the right stuff or were unfinished or whatever so he decided to put them together here. With that in mind you are free to read without the constraints of serious comic writing, which makes some seem kiddy-humorous. For instance, the short "Fellatio's: the candy bar that's chock full of cream and nuts." Then, there are testimonials from all the kids that are sexual innuendoes. This one is a great way to get reaction to low powered ideas, or self believed low powered ideas. With the fact that these shorts are perceived as not that great, it's easier to find the humor in them. So I'm going to say run with this one. Hey! It's free. (Horrendous Failure Studios, <http://failure.humpin.org>, [shuttlebuszine@hotmail.com](mailto:shuttlebuszine@hotmail.com))

#### **SYNTHETIC UNIVERSE #3**

\$3.95U.S., \$5.95CAN

All I can say is very bizarre. This is a collection of short stories by one author. For the most part, we are thrown around future, present, and past. The first story is called "Thrifting in the 2020's" and, apparently, hair is a bad thing in the future. It's basically about a girl with a mixed up sex life, but there are all sorts of disconnection's thrown in that have nothing to do

with the story. I found most of the stories to be disjointed and hard to follow, like "Killing Time," about freaks and princes and witches with a sheep that thought it was a flying elephant. I wanted to like this, because the artwork is well done, but the stories are just too wacky. (Hardcut Publishing, P.O. Box 291700, LA, CA 90029, [ali@hardcutpublishing.com](mailto:ali@hardcutpublishing.com))

#### **HAMACHI GIRL**

\$??

Didn't think this one was going to be special, but in a strange way, I liked it. Maybe because it was straightforward and simple. It's about a guy who owns a sushi shop and his daily routine and the customers who come into his shop. I think most of all what attracts me about it is he likes it. He has found his niche in life. The drawings are simple yet exact and the story flows. It's like a Japanese *Cheers*: a place you want to go to to just get away. Hamachi girl is his favorite customer and hence the title of the comic. Maybe it appeals to me because these people are the people who shop at my store, and I care to take the time to joke with them or share a story. I think that's why this is likeable. (E-Z Cheese Comics, [tindog@hotmail.com](mailto:tindog@hotmail.com))

—Gary Hornberger





**Designated Dildos**

# I'm Against It



## The Eagles are a bunch of dildos who have no right being in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

You can't help but notice the inclusion of punk mainstays the Ramones or The Clash as inductees in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame these last couple of years. Both bands more than deserve a place in this certain hall of fame, right up there with some of the all-time greats like Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, The Stones, or The Beatles. Keep in mind that there are some inductees there that have *no* business wasting anyone's time at all (don't worry – we'll get to them later on). While The Clash were nominated when Joe Strummer was still among us, it makes me think about why the Ramones' nomination was a year late *and* thrown into the ring after Joey Ramone succumbed to lymphoma in 2001, the same year they should've been inducted. Hmmm. Perhaps a sudden realization of one's importance after they've left us? Pangs of guilt? Trying to play catch-up with one's credibility on their personal explanation of how a band such as the Ramones "have always been an important factor in the evolution of rock & roll"? I'd say a little of each, quite frankly. Fucking glory whores.

Although this hall of fame is actually an under-the-table handjob for most of those working within the industry, most artists (inducted or not) know their net worth whether it's in the studio laboring over their next full-length, or walking off the stage, soaked to the gills with sweat after another night on the road. How does *anyone* get into this hall of fame, or even nominated for that matter? According to the guidelines set by their Foundation committee, here's the lowdown. And remember – this is *exactly* how the guidelines are written (get ready to shake your head): "*Leaders in the music industry joined together in 1983 to establish the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation. One of the Foundation's many functions is to recognize the contributions of those who have had a significant impact on the evolution, development and perpetuation of rock and roll by inducting them into the Hall of Fame.*" Let's see –

industry. Now, just *what* constitutes a leader in this industry? Owner of a label? Owner of a radio station? Who? I'd like to know. And recognizing contributions is *one* of the Foundation's many functions? Just what else do they have their hands in? This is something else my cat ears are perking up about. Interesting. Here's the four categories of inductees. I'm sure this will answer the questions many of us have had of "Who is this person and why are they getting inducted?"

Here's how it's broken down:  
**1) Performers:** "*Artists become eligible for induction 25 years after the release of their first record. Criteria include the influence and significance of the artist's contributions to the development and perpetuation of rock and roll. The Foundation's nominating committee, composed of rock and roll historians, selects nominees each year in the Performer category. Ballots are then sent to an international voting body of about 1,000 rock experts. Those performers who receive the highest number of votes, and more than 50 percent of the vote, are inducted. The Foundation generally inducts five to seven performers each year.*" This is what I was commenting on earlier about the Ramones. That first groundbreaking LP of theirs was released in 1976. So why was their long-awaited induction slated for 2002? That's a year late, no? Better late than never, I suppose, as it always is with the Ramones, god bless 'em. At least the hall did The Clash justice and inducted them twenty-five years after their wonderful self-titled debut was released in 1978 (even if the U.K. version of it was released in 1977). This nominating committee composed of rock and roll historians – who are they? Why are they the only ones who get to choose nominees in the "performer" category? And these ballots that are sent to this "international voting body of 1,000 rock experts" – who are all these 1,000 folks? I'm picturing a room full of people resembling the Comic Book Guy from *The Simpsons*. D'oh. I can hear it now – "You call *this* a nominee? Hell-o! I

think *not!* Worst choice *ever*. Now make like my pants, and *split!*"

To add to that thought, I was looking over the hall's list of past inductees and couldn't help but notice some missing holes in their list. Just off the top of my head, here are a few missing artists from that list in (somewhat) chronological order, and by *no* means is this everyone who should rightfully be inducted – I know there are many who have been overlooked: The Ventures. I mean, shit the bed! – Their first full length has been spinning on turntables since 1960! That was forty-three friggin' years ago! Can you say "rooked"? Dick Dale & His Deltones have been just as robbed from their spot in the hall, as well – their first LP debuted forty-one years ago in 1962. These two outfits deserve spots in the hall right next to The Beach Boys, period.

The Stooges or even Iggy Pop? I know that The Stooges made the cut to be one of the fifteen performers to be nominated back in 1997, yet the geniuses voting that year must've really been up to their ears in their own asses at the time. The Stooges were one of the top outfits to unleash the proto-punk blueprint on American soil with their debut back in 1969. And how about that real live bunch, the MC5? Just as important as their Michigan brethren The Stooges, the MC5 carved out a sonic template to be lifted for years to come with their electrifying debut, *Kick out the Jams*, also from 1969. Thirty-four years and waiting for both of these bands – now *that's* a damn shame.

Since their self-titled debut hit the world in 1970, Black Sabbath ultimately had a place waiting in that hall, too. But word has it that Mr. Osbourne has personal feelings regarding the hall and its committee along the lines that suits have absolutely no place to speak whatsoever when it's regarding rock and roll. Well said, Ozzy. How 'bout them New York Dolls? With only two full-lengths under their lady-like belts, they released a monster wave of raunchy, lipstick-smears rock and roll to be worshipped, ripped off, and reckoned with thirty

years ago with their self-titled debut from 1973. Remember, if it weren't for The Dolls, all you punk rock and roll guitarists may have never got to buy records from their ex-guitarist Johnny Thunders and his band, The Heartbreakers, not to mention the oh-so-infinite influence The Dolls had on bands like KISS.

Ironically enough, KISS is four years late with getting their own induction to the hall of fame since their debut LP from 1974, even though they were considered one of the touring acts in the world back in their day. That one's a real head-scratcher – what did you do to piss off that nominating committee, Mr. Gene Simmons? Impregnate all of their daughters? (or wives?) Another band debuting its first LP in 1973 who hasn't yet received their props in the hall is Lynyrd Skynyrd. Before you all start crying out and wringing your hands about Skynyrd even being mentioned here at all, I defy anyone to look down their nose at *any* of their other material that hasn't been beat to death on '70s FM radio. Like Led Zeppelin, Skynyrd's definitely a band you listen to an album at a time, unlike most of the ding-dongs who buy K-Tel's *Monster Rock Riffs* or whatever the fuck those awful comps are titled. I stand by my backing of Skynyrd 100%, and you know what? Fuck *you* if that ain't "punk" enough for you.

An often-forgotten staple of NYC rock and roll is the pride of the Bronx (no, not the Yankees) – The Dictators, who, in 1975, had already spewed forth their raucous first full-length, *Go Girl Crazy*. Out a year prior to their brothers-in-arms Ramones' first LP, The Dictator's *Go...* even featured their own version of "California Sun," only to be covered again in 1977 on the Ramones second LP, *Leave Home*. Handsome Dick Manitoba and the rest of the Dictators would be a very worthy inclusion amongst the other inductees in the hall, just for their live performance at the award ceremony or their acceptance speech alone. Here's hoping that they won't go three more years unnoticed for nomination. 1976 delivered the self-

**Designated Dildos**

titled debut LP of Blondie, and, with the help of their lovely singer Deborah Harry, this band helped kick in the closed doors of male-dominated rock at the time, paving the road for female rockers to follow. Blondie is way deserving of such a spot in that hall of fame and she and her band sure have earned it.

Hey! Where's Motorhead on this list of inductees? Their self-titled debut was launched upon our unsuspecting planet's ears some twenty-six years ago in 1977. Let's give credit where credit's due here,

*We Not Men? A: We Are Devo*). Again, both bands are more than deserving to be on that inductee list.

Okay – enough of what's come up off the top of my head. Back to the inductee categories: **2) Non-Performers:** “*Songwriters, producers, disc jockeys, record executives, journalists and other industry professionals who have had a major influence on the development of rock and roll.*” As far as disc jockeys, our own Rodney Bingenheimer should already be inducted in the hall, being that he gave most

above-mentioned ‘70s roster of Sire artists.

### 3) Early Influences:

“*Artists whose music predated rock and roll but had an impact on the evolution of rock and roll and inspired rock's leading artists. The special selection committee elects the inductees in the Non-performer and Early Influences categories.*” This one's pretty self-explanatory. Basically, the inductees in this category are folks who got the ball rolling long before rock and roll was rearing its ugly head to parents

drums, etc. – on songs and records that still stand strong to this day, some of the real greats contributing their licks ‘n chops to Motown. I'd just like to personally add here that it's *so* bad ass to see Hal Blaine inducted under this category, especially when it was first introduced in 2000. Hal's drumming was partly responsible for a helluva lot of hits on a helluva lot of records, especially his close-as-you-can-get-to-near-perfect work with king producer Phil Spector. A hall inductee himself, Spector was the mad scientist



Designated Data

people. As editor Retodd would exclaim, “What the fuck?!” Cheap Trick is also another band that debuted their fantastic first self-titled record in 1977. Need I explain as to *why* they deserve their just due in that hall of fame? It's *Cheap Trick*, folks! Here's a band that I *know* slipped a lot of the minds on that nominating committee, and maybe even some of you reading here – The Jam. When their 1977 debut, *In the City* landed in the hands of the fans, The Jam pushed the envelope of rocking the ass off of a pop melody, ala their British bros The Kinks. In my own opinion, The Jam have always been a way-underrated rocking outfit (and a *trio*, for that matter).

Here's something to ponder – The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame and its respective museum are located in Cleveland, Ohio. Yet, there are two bands hailing from that very same state who've yet to be recognized as hall of fame inductees – the Dead Boys (who debuted in 1977 with their deliciously-diseased rock and roll anthem LP, *Young Loud and Snotty*) and Devo (who successfully sprung a new wave leak all over the critic's heads in 1978 with *Q: Are*

Angelenos their first blast of punk over the airwaves from the KROQ 106.7 FM radio station in LA (which, nauseatingly enough, is actually a *very* far cry from what it used to be). Lester Bangs falls under the journalist category – where's his induction? I'm sure Mr. Bangs will get his nomination as soon as Howard Stern gets his – now *that* would be an awards show worth taping, be that it would ever happen. If it *does* in fact happen, kind folks of the committee, let's make sure that The Dictators get their induction that particular year, as it would be heaven-sent if they got to perform along the likes of ‘ol Lester and Howard. And record execs? Seymour Stein, the man who spear-headed Sire Records, rightfully has a place in this hall, too. Without visionary label dudes like Stein, Sire might not have happened the way it did, and that would've meant no tasty full-lengths of the Ramones, Dead Boys, The Replacements, Richard Hell & The Voidoids, or The Saints for any of us. As much as Leonard Chess helped spawn artists like Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, and Chuck Berry with his Chess label, Stein's label did the same with the

across the world – early bluesmen and women, primal guitar slingers, and early-era country/honkytonk/hillbilly hybrid cultivators. Being that this category's a no-brainer, the hall pretty much have everyone covered here, but I'm sure there could and will be a few more names added in the future. Remember that those who had made a major impact in their time weren't as numerous as all the countless heads who lead the onslaught of rock and roll to come. Also add to the mix that many of these early influence inductees died at a fairly young age (and you thought *you* were a rockin' rough-neck, there, cocko).

**4) Side Men:** “*This category was introduced in 2000. It honors those musicians who have spent their career out of the spotlight, performing as backup musicians for major artists on recording sessions and in concert. Though they often play a key role in the creation of memorable music, the public rarely knows them by name. A separate committee, composed primarily of producers, selects the inductees in this category.*” This category showcases inductees who've lent their talents – be it piano, bass, guitars,

who oversaw production for bands like The Ronettes and The Crystals, both of whom Hal set the backbeat for (yet *neither* bands are in the hall themselves – go figure!). Hal's wrists can also be duly noted on his timeless drumming work with The Beach Boys. A well-deserved induction, Mr. Blaine.

### 5) Your Worthless Contributions to Rock Are Paralleled to the Smell of Ass, Therefore I Hereby Revoke Your Induction:

I know, there are really only four official categories of inductees in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, but I had to add my own fifth category here. C'mon! This is (fuck you) Dale's column you're reading, remember? I told you earlier we'd get to these clueless wonders who had somehow finagled an induction and here they are: Paul Ackerman (Non-Performer award). Paul was the music editor for *Billboard* magazine for thirty years from 1943-1973. While maybe Paul's heart was in the right place for rock and roll's sake, he helped push one of the biggest music industry rags to showcase what's “hot” and “happening” in the music business. You see a lot

of the bands we cover here in *Razorcake* grace *Billboard's* pages? You don't? (To quote my good man Homer J. Simpson – "By the way, that was *sarcasm*.") *Billboard* – I'd sooner wipe my ass clean with my own hands before I would use the pages of their mag. How do you wipe shit off with shit? You don't.

The Bee Gees (Performer award). While *Saturday Night Fever* is a great movie to watch while crusting it on the couch on a Sunday afternoon, I'm never going to purchase the film's soundtrack. And don't go telling me that their "musical efforts" pre-*Saturday Night Fever* helped them get their induction, either. I can name a gazillion garage bands that would've slapped the Bee Gees around like crack whores if they had to share a rehearsal space with them at the time of their early inception. Craptacular. Eric Clapton (Performer award). Not only has Eric been inducted three times, but the third induction for his solo work makes me want to retch pools of bile into my lap. I'm allowing well-earned clearance for his first couple inductions – The Yardbirds and Cream – but putting my fucking foot down for the award for his solo tripe. If Eric's dearly departed child heard the overrated crap his dad put out on his own today, he would've

jumped out of that apartment window on purpose this time. I got three words for Eric Clapton – James Patrick Page. Bite me.

Crosby, Stills, and Nash (Performer award). Remember what Bluto Blutarsky (John Belushi) did to that acoustic guitar when he came down the stairs in the 1978 movie classic *Animal House*? That's the



feeling I get when I'm subjected to listening to Crosby, Stills, and Nash. As my homeboy/Lil' Beez comic creator Art would quip: "Get that shiz away from me. I'm allergic to it – I break out in punches." The Eagles (Performer award). Good *god*, do I really have to get into this one? I don't? Thank you. By the way: true story – if you ever want to see your car stereo literally get kicked through the dashboard and into the engine compartment under your hood, play The Eagles when travelling with one Clint Weinrich, aka, The Torrez. He *will* ask you once to change it and/or turn it off. After that, get ready to wonder why you didn't take my fair warning seriously.

Fleetwood Mac (Performer award). If I have to explain this, you're getting the donkeypunch of

your life the next time we meet up. Everything that the 1970s was wrong about is encapsulated here. The kind of "rock" that the disco ducks would listen to. Pardon me while I go shower, now. I feel unclean all the sudden. Pass the Comet, please. Bill Graham (Non-Performer award). The concert promoter of the Fillmores West & East, and artist manager who wasted time putting on shows and heavily pushing bands like The Grateful Dead (ah, FAWK! Now I'm all dirty again! Shit!) when he should've been concentrating his efforts squarely on bands like The Stooges and the MC5. How dare he. The Grateful Dead (Performer award). Everything and anything about this so-called "band," as well as its following, needs to go away. Permanently. All of you. Go join Jerry Garcia in his communal burial plot and die. If I were granted one wish from the Great Rock Genie Of The Lamp (who would probably be the spirit of Stiv Bators, or someone of the like) to turn The Grateful Dead into anything I wanted, it would be a great, big pile of steaming shit. Not the one they've always represented, but an *actual* mound of poo. That way, I could take and flush the whole band down the shitter and never have to look, listen, or smell them ever again.

Simon and Garfunkel (Performer award). See above Crosby, Stills, and Nash explanation. Ditto for Paul Simon as he's inducted twice for his "solo work," just like Eric "You Seen My Kid?" Clapton. Steely Dan (Performer award). Okay – who was freebasing liquid STUPID on the nominating committee when this uncalculated mistake was let through the turnstiles? Hmmm? Hey! I'm waiting! All right – that's the end of my tacked-on category. I can only hope that some bands like The Cramps (debuted their first LP in 1979), The Psychedelic Furs (theirs in 1980), The Replacements (theirs in 1981), or Social Distortion (theirs in 1983) get their just desserts from the hall of fame in the next couple of years. Hell, even a nomination for these folks would be nice!

Enough of my own personal thoughts/wishes for now. If any of you Razorcakers get some slick ideas rattling around up in that head of yours about any of this, zip me some email with your own thoughts on who you feel should be inducted, or who you feel is yet to be inducted.

**I'm Against It**  
**-Designated Dale**  
<DesignatedDale@aol.com>





*The impact of the car crash was so forceful that the front passenger doors were torn from the sedan. The Honda nearly broke in half.*

## SHELLED

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about death and dying.

I only had two best friends in Florida, and one of them died last January. It was the first time I'd ever dealt with the death of someone close to me.

It was the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend, so I had Monday off. Sean was already living in Los Angeles and working on *Razorcake*, so I was living by myself. I didn't look forward to teaching the next day. All I wanted to do was spend the last free hours of my holiday alone. I was sitting in my living room, flipping through magazines and half-listening to some cooking show on Food Network when the phone rang. I had Caller ID, which came in handy when I didn't want to answer the phone but wanted to know who was calling. I checked the name. It was my friend Jonathan Kulbach.

*Jonathan, I thought. I can talk to him later.*

I turned the page in my magazine and let the answering machine pick up, but the voice leaving a

message wasn't Jonathan's. It was a woman, a total stranger. Her voice was shaky, and she was obviously trying to keep from crying.

"Felizon," I heard her say, "you don't know me, but my name is Marnie. I'm a friend of Jonathan's. I'm calling to tell you... I have some bad news... Jonathan passed this weekend."

It was like a bad made-for-TV drama. But that's exactly how it happened, exactly what she said. I snatched up the phone and tried to stay calm, but all I could manage was "What? What?" The woman on the other end told me she was calling from Jonathan's apartment. That was all I needed to know. I told her I'd be right over.

The whole time I drove down A1A and 520 West towards Merritt Island, I kept thinking that it had to be a joke. That my friend Jonathan, who was the same age as me and who I had just seen last week, was *not* dead. That the one person whose friendship helped me get through some bad times had not left my world for good. Part of me said that he and Marnie were trying to pull a fast one, that when I showed

up at his apartment, they would both laugh hysterically and I'd be relieved. But the other part of me was afraid this was for real.

Marnie opened the door, and all I had to do was look at her face to know it was true. We both started crying and hugging each other. I had never seen this woman before in my life, but all of a sudden we were best friends. I followed her into the living room, and she told me what had happened. An aneurism had burst in Jonathan's heart, killing him in his sleep.

I had been over to Jonathan's apartment a couple of times before. He didn't own a television or fancy furniture. His living room consisted of two bookshelves full of books, a couple of unmatched chairs, a glass coffee table, and a sofa that had been given to him by relatives. Looking at that sad, unadorned room, I became painfully aware of the cold. I thought of Jonathan sitting alone and reading a book on Friday nights because friends like me didn't return his phone calls. I went into his bedroom and saw a book face-down on his nightstand, probably the last book he was reading before he died. It was Annie

Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*.

I felt my heart break even more.

I cried that whole week. I went to school the next day and cried through all of my classes. Every hour, when a fresh group of students came in, I'd start the class by telling them that I wasn't feeling well. And I'd tell them why. And then I'd cry some more. A few of my students got out of their seats and came up to the front of the classroom to give me hugs. A couple of students wrote sympathetic notes and gave them to me after class to read. My last class of the day, sixth period, was usually the worst-behaved of all my students. This time, they listened when I told them I wasn't in any mood to put up with their shit. And then they were slightly less obnoxious assholes that last hour of the school day.

Mr. Johnson, the assistant principal at McNair, was my favorite administrator. Before he had moved up into the role of a boss man, he and I used to teach in adjacent portables that were located at the farthest end of campus. We got to

Felizon Vidad



Photo by Dan Glenn Fury



be good buddies, way out there in the boondocks where it was too much of a walk for others to come out and visit. So, that Tuesday morning, as soon as I got to school, I went into Mr. Johnson's office, shut the door, and told him what happened. He listened with compassion, and then he told me a similar story from his own experience. A friend of his was alive one day, dead the next, and no one had seen it coming. Mr. Johnson told me he was in denial about it for the longest time, that he refused to cry or show any emotions because he was trying to be a tough guy.

I sat in his office across from him and struggled to keep the tears from coming. I said, "I feel like such a wimp. I can't stop crying."

Mr. Johnson got up from behind his desk and handed me a box of tissues. He patted me on the shoulder and then gave me a hug.

"It's okay to cry, Pee Wee," he said kindly, using his pet name for me. "You're dealing with this a lot better than I did when my friend died." And then he told me I could take the rest of the week off, if I wanted. He said I wouldn't have to worry; he'd find me a sub.

I only took a day off from work, because it would have been a bigger hassle to write up a week's worth of lesson plans for a substitute teacher. I spent my day off thinking and trying to come to terms with the death of a close friend. I remembered the last time I heard Jonathan's voice. We'd spoken on the phone just the week before. He had obviously wanted to talk longer, but I had cut the conversation short because I hadn't felt like talking anymore. Now I was sorry that I hadn't spent five more minutes talking to him. I was sorry that I declined his invitation to go to lunch that day because I had a stack of essays to grade. I was just plain sorry.

I felt awful. I could blame myself for being a bad friend, or I could forgive myself and try to move on. Jonathan was dead, and I had to accept that. For the longest time afterwards, I had to keep reminding myself that I couldn't change the past. I had to just keep on living. And as the days passed, I was able to go for more extended stretches of time without breaking down, without crying, without waking up in the middle of the night to the sudden realization that one of my best friends was dead.

Eventually, I reached a point where I was still sad about losing Jonathan, but I was able to deal with the pain without disintegrating into tears at the very memory of him. I thought it was sort of like scar tissue: that part of your body

heals over, and you're less sensitive to pain in that area. I thought, for all the worrying and crying and thinking that I did, maybe I'd gotten tougher. Maybe I had built up a mental callus that would deflect any future emotional pain when it came to death and dying.

But I'm not a doctor, and my self-diagnosis was way off.

Last week, my friend Jamelle came to visit me from Hawaii. I've known Jamelle since we were kids. We both grew up in Waialua, a small town on the North Shore of Oahu. We lived on opposite ends of the same neighborhood, a part of town called Paalaa Kai. Jamelle still lives there. Unlike a lot of our old classmates who haven't left Hawaii, she makes it a point to

*I looked up to see footage of tomahawk missiles  
exploding in a city skyline...  
I wonder if there is still anyone who believes that no  
Iraqi civilians have been killed.*

travel outside of the island at least once a year. When I was living in Cocoa Beach, Jamelle flew out to Orlando and we spent some time together. Now I'm living in Los Angeles, and last week was her spring vacation. I picked her up at LAX, and we hung out for a couple of days before she met up with her cousins in La Cresenta.

During the drive home from the airport, I asked Jamelle to tell me all the news and gossip from our hometown. She gladly obliged, thinking of tidbits that I might find especially interesting. We were laughing, joking around, and then she remembered something she hadn't told me yet. She asked, "Did you hear about the big accident that happened on the North Shore?"

"No," I said, keeping my eyes on the road and feeling a huge sense of dread. "What big accident?"

"Oh, man, it was big," Jamelle said. "Five local guys were killed."

She went on to tell me everything that she knew about the incident. I listened and drove and nodded as Jamelle talked. It didn't seem real to me. Later, I called my parents and asked them about the accident. I went online and looked up back issues of the *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. From what Jamelle and my parents told me, and with what I gathered from the newspaper accounts, I tried to piece together the events that had become known as the deadliest accident on Oahu's roadways since November 10, 1995, when five people were killed and three injured in a car crash on

Kalaniana'ole Highway.


On the evening of March 17, St. Patrick's Day, a small group of locals gathered for the twenty-first birthday of a friend, Patrick Askew-Jackson, at a popular North Shore beach called Shark's Cove. It was after 1 A.M. when three carloads of family and friends headed home. They were going southwest on Kamehameha Highway, the two-lane road that serves as the only thoroughfare on the North Shore. In one of the cars were five people: Patrick; his 13-year-old brother Kaimana; their cousin Jose Delizo, Jr., 17; and two neighborhood friends, Shannon Waiwai, 22, and Rex Dicion, 31. I had gone to high school with Rex; he was friends with my older brother. I'd also known Shannon when he was

that early hour of March 18, the wrecked Honda's speedometer needle was frozen at 88 mph.

I don't know what the other four in the car said or did as Shannon raced to their death. Did they scream in encouragement, goading him to catch up to the car ahead, or in fear, the burst in speed beyond their control? Or were they too transfixed or too horrified to cry out? I cannot even begin to imagine the terror, the realization in one awful second that you are about to be killed. Or did it all happen so fast that there was no time to think, no time to react?

Shannon lost control of the car, veered to the left, and crashed into a palm tree on the shoulder of Kamehameha Highway. He was ejected and landed about thirty feet from the wreckage. None of the passengers had worn their seat belts, but would it have mattered? There were no significant skid marks on the roadway. Impact with the tree occurred less than a second after the car veered from the left lane of the highway. Police estimated the reaction time to have been less than one-tenth of a second. The impact of the car crash was so forceful that the front passenger doors were torn from the sedan. The Honda nearly broke in half. The three in back were pinned in the wreck. Their bodies had to be extricated by firefighters; the car's roof and back passenger doors had to be cut off first. The two brothers were found hugging each other in the back seat. My father, who's known the Dicion family for years, told me that Rex Dicion's body was found with his intestines squeezed out. I don't know if this was fact or hearsay, but I saw the pictures of the mangled car. It distresses me to think about Patrick, Kaimana, and Rex, trapped in the back seat, suffering multiple injuries beyond hope of being saved.

All five victims were pronounced dead at 2:05 A.M., thirty-three minutes after the crash was reported to police. A few days later, the medical examiner's office confirmed that neither Rex nor thirteen-year-old Kaimana had any alcohol in their systems.

I'm not a relative of any of the victims; I wasn't even a friend, really. But I knew Rex and I knew Shannon, and all five who were killed lived in my old neighborhood. The last time I went home to visit my parents, Waialua seemed even more quiet and depressing than I remembered. The Waialua sugar cane plantation, the town's biggest employer, had closed in 1996. Many residents had moved away in search of  37

better jobs. Those who stayed in Waialua struggled to make ends meet and pay their bills. It is a sad fact, but I lived in a poor town. I moved away to go to college, and I never moved back. I hate to say it, but a lot of the people who still live there don't have more than a high school education. Many of the older Filipino immigrants who worked for the plantation never attended high school.

My mother, who spoke to Rex's youngest brother a few days after the accident, found out from the brother that "Rex hadn't been doing too good" – hadn't been working, had two children. Rex's girlfriend had left him, and his mother was taking care of his children. My mother knew Rex's mother; the Dicion family lives a few houses away from my parents' home. When I was in high school, cars had flooded our street as friends and relatives attended a wake for Jesse Dicion, an older son who had been killed in a car accident. Now the family was in mourning again.

Rex hadn't been the only one with children. Patrick and Shannon each left behind a daughter. And then there was Elizabeth Askew, the mother of the two brothers who had been killed in the accident. She had witnessed the whole thing. She

said when she reached the crash scene, there was a cloud of smoke. She saw a body hanging out of the car. She couldn't bring herself to go any closer, couldn't let herself believe what she'd just seen, couldn't accept two more deaths in her family. Earlier in June, her forty-one-year-old husband had committed suicide.

Yesterday, Sean was flipping through the channels and stopped to watch the BBC broadcast of the war in Iraq. I sat on the floor, on the sleeping bag that had been Jamelle's bed when she spent the night. I hadn't bothered to put it away because it was comfortable to sit on, and it made a perfect play mat. I sat there, surrounded by Blythe dolls and their clothing. From the plastic bin of dolly clothes, I carefully selected ensembles and combed each doll's hair in a style that matched her outfit. Preppy Blythe, preppy hair. Punk rock Blythe, punk rock hairstyle. I concentrated heavily on the task. Meanwhile, the television went on with talk of war. I looked up to see footage of tomahawk missiles exploding in a city skyline. I remembered someone I knew saying that the bombs were special something-seeking types that wouldn't kill any live humans; the

bombs would only destroy empty buildings. I remembered my friend Pat telling me that someone she knew said something similar, that this person believed nobody was being killed by those bombs. I wondered, if two people who didn't know each other thought the same thing, then how many others out there had the same idea? Last weekend alone, the US dropped three thousand bombs on Baghdad. I wonder if there is still anyone who believes that no Iraqi civilians have been killed.

The American media is selective and subjective. They're not going to show or tell about the innocent Iraqi civilians who've been killed in Baghdad – those unfortunate people who didn't have a chance, who couldn't get out of the way fast enough. Alive one day, then dead the next. Just like my friend Jonathan who was killed in his sleep and never saw it coming. Or like five passengers in a speeding car, slamming a hundred miles an hour straight into a palm tree on the side of the road, reaction time one-tenth of a second, the fate of their lives absolutely out of their control.

Bush justified the bombing of Iraq by claiming that Saddam Hussein was concealing weapons

of mass destruction. Thousands of bombs were dropped over Baghdad. If indeed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, and if indeed he was as crazy as the media portrayed him, I wonder why he never unleashed those weapons.

I know it's okay to remember the dead. But I also realize that those of us who are still alive just have to keep on living. I have to move on. I sit in the comfort of my living room, surrounded by the Sea Wees and Blythes I collect. I comb their hair and change their outfits and arrange them in stylish positions. I try not to think about death and dying. But it's pretty hard not to, especially when I hold a doll in my hand and it is nothing but an empty shell, an empty body. Eyes that look up at me without seeing.

It was never alive, so it can't be dead, and I still can't help thinking about death, that dying is completely unpredictable. One minute you're alive, the next minute you're dead. Just a shell of a body.

Considering all that's going on around me right now, I can't stifle the thought that, at any given point in time, it is possible that I could be shelled, too.

–Felizon Vidad





Sean Carswell

## A Monkey to Ride the Dog



*But one lesson World War II hopefully taught us all is that fighting against something – a cause, an ideal, whatever – doesn't necessarily mean that you're fighting for its opposite.*

Last issue, I wrote a long column about the concept of fighting a war for freedom and what a questionable concept that is. I talked about how past wars have severely limited our freedom of speech, our freedom of the press, and things like that. After I was done writing that column, it occurred to me that I'd forgotten to talk about the biggest freedom there is: the freedom to walk outside. Freedom in the sense that you're not a prisoner. I couldn't believe I wrote a column about fighting for freedom and I forgot to include Fred Korematsu. So here's Korematsu's story, and all the reasons why you should care about it.

On July 19, 2002, Peter Kirsanow was addressing a meeting on Arab and Muslim concerns in Detroit, Michigan when he said, "I think we will have a return to Korematsu." This seems like a bland, vague statement, but the Arab Americans at the meeting saw this as an incredible threat. The Japanese American Citizens League called for Kirsanow's resignation for this. Civil rights activists nationwide were up in arms. Small groups of people everywhere were freaking out. Most Americans, though, were apathetic. Most Americans have no idea who Peter Kirsanow is, who Fred Korematsu is, and how large of a threat a "return to Korematsu" is. When you know these three things, though, you realize what a staggering statement this was. First, we'll start with Fred Korematsu.

The story of Fred Korematsu goes back to World War II – the Good War. World War II was supposedly a war fought against Hitler, against fascism, and against racism. And I'll be the first one to admit that Hitler, fascism, and racism are three good things to fight against. But one lesson World War II hopefully taught us all is that fighting against something – a cause, an ideal, whatever – doesn't necessarily mean that you're fighting for its opposite. For example, the US fought against Hitler's racism and his concentration camps, and these were good things to fight against. But fighting against them didn't exclude the US from having racist concentration camps at home.

World War II internment camps are a well-known and ugly part of US history. From March, 1942 to March, 1946, 120,000 Japanese Americans – 77,000 of whom were US citizens and were born in the United States – were imprisoned without a charge or a trial. Most of them were sent to Manzanar, a barren camp surrounded by barbed wire, in a remote place in eastern California. According to the US

Department of Justice, these 120,000 people were imprisoned without a trial because everyone of Japanese descent was a threat to the security of the United States, and these folks were of Japanese descent. None of the 120,000 prisoners had committed any crime at all. They were imprisoned solely because of their ethnicity. The US Department of Justice didn't stop with the Japanese Americans, though. It's a lesser known fact, but a fact just the same, that nearly 12,000 Americans of German, Italian, Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, and Romanian descent were also imprisoned without a charge or a trial during World War II. Most of these prisoners were taken to a camp in Missoula, Montana. At the same time, more than a half million Italian Americans were placed under travel restrictions and forced to observe a curfew. In the midst of all of this mess, Fred Korematsu made a name for himself.

In 1942, when the US government issued Executive Order 9066 (the law that said that everyone of Japanese descent in the US had to go to jail because they were of Japanese descent), Fred Korematsu was a welder working for the defense industry in an Oakland shipyard. He was a hard worker, a well-respected employee, a US-born citizen, and a patriot in the war effort. He was pretty much an all-American-type guy. He even had a hot rod that he worked on during the weekends. Prior to Executive Order 9066, he had tried to enlist in the army on two different occasions. Both times, he was turned down because of some physical disability. So, based on all of this, Korematsu didn't think it was right for him to be imprisoned just because his ancestors came from Japan. Beyond that, Korematsu had a fiancée who was white, and, for obvious reasons, she didn't want to go with him to the internment camp. He knew that, if he went off to the internment camp for the duration of the war, he was going to lose his chance to marry this girl. So Korematsu fought the internment. First, he left his job and he left Oakland. He changed his name to "Clyde." He had his nose and eyes surgically altered, and he started telling people he was Chinese. He moved to a small, coastal California town, where he got a job working in a trailer park. And, for a while, his ruse worked.

Then one day, Korematsu was in downtown San Leandro, waiting for his fiancée. She was running a bit late. Korematsu went into a nearby shop and bought a pack of cigarettes. He went back outside and smoked one of the cigarettes. His fiancée still hadn't shown up, but the military police had. To this day, Korematsu doesn't know who ratted him out – his girlfriend or the clerk who sold him the smokes or someone who passed him on the street. Nonetheless, someone

had alerted the MPs, and they arrested Korematsu.

The next morning, the headline of the front page of the San Leandro newspaper read, "Jap Spy Caught."

At this point, Korematsu was in real trouble. His crimes now went beyond just being Japanese American. Because he'd failed to report to the internment camps, he was also under arrest for resisting an executive order – a felony offense. So now Korematsu had a court battle to contend with.

Edward Besig, a young lawyer for at the American Civil Liberties Union, also didn't agree with the internment camps. In fact, he'd been waiting for an opportunity to fight against them in a court of law. When he heard about Korematsu's arrest, Besig jumped at the chance to fight this battle. He offered to represent Korematsu free of charge. Besig also drove down to San Leandro and posted Korematsu's bail.

After Besig put up the bail money and Korematsu was released, the two of them tried to walk out of the courthouse. As soon as they made it down the courthouse steps, four MPs were waiting for them. The MPs informed Korematsu that he had to go with them to the internment camp. Besig told the MPs that they couldn't legally take Korematsu, that his bail had been paid and he was a free man. The MPs drew their rifles, pointed them at Korematsu's head, and told him that they had to take him to the internment camp, and it didn't matter to them whether he got there dead or alive. Korematsu went with the MPs.

He spent the next two years in the internment camp. It was a rough road for him. Most of Korematsu's fellow prisoners disagreed with his stance. They felt that they should just go along with the US executive order and not cause any trouble. Korematsu spent most of his time in the camp by himself, an outcast.

In the meantime, with help first from Besig and later from attorney Wayne Collins, Korematsu fought the case at every level. The case reached the Supreme Court on October 11, 1944. On that day, Collins argued that it was unconstitutional to imprison someone, without a trial, based solely on his ethnicity. It took more than two months for the Supreme Court to reach a decision. On December 18, 1944, Supreme Court Justice Hugh Lafayette Black – a noted liberal who was placed on the Supreme Court by Franklin Delano Roosevelt – announced the verdict: appeal denied. In his statement regarding the case of *Korematsu v. United States*, Justice Black said, in essence, that it is legal and constitutional in the US to imprison someone based

Sean Carswell

solely on their ethnicity, if people of that ethnicity are seen as a threat to the security of the US. In other words, you can imprison a Japanese American without a trial, just because he's of Japanese descent. According to the US Supreme Court, it's legal. It's constitutional.

When the appeal was denied, Korematsu became a convicted felon. He was sentenced to five years probation. On top of that, he spent the next fifteen months in an internment camp in Utah.

After the war, Korematsu tried to keep a low profile. He went on with his life. He moved back to San Leandro and got a job and finished his probation without incident. He met a woman and married her and they had kids. He lived like a normal, average American citizen, and spoke very little of his trial and his time in the internment camps. In fact, Korematsu's daughter Karen didn't know about her father's fight until she heard about it in a high school course.

In 1983, a political science professor and attorney named Peter Irons was doing some research for one of his classes. He uncovered evidence that the government had suppressed, altered, and destroyed military documents in relation to Korematsu's trial. Irons gathered a team of ten attorneys, most of whom were Japanese Americans. They approached Korematsu and asked if he would be willing to reopen the case. Even though Korematsu had already served his time and had already fought this decision all the way up to the Supreme Court, he agreed to fight it once more. The attorneys filed a motion to reopen Korematsu's case.

At this point, to avoid political embarrassment, the US government and President Reagan offered to pardon Korematsu. Korematsu refused the pardon. He argued that accepting a pardon would suggest that he had done something wrong and was being forgiven for it. Korematsu believed that he'd done nothing wrong, and he wasn't asking for forgiveness. He was demanding that his felony conviction be overturned.

The team of lawyers brought Korematsu's case to the US District court in San Francisco on April 19, 1984, where Judge Marilyn Hall Patel overturned the forty-year-old conviction. In that small way, Korematsu finally got his apology and justice was served. But a problem remained.

According to the rules of the US judicial system, a lower court cannot overturn a higher court's decision. So, though Judge Marilyn Hall Patel did have the authority to vacate Korematsu's decision (in other words, she had to power to overturn the felony conviction for resisting an executive order) she did not have the power to overturn the Supreme Court's decision of *Korematsu v. United States*. So, according to that Supreme Court decision, the precedent has been set. It is still legal and constitu-

tional to imprison someone in the US solely based on that person's ethnicity.

The story of Fred Korematsu is an interesting bit of American history, but when I first heard about all of it, one question kept coming up in my mind: could any of this happen again? Though it is still legal for the US government to imprison people without a trial based solely on their ethnicity, would they ever do it? It does seem like a far-fetched scenario, and it may very well be a far-fetched scenario. But before we decide that, we should look at how *Korematsu v. United States* has been handled recently.



In 1991, during the first Gulf War, a motion was argued on the floor of the US House of Representatives to imprison any Iraqis or people of Iraqi descent in the United States. The motion was denied. But someone still brought it up and some congressmen did argue in favor of it.

Around the same time period, though, in 1988 and 1992, the House of Representatives pushed two bills through Congress. The first was H.R. 442 (The Civil Rights Act of 1988) and the second was H.R. 4551 (the amendment to the Civil Rights Act of 1988). Between these two bills, the US government apologized to the former prisoners who had spent World War II in internment camps, and they paid the surviving prisoners \$20,000 each in reparations. When you consider these two acts of Congress and the 1991 debates about interning Iraqis, you get a mixed message from US House of Representatives. Sure, they were willing to

apologize and pay the Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II, but, while they debated how to apologize and how much to pay, they also debated whether or not they should imprison Iraqis for being Iraqis.

More recently, within two days of September 11, 2001, several hundred people were arrested and detained in secret. US Attorney General John Ashcroft was in charge of these detentions. Initially, he refused to disclose the location of the prisoner or the prisoners' names. He did admit to the *New York Times* on December 2, 2001 that he was currently detaining 548 prisoners whose names he would not release, and another 93 people whose names he would release. According to the *Times*, President Bush set up secret military tribunals for these detainees. A "tribunal" is basically a trial that is set up outside the regular judicial system. This means that the detainees were given a trial, just not a trial in a recognized US court of law. The *Times* went on to report that "it is by no means clear that the president has the authority to set up military tribunals," and "the military tribunals set up by President Bush have little relation to actual military justice."

Of course, if these tribunals were secret, then the *Times* obviously couldn't report first-hand on the trials and isn't really in a position to comment on their relation to military justice. Still, if a court is legal and everything is fair and honest, why should the trial be kept a secret? Why should the names and ethnicities of the detainees be kept a secret? If Ashcroft says he has 548 detainees, how many do you think he really has?

After feeling the sting of ethnic detention first-hand, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) keeps pretty close tabs on any detentions that are based on ethnicity. According to JACL executive director John Tateishi, the number of detainees is actually more like two thousand, and the detentions are Manzanar all over again.

And, most recently, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia started making vague threats about civil rights in the United States. According to the *Sacramento Bee*, Scalia said that "the government has room to scale back individual rights during war time." Scalia said this during a speech at John Carroll University on March 17, 2003, two days before the US invaded Iraq. He went on to say, "Most of the rights that you enjoy go way beyond what the Constitution requires," and, in war time, "the protections will be ratcheted right down to the constitutional minimums." I don't know if these statements indicate that anyone in the federal government is thinking about internment camps again, but, if you do ratchet freedoms down to the constitutional minimums, this does allow for internment camps.

Sean Carwell

So this brings us up to date, and it also brings us back to the original question of who is Peter Kirsanow, and what did he mean when he said, "I think we will have a return to Korematsu"?

In late 2001, in the wake of these military tribunals and secret imprisonments, President Bush appointed Cleveland attorney Peter Kirsanow to the US Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR). The commission chairwoman, Mary Francis Berry, fought this appointment for five months. Finally, in May of 2002, a federal appeals court installed Kirsanow to the eight member commission.

Within two months of Kirsanow's appointment, on June 19, 2002, to be exact, a group of Arab American activists, community leaders, and representatives met with the USCCR to discuss the general racism that they had been experiencing in the US since September 11. Mostly, they were concerned with things like police profiling, faulty searches, and secret arrests. Kirsanow addressed this group in Detroit, Michigan, the home of the largest number of Arabs in the US. Towards the end of the meeting, a University of Michigan professor asked Kirsanow for his assurance that the US government would not bring back internment camps. Kirsanow responded to this by saying, "If there's another terrorist attack and if it's from a certain ethnic community or certain ethnicities that the terrorists are from, you can forget civil rights in this country. I think we will have a return to Korematsu."

Kirsanow later denied saying this, but the meeting had been recorded, and the above quote was taken from the official transcript. When it

became clear that Kirsanow couldn't deny his statement, he simply denied that it was a threat, and he claimed that it was taken out of context. This denial, too, is suspicious, because it's hard to imagine a context in which this statement is not a threat. Because Kirsanow was put into his position to protect the civil rights of Americans and because he personally threatened the civil

*In 1991, during the first Gulf War, a motion was argued on the floor of the US House of Representatives to imprison any Iraqis or people of Iraqi descent in the United States.*

rights of so many Americans, several Arab Americans, along with the JAACL and various other civil rights organizations, called for his resignation. President Bush publicly supported Kirsanow, saying, in essence, that Kirsanow made the statement with "the best intentions."

Regardless of whether Kirsanow meant his statement as a threat or not, he did re-introduce the discussion of internment camps. It's now once again a feasible alternative. And, when you start looking into all of Ashcroft's secret arrests and Bush's military tribunals; when you realize that arrests based solely upon ethnicity is both legal and protected by the Constitution; when you hear Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia say that our civil rights will be "ratcheted right down to the constitutional minimums"; and when you consider that Arab Americans and Iraqi Americans have already been discussed as a possibility for internment, all of this talk becomes scary.

Of course, when you consider that people can only be arrested based on their ethnicity if that ethnicity is seen as a threat (which basically means that the US has to be at war with the country for people of that country's ethnicity to be a threat) it doesn't seem quite so scary for those of us whose ancestors don't come from a region where the US is currently at war. Then again, over the past five years, the US military has supported or engaged in combat in Columbia, Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia, Mexico, Palestine, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. There has also been a lot of talk about expanding the current war in Iraq to Iran and Syria, and the people of North Korea seem pretty well convinced that they're the next target on the US hit list. So, when you consider all of this, the US could build a pretty big internment camp.

To be honest, I seriously doubt that these internment camps will come about. The probability of them coming about isn't really my point, here. It's just that internment camps are exactly the kind of thing that war makes possible. Every war threatens your human rights, and just because you're fighting against one fascist, it doesn't mean that you're not fighting for another fascist. Just because you're fighting against human rights violations in one part of the world, it doesn't mean that you're fighting for human rights at home. And just because you're fighting against a dictator in the Middle East, it doesn't mean that you have a democracy at home.

—Sean Carswell



*(If you want a list of the sources I used for this article, please email me at sean@razorcake.com)*

Sean Carswell



America's Sweethearts:

# THE ORPHANS

By: Miss Namella J. Kim  
Photos by Raf Jetson

Tuesday nights are generally the drag down, most depressing day of the week. It's not like Monday when the initial shock of going back to the grind strangely motivates you to weather through (Iron Man triathlon style) another load of your boss's crap. Wednesdays are hump days – the mere coinage of the term evokes sexual rompage and debauchery! Thursdays calls the warrior out from within – you party and face the Friday with a sheer determination to slack the fuck off. So Tuesday, I'm sitting with my handsome male companion of the night, Rick Hall, at dank and seedy Goldfinger's in Hollywood proper. There's little hope within these walls as Hollywood's rock scene converges here with scattered performances of burlesque, bad local acts strutting their stuff to no avail, and Coyote Shivers recanting glam rock glories of the past. David J is an electro-mongering guest DJ here sometimes – that should clue you in. So where does one go to die in a dark quiet place on a Tuesday night? Well, Goldfinger's of course! While the stimulating performances of the night culminated with a showstopping, over-the-top metal performance by San Francisco's fire and debris blowing, Sparrow's

Point, I opted for a more entertaining round of Hangman with Rick. (He got "phantasmagoric" within three letters – fucker should be on *Wheel of Fortune* or something.)

Then came 12:30 – when all expectations have been dropped to their knees. Nothing could have saved me from wanting to leave these immediate, mind-numbing environs, yet the three chords came buzzing through the cheap amp like a Texas Chainsaw Massacre. The bass filled the room with sparse yet bebopping notes. Then Jenny came onstage drunk as a trailer trash skunk, exposing her cotton panties while writhing across the blood, beer and semen laid floor. The Orphans were onstage. My intrigue soon turned into fevered cheers as they screamed, wailed, cried, and tumbled onto a set of five of the most destructive songs I've heard in a long ass time. Jenny cried, "I'm soooooo drunk you guys." Then she promptly fell off stage while clutching her Sailor Happy Tom (Turbonegro) hat. Many beers were tossed, Wade the bass player, was not going to be one-upped by the cheap theatrics of Sparrow's Point. He took a giant swig of his 151 and spit fire into the audience. Meanwhile, he missed and set himself aflame like an Indian

wife burning on the pyre, yet he continued to pull at his bass strings diligently – not missing a single note. His left hand must have been aflame for a good solid minute.

The last note rung out into the empty crowd and I made a beeline for the band. I knew deep down in my heart that they would be the band I will come to manage. I ran up to them and said, "That was fucking great! Can I be your manager?" With those nine words I found myself on a ride for a good eight months, telling everyone I knew about them, making demo CDRs, and sending them out to anyone who would give them a listen. The ride was short but sweet. They have put out a single on Malo Records, got nominated for The LA Weekly Music Awards 2002 for best punk band, alongside such punk rock dinosaur mainstays like Bad Religion, got a healthy dose of local buzz from *The Weekly*, thanks to Falling James and Bob Cantu championing their cause. The Orphans went on tour and when they came back I quit as their manager. I figured I was done, but for the band this is just their beginning. I was sick to my guts, eating a chocolate chocolate chip cookie and downing some hot chocolate at Top Fuel Coffeehouse (AA rock'n'roll meeting central – thank you

guys!) on beautiful Sunset Blvd. I finished my hot chocolate and promptly threw up into the empty cup. Ahhh, the Orphans. Vomit-inducing fun.

FYI: This interview took about a year to complete.

**Wade:** Brandon (drummer) is at anger management class tonight so he couldn't be here. He has to take the class. Dan (guitar) is home listening to the Circle Jerks.

**Jenny:** Oh my god. The next tour is going to be great! I am feeling vulnerable, so I am going to stick my hand in your butt crack. Your ass smells like chocolate – maybe because I just ate a bunch of chocolate.

**Wade:** My butt smells like baby powder! We should be in this issue (*Razorcake* #13) with GWAR.

**Jenny:** With Nardwaur? What if Nardwaur was in GWAR? That would be great!

**Wade:** We could have been in it but the first time we did this interview, Nam puked into a cup so this didn't meet the deadline.

**Jenny:** One time I puked in a Macy's bag in a garage. Nobody was there to watch it. No one was there to rub my back and hold my hair back. That's how I'm gonna figure out who my soul mate is, if a guy can be in a bathroom with me when I puke, I know it's good.

**Wade:** I hate puke.

**Nam:** What are you guys up to

these days?

**Wade:** Recording.

**Nam:** What are you recording?

**Wade:** We're recording for our full length, which should be out at the end of summer on Kapow Records, if we're still on the label by then. I don't know if he's too happy with us. We played a party for one of his distributors and we beat someone up in front of them.

**Jenny:** That guy had nothing to do with it. He was just there and started a riot. It was in Sacramento. He was friends with the guy who was throwing the party.

**Jenny:** He wasn't just some dude. He was picking on us so

we totally dig the label. Hopefully, down the road, we can do something with Rip Off but right now it's not really for us.

**Nam:** What happened in Chico, Jenny?

**Jenny:** I had a nervous breakdown in Chico.

**Wade:** It was one of the best shows ever.

**Jenny:** They put something in the alcohol there and only people in Chico could get drunk off them. We all had so much to drink and we were all sober. We all had stomachaches from the sugar and we had to pee.

**Wade:** She had a cat named Ganja and a roommate named

possessed by the devil. I had an out-of-body experience. I could see myself yelling and screaming in the room.

**Wade:** The rest of the tour was good, too. We hung out with The Hunches and The Units.

**Jenny:** Wade was in the Hunches' bathroom.

**Wade:** Have you ever been in a really hot, steamy bath with a grip of drugs in your system? It feels good. I couldn't figure out the shower so I just took a bath.

**Nam:** Do you know how gay you sound right now?

**Wade:** I couldn't figure out how to turn the shower on!

**Jenny:** We were all trying to figure out what Wade was doing in

band.

**Nam:** Are you saying you're not a violent band?

**Wade:** We all have so much more fun than the people at the shows when we play. I just like to swing my bass around for fun. If I hit someone, I hit someone.

**Jenny:** One time, Brandon threw a drumstick out, which is the only outburst Brandon ever had in the band. This guy comes up to us and he's like, "Your drummer hit me in the eye!"

**Wade:** Brandon's sticks go for \$30 on eBay, 'cause it's so rare when you catch one.

**Jenny:** In the eye! Or in the neck... I wore a white t-shirt that says "in the neck."

...and life is when people can't figure out if I am going to kiss them...



he asked for it.

**Wade:** Then, all of a sudden, Kyle got punched in the neck.

**Nam:** What happened to Greg Lowery? Weren't you guys gonna do something on Rip Off Records?

**Jenny:** He just wanted to produce us...

**Wade:** He wanted too much control over us.

**Jenny:** He wanted Brandon to shave his beard off. We want The Orphans to be the boss of The Orphans. We love Rip Off. It's a good label.

**Wade:** We just want to have fun with it. We don't want people to tell us what to do.

**Jenny:** We don't even like ourselves so we don't want someone to tell us what to do. We weren't on the same page but

Sailor that was in the navy. She put us up.

**Jenny:** I'm a crazy bitch and Wade likes to party waay too much. When I'm tired, I wanted to go to sleep and I'm hiding in the sleeping bag in the living room and everyone was partying around me. Then Wade wanted them to play "Talk Dirty to Me" at volume 10. Wade's like, "Do you guys have any Poison?!" Then the girl puts it on volume 10. Then I freaked out and jumped out of my sleeping bag...

**Nam:** What did you yell?

**Jenny:** "Fuck you, Wade! I'm sleeping in the van. Fuck this!"

**Wade:** So then there was room on the couch for me.

**Jenny:** So I slept in the van. I freaked out. It was like I was

the bathroom.

**Nam:** What's next for you guys?

**Wade:** We're all ready to go back on tour. All of us love something different about the band but we all love touring. I love to play live. Dan likes to write songs. Brandon likes to record.

**Nam:** What do you like Jenny?

**Jenny:** I like playing shows. I love playing shows. Basically, I have a lot of pent-up anger. Maybe I should go to anger management with Brandon. If I didn't have the band, I would probably be a serial killer or end up killing myself.

**Wade:** For some strange reason everyone thinks we're a violent

**Nam:** How would you wrap up your beginning into one sentence?

**Wade:** We were bored.

**Jenny:** We had the instruments.

**Wade:** We had the instruments left over from the previous bands.

**Jenny:** And two out of four of us had anger problems.

**Nam:** Why is Brandon in anger management class?

**Jenny:** He's still pissed off at the "Dustin" incident.

**Wade:** Have you ever talked to him about that?

**Nam:** No comment.

**Wade:** Dude, he's fuckin' angry.

**Nam:** Is it like court appointed?

**Wade:** You wouldn't even know

...or punch them in the neck.

because sometimes he's totally cool, but if he hates you, he will let you know.

**Jenny:** If you touch him or hit him or anything he will hit you back twice as hard. It doesn't matter if you are a boy or a girl. He will hit you and it's gonna fucking hurt. I'll forget and I'll hit him and I know; motherfucker, I know what comes next.

**Nam:** Who has the best tattoos?

**Wade:** Dan actually does tattoos now.

**Jenny:** Who has the worst tattoos, you mean? Have you seen my Bobby Page? It used to be Bettie Page and then I got fat. Then the tattoo bled out and started getting fucked up, so now it looks like a transvestite. So we all call her Bobby Page.

**Nam:** What happened when you broke your arm?

**Wade:** I broke my elbow and I was trying to play shows. I broke it skateboarding at a pool in Cerritos. I was skating with Dan and the Street Trash guys. So, I was trying to swing my bass around with this giant cast on my arm. It sucked and stupid people came up to me and said I was playing good. I know they were lying.

**Nam:** Who are some of the bands you guys like these days?

**Wade:** It's slim pickings! We all like The Circle Jerks and we all own Circle Jerks albums. Everyone is so scared to say what they are into these days. I listened to Judas Priest! I listen to Mercyful Fate. I still listen to crust (punk) and death metal. It's stupid to say how long we've been listening to punk rock. I listened to everything. If people judged everything by that, or appearance, the music wouldn't go anywhere. What we are wearing right now is what we wear to play a show.

**Jenny:** I have a special pair of pants that are orthopedic that has a special plastic inside. It supports me like those people that work in Staples that wear the back things because I hate bands with girl singers that dress up all slutty because they want to have a girl in the band that looks like a slut.

**Wade:** Then everyone looks at the girl and they can't remember a note of any of the songs.

**Jenny:** I want to be judged on the same level as the boys. I don't want people to make spe-

cial considerations for me just because I am a girl, a vaginal hole.

**Wade:** I don't want girls to love me because of my huge bulge in my pants. I want them to respect my playing.

**Jenny:** That's why he wears his bass so low.

**Nam:** Ouch. Where do you see yourself in the future?

**Jenny:** We don't think about the band in the future.

**Wade:** The band is just day by day. When we quit having fun we're not gonna be a band any-



more. If one of us leaves, we are done. I just broke my arm and Phil the Roadie was singing. Phil is in the band.

**Jenny:** I was in the hospital with strep throat. He sang. Everyone was confused because they thought there was a girl in the band. Everyone's like, "Isn't there supposed to be a girl in the band? There's just some pirate-looking guy singing."

**Nam:** What was the worst disgruntled showgoer experience?

**Jenny:** Besides Tim from Pomona.

**Wade:** He still wants to challenge me to a backyard wrestling match! (writer's note: Wade blew fire into Tim's eye by accident.) Our shows are about people having fun. They go to an Orphans show not knowing if it's gonna be a sedate show or a show where they get punched or humped in the leg...

**Jenny:** Or punched in the neck.

**Wade:** We would definitely like to play shows where people are into it.

**Jenny:** I don't like to play shows where they just stand around and judge you.

**Wade:** LA's notorious for that.

When we played out, we had a lot of people going nuts. When we play out of town, people are so into it.

**Jenny:** People in LA are always trying to figure out where we fit in or what band we are trying to rip off...

**Wade:** They're looking at what t-shirts we are wearing so they can see what bands we are into. They're just not listening to the music anymore.

**Jenny:** We want people to get excited and be as excited about the show as we are.

drop a \$10 bill, it's the biggest dilemma a band will go through because they can't figure out if they should grab it or not. There's cum all over the floor and there's a mirror behind the dancer so you can see all the other guys jacking off in their booths.

**Nam:** Who would you like to play with on the next tour, besides GWAR featuring Nardwaur?

**Wade:** I wanna play with The Tyrades, The Sex Machines, The Hunches, The Dirty Sweets, The Shemps...

**Nam:** I love The Shemps! How was your show with them?

**Jenny:** We're totally amazed by Squeaky Shemp. He's not only a bodily contortionist, he's also a facial one, too. I've never seen a grown man do a karate kick into the splits and not miss a beat!

**Wade:** They were fun. I can't wait to go to New York and play with them. I'll bring burritos so Artie can slip and break his arm on it again like he did in Frisco.

**Jenny:** I heard Artie played with a broken arm and was jumping all over the place and was making fun of crippled people. The Orphans give them our seal of approval.

**Nam:** What other bands?

**Jenny:** The Deadly Weapons, The Fleshies...

**Nam:** How was that Fleshies show at The Derby? Wait, I forgot to go.

**Jenny:** We forgot about it too.

**Nam:** What happened?

**Jenny:** Two out of four of us forgot about the show. I won't mention whom.

**Wade:** We had to play there at 8PM. (The Orphans are in the Long Beach area.) How do we even get there by 8PM? That was Great White's fault because it was supposed to be at The Smell but the Smell got shut down, thanks to Great White. We'll show up to the next one. We promise.

**Nam:** Any final thoughts?

**Jenny:** I had a good final thought but I forgot it.

**Wade:** It was THAT good. Brandon wants to thank his anger management coach - his proverbial Jack Nicholson to his Adam Sandler. Dan wants to thank everyone with Circle Jerks albums. We would all like to thank everyone in the neck.

Sean and I showed up to the Broken Bottles' suburban house. It looked like Anystreet, Any Town, Stucco, USA. We'd met the band several weeks before, when they were kind enough to play a Razorcake show at Juvie, an awesome all-age venue in LA with a skate ramp. We were lead into the sweaty, cramped rehearsal space as they careened and cracked through a couple of songs. It's such good shit. It's like Broken Bottles have set up a musical distillery in that little room. All the greats of Orange County – past and present – seemed to have heated, bubbled, percolated, and condensed into this band. At first, you may say, "Dude, they're living in the past." Not quite so. Like bathtub vodka, if you don't do it right – if you mess with the truer forms of punk rock in the wrong way – it makes lesser bands go blind from milking their too heroes too closely. Bands who don't go blind, like the Broken Bottles, hop up the proofing of punk's grain alcohol content. This is the rough stuff that somehow goes down smooth and lights on fire when it goes down.

Right after he flipped off his amp, Jes "The Mess" came over to me. "You have good teeth." I smiled so he

could get a better look. Travis, the bass player, a forklift operator, and Jes's older brother said, matter-of-factly, "He likes looking at teeth." It would come out later that a cop had booted most of Jes's out and that he'd just got new ones. On Jes's hand was a piece of gauze, fixed to his palm with white medical tape. It would come out that he was getting over scabies. We walked outside onto the lawn. Darren, the guitarist, is the brain behind the schematics of the band. It would come out that he was a millimeter away from serving an extended prison sentence. To fill out the picture is Drew, the drummer, who doesn't talk that much. It would come out that he's the biggest *Thrashin'* fan in the world.

Some bands pretend to be glorious fuckups to sell more records. These guys make records and are in a band as a form of sonic radiation therapy. If they didn't have something positive to channel into, they'd probably be running through your back yard naked and pissing on your ferns.

Track down their singles on Hostage and Revenge.

# BROKEN BOTTLES BROKEN BOTTLES

INTERVIEW BY  
TODD TAYLOR AND  
SEAN CARSWELL  
PICTURE TO THE RIGHT,  
BY TODD  
ALL OTHERS BY  
SUPERSONIC  
DAN MONICK

**Sean:**  
On that  
*Cuts* compilation on  
Hostage,  
there's  
an inter-  
esting  
story about how

you guys first started out as a band. Do you mind telling that story in your own words?

**Jes:** I got locked up, where they put you in rehab and it's long-term rehab and it's called the Gary House. I went to jail for two months. Then they put me in Gary House, and then I failed. Then I went back to jail, then I went back to Gary House for a year, then I went back to jail because I couldn't finish the program right and then I did six months at the Salvation Army and I finally got out. I told the judge, "I just want to get close to God," [snickering] and they let me out and it worked out all right because now I'm closer to God than I've ever been. And I got some new teeth because I got an SSI (Supplemental Security Income – disability checks) and they pay my rent and all the things that I do.

**Travis:** In the meantime, he was teaching me how to play bass.

**Jes:** He's still on the top string. The second

string is hard for him.

**Sean:** How many strings do you need?

**Travis:** We'd go there and I'd visit him. One Sunday it'd be like, "You guys can practice in the kitchen." Then they'd get irritated. "You can practice outside."

**Jes:** They'd fuckin' switch us around to different rooms and I'd try to show him how to play. So, yeah, I wrote that song, "In Rehab" and put it on the *Cuts* album. We sent him a tape of me playing that song in my punk room, and decided, "Okay, this sounds like Social Distortion. Let's put them on our comp." [laughing]

**Todd:** Not to get too philosophical, but what's the purpose of the band? Beer, chicks, and money? Is it a coincidence that you're on Hostage, which is an extremely reputable label run by really nice, ethical guys who have a nice community of loose-knit bands?

**Darren:** Basically, that whole *Cuts* thing started with there's plenty of great bands that don't get any acknowledgement for anything they did because they don't have anyone behind them. Hostage got behind this band full-blown.

**Travis:** Hostage came because I pushed that. I'm just into their bands. I knew that I wanted to be on that label so when we started a band, I told Jes, "Don't even tell any-

one that we've got a band." When I sent that in, nobody knew.

**Darren:** I just wanted to play.

**Jes:** I'm just doing it out of boredom. I've got nothing better to do.

**Travis:** I made a tape – because we were going to record, but the funds just weren't happening – so we used this little tape player, the little kind, you know? I had tons of tape, so I cut it up and compacted it and gave it to Rick (one of the Hostage honchos). He was stoked on it. It was fuu-zzy. I have the original thing. [Makes breaking, static sounds.] We sat in the middle of the room and played into it.

**Jes:** It was total shit. We just sent it to him and he was interested, which is pretty weird, for a band that came out of nowhere.

**Travis:** When I sent in that tape, we sent a bunch of songs. He wrote a letter back. I was floored, dude. Rick picked that song out and he's all, "Go record that song."

**Darren:** Basically, when we recorded that, no one had a tuner and so it's about a step and a half too high. The song sounds a little different when you hear it live. It's still the same song but it's completely different notes.

**Jes:** We recorded "Gothic Chicks" for a hundred dollars...

**Darren:** If nothing else comes out of it, if



nobody else comes and interviews us or we never get another show...

**Jes:** If you're talking about pussy, I seen two fourteen-year-old girls come up to Darren and want to fuck him after the show. At Juvee. And he just stood there and smiled, like aaahhh.

**Darren:** I gave them a record to make them go away. I think if everything were to end and nobody wanted to hear our band, we'd still be coming here once or twice a week because it's cool.

**Jes:** If I have to, I will play in this room and not play shows. I'll just play for the fuck of it.

**Darren:** I honestly have fun every time we play and that's what it always comes back to.

**Travis:** My biggest thing is that I wanted to hang out with my brother. That's why I wanted to play. "Teach me how to play bass." I've never had time before. I was stoked when we first played in the garage. "Woah, it's cool." I never even fathomed... I thought we'd just play with a couple friends' bands.

**Darren:** Now we have to make decisions about stuff.

**Todd:** How'd you all meet? Travis and Jes, you're brothers. How'd you meet Darren?

**Jes:** We had a band together when we were teenagers called The Dogs, in 1994. It was a faster paced band.

**Drew:** I've known Jessie for ten years.

**Todd:** Why were The Dogs banned in so many clubs?

**Travis:** I'd set them up a show and they'd go and destroy it, dude, every time.

**Jes:** Because there was a member of the band who is the singer of The Dogs, named Nate Holt. We called him Nate Hate and he tried to fight everybody, including the manager. Every show.

**Drew:** Same as you, dude.

**Jes:** Basically, I'm blaming it on him because he wanted to destroy everything, including microphones and whatever was in his way. The Dogs really didn't sound pretty.

**Travis:** I think the only show you ever pulled off was in San Clemente.

**Jes:** And then the bass player was never there, so I'd have to show somebody how to play bass at the last minute. There was no control. Darren came to a show one time and he started a fight with the bouncer, too. I don't know what the tough guy thing was.

**Darren:** Gabe from The Starvations and I did a Dogs 7" and I think we've still got 1,200 of them. The last time I saw it, I



JES, THAT NIGHT, I DID THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IVE EVER DONE, THEIR COP CAR WAS PARKED OUT IN FRONT OF THE APARTMENT, I TOOK A PISS ALL OVER THEIR FUCKING COP CAR, SOME GUY I DIDNT EVEN KNOW, COMES UP AND SHAKES MY HAND, "THANKS FOR DOING THAT"

bought it at Noise, Noise, Noise for seven cents. It really is a decent record.

**Travis:** Someone wrote that it was the ugliest cover they'd ever seen.

**Darren:** [to Jes] You figured out that you were a much better singer and started getting more confident.

**Jes:** Right. The light bulb went off and I said, "Okay, I can sing better than this guy and he just wants to destroy everything."

**Darren:** Jes would sing a couple songs on it and people would say, "You've got to sing all of them."

**Jes:** Now I have more energy, more confidence, and more self esteem.

**Drew:** Wouldn't Nate bark like a dog?

**Jes:** Yeah. He'd bark. I'd put him on a leash when I walked him around the park and

shit. He needed to be spayed and neutered and taken to the vet.

**Todd:** Darren, you used to drum for the Starvations?

**Darren:** Yeah. Probably close to ten years now. Me and Gabe and Louis from Los Villains started The Starvations.

**Jes:** I want to make them starve. I want to take away all of their food privileges.

**Darren:** The Starvations evolved into what it is now when Ian hooked up with them when I went to jail and rehab. I don't remember which one, but it was six different trips that I had to take. I finally talked to Gabe. "You guys should get somebody else." He said, "Yeah." And I couldn't really play drums, either. Just kick, snare, kick, snare, kick, snare. That was the only beat I'd play for all the songs. But, it was fun and Gabe's still one of my best friends. No hard feelings. I just couldn't stay out of trouble.

**Travis:** Didn't you guys play a radio station?

**Darren:** We did KUCI a couple times. We took all the CDs off of wall one time.

I'm not even sure if that was The Starvations. It might have been this other band called The Fifties that we had.

**Todd:** How did you come up with the name Broken Bottles? Is it significant or is it just a name?

**Jes:** I tried to call it The Unloved.

**Drew:** We were having major trouble with names.

**Jes:** Travis - we had a lyric in

one of my songs, "...stars and stripes, broken bottles" - and he's all, "Let's call the band that." My drummer follows me for months and says, "We're not calling the band that." Keep in mind, we were playing a show. We needed to put a name on the flyer. Broken Bottles. Then we find out that there's another band in Connecticut, and they've been emailing Darren and saying "Fuck you. You stole the name from us." Now we want to sue. I'm trying to get an attorney.

**Todd:** You should do what the Smut Peddlers did. Call up the other band and say, "Listen, no weapons, parking lot, last man standing." Julia wrote them that, plus, "I'm a girl."



**Darren:** The one singer guy looks pretty big, though. I'm not really that worried about it.

**Travis:** Names are the roughest thing to agree on.

**Jes:** We wanted to get away from "The." That was a big thing.

**Darren:** Because so many bands are "The" somethings.

**Jes:** If you look at bands on MTV, there's a "The" in it. The Donnas. I want to have sex with the fat Donna. The bass player. You know, anal.

**Darren:** You've had a thing for fat chicks lately, huh?

**Jes:** The Donnas, Kelly Osbourne. There's no end to gothic chicks.

**Sean:** What's the porn with Kelly Osbourne? What's that story?

**Jes:** Okay, I want to do a porn with her. I'm trying to get sued by her. Once she gets to talk to my attorney, my public defender, whatever I gotta do, then we'll deal with it.

**Todd:** Travis, what's the worst fight you ever got into with your brother?

**Jes:** You punched me in grandma's house when I was five and I tried to beat you up, but I hit the wall [makes hitting sound] from four feet away.

**Darren:** Travis is pretty strong. He don't look like it, but he's a tough guy.

**Travis:** Remember the old race tracks with the tongues you slipped together?

**Todd:** Hot Wheels?

**Travis:** Yeah. If you whipped - whachaa. I remember we were doing something and he got me with one of those one really good. He once got me with a belt. I used to mess with him a lot. He used to hang out with all of my friends.

**Todd:** What's the age difference?

**Travis:** We're eight years apart. One of the funniest stories is one of my best friends was at the beach and we always used to pick on Jes and stuff. He'd get all irritated. He wouldn't cry. He'd always come back and try to do something or hang out. My friend was laying on a towel and Jessie came up behind him and pissed on him. That guy was a tough dude.

**Jes:** I got him back. He used to throw me up in the air and not catch me. When I turned five, I pissed on him.

**Travis:** He turned around, like, "You're fucking brother pissed on me." It was fucking hilarious.

**Darren:** Travis has a very high tolerance for everything.

**Jes:** I know he's started to drink a little bit more since he's entered our band.

**Travis:** You're just noticing because we're hanging out more.

**Jes:** So you have your private stash at home, hide the bottles?

**Travis:** That's my biggest thing, being in a band with my brother. Eight years apart, you get spread apart. It's hard to keep in touch. Being in a band, that was one of my biggest deals, to hang out in a world you never got to share with someone because

you fuckin' just go away.

**Todd:** How much does San Onofre and the nuclear power plant right down the coast play in Broken Bottles? It's conspicuous because Smogtown's in San Clemente, which is close to here, too, and *The Fuhrers of the New Wave* was heavily themed with radiation. Do you know any hushed occurrences at the nuclear power plant that's basically in your neighborhood?

**Jes:** Okay, well I know some kid who said his balls turned green after he went out surfing. [laughter]

**Travis:** I'd have to say in San Clemente, there's some strange characters.

**Jes:** San Cle-meth-te, like they do a lot of meth amphetamine.

**Travis:** It's a weird, lost little border town. (Border to Camp Pendelton, a huge military base.)

**Darren:** It's definitely not like the rest of Orange County.

**JES, I GOT THIS TOY SHARK THAT WAS SIX INCHES LONG AND I PUT IT ON MY DICK AND I GOT A BLOW JOB ON CAMERA. DREW, STUCK A FUCKIN ENVELOPE OPENER UP YOUR ASS. TRAVIS, ILL NEVER WATCH THAT VIDEO.**

**Travis:** Plus, it used to be a Marines town. It was a full-on jarhead town.

**Jes:** Sometimes, I sneak up on the base, but I've never actually gone up to where the tits are and just touched the nuclear reactor. I've been out there.

**Travis:** My dad had work out there and he ended up dying of full-blown cancer. I think they do have a lot of shit that happens that we don't know about. I know the beach has been closed down there a lot. We've surfed down there. If you surf in front of it, even in the dead of winter, it's totally warm.

**Darren:** If you think of all the bullshit going on in the world right now, everyone seems to conveniently overlook that that thing's right there. If a plane was to crash into that...

**Travis:** Well, they have one off, right, for years? I think they turned one off ten years ago because they were trying to figure out...

**Jes:** They took one boob out...

**Todd:** A mastectomy.

**Jes:** Like Nancy Reagan. Just one tit.

**Darren:** It's kind of a scary thought. Dude, look, it's two miles away.

**Sean:** Didn't Christie Brinkley have a whole big thing about wanting to put a naval ship to patrol it, right after September 11th?

**Travis:** I'm sure.

**Darren:** They've finally agreed to give everybody those pills, potassium iodine, which will combat radioactive fallout.

**Travis:** Nixon had a ranch right there, too, in San Onofre.

**Jes:** Laying out with his fuckin' Zinka on.

**Travis:** I remember being a little kid and we'd sneak on and trash shit. I think this whole down south area, there are some strange characters.

**Todd:** It's kind of freaky.

**Travis:** Yeah. It is. Everyone says, "Suburbia. Mission Viejo. Everything's perfect," this and that. Bullshit. It gets more hairy down here with anger sometimes than going towards LA or Long Beach. There's way more tension. Guys with four by fours [makes rattling engine sounds] "I'm going to fucking kill you."

**Darren:** This place was built on our parents wanting to have the nice yuppie lifestyle and drive nice cars that they probably couldn't afford. Through it all, I think most of these kids got overlooked. I know I kind of did, to some extent. If you look around, everything looks nice.

**Travis:** Everything's perfect.

**Darren:** But what the fuck are you supposed to do when you're a kid?

**Travis:** Surf, skateboard. If you're in Mission Viejo, you're fucked.

**Jes:** By the time I'm in my twenties, now they're installing skate parks.

**Travis:** I think there's a fucking clash. Not that it's bad, it rules. If you can go to the fuckin' beach a mile away, it's insane. It seems like all the rich are on the hills. It's a weird thing. And then you go to San Juan Capistrano and you've got the full cholos, their own gangs, their whole trip. In San Clemente you have Mexican gangs fighting each other. It's weird.

**Todd:** Everyone has to answer this question. What was the last thing that was stolen from you?

**Jes:** I got a shirt ripped off from me by the guy who left about ten minutes ago. I got records stolen from me by people who say that they're my friends. Videos. Everything. I own one Broken Bottles record and I play in the band. They gave me five.

**Darren:** It's been awhile. I kind of like don't let anybody come over to my house. That's one thing I've stood for. No matter how much I hated somebody, I wouldn't steal their records or their guitars or their girlfriends, for that matter.

**Jes:** Do you ever cross the line after, like the next time they come over and say, "Okay, you can't come over any more because you stole something from me"? What do you do? Beat them up? Do you accept them as a person and pretend that they're your friend?

# ~~BROKEN BOTTLES~~ BROKEN BOTTLES



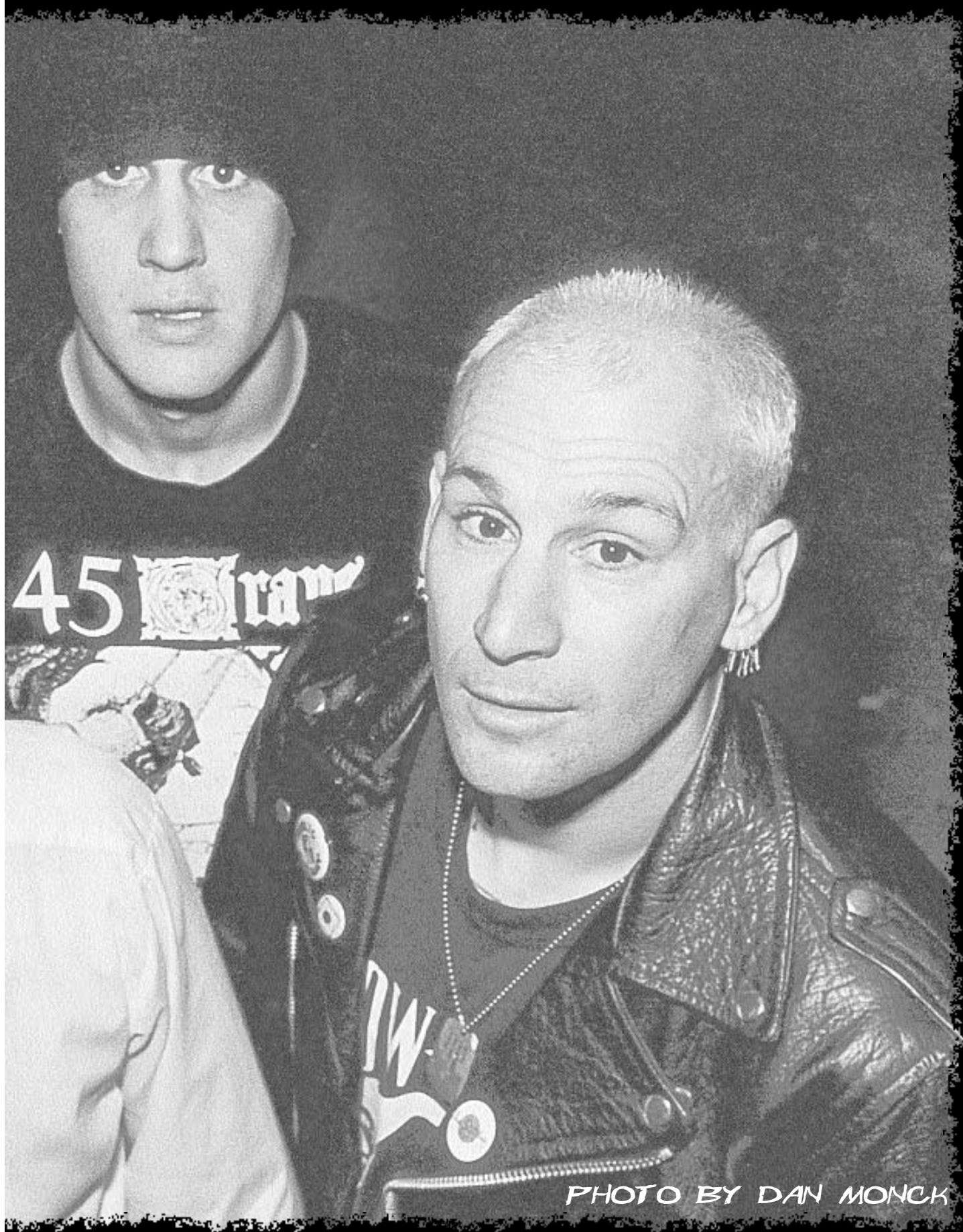


PHOTO BY DAN MONCK



**Darren:** Nah.

**Sean:** Are you asking out of personal experience?

**Jes:** Yeah.

**Drew:** My car stereo got ripped off.

**Jes:** Your whole car got ripped off when you were living in LA.

**Drew:** I lived in LA and my truck got stolen. I moved to Newport Beach and my fucking CD player got ripped off a couple months ago. That was the last thing.

**Travis:** I left my skateboard on my porch and knowingly – this was before I had a gate – “Aw shit, I’m just going to try it.” I left it there and it was gone. Snaked. And a camera, just the other day. My girlfriend was having a garage sale. Two dudes around sixty – one dude was asking her questions and the other dude took off with it. I was floored. I was like, “Whatever, have fun, dude.”

**Todd:** Which one of you has made a movie and what is it about?

**Jes:** How do you know about that? Okay, I made a little documentary. It’s called *Liquid Squid*. It was about me. When I was nineteen, this guy – funny story – he had a video camera and used to shoot videos for surf guys like Volcom and shit like that. His name was Tim Wade. He said, “I want to shoot a documentary.” So I went around and I did all this stupid shit. I got this toy shark that was six inches long and I put it on my dick and I got a blow job on camera.

**Drew:** Stuck a fuckin’ envelope opener up your ass.

**Travis:** I’ll never watch that video.

**Drew:** Jes watched it with his mom.

**Jes:** Tim suggested I do something stupid and I did something like that. He had a cast on at the end of the movie and he punched me in the face and I got kicked out of the house and we watched the video the next day. Two weeks later, he died. He went crazy. He stole five thousand dollars from this guy’s house that we’d just filmed the movie at, from his credit card or some deranged thing. They found him at hotel in San Clemente, in the bath, purple, with a needle in his arm. He was a dead duck.

**Darren:** Two days after *Liquid Squid*, when Jes came over to show the movie at my house, he almost got shot by the cops because he has this little dinosaur hand toy that kind of looks like a trash picker upper. We were having this party at my house and the cops showed up and said, “Everybody has to leave.” So, everybody was going. “Hey you, in there, come out.” And Jes comes out with this dinosaur and he’s got it hidden behind his back. “Get your hands out.”

**Travis:** This was Crown Valley, dude. They’ve got nothing going on.

**Darren:** The cops thought he had a gun.

**Jes:** And they took our chicks. We had ten chicks.

**Darren:** The cops were being stern and kicking everybody out. They were about ready to leave, then they go, “What are we going to do about the crazy guy?” They all

look at each other. They’re all, “He can stay here, right?” Then they gave half of our friends DUIs when they left the place, too.

**Jes:** That night, I did the most beautiful thing I’ve ever done. Their cop car was parked out in front of the apartment. I took a piss all over their fucking cop car. Some guy I didn’t even know, comes up and shakes my hand. “Thanks for doing that.” You can’t get away with that anymore. They’ve got the video camera in the cop cars.

**Darren:** Not pointing up. You did that off



the balcony, didn’t you?

**Jes:** No. I went right up to the front... I have full-blown scabies right now. [laughter] No, I really do. I’m serious.

**Travis:** It’s getting way better. He’s had it for a couple months.

**Jes:** Scabies is an itching, irritating feeling that you want to go to bed but it’s red and it has bugs and it crawls around all over your body. I went to the doctor but I didn’t have money and they told me – it was a nurse – “Well, if you have this problem, here’s this lotion. If it’s not that, then it’s scabies. If it’s not that, then we’ll put you in the hospital.” So they didn’t give me a solution and I just kept itching all the time and eventually they put it away.

**Travis:** Tell the story when you were in Carl’s Jr. and you were jonesing for your cream.

**Jes:** Yeah. So, I got the lotion. I finally went to Longs Drugs. I got my prescription for scabies. I’m in the bathroom, trying to put the lotion on. I’ve got my pants down to my fuckin’ ankles. I’ve got a bottle of lotion, and this guy walks into the bathroom. “Ooohh.” He thought I was jerking off. “Okay, I’ll just leave you alone there.” My scabies are going away. I’m not going

to get and trade diseases like baseball cards, you know what I mean?

**Todd:** Why is it important, to you, that you’re a punk band from Orange County? What kind of history is involved or what are you drawing from?

**Jes:** I like TSOL a lot. I fuckin’ think that DI, Adolescents, all the Orange County bands that came out of here, have been pretty good. I was born right by Theo Lacy Prison in the hospital in Orange County. I’m not going to lie and say I’m from L.A.

Why not be honest? I’m from suburbia. Kicking it on a grass lawn. It’s the truth. This is middle class life. It’s hilarious but that’s the way it is. I like a lot of the bands out of Orange County. For Rick to even start a label called Hostage is good because I don’t see any other labels in Orange County or supporting Orange County bands. They’re always going somewhere else.

**Darren:** I live in North Hollywood right now. I’ve lived there for years, but I always think I’m from Orange County and I’m moving back. I was born back East in Bridgeport, CT. I moved out here when I was seven or eight. I was a fuckin’ lost, pissed-off kid before I found punk rock. I remember hanging out with kids from all around here – and there weren’t that many of them.

**Jes:** Was it true that they were called The Little Girls From Laguna Beach before they were called Starvations?

**Darren:** No, not to my knowledge. But, I did hang out in Laguna a lot and, for the first time, I found somebody. I didn’t feel so fuckin’ strange.

**Travis:** Mike Lohrman helped out a lot. (Mike’s the lead singer of the Stitches and owner of Vinyl Dog Records.)



**Darren:** I fuckin' spent years hanging out at Lohrman's shop when I was eleven and twelve, riding the bus down, running away from home. I didn't have a bad life. My parents had food and everything for me, but you know what? Fuck this shit. I wanna do what I wanna do.

**Travis:** I like the story you were telling me when you won that Clash button.

feel that, right now, I'm discovering where I belong musically. For some reason, it just clicks with me.

**Drew:** I was born and raised in this town. Ever since I was a little kid, I'd listen to the Circle Jerks and I learned how to play drums to that.

**Jes:** He was the biggest Circle Jerks fan. He had Circle Jerks shirts on all the time. He'd put the headphones on with Circle Jerks on it.

by the cops. Now, he's living back at home. He's got a purpose now. He plays music and he goes to school to cut hair.

**Travis:** Yeah, he almost graduated from hair salon.

**Darren:** Jessie was a serious fuckin' handful before. I used to wake up to this guy in my living room at five in the morning talking to himself in the mirror. No joke. Now, he's blossoming into such a nice young man. [some laughing] And he writes the most amazing songs. He wrote a song the other night that my girlfriend's pissed at me because I keep playing. I made him record it because I wanted to take it home.

**Jes:** I thought you were on drugs or something because you wanted to hear the song over and over.

**Darren:** Jessie's songs, I'm just amazed every time we write one. I can't believe it's come out of him again.

**Jes:** "Radioactive San Onofre" was, actually, my dad wrote those lyrics and I stole it from him.

**Travis:** Yeah! He copped to it, finally. Yes, yes.

**Jes:** I told him to come to the show and he checked it out. He's all, "You changed the lyrics a little." He's not going to sue me or nothing.

**Travis:** When we were kids – our Dad still is but isn't doing it as much – is a writer. He did a lot of plays in a lot of places. Poems, too. He has a book he actually published but it sits in his closet. It's one of his poems. He has a whole book of tons of poems and lyrics. His characters, when he was doing poems, he was Ronaldo Hep. He'd get in the full outfit and the hat. The picture on the cover is him jumping the power plant.

**Jes:** On San Onofre.

**Travis:** My mom took the photos. It's kind of cut and paste. I bug him all the time. I want to get it out there. Eventually, I'm just going to take them.

**Todd:** Get a couple of sixty-year-old men to do the job.

**Travis:** Totally.

**Drew:** I hadn't seen Darren for a long time. We had our first guitar player, Ace. He left. Johnny No Good.

**Jes:** Heroin addict.

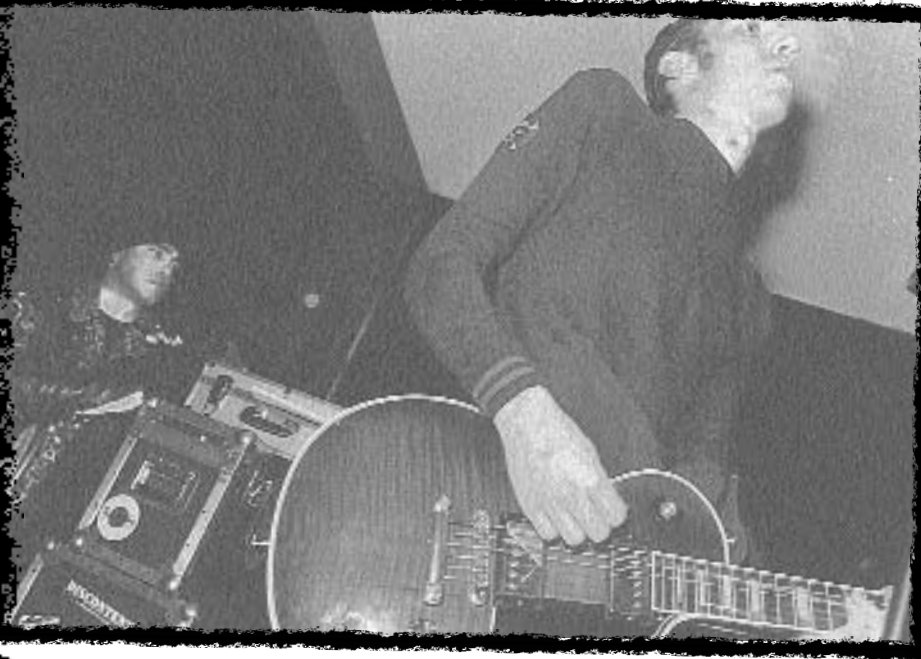
**Drew:** Jessie said he wanted to bring in Darren and at first I didn't want a guitar player. He came and played and it was fuckin' rad and it just clicked. The rest is history. This guy does everything in the band.

**Darren:** I drove down from North Hollywood, three or four days in a row, and learned the whole set in two or three days just because I was that stoked on playing. This was before anything had happened.

**Travis:** You came to that one show and you liked it.

**Darren:** I was so stoked.

**Jes:** We were on the same bill as him, and he was like, "If you ever need a guy." I said, "I think it's going to happen really quick because this guy is going to go to jail." And



**Jes:** When Kurt Cobain died and they had Blow Your Brains Out Day at Vinyl Dog. He signed all these records and pretended that he was Kurt Cobain and he got a hundred bucks for each record. That's how sick the fuck is, really. Yeah.

**Darren:** I kinda got introduced to Orange County punk music through him. I was first into the Dead Kennedys and Minor Threat. Then Agent Orange and Social Distortion and those are some of my favorite bands now.

**Travis:** There's a lot of bands out of here, years ago. UTI.

**Drew:** UTI rules.

**Travis:** That guy died two years ago.

**Jes:** A lot of bands didn't get noticed.

**Travis:** That's another thing. Yeah, you can be from Orange County, but if you just stay right here, that kind of sucks, too.

**Darren:** Orange County seems to be a place – I don't know what it is – but it seems like bands from Orange County have a hard time getting any further than being great, big hometown heroes.

**Todd:** The Crowd never did a national tour.

**Travis:** They're thinking about it. A European tour, I heard.

**Darren:** If somebody would pay for us to get to the next city so we could go see the States or the world, or whatever, fuck, that's worth it to me. That's all I've wanted to do since I was a little kid. I was always really into music and I didn't know where to place it. I

**Drew:** That drummer taught me how to play.

**Travis:** On a drum set that freakin' floated around San Juan from Filthy Phil to Steve Stern.

**Jes:** It had a sponge on the high hat and a sock on it. Trash can lids.

**Darren:** I sold it to some Mexicans at a garage sale for fifty bucks.

**Travis:** The recording engineer, Jerry, was, like, "I can't tune this." And then he's all, "You know what? Who's to tell an artist what color to use on the paintings? We'll just figure it out." We're all, "Yeah."

**Darren:** The people who bought it barely spoke English bought it for their son to play drums for their church. That drumset with the upside-down cross is now in a church.

**Drew:** My girlfriend bought me a new drum set.

**Jes:** She's a stripper. She takes all her clothes off in LA.

**Todd:** Look to the person in your band to your right and say how they've changed the most in the last two years.

**Darren:** It was probably about two years ago that Jes – I went to go visit him in Theo Lacy – he had no teeth. He was tore up. This was right around the beginning of the band. I was doing the same thing. I was a little later on in the program. I had already done my jail time. So, I went and saw Jes. He'd been in a high-speed chase and crashed his car and had teeth knocked out



he did. Budda bam, budda bing. I swung him in there.

**Darren:** I'd always told Jessie through the years that I thought his songs were amazing. When I saw the band play, it was rough, but you could hear the songs. It floored me.

**Travis:** Drew. He's been a way happier dude these last couple of years. I've known Drew for years and he used to be way more gnarly and kinda just irritated. "Fuck this shit." He's been way more happy. Even with his chick, he's stoked.

**Darren:** Not so negative.

**Jes:** Drew was so negative growing up as a child, if he could be not negative for five

n't want to go to the doctors. I was just dying. I asked some people and they gave me Vicodin and some pills and I don't even take pills. Then I took them and I was, like, aaahhhh, this is why everyone is into pills. I had a beer. I was relaxing. I even told my boss. Then I went back to work and they said, "You either have to go to the clinic or go back to work full time." And I wasn't feeling that rad. "I'll go to the clinic." No big deal. I didn't even think twice. I went to the clinic. Peed. Came out dirty. "A dirty test is a dirty test. Fifteen years. You're out of here." I'm all, "I made myself go down. No one sent me."

**Darren:** We were having to carry his amp for him.

**Travis:** I was hurting, dude.

It ended up that I had to cop that I have a pill problem. I had to go in front of some people and

talk and sign and say I need help.

**Jes:** Have you been going to the meetings? Because I'll sponsor you.

**Darren:** This is the biggest fuckin' joke.

**Travis:** Now, it's funny, at work, all the heavy bosses are like, "We always knew you were always on the pills and weed." But that was a pretty fucked situation.

**Sean:** Jes and Darren, what were you guys arrested for?

**Jes:** The last time that I ever had: high-speed pursuit, resisting arrest, three under the influences.

**Drew:** Cop fucked him up so bad.

**Jes:** 'Cause the same cop would come right here [Jes's mom's house] and would arrest me for being on drugs and the last time I saw him and he saw me, I fuckin' floored it. It wasn't even my car. He kicked my teeth out. He beat the shit out of me.

**Drew:** And your mom took pictures.

**Jes:** What can you do? If you hit him back, that's fuckin' assault on a police officer, and I knew that in my head, so I just took the abuse.

**Darren:** There is some rational thinking in there.

**Jes:** I ended up in the hospital. And when I'm standing in court, they wanted to charge me because his fist got cut from punching the shit out of me.

**Darren:** From his teeth.

**Jes:** They wanted to charge me for him beating me up. They wanted me to pay an extra hundred bucks or something.

**Sean:** Did you have to?

**Jes:** No.

**Drew:** Did you tell him you liked his boots?

**Jes:** No. He booted me in the mouth a few times. It was Officer Peterson.

**Travis:** Was that the same when the neighbor jumped on you and you broke the fence?

**Jes:** No. I have a juvenile record, but that's all clear.

**Travis:** You rolled a car down the street.

**Jes:** We're not talking about that one. I went to County and I did my little deal and I went to rehab. It was right when Prop 36 came out. (Prop 36 lets first- and second-time, non-violent, simple drug possession offenders have the opportunity to receive substance abuse treatment instead of jail time.) It was a new thing. The judge still let me go to rehab and I was nineteen.

**Darren:** Mine was for numerous things. I began to play a game with the police. They would arrest me and they would put me in jail and try me for stuff and I would always win. I was a juvenile and it's hard to win those cases because you're adjudicated rather than given a jury trial. It's whatever the judge decides. I'd spent a year and a half, two years of my teenage life, inside of jail and won all of my cases. On the last round, I was eighteen and they were like, "You're going to prison and you're going for fifteen years." Basically, I got caught with a whole bunch of drugs and somebody OD'd and almost died - he's dead now from something else - but they wanted to charge me with murder. It was all this gnarly shit. I learned my lesson there. I took a plea and went through a drug program.

**Travis:** You were clean for a long time.

**Darren:** Three years. Completely sober. I made a decision at that point. Hey, my life isn't going anywhere but a bad place and the stuff that kept happening was getting worse and worse and they were making stuff up, too. It was like, if I don't go somewhere else and do something, I'm going to be fucked. I completed my program. I'm probation-free and everything else. I still wonder if I could have beat it. I think I could have.

**Todd:** It's better not to find out.

**Darren:** It was a pretty big gamble at that point. We weren't talking about going to Los Piños for six months and hanging out at the ranch.

**Travis:** Fuck all those cages, man. No way.

**Darren:** The plea was that if I fucked up, I had to go to prison for three years. I saw Jessie at the record store and we went and relapsed together. [laughter] This was kind of ironic because I had your mom and Fred at the door, banging on my hotel room, and the police calling on the phone.

**Jes:** That was Katia. Katia called your house. She tried to hit me with a skateboard, right in the face, and I outran that.

**Darren:** Talking about the signs that you should stop - when the police start calling on the phone and asking about dead bodies and your mom's banging at the door. And this was in a short period of half an hour. I just went back to jail. Just checked myself back in. I had to go to court. "Okay, I fucked up. I'll take the jail now." They let me back out again and gave me another shot at the program and I did it.



Thank you, Dude

**JES, DREW WAS SO NEGATIVE GROWING UP AS A CHILD, IF HE COULD BE NOT NEGATIVE FOR FIVE MINUTES, MY MOM WOULD PAY HIM TWO DOLLARS.**

minutes, my mom would pay him two dollars.

**Darren:** Drew is still very negative, but it's not as bad.

**Jes:** He's like, "I wake up and I say, 'Fuck, I hate this!'" He'd wake up in the morning and hate life. It all came around. No Prozac or nothing.

**Todd:** Jes, what about Travis?

**Jes:** Travis doesn't change. He's perfect. He bought a house. He pays rent. He does everything he's supposed to do. He's so part of society and that's the best thing in the world, to pull your shit off. He's not fucking up. He's not going to cause anything going down.

**Darren:** Jes has to say nice stuff. Travis is the one who gets the checks for Jes every month.

**Jes:** I get SSI and he cashes the check for me.

**Darren:** He has to have a trustee for it.

**Jes:** Every month, they pay me, so I bought a guitar, an amp, the whole nine yards. That's how I make my living.

**Darren:** [to Travis] You've had the same job for, what, sixteen years?

**Travis:** Fifteen years. Warehouse forklift operator. It used to be Kraft Foods, Shipping and receiving. Right now, it's US Foods. Just recently, a lot of the older guys, who have been working there since '69, when I was born, they're all beat. Recently, I've been thinking, "Fuck, that can be me in a couple years."

**Jes:** And Travis refuses to move up in the work world. He could wear a tie and boss people around and stuff, but Travis will not take that job.

**Darren:** Tell them the story about the Vicodin.

**Travis:** I was helping someone move and hurt my back. I haven't smoked pot in fifteen years because they do drug tests because it's all heavy machinery. So I hurt my back. It was over the weekend and I did-



# AVAIL



## INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY SEAN CARSWELL

A few years ago, I worked in a rock'n'roll bar in Atlanta, and one of the guys I worked with was an old NYC punker named Jim. Jim was a huge fan of Johnny Thunders and the New York Dolls and the Ramones and all those seventies New York/CBGBs bands. He and I would sit in the back of the bar a lot of nights, watching all the touring and local acts come through, listening to generic hardcore and generic punk and weakly disguised classic rock and fourth generation Ramones knock-offs. Finally, one night Jim gave up on music altogether and told me, "No one's doing anything original anymore. You can listen to every one of these goddamn bands and tell exactly who they're ripping off." I disagreed. Not about the bands that played in our bar. By and large, they sucked. But about music in general. Right around that time, Avail's new album, *4AM Friday*, had just come out, and I couldn't listen to it enough. And it was original. And you couldn't pick out their influences. In fact, the album had nothing to do with the Ramones or the Sex Pistols or Johnny Thunders or any of the bands that everyone rips off, but it fucking rocked. So I dubbed the album onto a cassette for Jim and handed it to him and said, "Here you go, Jim. This'll make you believe in punk again." A month later, Jim came into work with a CD of *4AM Friday*. "I wore my tape out," he told me. This is the power of Avail.

For a while after that, whenever the bands were done playing and Jim and I were left to clean up the bar by ourselves, we'd

blast *4AM Friday* through the club's sound system and wash away the memories of each night's generic bands. In my mind, that album became a talisman against generic punk. And it's not that Avail hadn't done anything before or after that album. Prior to *4AM Friday*, they'd released *Dixie*, which my friend had dubbed for me, and I wore out the cassette version of it and bought it on CD. After *4AM Friday*, they went on to perfect their mix of hardcore with infectious melodies on both *Over the James* and *One Wrench*. They've toured incessantly with bands like Dillinger Four and Leatherface, and they've brought their high energy live set - complete with their own cheerleader - to just about every corner of the US where one or two punks might be found. And they've followed all of this up with some great songs on their latest release, *Front Porch Stories*. Still, despite all of their accomplishments over their ten years as a band and despite all of their great music, the best thing they've done, in my mind, is fill up the sound system of that rock'n'roll bar late nights in Atlanta, helping Jim and me keep our faith in music despite the fact that we'd spent another evening watching another slaughter of punk rock. For this reason, I hunted them down on their last trip through LA, and I did this interview with Avail's singer, Tim.

AVAIL is:

Tim Barry - vocals, Ed Trask - drums  
Gwomper - bass, Joe Banks - guitar  
Beau Beau - cheerleader

**Sean:** How was Born Against instrumental in Avail getting started as a band?

**Tim:** Oh, man, you're going way back, bringing up old shit. When I was living in this big house in Richmond with the rest of the guys in the band, I used to set up shows. I did shows with bands like Econochrist, Rorschach. The really ultra-underground bands at the time that gave punk a kick in the ass – because punk was really mundane and boring in the early nineties, in my opinion. I set up a show for a band called Born Against. Adam Nathanson, who was the guitarist in Born Against, called me up and asked me to set up a show. So I did. And everybody in my house, there was fourteen of us, fell in love with Born Against. And Adam Nathanson, along with the rest of the guys in Born Against, explained to us how we could be part of this underground network of bands touring. Basically, Adam sat me down and taught me how to set up tours. He sent me a list of phone numbers from their previous tours for people and places where they'd had good shows. I started calling the numbers and saying, "Hey, I got your number from Adam Nathanson from Born Against. He said you might be able to set up a show for us." And the girl on the other end of the line would say, "Yeah, yeah. When are you coming through?" And that's how we learned to tour.

Between our roommate, Adam Thompson – who's now a writer in San Francisco; he writes for the *Bay Guardian* – he's the guy who put out our first record. So, without him and Adam Nathanson, the two Adams, Avail would not be what we are right now.

**Sean:** When did all of this happen?

**Tim:** The first time I used that list was probably 1993.

**Sean:** When you did that, did you get any shit for not sounding anything like Born Against?

**Tim:** No. Our records didn't sound like Born Against. We didn't know what we were doing when we recorded our first record, so it sounds more like Kansas than Avail. But, we played differently, live. But, you know what? Come to think of it, we did do a few shows out of town before Adam gave us the list. We had some friends in North Carolina who set up a show for us there. And we had some friends set up a show for us in Florida. And we told everyone in Richmond, "We're going on our first tour." It was two fucking shows. We were so excited; we said it was a tour. Years later, we're doing tours with a hundred and sixty dates.

**Sean:** What was Catheter Assembly Records?

**Tim:** Catheter was going back to Adam Thompson's baby. Adam was a buddy of ours. I actually met him fistfighting him at a show in DC. He ended up moving into our house later on. Like most men, they seem to bond after a fistfight, at some point. Anyway, Adam was living at the house and we had a whole bunch of songs and he was like, "You know what, I'm gonna start a record label called Catheter and I'm gonna put out Avail's first record." And we were like, "All right." I ended up helping him out. It was him and me putting it together. Later on, there was another independent record label from down the street called Assembly Records. And as I was touring so much and didn't have the ability to sit at home

and help with the label, Adam and the guy from Assembly, Chris, kinda merged and it became Catheter Assembly Records. So the original Avail record (*Satiare*) is actually on Catheter. Then we repressed it on Assembly. And there were three different covers, because they all sucked and we kept changing them.

**Sean:** I thought there would be more of a story behind the name "Catheter Assembly." Like, why would you want to name a record label after the act of putting together a catheter?

**Tim:** Assembly was relevant in Chris's world because he's way into labor unions and stuff like that. In fact, he's a union boss in Las Vegas right now, representing the largest restaurant and hotel union in the country. So that was Chris's world. And Catheter comes from Adam's obsession with his urethra. He was constantly sticking stuff up it. Like, I'd walk in the room and he'd have a pencil halfway down his dickhole. That went on for years. That's where "catheter" came from.

**Sean:** Who taught you how to ride the rails?

**Tim:** Woody Guthrie.

**Sean:** There was no one person who took you down to a freight yard and showed you?

**Tim:** No, there was. But I listened to records too much – country and bluegrass records that talk about broken-hearted and broke guys, bums hopping freight trains to get away from their problems. I kept thinking about it. I'd always been around trains my whole life. I started getting obsessed with trying to ride them. I didn't know what I was doing until a buddy of mine, Ronny – we call him Ronny Richmond – was staying with me

and I was talking to him about wanting to hop a train and he was like, "Shit, I'll do that." He grew up in a trailer park. He was poor. His uncle had taught him how to ride. So he was like, "Shit, I've ridden trains before." So he took me down to the ACCA yard in Richmond. It runs north and south. He got all stealth and ran around the yard until we found a worker to tell us what train to get on. I caught my first train the next morning. At six A.M., I woke up on a boxcar. That shit started rolling and that was my first trip. We rode to Rocky Mount, North Carolina and hitchhiked over to Raleigh, North Carolina, and I can't remember where we went from there. But that was it. I was hooked. I hate it and I love it. I don't know why I do it.

**Sean:** Why do you hate it?

**Tim:** Because it's lonely as shit. It'll rip your soul out, sitting on a boxcar by yourself, covered in train soot. You walk off a train and you walk down the street and people who would normally be friendly look at you like you're some transient piece of crap who's just rolling through town. It's an odd thing. Sometimes, I'm riding those freights and I feel like a pirate. I'm high on myself and high on life and screaming at the top of my lungs, "This is the best thing ever." Bottle of whiskey in my hand. Other times, I'm sitting there on a cold boxcar floor thinking, why do I do this? This is the loneliest and most fucked up thing in the world.

**Sean:** You've touched on it a little bit, but why do you love it? What do you love about it?

**Tim:** I don't even know if love is the right word to describe it. Riding freights, for me, is nothing more than a way to





break out of that routine that you fall into. My life is really structured at home. I work on band desk work – we manage ourselves – so life becomes really structured and what I need is to just break that, on occasion. It puts everything in perspective. Sometimes, I sit at home and look at my beautiful twelve-year-old dog. I look at my great roommate Gina and my great roommate Al and my awesome neighbors and my awesome neighborhood where everyone is so nice and so welcome that we don't even lock our doors and I go to band practice and my band buddies are the greatest bunch of guys in the world. Sometimes, I feel like I take everything for granted. So I step out of that sometimes to gain a perspective, to assure myself that I'm in the right lane in life. I'll be riding a freight, sleeping in twenty-four degree weather, shivering to fucking death, thinking, you know what I want more than anything in the world is to be lying in my own bed with my dog curled up with me, two cats sitting on my shoulders. It's the trains that make sure I don't take all of this for granted. It's voluntary homelessness.

I write a lot of lyrics out there, too. Half of the songs on *Over the James* and *One Wrench* were written just prior to, during, or coming home from a train trip.

**Sean:** That song on the *Front Porch Stories*, "The Falls," is that about your neighborhood in Richmond?

**Tim:** That's about all of Richmond. It's a line-by-line blast of shout-outs to friends. The whole thing about "front porch stories," that's what you do in Richmond. A lot of people don't even go to bars. They get on their bikes, pick up a forty, and stop by someone's front porch. And you can break it down line by line. "To R.A.G.N., sowing what others may implore": R.A.G.N. is an abbreviation for Richmond Anti-Globalization Network. So I'm giving them props for all their hard work. "I've been broke and forlorn and caught out with the best at the ACCA yard." ACCA yard is the big train yard that runs north and south through Richmond. And "the best" is a reference to my great friend Brent who's helped me through so much and he's my train-riding partner. I've been really bummed out and whatnot, and there's Brent, listening to me, while we're riding freights. The whole song is like that. I could go through the whole thing. It's really a song for Richmonders, that I hope somehow other people like. "Healing but scarred, there's bullet holes in a porch in Jackson Ward." That's about the neighborhood next to mine. One night, six friends of mine were sitting on the porch, drinking with the dogs, and these two thugs rolled up and robbed them. And the guys were so fucking poor that they had no hot water or heat. Actually, no electricity at all. And you can't rob poor people. So my friends

took out a baseball bat. It was guns against the baseball bat. Four of them got shot. One of the thugs had a tech-9. He started spraying them. The other thug had a twenty-two. My friends beat them with a baseball bat. The guy with the tech-9 ended up getting killed. So the songs are just little shout-outs like that. When I went by their house after this to see how they were doing, there were a bunch of bullet holes in their porch.

**Sean:** How are they doing?

**Tim:** All of them are fine. Every single one of them. The guy who got shot the worst got shot four times. It was because he jumped on the dog, trying to save the dog. It'll bring a tear to your eye. But they're all alive and fine. Healing but scarred.

**Sean:** Is it true that you guys have practiced in the same place for ten years?

**Tim:** Nine years. It's (the guitarist) Joe's house. We all used to live there. He ended up buying it. He got married. He has an eleven-year-old son. He bought the house and it still has this scummy-ass band room that smells like cigarette smoke and band stink. We still practice there.

**Sean:** Do the neighbors mind?

**Tim:** No. When we moved to that house in '93, the block was crumbling, urban decay. We had no neighbors. Well, we had neighbors but they got shot. One afternoon, one girl got shot and killed – young as shit; she was like twenty years old – and the other girl got shot in the arm and she lived. Their house was abandoned for many years after that. Since then, the neighborhood has really gentrified. Because we were the first people on the block, everyone met us first. The people who own the bars on the corner and the hair shop next door and the flower shop and all, they know us. We always introduced ourselves and said, "We're in a band. We practice here. The room's sound proofed. If you ever have any problems, talk to us, not the cops. We'll reschedule practice."

**Sean:** Here's your philosophical question: when you think of the South, what do you think of? What does it mean to you?

**Tim:** To me, it's just a slower pace of life than here in LA. I get clusterfucked when I'm here. And this is not dissin', but I feel so overwhelmed. There are too many people, too many cars, too much working to live instead of living and then working. For me, when I think of Richmond, Virginia, I think of the beginning of the slower pace of life that is the South. It's really the industrial north of the South. The cut-off line for the South is Fredricksburg, Virginia, which is right up the road from Richmond. After that, it's just this mega-city that starts in Northern Virginia and spreads up past Boston. When you think about the entire South, it's a totally different culture than a place like LA or New York or Boston. I kinda embrace that "southern" pace of life, but that southern pace of life is not unlike way up north in Maine or New Hampshire, or like in the Pacific Northwest, like in Bend, Oregon. But the South has that funny clique to it because we lost. And when you lose, you can't seem to forget it. We get pigeon-holed for racism and everything else.

**Sean:** Why do you think the South gets pigeon-holed for racism?

**Tim:** I don't know. I don't know why Montana doesn't get pigeon-holed or LA or Orange County – the home of white Aryan resistance and huge white power movements – don't get pegged for it as much as a place like the South. Pretty much all we have are some old, crippled, about-to-die Ku Klux Klan guys who don't have any pull at all. And they barely even exist. The problem, I guess, is that old Virginia mentality that old folks still cling on to. Like, we have Monument Avenue with Confederate "heroes." We have statues up all over the place. And when Arthur Ashe, the African American tennis player who died of AIDS, when his monument is proposed to go up on Monument Avenue, it's only the old Virginians who don't want it, who say, "No. It's heritage desecration." And everyone else is like, these old folks'll die soon enough

anyway; put the goddamn monument up. So those elements still exist. But they exist throughout the entire United States. I'd say the panhandle through Texas and into Southern California is probably more racist than the South, with respect to the way people in the Southwest deal with Mexicans and people from Latin America in general. I mean, I've never heard of such crap in my life as what I read in the papers out here. I think the biggest racist thing that's happened in Richmond in the last ten years is the Church of the Creator – those white power freaks of nature who came out to our library to hold a meeting. Five hundred people showed up to protest, and the meeting hall held sixty people. Thirty-nine of them were black Baptists who got there first and took up all the seats. It's weird. The South gets pigeon-holed, but it's a national problem. It needs to be addressed as a national problem.

**Sean:** What's your involvement of AK Press?

**Tim:** I don't have an involvement, except that I'm a fan.

**Sean:** Don't you bring along their "bookmobile" on tour?

**Tim:** We haven't for a little while. The way that used to work is that some of our roadies in the past did distribution with AK Press. We've always welcomed anything norm-challenging along on tour. AK Press is obviously norm-challenging. The books are relevant and classic and fun to read. It's great. It adds a whole new element to the usual mundane and boring rock culture that we're all exposed to consistently. So, in that case, we support them. And I guess I've been wearing this AK Press sweatshirt for about two years now. I'm sure it's in plenty of photos.

**Sean:** I read an interview that you did with a Richmond zine, and you talked about two unsung heroes from Richmond: Gabriel Prosser and Elizabeth Van Lew. Who were they?

**Tim:** Gabriel Prosser was a slave. In 1800 or 1811 – it was after Nat Turner's rebellion – Gabriel Prosser tried to start one of the first slave insurrections. He and a group of other slaves rebelled. They grabbed hoes and pitchforks and anything they could get their hands on, and their idea was to walk through the county in the evening, grab more slaves, and make their way to the capital and take it over and start a slave revolt. I believe it was late summer, in August. If you've ever been to Virginia, late August has some of

the most intense thunderstorms you've ever seen. And, basically, the road got muddied and the slaves couldn't go on any longer. Eventually, Gabriel Prosser ended up hiding in the swamps of the James River for a while. He was hanged with six other people. Pretty much everyone else got away. I don't remember if they had murdered any whites. Nat Turner, before that, had. In fact, I have a buddy who I work with, Earl Mason, who's a direct descendent of Nat Turner, so when I get home, he's taking me to his land and he's gonna show me all the hideouts that his very historic family had. It's all on this farmland down in Suffolk County.

Anyway, Elizabeth Van Lew, as far as Richmond folklore goes, is considered a raging fucking lunatic. She came from a really wealthy family in Church Hill. Extremely, extremely wealthy. And she stayed loyal to the Union throughout the Civil War. She

## I'D WALK IN THE ROOM AND HE'D HAVE A PENCIL HALFWAY DOWN HIS DICKHOLE.

was a spy for the Union. She spent her time in the streets, pretending she was insane, but she was really collecting information and hanging out with all the high-up Confederates – which she could do because of her wealth – and dropping notes off to the Union commanders during the peninsula campaign. Later on, when the Union was coming into Richmond from every direction, she had a really prominent role in the movements of Union troops. I don't know if she's an unsung hero or a traitor. It depends on your perspective. I'd just like to see more of that history in our city because that's fairly unknown. We know about Robert E. Lee. We know about Stonewall Jackson. We know about Jeb Stuart. We know about Jefferson Davis. We know about the Union cause and the Confederate cause, but we don't know the true stories about the everyday people involved in the war. I'd rather see a monument to a random Richmond private who fought in the Civil War and died and some random Union private, and hear their stories, than hear the same old rhetoric that comes out with all this neo-Confederatism. Elizabeth Van Lew is relevant. It would be neat for people to learn more about her. And about Gabriel Prosser, obviously. The city finally did put up something on Gabriel Prosser very recently. At the same time, somebody fire-bombed a mural of Robert E. Lee. I got blamed for it.

**Sean:** Who blamed you for it?

**Tim:** Within two hours of it happening, the *Richmond Times* dispatch called me up, not accusing me, but doing that old, "What's the buzz? You know what happened, right?" They totally thought I did it. I'm just gonna leave it at that. It was a bad situation.

**Sean:** Did you do it?

**Tim:** No, I didn't fucking do it.

**Sean:** I had to ask.

**Tim:** Yeah. I should've done it. I endorse it. But I didn't do it. There's a twelve thousand dollar award for the capture of whoever did it. They take that shit seriously down there.

**Sean:** I'll ask you less academic questions, now. You guys all went to the same high school together, right?

**Tim:** Yeah. I graduated from South Lakes. Joe graduated from South Lakes. Beau went to South Lakes for four years – ninth grade twice and tenth grade twice, then he joined the Navy when he was seventeen. Gwomper dropped out after his second or third time in ninth or tenth grade, whatever it was. And Ed did not go to South Lakes. Ed went to some other school in Reston.

**Sean:** Did you all go back to your ten year reunion?

**Tim:** I did not go. You know why? Because up there, it's suburbia. It's the beginning of a "planned" community that turned into just an expansion of Washington DC. The people I went to high school with all went to points north. When they got the ten year reunion together and they contacted me, I asked for specifics. The specifics were a good sum of money, which I don't have. My money







goes to rent and dog food and bills and not a hundred bucks to some fucking reunion, just so I could look at people and laugh that they have boring jobs and I have fun in life. I didn't go because the invitation was like, "Meet at Clyde's," which is this yuppie bar, "for cocktails." I didn't even know what a "cocktail" was until somebody told me. I found out that a cocktail is when I drink beer early in the day. Then, the next day, there was golfing and a formal party. And you're talking to a man who's never worn a suit in his entire life. So I bailed on it. And the only time I find

it justifiable to shit on people because I'm in a band that's semi-successful is when those people are high school friends. Other than that, I never talk about it. But there was something in me that wanted to go there and say things like, "Oh, really, you work in front of a computer with a fluorescent light glowing over you? That's boring. I just got back from touring Japan." So it's better that I didn't go. Beau did not go either. He would've had to go as my date, because he didn't graduate.

**Sean:** On the back, inside cover of *One Wrench*, you have a picture of guys lined up with shovels...

**Tim:** I don't know who they are. We threw that record together right quick and that was something that Ed had found. He'd be better suited to answer that question. What I think it is is an old picture of the western expansion of the railroads. Unfortunately, there wasn't much of a story behind it. I wish we would've taken more time choosing things closer to our lives.

**Sean:** You're wearing a "Free Mumia" shirt in that album insert. Why should Mumia be freed?

**Tim:** I wear that shirt intentionally to spark dialogue regarding Mumia Abu Jamal's case. He's on death row for the murder of a police officer. I do not stand behind the slogan "Free Mumia." I just wear the shirt to spark conversation. I would like to see Mumia have a new trial because, through all of the research I've done, I truly believe that he was not treated fairly by the judicial system. I wasn't there. I don't know exactly what happened, but there are so many flaws in his case. Obviously, through the many moratoriums that have happened throughout the country, people up high have realized the discrimination against the blacks and any non-whites or poor people. Particularly with sentencing and with death penalty cases. And I will say, for the record, that I'm adamantly opposed to the death penalty. That stems from the inequality for poor people in the judicial system.

**Sean:** So why don't you stand behind the idea of freeing

Mumia?

**Tim:** With a retrial, I believe he would be freed. I don't want to see anybody who's been convicted of something to just be let out. I'm saying retrial first, because the logical next step is to free him. Once they go through the real process of examining the case. But it's a really catchy slogan.

**Sean:** What's your involvement with Food Not Bombs?

**Tim:** We donate all of the money we make from Richmond shows to Food Not Bombs. It's a substantial amount of money every year. I was around when it started in Richmond ten years ago, and I took a proactive role then. My responsibilities on the road are too demanding now. So now we donate our money. They have a van. If anyone's arrested, they can fund lawyer fees. And right on down

## THE GUY WHO GOT SHOT THE WORST GOT SHOT FOUR TIMES. IT WAS BECAUSE HE JUMPED ON THE DOG, TRYING TO SAVE THE DOG.

the line, everything from salt and pepper to trash cans to... shit, man, if you want to cook a real meal for two hundred people, think of how much those fucking soup bowls cost and all the skillets and everything. You've got to have real shit and it has to be up to code. So everything's really clean, and we fund them all the cleaning products to have a real, functioning kitchen. And I'm proud of that. What Food Not Bombs does is build community, and that's important to us.

**Sean:** You have that song "Lombardy Street" on *Over the James*. I don't want to know what the song means, but what does Lombardy Street itself mean to you?

**Tim:** That's where I met the person who the song is about. She lives in San Diego now. I'll see her tomorrow. She's a great, great friend of mine. I don't even know if she really knows who the song is about. It's more me questioning myself than dogging somebody. I'm really good at critiquing myself. It's better for me to do it with words on records than to do it with a gun in my mouth.



# STITCHES

Punk rock cuts into defining moments. It has to; otherwise it'd be a blur. A friend of mine had just soccer'd a beer bottle into my kneecap from across the nearly empty hardwood floor. I was in Vegas, standing in one of the few places, besides the restroom, that wasn't carpeted and soaking up some sort of alcohol or puke. Punks of all stripes and polka dots milled around. Smoke, cheap perfume, and cheaper promises filled the air between calls for bingo. A little egg of a bruise rose up from my knee. I was as torn up as the ripped fishnet stockings on the ladies who walked by. I was drunk enough to start carrying my camera like it was a raccoon about to attack me. I got another drink and my legs seemed to matter less.

The Stitches, whom I've seen numerous times, almost too many to count, took the stage. 'Til that point, I liked 'em pretty well but I was never awwoogah! about them.

They've got a simple beauty about to 'em. Like knives. Like blowjobs. Sure, it looks simple enough, but you know instantly when someone's doing it close to perfect. Slice out large chunks of songs, circa '77-'82 (complete riffs from the Clash, The GoGo's, and the Sex Pistols) and massage them in particularly fascinating way that'll make you say, "That feels downright good," with a little, pleasant eye roll. And with The Stitches, you can bet there'll be a lot of fluids flying around.

Anyway, after The Stitches plowed into their set at this three-day marathon, the crowd went nutty bonkers. Creeps and cretins, retards and pirate glue sniffers alike jumped around like they were semi-superheroes. It was an absurdly good set. Then, Mike's nasally vocals were cut. As is the protocol with these all-day, run-of-the-mill deals, time slots were tight. The band played on, instrumental-like. Mike, one to usually take adversity by attacking someone nearby, jumped headfirst into the crowd and quickly emerged back on stage with a little plastic cup. He poked out the bottom and employed it as an itty bitty megaphone. The crowd, roaring, filled in the vocals. As the song was rounding its way into the final choruses, the mic juice was switched back on, and the place went apoplectic koo-koo, with Mike leading the charge.

This feel-good moment has stayed with me ever since. It was one of the best shows I've seen, ever.

Say hey to one of the most mythologized, punk with a big p, drug-addled Orange County bands to grace our pages.

Special thanks to Mundo, Mike Dunn, Julia Smut, and Dale for "research" help.

*mike* : vocals  
*Johnny* : guitar  
*pete* : bass  
*Skibs* : drums

**Todd**: A theoretical question. Why aren't you guys a huge band? It's all there. You've been around for a long time, have a loyal fan base,



**Interview by Todd Taylor Pictures by Dan Mopick**

and you play out regularly

**Mike:** We were huge, but Pete got off his medication. He's lost a bunch of weight. Now, we're down to – on an average – I'd say we're a buck sixty.

**Todd:** Do you guys shoot yourselves in the foot, as a band?

**Johnny:** Constantly.

**Mike:** In the arm a couple times.

**Todd:** Why do you say “constantly”?

**Johnny:** We just pretty much do what we want to do. We never really listened to what everyone told us to do.

**Todd:** Any regrets?

**Mike:** Say yes.

**Skibs:** If you're thinking that long.

**Mike:** It's just like all the other questionnaires. It says, “Yes? Explain.”

**Johnny:** Actually, we're pretty well known all over. We do better in other cities than

**Mike:** I guess we accomplished a lot more than we set out to do.

**Todd:** Are you happy about that?

[Long pause. No answer. Lots of laughter.]

**Mike:** Jeez. Sometimes.

**Todd:** Everyone has to answer this question. What's your day job?

**Pete:** I do masonry.

**Johnny:** Unemployment.

**Mike:** I work at a record store and skin care products. What else do I do?

**Johnny:** We have a record label.

**Mike:** We have a record label, but we don't really put any work into it. Wait, jobs? Income? That was proper, I think.

**Skibs:** I work at a record store as well. Not the same one that Mike works at.

**Todd:** What record store do you work at?

**Mike:** Say it!

**Skibs:** Okay, I work for Tower Records.

**Mike:** What do you mean? It closed at eight o'clock tonight. I fucking got here late.

**Todd:** I mean, the store, Vinyl Dog.

**Mike:** Oh, Vinyl Dog was never a store. It was just a label that I ran out of the middle room of my shooting gallery house on 20th and Orange.

**Todd:** A lot of different people hung out there though.

**Mike:** Yeah, but nobody had anything to do with records.

**Todd:** Mike, do you fit people for pants, on occasion?

**Mike:** I feel their nuts from time to time, sure. I just put a closet in there. I sell pants and shirts and shoes and just crap.

**Todd:** Mike, this is something I've been wanting to ask you for a long time.

**Mike:** Okay.

**Todd:** Does your mom own a large cosmet-

**Mike: Shit, I guess I told the stewardess I was going to kill everybody on the plane unless she brought me another vodka. It doesn't go over so well.**

LA. Go figure.

**Todd:** Can you attribute it to anything?

**Johnny:** Yeah, because we don't play there that much. We play here every fuckin' weekend.

**Todd:** I usually don't ask this question, but I don't know the answer to it. How and when did you guys start the band? I know there were some line-up changes early on.

**Johnny:** You can field that question, Mike.

**Mike:** What do I need to do to it?

**Johnny:** Field it.

**Mike:** Field. We started out of boredom. There was absolutely nothing to do. I figured if we were going to be going into the clubs and watching really shitty bands, we might as well be getting in free and be the shitty band. The original members is the same line-up we have now, minus Ted Turnbull – he was the rhythm guitar player guy – and Sleeper was the drummer.

**Todd:** Did you accomplish what you set out to do with the band?

**Johnny:** We put out a record.

**Mike:** Actually, when we first put out that *Sixteen* seven inch, I was pretty much planning on putting out the record and having something to remember the band by.

**Todd:** Like a memento.

**Mike:** Right. I had no idea it was ever going to go this far. I couldn't even imagine. I didn't even think about putting out a single number two, let alone three, four, five, or six and twelve inches and all that kind of shit. That first seven inch was freak-o De De's idea because she wanted to have something to sell on tour. (De De's the lead singer of the long-running band, *UXA*.)

**Johnny:** That's the compilation. (*You Know It's a Product and Products are to Be Consumed*.)

**Pete:** I had my 798th drink ticket tonight, so 2,500 more, and I'm good.

Okay.

**Todd:** Are you a stocker?

**Mike:** No, he's a sensitive artist.

**Skibs:** I'm a display artist.

**Todd:** Do you do the airbrushing?

**Skibs:** Yeah, I do all the airbrushing and all the painting.

**Johnny:** He's known for *The Wall*.

**Skibs:** Yeah, I can paint Pink Floyd's *The Wall* like there's no tomorrow.

**Todd:** What was the last thing you had to paint?

**Mike:** Moby?

**Skibs:** Ooh, you were close. The last thing I had to paint was Jennifer Love Hewitt. She's good looking, too, man.

**Johnny:** Did you give her bigger boobs than she normally has?

**Skibs:** Of course.

**Johnny:** Good man.

**Todd:** Mike, explain *Blow Your Brains Out Day*.

**Mike:** Ooh, you mean the Kurt Cobain, *Blow Your Brains Out Sale*?

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Mike:** That was awesome. The hippie gone done shot himself in the face so I figured I'd capitalize on it and I took all the Nirvana records and I signed them with three different pens and three different signatures and I put them in a cardboard box up on the front, marked them all at a hundred bucks, and sold 'em.

**Todd:** Every one of them?

**Mike:** Yes. And when they'd come up and ask, “Are these signatures real?” I'd say, “Yes, they are real signatures.”

**Skibs:** “Real signatures.” They're not their signatures, but they're real.

**Todd:** How long has Vinyl Dog, your record company, record been in operation?

**Mike:** Ten years.

**Todd:** When did it close?

ics company?

**Mike:** No, it's skin care products.

**Todd:** Is that who you work for?

**Mike:** Uh huh. It's called Epicurean.

**Todd:** Does she make a lot of money?

**Mike:** It does pretty good. It's getting really big now.

**Todd:** What's so special about it?

**Mike:** I don't know. You'd probably have to ask somebody who knows what it is.

**Todd:** Have you ever used the products?

**Mike:** If you want to go into it – I guess it really doesn't have anything to do with the band – but it's all enzyme-activated stuff. Real high goodies. We just set Kyle Kapow up with a box of lotion so he could take care of his personal deals.

**Todd:** Pete, this is a two-parter. Is it true that you once had a refrigerator that broke down?

**Pete:** Yes.

**Todd:** Is it true that instead of taking all the stuff out of the fridge, that you bought another?

**Mike:** No, no, that's not true.

**Pete:** It broke down but it stunk so bad and people would open it and it would smell like shit. The cockroaches would run out. So, my friends got some bolts and shit and bolted it together.

**Todd:** What?

**Mike:** Wait, the deal was like this. The power went out in the house and so everything in the fucking refrigerator – 'cause it was still plugged in and it shut off – went bad, the power went back on, and people would come into the house to put their beer in the fridge. They'd open it up, and it'd stink out house. So, they got a big, giant chunk of steel and some bolts, drilled holes, and bolted the thing shut, but it was still plugged into the wall. They just left everything in it.

**Todd:** Did you ever think of taking it out of the house?

**Pete:** Yes. When I got in a fight with my ex-wife, I grabbed it and threw it down the stairs.

**Todd:** How long was the refrigerator in your house like that?

**Pete:** As long as I was on speed for. I'm not sure. [laughs]

**Todd:** Mike, do you have a big half pipe in your back yard?

**Mike:** That's over at my mom's house. It's awesome.

**Todd:** Did a skate company ever sponsor you?

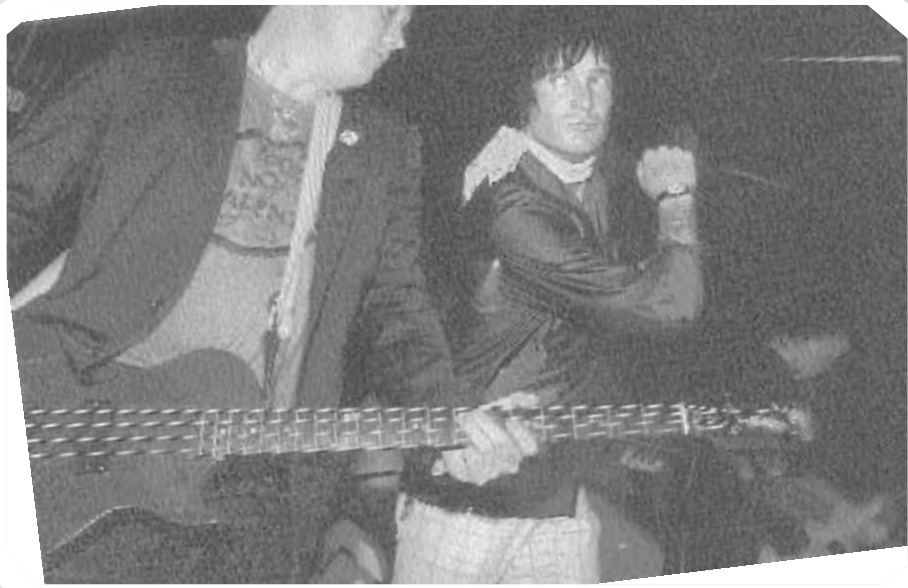
**Mike:** Yeah. All sorts of stuff. Alva, Black Label, Independent, and stuff.

**Todd:** Johnny, you skate a lot, too. Were you ever sponsored?

**Johnny:** No. I just get free shit from friends and shit.

**Mike:** Isn't that sponsorship?

**Johnny:** I'm sponsored by friends that think I'm all right.



**Pete:** I thought the best way to settle it was to go in my room get completely naked, run out, and punch the guy in the face.

**Todd:** Mike, have you ever unintentionally broken someone's nose with a mic stand?

**Johnny:** It was a skull. It wasn't a nose.

**Mike:** I don't know about noses. I split some girl's head open at the Purple Onion up in San Francisco.

**Todd:** Do you remember her at all?

**Johnny:** I do. She worked at the Lusty Lady. She kicked me out, or, the security kicked me out for yelling at her huge bush. [laughter]

**Mike:** She had German black bush?

**Johnny:** It was cave woman bush.

**Todd:** Pete, true or false: You're trying to buy crack off of a hooker, but she wouldn't give it to you, so you hit her, stole it, and ran away.

**Pete:** That's absolutely false.

**Johnny:** You smoked it with her, didn't you?

**Pete:** I never bought fuckin' crack from a black hooker lady.

**Todd:** I didn't say black.

[laughter]

**Johnny:** Now the truth's coming out.

**Pete:** No, that's not true.

**Todd:** Mike, you're sober now?

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Why'd you decide that?

**Mike:** I dunno.

**Todd:** There was no catalyst for it?

**Mike:** No, actually. I had a great time drinking. I had a great time doing drugs, too. I dunno. How would I put it? I got sick and tired of trying to put everything back together all the time. It took too much energy. I didn't feel like it, I guess.

**Todd:** Is the sobriety permanent?

**Mike:** I dunno. I have no idea. Fuck.

**Pete:** About that last question. I know what you're talking about. It was a male hooker in 'Frisco. He ripped me off on crack and I did take a swing. I missed, but he punched me out pretty good.

**Todd:** Who owns GG Allin's lab coat with blood, shit, and piss all over it?

**Pete:** I do.

**Todd:** How'd you get it?

**Pete:** From GG Allin.

**Todd:** He just handed it to you?

**Pete:** I traded him a little leather jacket.

**Todd:** How many times did you see GG Allin?

**Pete:** One time at Raji's, using some glam band's equipment.

**Todd:** Mike, during a GG Allin show, was it true that you were outside with your pants around your ankles?

**Mike:** Well, I ended up outside, too. We were inside and the band hadn't started playing yet and we were drinking all day. It was up in Santa Barbara and they had those fancy twenty-five cents for a cocktail deals for an hour. We took full advantage of that and got pretty fucked up. We ended up going to over to the show. It seemed like a good idea to take my pants off, so I was running around with my pants off and one of the cops tried to tell me to split. I wanted his nightstick, so I grabbed his nightstick and we started wrestling around. And me and the cop fell down the stairs and they kicked me out and arrested me and took me to the can.

**Todd:** But, when you ended up at the bottom of the stairs, weren't you sitting on top

of the cop?

**Mike:** Yeah. It was really fuckin' funny. When we got to the bottom of the stairs, the other cop was super, super pissed off because I was lying on top of him, naked. The fuckin' other cops are standing at the bottom of the stairs, just pointing and laughing. Me, lying on top of a cop, naked, busting up with all these other cops busting up. One guy got super mad and insisted on taking me to jail. All the other cops were, "Just kick him out." He wasn't having any part of it.

**Todd:** Pete, why are you called The Action Man?

**Pete:** I don't know. Ask Mike. Me made that shit up.

**Mike:** 'Cause he never moves. He has no action, so it's kind of a contradiction in terms. Have you ever watched *Wild Planet*, Discover Channel, anything like that?

**Todd:** On occasion.

**Mike:** Have you seen any documentaries on the sloth?

**Todd:** The three-toed sloth?

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Did you know that after a sloth dies, it can still hang from the tree for two weeks before it falls off.

**Mike:** We thought he was dead for years, but he can still hang out in the back of the van and cuddle.

**Todd:** Who has lost teeth, here?

**Mike:** I lost the first half in Skateboard Odyssey (a skate park) and I lost the rest of 'em in Reno, Nevada.

**Todd:** How?

**Mike:** Got 'em punched out.

**Todd:** By who?

**Mike:** Mark Gonzales. (A pro skater.)

**Todd:** Why?

**Mike:** I don't know. I was really drunk and I'm not really sure how everything ended up. I don't know how it happened.

**Todd:** Did he soundly whoop you? Did he lose anything?

**Johnny:** His temper. [laughter]

**Mike:** I've heard so many different stories. I heard it was his brother. I heard it was him. I heard it was a rock. I've heard all sorts of shit. I'm pretty sure it was him. I was pretty sure it was the bouncer guys because they were pulling me out of the skate contest thing and I thought it was the bouncers who did it, so I started trying to scrap with the bouncers and they hauled me off to the little holding station. I ended up going to jail and sitting there for a couple days until Monday rolled around. So funny. I woke up in jail the next morning. I looked over. I tried to talk to my cellie guy and I couldn't talk. My lip was flappin' like a microwaveable hot dog. It was so fucked.

**Todd:** Mike, is it true that you almost lost your arm dancing to James Brown on top of a glass table? Didn't it nearly need to be amputated?

**Mike:** Yeah, yeah. It was Elvis's birthday and I was dancing with some young lass and I tripped over the carpet and ended up falling through this glass table. It cut the thing off, pretty much.

**Todd:** How many stitches?

**Mike:** A whole bunch.

**Todd:** Johnny, one of my first memories of seeing you was when you were in a choke hold at the Troubadour. I think it was a Humpers show.

**Johnny:** Yeah, they got pissed that I was stealing their beer, I think and they called security.

**Todd:** Do you get choke holded a lot?

**Johnny:** Not usually. They've got to be pretty damn big because I can fuck 'em up.

**Todd:** Pete, explain the last time you were in a naked knife fight.

**Pete:** Naked knife fight? That was with my own dick. [laughter] When I lived in Anaheim, some new neighbor living next door to me was pissing me off and I went over there naked, holding a knife to my dick, for some reason. I'm not sure.

**Mike:** What about the nazi guy at the birthday party at Mark's house?

**Pete:** Oh, fuck. I forgot about that one.

**Johnny:** Were you naked? [laughter]

**Pete:** Yeah. I forgot. Some nazis were fucking with my friends or something and they got in a fight and I thought the best way to settle it was to go in my room, get completely naked, run out, and punch the guy in the face.

**Mike:** He was hanging out, harassing everybody. He was standing by the door and I walked by. The guy blows in my ear, you know what I mean? I turn around. He's

like, "What's up, holmes? Just got out of five years in Chino." I was, "Man, I'm sorry to break the news to you, but there's girls out here. You don't got to fuck with guys anymore, dude." He got all upset and went inside and started storming around. And me and Todd and Shitty Sean and a couple other people ended up bailing out, going, "We're out of here." And every time Pete freaks out and does cool shit, I always miss it by five minutes. He does this once every seven years. It doesn't happen very often, but every time he does it, I get smoked on it. I never get to see The Action Man in action.

on the plane unless she brought me another vodka. It doesn't go over so well.

**Todd:** Didn't they divert they flight so they could drop you off?

**Mike:** No, it was Chicago to LA, originally. I had to catch another one, Chicago to Orange County. They wouldn't serve me at the airport because I didn't have any ID. I'd lost my ID and my passport, everything I had, in Chicago. When I got on the airplane, they didn't ask for anything and I started getting all the free drinks because I'd gave up my ticket for the LA flight. There weren't enough seats to get my buddy on, so because I forfeited my ticket, they gave us first class to Orange County. It's supposed to be all you can drink for free.

**Johnny:** If they can hit me in the teeth with the microphones, I can hit them in the teeth with my guitar, no problem.



**Todd:** Mike, can you lead us up to the point where you were restrained and kicked off of a flight.

**Mike:** Lead you up to the point? I have no idea what happened up until that point other than the fact that I guess I told the stewardess - she cut me off on drinks - I finished off the handful of valiums and passed out and got arrested. I woke up and there were the guys in green, standing above me, saying, "Hey kid, get up." And I figured they were there for me. So, I just went along quietly. They called in the feds and asked me a bunch of questions. Shit, I guess I told the stewardess I was going to kill everybody

**Todd:** So you took advantage of that.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Johnny, there was a time where you were hitting people with your guitar on a regular basis. What will provoke you?

**Johnny:** It's because a lot of people like to come up and fuck with me while I'm playing. They'll grab my guitar or my strings.

**Mike:** They'll mess up his hair.

**Johnny:** Yeah. Throw beer.

**Todd:** Throw burritos at you.

**Johnny:** Yeah, yeah. Or even tapping the microphone and hitting me in the teeth. If they can hit me in the teeth with the microphone, I can hit them in the



teeth with my guitar, no problem.

**Todd:** Pete, have you ever thought of going cordless?

**Pete:** What's the point? I stand in the same place the whole time, anyways.

**Todd:** I've seen you so many times walking around in little circles. The cord gets wrapped around your legs and you unplug yourself.

**Mike:** [laughter and clapping]

**Pete:** It'd make it easier to go to the car and get a sniffer and go to the bar to get a drink.

**Mike:** If he didn't have a cord, he wouldn't know where to plug his tuner into, which you can't use anyway.

[In enters extremely drunk guy. He's so bad off, he's resorted to hugging people and making loud baby sounds. No one knows him, but he's friendly. He's bleeding from the chin.]

**Mike:** [to drunk guy] What's up, little buddy?

**Drunk Guy:** Yeee.... unnhhhh. Muuuullleeee. More questions. Yeunnghhhh.

**Todd:** Everybody has to answer this question. Name one body part that you're self-conscious about.

**Drunk Guy:** Yeaah. Mule.

**Johnny:** My beer gut.

**Pete:** My huge penis.

**Mike:** My mule.

**Drunk Guy:** Mule!

**Skibs:** My foot.

**Drunk Guy:** Mule!

**Todd:** So, what happened to your last drummer.

**Pete, Johnny, and Mike:** Which one?

**Todd:** The last one, Eddie. He was with you for a while.

**Johnny:** Once the war started breaking out, they shipped him back to Mexico. [laughter]

**Todd:** Why are there so many versions of your first LP, 8" X 12"?

**Mike:** They just keep going out of press, so we make more.

**Drunk Guy:** Yeah. Mule!

**Todd:** Haven't there been eight presses?

**Mike:** No. Five.

**Johnny:** No one wants to buy the same color record. Everyone likes to buy a new color.

**Todd:** Do you think you're selling it to, essentially, the same five hundred people?

**Johnny:** We press a thousand, so I'm sure at least a thousand people buy it.

**Todd:** So, who's idea was it to have a purely white, lacquered cover with clear vinyl of the new one, *Twelve Imaginary Inches*?

**Johnny:** That was our old drummer. That was the best idea he ever came up with.

**Mike:** Didn't we come up with that idea just so we wouldn't have to look at his picture on there? [laughter]

**Drunk Guy:** Gooahh!

**Mike:** I get questions all the time: "Who's the banker on the right?"

**Todd:** Why was there such a huge gap in time between your two LPs?

**Mike:** There's only two inches. (8" X 12" is a 10" record.)

**Johnny:** There's a lot of shit in between. There's a lot of seven inches and some EPs in between.

**Todd:** How many years has it been between the albums, though?

**Mike:** Eight years?

**Johnny:** It was only actually six years.

**Todd:** And a lot of your singles are out of



This photo by Todd

print.

**Johnny:** Yeah, the singles are out of print. Singles collection coming up soon.

**Todd:** Is there anything you've done but haven't been convicted of that would prohibit you from traveling to a foreign land?

**Mike:** As a matter of fact, my joint suspension was lifted on March 10th, so I'm a free man. I can do whatever I want to do.

**Todd:** What for?

**Drunk Guy:** Yeah, you did.

**Mike:** Drug charges.

**Skibs:** I have been convicted of many felonies.

**Mike:** And you're off.

**Skibs:** Well, probation's over, but when you're a convicted felon, you can't get into Canada. You can get into most European countries, though.

**Todd:** Do you mind telling me what for?

**Skibs:** Drugs, weapons, paraphernalia. A Subaru with three tires.

**Mike:** Burglary.

**Skibs:** No, I wasn't convicted of the burglary charge.

**Johnny:** Hanging out with these idiots for over twelve years.

**Drunk Guy:** Fuck off. [laughter]

**Pete:** I've never been in any trouble. I was once in a holding cell, back in '85.

**Todd:** What's the largest transformation you've ever gone through?

**Mike:** I went from skinny to fat, back to skinny again.

**Skibs:** This sunburn I just got today.

**Mike:** From pink to extra pink. Try for extra crispy.

**Johnny:** [to drunk guy] I'm going to smash you in a second, dude... I moved out from Ohio to Los Angeles.

**Pete:** What transformation have I gone through?

**Johnny:** You're going through a divorce.

**Pete:** Going through a divorce. I did a backup vocal about two years ago. That was pretty cool.

**Todd:** You have to look to the band member to your right and ask them a question you've always wanted to ask them.

**Mike:** [to Skibs] Are you gay?

**Drunk Guy:** Yeah!

**Johnny:** [to Pete] You never gave me that hand job two weeks ago. Why not?

**Mike:** That was just a simple statement. You need a question.

**Johnny:** I asked, "Why not?"

**Pete:** Go back to that last question, about gaining that thirty pounds. [laughter] [to Mike] Why did you say you wouldn't drink at my funeral?

[no response]

**Skibs:** You stumped him, Pete.

**Mike:** I have no idea. I don't even recall discussing your funeral.

**Johnny:** You're supposed to say, "I don't like Natural Light."

**Mike:** I'm sorry. I'm still not going to drink at your funeral. [to Skibs] What time are we surfing tomorrow?

**Skibs:** [to Johnny] Is it true? Are you a real-life ice ape? [laughter]

**Johnny:** Yes.

**Todd:** For people who have never heard the Stitches, can you help them out? What's your intention for the band? Why do you do what you do?

**Johnny:** To piss everyone else off.

**Todd:** Is that really it? Then no one would come to your shows.

**Johnny:** We're working on that right now.

**Mike:** Free drinks, and, no, I don't have anything to do it for. I'm continually stumped by why I do this.

**Johnny:** I'm stoked that there's two sober guys in the band 'cause I get more drink tickets.

**Skibs:** Not tonight. They've got Red Bull on tap.

**Drunk Guy:** Yeeaaahh! Neeaaahh!

**Skibs:** That's my only question. Is the drunk guy going to be in the interview, too?

**Todd:** You bet.

# The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Article by Joe Beil

Artwork by Sarah Oleksyk and Keith Rosson



## Martin Luther King, Jr.: Civil Rights Leader

I'd say that everyone is familiar with Martin Luther King to some degree, but there are some important details to understand in order to discern why the FBI and CIA would be so interested in undermining and discrediting his every move (and then later offering substantial assistance in at least covering up his murder).

King was a powerful leader and speaker for a formerly unfocused, yet large group of Americans. He spoke charismatically and articulated things that his followers had only previously understood without words. He organized peaceful marches to gain labor recognition for underprivileged workers. His nonviolent stance was effective in helping the image and intentions of his movement. As he saw it, his struggles to unite and gain equality for the repressed African American population was intrinsically linked to opposing the Vietnam War and the class struggles of all Americans.

In the end, one of the great mistakes that cost him his life was opposing the war in Vietnam. He referred to America as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today," comparing American practices in Vietnam to practices of Nazi Germans in World War II. His critics said that he should focus on one issue (organizing the sanitation workers of Memphis), but, in his mind, it was the same issue. He saw the relationship among "the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism." It is theorized that King's stance on the war might also have been a result of him losing power with the more radical factions of the black power movement. King was also rumored to be running in the 1968 presidential election, but he denied it.

The FBI, J. Edgar Hoover in particular, had a malicious hatred for King. King had demonstrated his ability to instigate massive direct action campaigns, and his supposed presidential candidacy would appeal to people who were opposed to the war. To Hoover, opposing the war was evidence that King was a communist. Why else would he oppose the war?

## COINTELPRO

COINTELPRO is an acronym for the FBI's domestic "counterintelligence programs" to neutralize political dissidents. Although the FBI has always used covert operations, the formal activities of 1956-1971 were broadly targeted against radical political figures like Martin Luther King, Jr. and his followers. Its goals are to discredit and undermine activist groups working domestically in the US. Since they believed their aims to be righteous, they would stop at nothing to accomplish their goals, including blackmail, threatening families, and politically lynching people with the media.

The FBI had been wiretapping King for years and planting paid informants

inside his organization to gather information. They referred to him as "Zorro," the Spanish word for fox, or "The Fake Messiah." In 1968, the FBI increased the surveillance even further. President Johnson feared that King would drive him out of the White House. Bugs were planted at "all present and future addresses" of King under approval from Robert Kennedy. The justification was that he was perceived to be a communist or acting under communist influence. These allegations have never had any supporting evidence. Hoover interpreted the permission for increased surveillance to include anywhere King stayed or spent extensive amounts of time, such as hotel rooms, friends' houses, families' houses, and more. No substantial evidence was ever produced as a result of this. King spoke out about how the FBI wasn't doing its job to protect him and other blacks in the south. The FBI took that comment personally, and a full scale espionage war was on. In the end, the wiretaps broke the privacy rights of 5,000-6,000 people.

Cartha DeLoach was the head of COINTELPRO in 1968. At one point, DeLoach and other FBI agents tried to get in touch with King to meet with him. King's office was particularly busy at this time, and the FBI's calls were not returned. To the FBI, being ignored was even worse than being berated and criticized. DeLoach talked about "removing" King and called him "the fake messiah."

One of Hoover's favorite methods was blackmail, and the best way for a group of conservative, old, white, religious men to embarrass or discredit someone was with charges of sexual promiscuity or adultery. Often, bugged tapes were doctored or improved to make a stronger blackmail case. It got to the point where they would blackmail King and then send him anonymous letters trying to persuade him to commit suicide. Other letters to his wife attempted to persuade her to leave him and included "improved" tapes of King in supposed sexual situations with other women.

COINTELPRO operatives discredited King by infiltrating black movements and turning marches and protests violent. During King's visit to Memphis on March 28, on a march in support of the sanitation strike, the march was turned violent by undercover police and FBI agents posing as members of a militant group called "The Invaders." The police did nothing to stop the violence and property destruction until the march came through, at which point they violently attacked the protestors.

## James Earl Ray

Ray was a small time criminal who escaped from prison in 1967. Most of his career was spent committing petty crimes like robbing illegal gambling rings and prostitution circles. Each time that he attacked a legitimate establishment, he was caught. He was not a murderer. He was

not even a very successful thief. It is not even known that he ever killed anyone or even fired a gun. It seemed that by 1968, he was attempting to get away from crime after his 1967 prison break and to eventually leave the United States for good. Ray was allegedly performing gun running operations for "Raoul," a man he met hanging out in sailor bars at this time. Ray made it very clear that he was in some sort of legal trouble and seeking money and some new identification. Raoul had promised to fulfill those needs. Ray claims that it was Raoul who caused him to purchase the rifle (claimed to be the murder weapon) and to be in Memphis on April 4, 1968. He was eventually convicted of killing Martin Luther King, Jr. without a trial. He later wrote an autobiography entitled *Who Killed Martin Luther King, Jr.?* while in prison.

One of the more entertaining facts about Ray is that, after he escaped from prison, he went to LA and took dance lessons from December 5 until February 12. He also attended bartending school from January 19 until he graduated on March 2. This demonstrates the fact that he was not a career criminal and was trying to break these habits. He was also not the "lone nut" that the media portrayed him as.

## The Assassination

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was planning to lead a demonstration for striking African American sanitation workers in Memphis, TN. He was staying in the Lorraine Motel on Mulberry Street in one of the city's seedier neighborhoods. His previous visit on March 28 had erupted in violence and looting, an image that he was not proud of and which served to tarnish his image of nonviolent revolution. He had hoped to show Memphis the effectiveness of nonviolence. In the end, a child was killed by the police; sixty more people were injured.

At the moment in question, on April 4, 1968, he was about to enjoy a prime rib and soul food dinner with Samuel B. Kyles.

Slightly before 6 p.m., King walked out onto the balcony of his hotel room to greet several people who stood below. He was on the second floor overlooking the motel's courtyard. At 6:01 as King stood alone on the balcony, a single shot from a high powered rifle tore into the right side of King's face, forcing him backward.

An aide came forward and pointed at where he had thought the shot came from, Brewer's Boarding House across the courtyard. It was later suspected, for unrelated reasons, that this aide was an FBI infiltrator. This moment yields us the popular picture of everyone pointing out the window.

Rev. Ralph Abernathy rushed out from the hotel room to King's side. He attempted to speak with King calmly, saying, "This is Ralph. This is Ralph. Don't be afraid."

But King was already unconscious, splayed across an ever-widening pool of his own blood. Andrew Young rushed up from the parking lot next to check King's pulse but really knew it was already over. Five minutes later, King was transported in a speeding ambulance to St. Joseph's hospital. He was pronounced dead at 7:05.

### Ray's Story

Ray claimed to be in Memphis on a gunrunning mission for a man he knew as Raoul. He had been instructed by the same man to purchase the pale yellow Mustang that he was driving in Memphis that day. He purchased a 30.06 Remington Gamesmaster rifle in Birmingham, Alabama at Raoul's request "to show to potential clients." He had originally bought a less powerful rifle but had exchanged it at Raoul's urging.

He checked into the New Rebel Motel on April 3 but moved to Brewer's Boarding House on April 4, again at Raoul's urging. When he parked the car on April 4, he noted that there was a very similar looking white Mustang parked ahead of it. After checking into the room, Ray was sent to run errands and, when he returned about 5:00, Raoul asked him to leave again so he could meet alone with clients, suggesting that Ray go to a movie. Ray didn't know what to do and eventually went to fix the spare tire he had discovered was flat. On his way back to Brewer's, he found the area full of policeman. Being a wanted criminal on illegal business, he immediately fled the city. While he was driving, he heard on the radio that King had been shot and that the police were looking for a white man in a white Mustang. He realized how much this description sounded like himself, and so he headed for Atlanta, where he had left some belongings on his last visit. He abandoned the car in an Atlanta parking lot and took a bus to Detroit. From there he took a train to Toronto, hoping that he'd find a way to leave North America for good. He researched newspapers in the Toronto area and applied for a passport under the name Ramon George Sneyd. On May

6, Ray flew to London. He attempted to join a renegade army unit that would send him to Nigeria. As he boarded a plane to Brussels, he was arrested as an international suspect in the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr. and was extradited to the US for conspiracy charges.

### Raoul

Raoul was a person who Ray referred to repeatedly in relation to his life from 1967 to 1968. Since Raoul's identity was never confirmed to be any existing person, it was always treated as a questionable part of the story. The investigation committee did research Raoul but determined that he didn't exist. Most of this reasoning stemmed from a lack of any witnesses who had seen Ray and Raoul together at their alleged twelve-to-fifteen meetings. There were, however, witnesses who had heard James Earl Ray talking about getting money or meeting with his brother. The committee dismissed Raoul as Ray's way to protect his brother(s) but it could also mean that "brother" was his euphemism for Raoul, which was the explanation from Ray's brothers.

Another unanswered question is why would Ray return the rifle for a more powerful one, if not by Raoul's suggestion? He used the excuse that, since the rifle was for deer hunting, his "brother" needed a more powerful rifle because he was hunting in Michigan, where the game was bigger. This is important because it shows that Ray wasn't sure what type of rifle was needed. In his autobiography, he seems to be rather unfamiliar with rifles at all. Ray also mentions that Raoul was quite vague in the type of hunting rifle that he was looking for in this case.

There was a particularly Raoul-like character who appeared later. His name was Jules Ricco Kimble. He went by "Roland" or "Rollie" and was operating out of the right neighborhood at the right time to have met Ray as he claims. Kimble was discovered by a newspaper reporter who was combing the area for such a person. He eventually tracked down Kimble's girlfriend and discovered that Rollie kept a trunk full of

guns and carried a police band radio. She was frequently asked to translate police broadcasts. He often called the US from her apartment and she had kept the phone bills, hoping to collect from him someday.

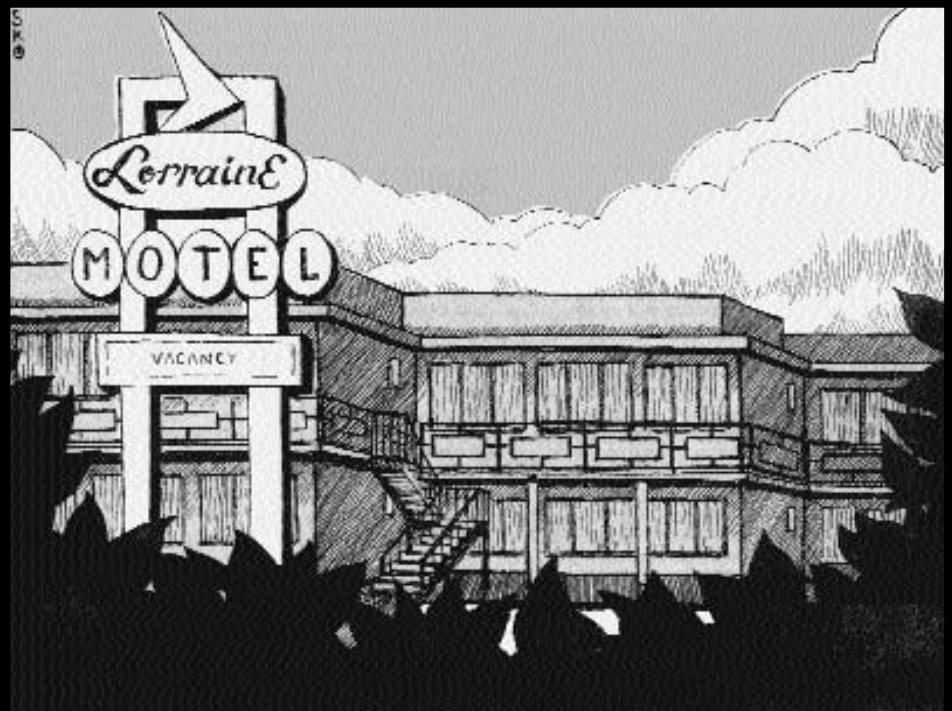
To add more interest to this person, police investigators following Kimble lost track of him on July 18, the same day that Ray claims to have met up with Raoul. Kimble was also in New Orleans at the same time that Ray claims to have received another payment from him. It is also in his FBI file that he had met with Grand Dragons of the Klu Klux Klan on July 18, 1967, and his wife had seen guns and explosives in the trunk of his car that day.

In 1989, Jules Kimble, while serving a double life sentence, was interviewed by BBC reporters. He readily told them that he knew Ray and had been involved in the conspiracy to kill King; he also added that he had told this to the FBI investigation committee. He said that Ray didn't pull the trigger and was only a patsy. Kimble said he was familiar with the assassination scenario and implicated an element of US intelligence headquartered in a southern city. Kimble said his job was to navigate Ray from Atlanta to Montreal in 1967 to meet with a CIA identities specialist. When this was investigated with an ex-agent of the CIA, he affirmed that the identities specialist had been in Toronto at that time and seemed quite surprised that someone had known that. The specialist's name was Raoul Miora. It does pose the question: When Ray refers to Raoul, is he talking about Kimble or Miora? Is it a composite of the two characters, or is Raoul an alias for Kimble?

### Ray's Aliases

It is not at all exceptional or notable that Ray used aliases. Nearly every petty criminal uses aliases from time to time to protect their identity. The notable things, however, are the incredible coincidences surrounding Ray's aliases. Eric Starvo Galt, Ramon George Sneyd, Paul Bridgeman, and John Willard were all Toronto residents from the same neighborhood living in a small radius of a few miles. None of

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them knew each other. They were all of the approximately same height, weight, hair color (dark), and appeared to be the same age as Ray. A few of the men even had scars on their faces like Ray. Ray also had plastic surgery on his nose in 1967, making him look even more like Eric Galt than previously. He changed his hairstyle to further resemble several of these men. How did he assemble documents on these people? Ray had never been to Toronto. All of his previous aliases had been people he had known from prison, an old neighborhood, or his brothers' friends. When probed about how he obtained these aliases, Ray changed his story frequently and acted as if he couldn't recall the details. The committee let this issue drop, referring to them as "uncredible" and "almost" unbelievable coincidences.

### Ray's Funding

If not Raoul, then who funded Ray in 1967 to 1968? This is a major focus of several investigators of the case, because it is one fact that has remained unanswered. Ray's explanation is currently the only plausible one. Martin Waldron is one investigator who described it as Ray's "trail of free spending." The FBI has tried to claim that Ray robbed the Alton Bank in Alton, IL (where he grew up), but sources show that he was living in Toronto at that time.

Ray has quoted the specific dates, places, and amounts that he was paid by Raoul, along with the services performed and the denominations of the bills. This certainly adds some credibility to his story.

When Ray was living in Toronto just after the murder, he was visited by a "fat man" delivering an envelope. He paid his rent the same day and purchased a plane ticket to England. Of course, people immediately questioned if this was a co-conspirator in the case. The man went to the police shortly afterwards, saying that he had just been a stranger delivering a lost letter. To add further intrigue, Ray was horribly paranoid at this point, rarely leaving his room. When the envelope was delivered, he came forward eagerly when he could have requested to have it brought to him. It seems that Ray had run out of money prior to this, because he neglected to purchase his plane ticket for six days after it was available. This could hardly be the behavior of a fugitive in a hurry. When confronted, the man was very edgy and refused to testify for the FBI, fearing for his life. As reasons for his fear, he cited people being killed who were witnesses in the Kennedy assassination.

### The Police's Story

The police's explanation for the story and how Ray is involved is as follows:

Ray arrived in Memphis the day before the shooting. He originally checked into the New Rebel Motel but moved the next day to Brewer's Boarding House, using the alias John Willard. Ray rejected a room that had no view of the Lorraine Motel in favor of one that did. The furniture was rearranged, most likely for the reason of watching King from a window perch. Ray had a newly purchased pair of binoculars.

Another resident of Brewer's, William Anschutz, claimed that he found the bathroom occupied several times in the hours before the shooting. Another resident, Charles Stephens, told Anschutz that the new tenant,

Mr. Willard (Ray) was using the bathroom. After the shot was fired, both Stephens and Anschutz claimed they ran into the hallway and saw a man running from the bathroom with a bundle. It is speculated that Ray fired the fatal shot from a situated spot in the bathtub.

A package was found by police in the doorway of Canipe's, an amusement company next door to Brewer's Boarding House on Main Street. The package contained a 30.06 Remington Gamesmaster rifle that was boxed, binoculars, ammunition, Schlitz beer, some food, and a portable prison radio (with Ray's numbers on it). Witnesses who saw the man who dropped the bundle said that he was neat and clean and wore a dark suit. Other witnesses had claimed that Ray looked neat and clean compared to the locals and was wearing a dark brown suit that day.

The same witnesses saw a white Mustang pull away from the curb, leaving skid marks. Ray describes his own car as "a very pale yellow."

An abandoned car registered to Eric S. Galt was found. It matched a description of a "white" Mustang that was seen fleeing the scene of the crime. Two witnesses claimed to have seen a dark man carrying a package and fleeing from Brewer's Boarding House.

Fingerprints on the rifle and scope were later matched to Ray's. The serial number on the rifle matched the one that Ray had bought in Birmingham, Alabama. Ray was the suspect for the crime, and the popular opinion was that he acted alone.

### Questionable Parts of the Police's Story

Just because Ray's prints were on the rifle doesn't mean that that he ever fired it, let alone the fatal shot. As far as we know, Ray had never fired a gun or killed anyone prior to this day. Why would he trust himself to be able to fire a single fatal shot from a rifle that he wasn't even accustomed to using? Remember, Ray was not a murderer. He was a small time thief turned into a gun runner.

The origin of the shot was never called into question or scrutinized, either. It was simply assumed that because the police wanted to believe the shot came from the bathroom window of Brewer's that that assumption was not able to be questioned. When it was questioned, people's testimonies were dismissed.

### The Bundle

Another important question is why would Ray take precious time to box the rifle (as if it had never been used) and wrap it in a bedspread with all of his belongings? Why would he dump it on the sidewalk instead of in the Mustang, just a few feet away?

The bundle is a very critical part of the evidence for the police to link the crime to Ray. The FBI and inspection committee speculated that Ray might have dropped the bundle in a panic after seeing police officers at the scene. They never investigated the angle that the dropped bundle might be a plant designed to implicate Ray. The witnesses' observations don't support the FBI's assumptions. All of the witnesses claim that the dark suited man who dropped the bundle was not fleeing in a panic. He walked casually and appeared to have deliberately discarded the bundle at that spot. He

even detoured from his trip to the car to drop the bundle in that location. Canipe, the owner of the business, was one of the witnesses, and he described the man to be "chunky" and "dark skinned." Ray is neither.

Later, writers who analyzed the situation speculated that Ray wanted to be able to take credit for the crime later and left the bundle as his calling card. This sounds well in theory but is rather inconsistent with the rest of Ray's activities and behaviors. He was trying to establish a new identity outside of North America without drawing attention to the fact that he was an escaped criminal.

### A Gunman in the Bushes?

The police and FBI completely ignore the testimony of anyone who insists that the shooter wasn't Ray or that the shot originated from anywhere other than the bathroom window at Brewer's. Solomon Jones said that he saw a man with something white on his face and something under his arm flee from the bushes in the courtyard after the shot was fired. Harold Carter affirmed a similar statement and was seated just in front of the bushes at the time. He saw a man with a high necked white sweater and a rifle or shotgun flee the scene. In both cases, the police intimidated these men to the point where they were afraid to repeat these accounts.

There was a broadcast on the police radio describing a car chase that never took place. It said the cars (including a white Mustang) were headed northeast. Ray headed south.

At 6:36, the report was "60 at Jackman and Hollywood. Mobile unit. East on Summers - from Highland exceeding speed limit. Blue '66 Pontiac going over 75 mph. Three white males in blue Pontiac. North on Jackson."

At 6:48, the description included "White Mustang is shooting at Pontiac. Austin Peay. Approaching the road going into naval base."

At no time was there ever an adequate explanation for this broadcast. Police Chief Holloman said it was a teenager involved in a prank. He seemed troubled by further questions, saying, "I don't recall if we ever found out who it was."

Other unexplained Mustang references occurred at 6:10, 6:12, 6:35, 6:48, and 6:53.

### Two Mustangs

One explanation that might help to explain these reports was the fact that there were two white mustangs at the crime scene. FBI interviews and press reports at the time confirmed this. Ray always described his car as "pale yellow," but every witness describes both Mustangs as white. One Mustang was parked almost directly in front of Jim's Grill and the other was parked a few car lengths south, closer to Canipe's.

Four witnesses established that the car in front of Jim's was there from about 3:55 until 5:20. The car in front of Canipe's was spotted at about 4:30 and again after 5:00. Witnesses said they noticed a white, dark haired man sitting behind the wheel until a little before 5:20.

One car left the area before 6:00. Two men walking past the corner of Main and Vance remembered seeing a Mustang pass directly in front of them between 5:15 and 5:30. The second Mustang screeched away minutes after the bundle was dropped.

Based on what we know of Ray's move-

ments and what he alleges his movements were, it's pretty safe to say that the car in front of Jim's Grill was his. He checked into Brewer's at 3:30 and bought binoculars at 4:00.

It seems far less likely that the Mustang in front of Canipe's belonged to Ray. For one thing, it was not spotted until between 4:30 and 4:45. If Ray was the assassin, why would he wait in the parked car for 30 to 45 minutes when he could be inside setting up the kill? Based on what we know, it seems that the man who dropped the bundle in front of Canipe's also drove away in the Mustang that was parked in front of Canipe's.

The simple fact that two cars of the same make, model, and color were in the immediate vicinity of the crime scene arouses suspicion. The closeness of their timelines continues to arouse that same suspicion. Also the fact that the car in front of Jim's left the area between 5:00 and 5:30 adds credibility to Ray's story that he left the area at Raoul's urging between 5:00 and 6:00.

### **Two Dark Suits**

Ray was well dressed compared to most people in the neighborhood. On April 4 and 5, there was a second well dressed man also wearing a dark suit in the neighborhood. The investigation committee chose to ignore this fact also.

The owner of Jim's Grill had called the police on April 5 because of a man wearing a dark suit who was acting peculiar while he was eating breakfast. Everyone else was very disturbed and stressed by the shooting while this man remained calm. He had also been eating dinner in Jim's Grill the previous afternoon at about 4 P.M. Ray claimed to have seen this man as well on April 4 and also described him as acting strange. The police questioned the man on April 5, and he claimed that he had hitchhiked all night on April 3 to arrive early in the morning on April 4. He was staying at Helen Wynne's, another rooming house in the immediate area. He was released without being fingerprinted because he "didn't fit the available description," when in reality, he did. He had blue eyes and brown hair; he was neat and

cleanly dressed in a dark suit. Even this man's wife later admitted that there was a "resemblance" between the two men. The man claimed that he was at the rooming house from 2:00 until 5:30 when he went to make phone calls, but this is inconsistent with several people's testimonies, who saw him eating dinner at Jim's Grill at 4 P.M. He later claimed that he was having dinner in a restaurant while King was shot (which occurred at 6 P.M.). Did he have dinner twice in two hours?

He claimed that he had come to Memphis as part of his plan to get to California. Again, his story has gaping holes because two days earlier he had been in Little Rock, which is several hundred miles closer to where he was going. He claimed that he came to Memphis looking for someone who needed a car delivered to California. He changed his story later on to say that he had come to Memphis to "sell some things." He didn't mention going to California this time.

The FBI only helped to contribute to people's interest in this man by deleting sections of their own documents on him. Most of the deletions aren't data of personal nature to protect the man. Rather, the sections pertained to the scene of the crime and the man's military record.

### **The Aftermath and Investigation**

In 1974, Russell Byers, a St. Louis underworld figure, told an FBI informant that he had been offered \$50,000 to kill King. He claimed that in 1966 or 1967, a drug dealer named John Kaufman asked him if he was interested in making a huge sum of money. The same evening, they went to the home of John Sutherland, a wealthy patent attorney and right winger. Sutherland was wearing the full dress of a Confederate colonel's uniform and was surrounded by Civil War memorabilia. He offered \$50,000 for Byers to kill King or have him killed. Byers said that he would think it over, and it was eventually forgotten. To his knowledge, nothing was developed from that meeting.

It was established that Ray could have possibly found out about the offer from a friend of Kaufman's, Hugh Maxey, the prison doctor at

the Missouri State Prison. Ray also served time with John Paul Spika, Byer's brother-in-law. Spika was later pressured to say that he told Ray about the offer. He was later mysteriously killed. Ray's sister owned the Grape Vine Tavern, a bar in St. Louis where underworld types hung out to make contacts. Ray's brother John was the manager. It is theorized that Ray could have discovered the offer there due to the fact the George Wallace headquarters was across the street, and Sutherland was a huge supporter. There is no firm evidence that any of this actually developed. While trying to establish a motive, the committee researching these details seems to be suggesting conspiracy as well.

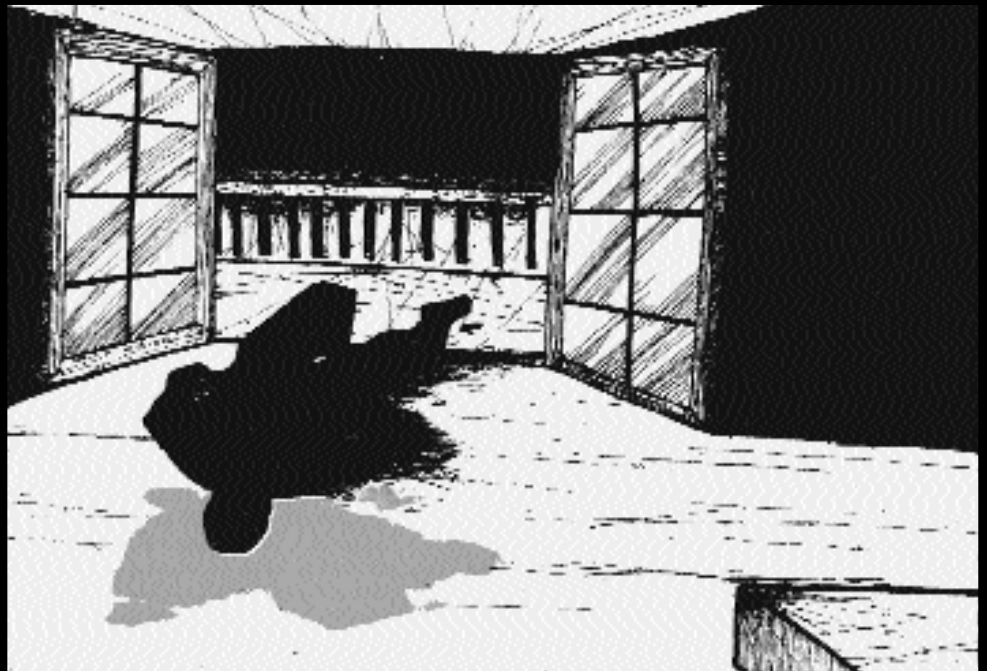
The prosecution was able to put Ray at the scene of the crime but failed to prove that he was the shooter. Having his fingerprints on the rifle and scope does not prove that he shot the rifle. The 30.06 bullet was never linked to his rifle. It was said that it was "possible" it was fired from that rifle, but it was also possible it was fired from any number of other, similar rifles that were in Memphis that day. In a legal setting, guilt and conviction work on a system of no reasonable doubt. Since the facts were never brought into question, it was easy for the prosecution to walk all over Ray. His lawyer, Percy Foreman, failed to represent him at all, neglecting to challenge or object to any statements made against him.

Another unanswered question is how would Ray know that Brewer's was connected to the adjacent building containing the bathroom where the shot supposedly originated? It was not visible from the street, and he had not been inside the upstairs of Brewer's until the day of the shooting.

### **Ballistics**

Many questions remain about the trajectory of the bullet involved because the scenario was never established. For some reason, the investigators were never too interested in determining the position that King was in when he was shot. This would normally be important to determine the angle that the bullet traveled and thus find its

**One particular FBI supervisor was elated when he found out King had been shot and then later was literally jumping for joy when King was pronounced dead. "Coincidentally," he was also assigned on the detail to investigate the assassination.**





source. Of course, this is coming from the same investigators who did everything they could to quiet witnesses who said that the shot came from anywhere but the bathroom window.

In addition, Ray had always been a very poor shot and he knew that. Why would he trust himself on the chances of one bullet at such a distance with so much obscuring his view?

At the evidentiary hearing for Ray, a former FBI ballistics expert said that not even the most skilled gunman could have successfully pulled off the shot in the manner suggested by the prosecution. According to the expert, to effectively achieve such a shot, the butt of the rifle would have had to stick six inches into the wall. The prosecution claimed that Ray had contorted himself into a position around the bathtub in

case or interviewed Ray for any reason other than selling information to Huie. He had been paid \$165,000 to defend Ray, and now he was just looking for an easy guilty plea.

Ray feared the judge wouldn't allow new counsel so close to the trial date. Instead of letting Foreman throw the trial if he pled innocent, Ray pled guilty as an act of desperation and as a result of his living environment at the time. Three days later, Ray appealed the case.

The process of appeals has been equally stacked against Ray from the start. While Judge Preston W. Battle was reviewing Ray's request for an appeal, he died mysteriously of a heart attack in his office. Federal Judge William E. Miller also died of a mysterious heart attack while at the courthouse reviewing Ray's request

Murtaugh, a former agent. He also doesn't believe the crime was ever investigated. The FBI issued a statement in less than twenty-four hours that no conspiracy was involved, yet they had extradited Ray from England on charges of conspiracy. How could they be so certain so quickly, before any investigation was done? Maybe it was because they didn't really care about the truth to begin with.

One particular FBI supervisor was elated when he found out King had been shot and then later was literally jumping for joy when King was pronounced dead. "Coincidentally," he was also assigned on the detail to investigate the assassination.

It took the FBI and local authorities fourteen days to discover that Eric Starvo Galt was actu-

## **Despite police and FBI intimidation, [Grace Stephens] stuck by her story and was later committed to a mental institution for twenty years, with no history of mental disorders. The doctors said she did not belong there.... her story has never changed.**

order to make the shot. Considering that Ray had no rifle skills, this just sounds ridiculous.

The bullet recovered from King was never adequately tested. All that was established was that it was "possible" it was fired from the rifle in question. This certainly doesn't sound like a case of "beyond reasonable doubt."

### **Ray's Lawyers**

After his extradition from Britain for charges of conspiracy, Ray was confined for eight months in a brightly lit cell. The lights and guards were present twenty-four hours a day. Closed-circuit cameras and multiple microphones constantly monitored his every move.

Under these extreme conditions, with Ray's physical and mental state deteriorating, his attorney, Arthur Hanes, continually pressured him to plead guilty. From the beginning, Ray had claimed he was a patsy in a larger conspiracy, and he continued to insist on a trial.

Simultaneously, William Bradford Huie was paying Hanes for information for a book he was writing on James Earl Ray. Huie offered the money to pay for the trial. Unfortunately, Huie leaked far too much to the press, and the prosecution would get a great sampling of what Ray was planning. A guilty plea supported Huie's best interest as well, as it would give his book maximum value as the information would all be new to its readers. In order to market his book, Huie went as far as writing lies that the public accepted as truth. He wrote that the palm prints found in the bathroom and room #5 belonged to Ray, even though they didn't. The police never revealed who these prints really belonged to.

James Earl Ray's brother Jerry advised him to dump Hanes and contact Percy Foreman, a prominent criminal defense lawyer known for being aggressive. Ray was hesitant, but other lawyers were turning down the case.

Foreman eventually took Ray's case with an even more adamant stance than Hanes about Ray pleading guilty. Despite his promise not to contact any authors until after the trial, Foreman also entered into a contract with Huie, forging Ray's name. Ray continually insisted on a trial. Foreman manipulated Ray by threatening that he couldn't guarantee his best efforts as defense counsel. Foreman hadn't even researched the

case or interviewed Ray for any reason other than selling information to Huie. He had been paid \$165,000 to defend Ray, and now he was just looking for an easy guilty plea.

During the trial, Foreman objected to no questions from the prosecution, not even ones that were leading or improper. He performed no cross examination of witnesses.

### **The FBI's Involvement**

At the scene of the crime, the FBI didn't radio in that King had been shot until thirty minutes after the shooting. This gave the shooter(s) the valuable time that was needed to escape. There was no explanation as to why the FBI waited this long.

Days before the assassination, the FBI had prepared a speech for Senator Robert Byrd to deliver to the Senate condemning King's actions. The speech even alluded to King as a communist. The FBI had further plans to create its own "black messiah" to replace King.

After King's assassination, the FBI continued surveillance of King's family and followers for another year. Next, they secretly moved to publish a book telling the side of the story that they wanted portrayed, as well as publishing newspaper stories undermining the King family. *Life Magazine* published a story about Ray containing a considerable amount of lies about his childhood life and family and referring to him as the "lone nut assassin." They went as far as putting a picture of his grade school class on the cover. To further obscure the truth, the photo was centered on what appeared to be "the mean kid" of the class, while Ray was almost completely unable to be seen in the photo behind someone else's head. The attempt to promote Ray as the "lone nut assassin" was later confirmed to be part of the FBI agenda by one of their own FBI documents. The intelligence detail of the FBI who had harassed, threatened, and tried to convince King to kill himself were the same ones assigned to investigate his murder. It was a joke, a travesty of justice. The will to seek the truth and find the right answers was nonexistent. How could this effort have been taken seriously?

"The feeling against King was so strong that if the FBI had had advance information of an assassination plot against King and no one else knew about it - they would sit on it," said Arthur

ally James Earl Ray, despite the fact that Ray's prison radio (bearing his inmate numbers) that had been left at the scene would have identified him immediately with any inspection. Galt was the name that Ray had used when identifying himself to Raoul.

Another curious character is a government informer named Randolph Erwin Rosenson who was known as "Randy Rosen." Most of the FBI files pertaining to him are completely classified, but the remaining portions show that he paralleled Ray's movements in 1967 to 1968, including Ray's trip to Birmingham where the rifle purchase occurred - the rifle which was the supposed murder weapon.

On King's previous visits to Memphis, he stayed in the Holiday Inn, which is a primarily white owned and patronized hotel. One of the main agendas of the demonstration was a boycott of downtown white businesses. Cartha DeLoach, the head of Cointelpro, was involved in a campaign to embarrass King because of his decision to stay in the Holiday Inn, instead of a black owned and patronized hotel like the Lorraine. Several published articles labeled him as a hypocrite, and it is theorized that, as a result, he stayed in the (much more vulnerable) Lorraine Motel for his next visit, thus unknowingly assisting his own murder.

Another interesting aspect of the situation is the story of a local reporter in Memphis. After reviewing photographs of the scene, he discovered that there was not a clear view from the supposed bathroom window to the balcony of the Lorraine, where the shot supposedly originated from. In fact, it was completely obscured by branches from ten-to-twelve foot oak and willow trees in the courtyard. This would have completely impaired the vision of anyone trying to make an already difficult shot. Just as this revelation was being discovered, the city made a decision to cut down the trees. No further investigation of this aspect of the case has been pursued.

Later, it became questionable whether or not the FBI's investigation was credible when the Senate was debunking the reports from the Warren Commission. It discovered that the FBI had destroyed evidence, suborned perjury, and committed perjury in order to protect the

killer(s) of John Kennedy. This posed the question of whether or not any FBI investigation was credible.

### Frank Holloman

Frank Holloman was the chief of police and chief of the fire department in Memphis in 1968. He had been a former FBI agent for twenty-five years, working in many of the local offices that monitored King in Atlanta, Memphis, and Jackson, Mississippi. He even bugged King in Memphis when the sanitation strike was developing. He was a close, personal friend of J. Edgar Hoover. In the hours before the assassination, he pulled all African American police and firemen from the scene of the crime and positioned them elsewhere, with no logic and little explanation.

### Floyd Newsum

Floyd Newsum was a firefighter at Station 2 during April of 1968. He was an avid King follower. The day of the assassination, he was moved out of the area to Station 31. This type of reassignment is typical if one station is overstaffed while another is short staffed. However, in this case, it was quite the opposite. Newsum's relocation made the equipment at Station 2 inoperable, because they had become one person short to operate it. Newsum was an extra, unnecessary man at Station 31. The official reason for moving Newsum was protection. The question is what was he being protected from?

Newsum stated, "There is no way that they could have thought that they were doing me a favor, protecting me, or making me more comfortable by transferring me. I am sure that I was not moved because of considerations of my safety."

If Newsum had been outside during the shooting, he would have seen the killer(s) flee and would have only been a few yards behind them.

Wallace was another African American who was positioned at Station 2 that day. He was moved to Station 33. Station 2 has a clear view of the Lorraine motel and was used as a post for police and FBI to monitor King.

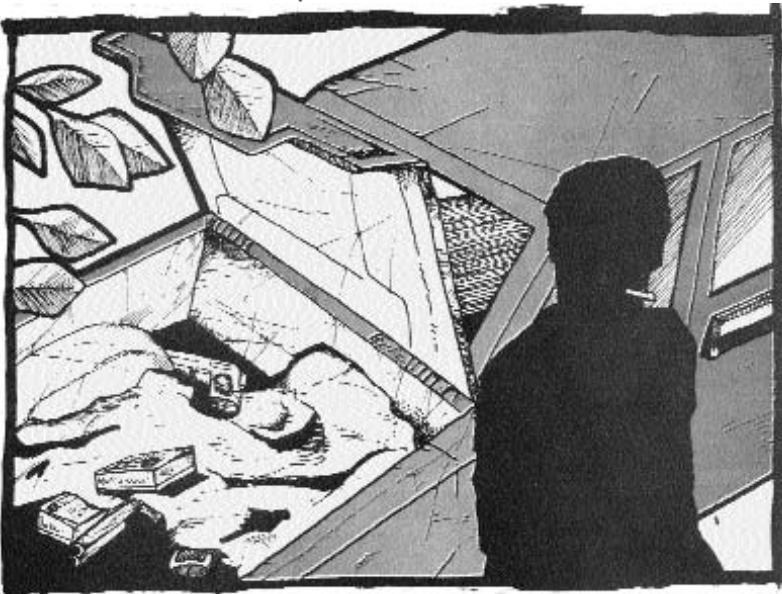
### Ed Redditt

Ed Redditt was the brains behind the Memphis police department's security detail on King. On the day of the murder, his security detail was reduced from ten people to two. When King arrived, his people asked not to be shadowed by security, and the chief was very eager to dismiss the security entirely. (After the way that they had been treated in the past, it was common for King and his followers to have distrust for the police and their work.) Redditt insisted on keeping a two man security team after he was told to go home the first time.

Two hours before the shooting, Ed Redditt was sent back to HQ. He was then told that there was a contract on his life, and he was immediately sent to stay at a hotel. The heads of every

law enforcement operation in the region were present for this meeting. Supposedly, a secret service officer flew to Memphis to share the information. If this was such a grave threat, then why did the officer fly instead of just telephoning the information? Redditt resisted the order because his mother-in-law was very sick and he did not want to move her. His thinking was that he would be well enough protected at his post in the firehouse. He was eventually forced to go home and was told that there was "nothing to discuss." Other officers were sent home with him under the guise that they were present to guard him.

Once they arrived at his home, it became apparent that the officers were truly there to watch him, not to protect him. They insisted on being at his side at all times. They all sat in the car out of his house as King was shot. Redditt was afraid to go inside because he thought the



presence of the other officers would disturb his mother-in-law. He also did not believe that his mother-in-law had a radio inside the house, but in fact, she did. They raced inside when they heard that King had been shot. His mother-in-law was screaming. The next day, she died of grief, screaming, "Dr. King. Dr. King. Dr. King. God take me instead of Dr. King." The secret service knew nothing of a threat against Redditt. Redditt's partner, Richmond, remained on the scene and did not carry out any part of their plan to protect King. One of them was to go to the street and scout the area, watching for people fleeing, while the other radioed to the mobile unit. Instead, Richmond did nothing and refuses to talk about it.

### Witnesses

Charles Stephens was the star witness of the prosecution. He had claimed to see Ray fleeing from the scene of the crime but later could not identify Ray. He was bribed with \$30,000 by the FBI to say that he saw Ray fleeing the scene, and he still couldn't seem to get his story straight. Before Stephens had received the bribe, he gave three descriptions that didn't fit Ray at all and said he did not get a good look at the man. The photos that he saw of Ray were before he had received plastic surgery on his nose. Stephens had supposedly identified Ray from

seeing his profile. The surgery significantly changed his appearance from this perspective.

James McGraw, a cab driver, came to pick up Stephens approximately three minutes before the shooting and said that Stephens was so drunk that he was unable to stand. Eventually, after getting frustrated, McGraw left Stephens lying on the bed and left the building. He said that he also noticed that there were two white Mustangs parked in front of Brewer's.

Lloyd Jowers also agreed that Stephens was noticeably drunk on April 4 and had been unable to pay his rent.

Grace Stephens was Charles's wife. She had been in the room with him during the shooting and claims that Stephens never saw the shooter flee and was not able to leave the bed. She also says that he was not wearing his glasses at the time and is virtually blind without them. She said that she was the only one who had seen the

person fleeing from the bathroom and that it was not Ray. She, unlike her husband, had not been drinking that day. Despite police and FBI intimidation, she stuck by her story and was later committed to a mental institution for twenty years, with no history of mental disorders. The doctors said she did not belong there and that her condition was worsening from living there. She was the only resident not granted visitors and was later only released after pressure from independent people investigating the case. Despite twenty years and a fair share of intimidation tactics, her story has never changed. Mr. Stephens eventually recanted his entire story. Their friends said they were afraid to testify after seeing what happened to the Stephens.

A nearby service station manager told one of the investigators for Ray's defense team that he saw Ray several blocks from Brewer's at the time of the shooting. This man was stabbed soon after he started talking to the defense team.

### Was the CIA Involved?

The CIA always did a good job of giving the image that they had little interest in King. They kept a very small domestic file on his activities and received information mostly from the FBI. This illusion was destroyed when an agent revealed that the CIA was keeping their true files on King in the highly classified "Western Hemisphere desk" where it filed its anti-Castro operations. This type of secrecy alleges that those documents were politically sensitive, if not illegal. Then again, that's nothing new for the CIA. Documents released under the Freedom of Information Act also later revealed that the CIA was passing information on King to the FBI.

Like the FBI, the CIA was probably interested in King because of the supposed connection between black power movements and communists. As a result, they infiltrated many groups, took photographs, and monitored militancy in black youths.

Of course, there is a huge difference between surveillance and murder,

but there are implications for that as well. The fact that surveillance on King was so heavy offers us a motive. Kimble implicates the CIA in his statements, saying they had seven operatives, among whom were two snipers with rifles identical to Ray's. The operatives obtained police uniforms, and two of them hid in the bushes (one of whom could have been the person seen fleeing wearing a high necked white sweater and carrying a rifle). If the primary shot failed, the other acted as a backup. The rifles were deposited behind the boarding house and obtained by other operatives who resembled police officers.

Kimble's credibility is, of course, in question, but most of his stories check out and align themselves perfectly with other facts that have been established. The CIA identities specialist who Kimble had mentioned was in fact in Toronto at the same time as Ray. There are currently no other plausible explanations as to where Ray's unbelievable aliases came from.

### Conspiracy?

The term conspiracy really only means that two or more people were working together towards a common goal. All of the evidence suggests that even if Ray was somehow peripherally involved, then he did not or could not have acted alone. Of course, this whole concept was downplayed by the police, the FBI, and the investigation committee. In reality, we'd need to have much more information than is available to the general public at this point in time.

It seemed that the plan was to establish that Eric Galt was the guilty party. Many documents turned up in his name (but not the name on the register at Brewer's or the rifle purchase), and the other aliases would serve to implicate him, since they were all his Toronto neighbors. Galt, unlike Ray, was an excellent marksman who traveled with guns in his car and had worked with US secret military projects at a Carbide plant. He'd also traveled to Birmingham (where the rifle was purchased) and Memphis. Luckily, for Galt's sake, the authorities found Ray first.

### How Do We Solve the Case?

In order to truly solve the case, we'd need an independent, impartial group of truth seekers who could access classified FBI and CIA files without any deletions. Phil Melanson recommends a special prosecutor.

The truth seekers could further investigate what people had seen in the bushes and obtain the footprint analysis that has never been made public. Unidentified prints in the bundle and in the boarding house should be inspected and compared to all persons, including Kimble. Kimble's relationship to the CIA should be probed and unclassified. Memphis police officers on the scene should be identified and questioned about the movement of the tactical units and the death threats against Reddit. Raoul Miora should be interviewed. The second "dark suit" should be questioned under oath about the gaps in his story.

### Conclusions

It seems that there are far too many holes in the case to sleep comfortably at night. For one thing, if the CIA, FBI, and Cointelpro exist to protect the safety and best interests of the American people, then why are there so many classified documents and so much deleted information? Shouldn't these organizations be accountable to us, the American public? The CIA still has no accountability whatsoever, and, despite being declared unconstitutional, Cointelpro still exists today.

In recent years, King's son Dexter met with Ray to express the fact that Coretta Scott King (King's widow) and their family believed that he is innocent. In December 1999, Janet Reno awarded a settlement of \$100 to the King family for a "wrongful death" and determined that there was a conspiracy to kill King, including agencies of his own government. A disturbing fact is that only two reporters showed up to the press conference to discuss this development, and the news coverage of it was ridiculously minimal. It was an incredibly courageous and unprecedented move to prosecute groups like the CIA and FBI. William Pepper has a new book on the subject called *An Act of State*. It

details the trials of the wrongful death suit against the FBI and CIA and the trial's conclusion – that the US government was over 60% responsible for King's assassination.

Who masterminded and laid the groundwork for the assassination? We may never know. Some people want to readily jump to conclusions, but as we've seen above, those who are most outspoken have been FBI agents working within an organization to discredit the movement. Dexter blames army intelligence, the FBI, the CIA, and Lyndon Johnson for having some involvement.

Ray serves as the ideal patsy and is powerless fighting against organizations as powerful as these. I personally believe that Ray and other people know more than they are willing to talk about, for fear of something much greater than themselves. It's downright frightening just how plausible it is for US intelligence agencies to have carried out a killing and then a cover up. I believe a new investigation is essential to the future freedoms of this country.

### Sources / Recommended Reading:

For a more detailed account of what happened, along with more supporting facts, check out these fine books:

Melanson, Philip, *Who Killed Martin Luther King?* (Odonian Press, Berkeley, 1993)

Ray, James Earl, *Who Killed Martin Luther King?* (National Press Books, Bethesda, 1992)

Lane, Mark and Gregory, Dick, *Murder in Memphis: The FBI and the Assassination of Martin Luther King*. (Thunder's Mouth Press, New York, 1993)

Weisburg, Harold, *Martin Luther King: The Assassination* (Graf, New York, 1971)

*This article originally appeared in the zine The CIA Makes Science Fiction Unexciting. Copies of the original zine are available for \$1 + 1 stamp individually.*

*Microcosm Publishing*

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*Portland, OR 97293-0332*

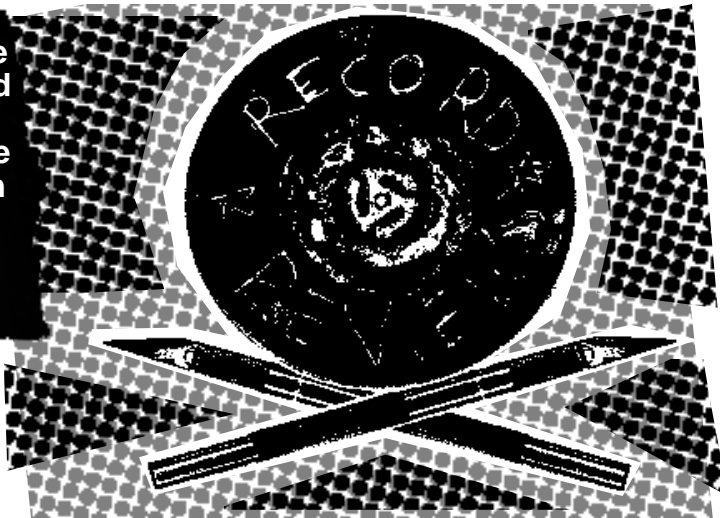
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**In December 1999, Janet Reno awarded a settlement of \$100 to the King family for a "wrongful death" and determined that there was a conspiracy to kill King.**

Please note: If you're an established record company, and you send us a pre-release without all the album art, we're probably going to throw that shit away... cock gobblers.



Dirt-spitting, beer-soaked bad ass punk rawk that will clear out a room full of emos quicker than a sweater sale at TJ Maxx. —Aphid Peewit

**ADVENTURES OF JET, THE: Muscle: CD**

They still sound like an unholy alliance between the Cars, Elvis Costello and ELO, this album's not as "rockin'" as their first album, *Coping with Insignificance*, and the hooks are a little more subtle than on that release, but there's still enough going on here to warrant many listens. They remain one of my favorite guilty pleasures. —Jimmy Alvarado (Suburban Home)

**AGAINST ME!: The Disco Before the Breakdown: EP**

I wasn't going to review this for stacks full of bias, but someone just asked me to tell them about the new Against Me! EP, and I figured that since I am writing this anyway... I like it a lot. Not quite as punk or sing-along as the last two releases, but that's not BAD. Tom from Against Me! told me that the 7" is better than the CD version. I like the cover photo because it had the guitar player, James, looking completely filled with passion, with the arm of some random crowd member leaning against him. Songs are as such: "Disco Before the Breakdown" — a beautiful, elaborate song about sexuality. Subtle message against homophobia. The horns... I have mixed feelings on. "Tonight We Are Going to Give it 35%" — God DAMN. My best friend and I had been having a breakdown in communication after a bad point in her life and she referred to these lyrics as exactly what she would have liked to have said. (Oddly, she and I toured with Against Me! just before this was recorded.) Blends Tom screaming his throat out with James singing and playing angelic melodies in the background. "Beginning in An Ending" — is a poignant, simple song that grows like a collage of unrelated material that somehow works together perfectly. Of course, go figure the song that has lines about reading my zines in it. (Seriously.) —Rich Mackin (No Idea)

**AMDI PETERSEN'S ARME: Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud Pa Film: 7"**

Havoc Records has put out a lot of great European hardcore bands that actually play hardcore and not metal or emo, and Amdi Petersen's Arme from Denmark continues in that fine tradition. Although the lyrics are in another language, this is proof that hardcore can still be interesting without sucking off the greats from the past. Hell, if I didn't know that this was a new band, I would have thought it was a great from the past. A ripping single and a damn shame that they broke up. —Josh (Havoc)

**ARRIVALS, THE: Exsenator Orange: CD**

I kept hearing about how good this band RAZORCAKE 80 was so I decided to

crawl out of my hole in the ground and check them out. "Good" is the understatement of the year. Most people use the n-word (Naked Raygun) to describe the Arrivals, and that sound is definitely there, but I actually hear more Radon than anything else. Using the least geeky terms possible, both bands make real music for real people, people who don't give two shits about trends or popularity and play their music like it's the most natural thing in the world. This is everything that you could want in a band: honesty, sincerity, creativity, and truckloads of the rock and roll. —Josh (Thick)

**ASTA KASK: Rock Mot Svinen: LP**

On one of my most recent monthly pilgrimages to Headline Records in Hollywood, I noticed this record right away, perched on the wall in full display as a new arrival. I grabbed it to see what it was. I knew that this Swedish band had been broken up since the mid-'80s. With a quick flip of the wrist, I looked at the back side of the album jacket to see that it is a compilation of tracks from all six of their studio releases. Yippee! I think my brother has all the releases but I personally haven't heard all their music. I do own a copy of the mini LP *Med Is I Magen*, which is a punk rock classic and a lucky find on my part. Also, I have them contributing tracks on the *Really Fast Vol. 1, 2 & 3* 2xCD comp that Burrito Records/Sound Idea re-released a few years ago and on the *Varning! For Punk* 3xCD comp which came out quite awhile ago. From the liner notes provided on this release, they were a very popular band in Sweden during the early '80s. They even received radio airplay. They have similarities to Die Toten Hosen out of Germany — popular in their homeland, but obscure here in the states. It's such a treat to my ears hearing more of this band. The music is melodic and poppy but stays unique due to their not being heavily swayed by too many outside influences like bands today. The music is not one bit wimpy, by any means. For the time period, the music is played at a hyper pace without going out of control and losing the melody. The lyrics are sung in Swedish and inject almost a party attitude by how much fun

they express. I, for one, do not speak a lick of Swedish. But once the needle hits the grooves, I'm a bouncing, epileptic, spazz boy with no rhythm. Old school and street punk lovers will join hands and become lovers of this band once they hear the punk flavor they created. I saw on a Swedish distro website that the 1st and 3rd EP have been re-released. I have to get my hands on some of that! I hope their whole catalog gets the same treatment. —Donofthead (Hohnie)

**ASTRID OTO: self-titled: CD**

Astrid Oto remind me a lot of Cleveland Bound Death Sentence. They have the same kind of up-beat punk songs with the same kind of sometimes political, sometimes nostalgic-for-yesterday lyrics, and they even have the same kind of crazy-kid-in-a-Kinkos layout to the CD packaging. All of this makes sense because both bands have the same drummer/lyricist/layout guy, Aaron Cometbus. Astrid Oto even has a similar style of alternating male and female vocals to Cleveland Bound Death Sentence. This makes it impossible for me to listen to this Astrid Oto album without comparing it to CBDS. This is a shame, because if I'd never heard CBDS, I'd love this album. It's fast and catchy without being poppy, and the vocals have a nice balance of anger, snottiness, and flat-out rocking. But I can't help comparing it to CBDS and thinking that this would be a lot cooler if Emily and Paddy were singing. This is probably my problem and not Astrid Oto's. And, since CBDS isn't likely to put out anything else, Astrid Oto does make a great second choice. —Sean Carswell (No Idea)

**BEAUTIFUL MISTAKE, THE: Light a Match, For I Deserve to Burn: CD**

If you like Grade, Thursday, Waterdown, Finch or any other melodic screamo metal-core band that tries to croon every so often but also yearns to deflect any emo labeling by periodically making attempts — no matter how awkward, contrived or affected those attempts may be — to rock the fuck out, you will likely enjoy this. I'm sure that somewhere, some girl or guy is listening to this and crying because they love that girl or guy

or goat so much, but I've heard this before and it sounded better last time. If you really need to understand what this sounds like (and I'd hope that my suffering absolved you of any such imagined or real responsibility on that account), imagine New Found Glory signing to Victory and changing their sound just enough to fit in but not so much that they gave up sniveling. —Puckett (The Militia Group)

**BEAUTYS, THE: The First Seven Inches Are Always the Hardest: CD**

It's no secret that I'm a big fan of The Beautys, so I was stoked to see this CD in the Razorcake PO box. To be honest, I was hoping they'd recorded new songs, but they hadn't. It doesn't matter. I'm happy with a collection of their seven inches. This collection gives some good insight into them as a band, because, even though the songs aren't arranged chronologically, it's easy to tell which songs came from the early days when they were still trying to find their sound and which songs come from their later recordings when they had their sound down. But they've packed a lot of stuff into this collection: everything from their first seven inch, *Girl from Planet Fuck*, to their amazing *A#1 Sex Shop Employee* seven inch (which has The Beautys' best ever song, "Coverband"), to unreleased demos from '95 and '98, to songs that only made it on to obscure comps, to a handful of bonus live tracks. I actually have most of the seven inches in this collection, but the problem with the records themselves is that they're over so quickly that I'm always left wanting more. With *The First Seven Inches*, The Beautys give me more. They put it all on one nice CD with extra stuff that I've never heard and they save me from having to get off my ass and flip the vinyl every two songs. —Sean Carswell (Diaphragm)

**BELLRAYS: Raw Collection: CD**

Good lord, sweet Jesus, and HOT DAMN. That's consistently been my reaction every time I hear something from these guys, and this ain't no different. A collection here of selected tracks from 7" and 8" records and assorted comps, which also serves as a roadmap of the band's evolution from soul-infused punk group to the fuggin' sound monster that it is today. To call this amazing would be an understatement. Think of it more as a communion wafer given to devotees to the church of rock-'n-roll. Crank "Say What You Mean" and be converted. —Jimmy Alvarado (Upper Cut)

**BIGFOOT IN PARIS: Such A Taste: CD**

Assity-ass-ass. Whiny lyrics over jazzy-rock. Wham + Erasure = Suck. —Megan (www.bigfootin.paris.com)

**BLACK EYES: self-titled: CD**

Noisy, art-damaged skronk that is easily the most aggro new release I've heard on Dischord in a while. The songs get a tad long-winded now and again, but damn if this ain't some nice work overall. Thumbs up. —Jimmy Alvarado (Dischord)

**BOILS, THE: Pride and Persecution: CD**

Just when I'm fed up with the waves of third-rate teenage mohawk rock ripping the ass off of Blitz and Cock Sparrer (when they think they're coping

Rancid), while inadvertently making a prison camp for street punk, comes another band onto my radar screen that's got it all right. The Boils have anger you can feel and musicianship that's unmistakable – catchy, and as sharp as getting tangled up in spools of barbed wire. What's refreshing is that The Boils actually sound like they're truly pissed, that they've got deep record collections, are concerned with amping their songs the fuck out, and their hands have actually seen calluses (and not from stroking their own egos). *Pride and Persecution's* also impressive by the fact that it changes modes effortlessly without pissing – from the early Agnostic Front hardcore thud, to The Bodies' velocity, all the way to the abrasive poppiness of Sweden's Asta Kask. If you aren't singing along to "as long as there's kids dumber than dirt" from "New Majority," perhaps you should be knitting a sweater instead, renewing your subscription to *Young Miss* (for the articles, you perv) and working on your 401k. Philadelphia's anger is sounding mighty and good these days. As they say, "Here's to the bittersweet taste of anger in our blood." Here's to something 100% recommended. –Todd (TKO)

**BOTTLES AND SKULLS:**  
*Born in a Black Light: CD*

Loved their *Amped the Fuck Up 7"*, but wasn't too jazzed by the bonus tracks tacked onto the CD release of said 7". This is more like it. No happy chord progressions or boy band posturing here, kids, just dark, loud, fucked up, rockin' tuneage in abundance. Then again, you can't possibly expect less from a band with the creative foresight to name a song "Pimento Llama." –Jimmy Alvarado (Sickroom)

**BRIEFS, THE:**  
*Off the Charts: LP*

So it looks like the major label route was not the way for these guys to go and they are back on Dirtnap where they belong. The Briefs probably wouldn't have gone over too well with all the nu-punk jocks and the nu-garage assholes. This is the music that people get beat up for listening to and that isn't something that sells too many records. Anyway, this pretty much picks up where the last one left off: fun, poppy, goofy punk rock that tips the hat to the Kinks just as much as it does to the Buzzcocks. You should buy this, and while you're at it, buy the first Kinks album, too. –Josh (Dirtnap)

**BROKEN BOTTLES:**  
*Bloody Mary: 7"*

It's striking, the difference between bands that half-assedly rip off the past and those that can pull things out of it – and make it better – without sounding like they're living in a TV re-run time warp of the punk episode of "CHiPs." Deep in the radiated stucco dysfunction of southern Orange County, comes one of the best new bands I've heard since Smogtown hit our shores. This single's about cemetery sex and heroin. While you're at it, pick up their first 7", *Radioactive San Onofre*. –Todd (Revenge)

**BUMPN-UGLIES:**  
*All-American 4-Pack: 7" EP*

Traditional punk scene heathens/malcontents, who cover the four basic food groups: pornography ("Hardcore Pride" – an h/c parody yielding the almost-immortal line "The only shows I see are preceded by a 'peep'"), pro wrestling ("i think it's funny / you're goin' to Jack Tunney"), the inherent lameness of more successful scene peers ("The Roast [12 Reasons]")

and a GG Allin cover ("Don't Talk to Me" – which brings to light the fact that, in the span of the now four issues i've written for *Razorcake*, i have been assigned to review an at-least-somewhat wrestling-oriented band's record twice, and on both occasions, said record has featured a cover of "Don't Talk to Me," which, for the uninitiated, is not a wrestling-related song. I mean... am i missing something, or did i just beam into a reworking of the "A Piece of the Action" episode of *Star Trek* where Oxmyx, et al, fell into possession of the first GG Allin album and an old copy of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* in lieu of that book about mobsters of the '20s, or what?). In their more inspired moments ("It Ain't Cheatin' [If the Ref Ain't Lookin'!]), they kinda evoke classic Elvis Hitler minus the rockabilly flirtations; everywhere else, they kinda send the vibe that the songs are structured to run longer than the concept behind them is able to successfully support. Dude, it's all about the flying buttress! Er, wasn't that Iceman King Parsons' finishing move? BEST SONG: "Don't Talk to Me," duh. BEST SONG TITLE: "It Ain't Cheatin' (If The Ref Ain't Lookin')" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Label design on this small-holed (and gray vinyl) record helpfully indicates where large hole and large hole bleed would be, were, in fact, this record in possession of a large hole. –Rev. Nørb (Low Down)

**BURN YOUR BRIDGES:**  
*self-titled: CD*


Undoubtedly angry – mostly at crusties, scenesters, play-acting anarchists, the "punk-famous" and quite possibly anyone automatically inclined to go to their shows – it's grating, and speedy hardcore that isn't afraid of neither the occasional blast beat nor melody. Am I hearing this right? There's only a guitar and drummer? Bob (Lack of Interest is my guess) and Chris Dodge (ex-Spazz)? There's an amazing bit of noise on here – and a nice diversity of modes from full-on thrash to more moody songs (all clocking in under a minute, I believe). At the same time, I occasionally found myself wanting more dimensionality, imagining how a bass, another guitar, or using more dual vocals would fatten and beef up the overall atmosphere. (I can't help but think of Charles Bronson – both bands have slaying wit, similar approaches, and were/are in it for the right reasons, but CB played like a mad nest of hornets. Maybe I just want more hornets with Burn Your Bridges.) Minimalist hardcore thrash? Who would have thought? That all said, I'm keeping this CD. It's scads better than most of what I've been hearing lately, particularly in hardcore. –Todd (Deep Six)

**BUZZCOCKS: self-titled: CD**

I am not ashamed to say that I have flat-out adored this band for going on two decades now. I am not ashamed to admit that I thought their last two albums were, to put it as politely as possible, wicked fuckin' boring. I am also not ashamed to report that, if this album is any indication, they are well on the way to rectifying any missteps taken on the aforementioned last two albums. The songs here, while are still just shy the lofty heights of greatness they achieved from the *Spiral Scratch* through *Trade Test Transmissions* releases, are well constructed and catchy as hell. They've gone back to writing good pop-infused punk tunes, which is a welcome relief, and Diggle's developed enough as a singer/songwriter to keep up with Shelley song-for-song. They were

# RAZORCAKE


**"I still haven't come across a turntable that cares how many patches you have when you play a record."**  
–Sean



**THESE ARE THE TOP 7"s SINCE THE LAST MAG.**


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**Underground Medicine Mailorder, Connecticut**

1. **Nikki Corvette**, *Love Me* (Rapid Pulse)
2. **Exploding Hearts**, *Modern Kicks* (Pelado)
3. **Briefs**, *This Age* (Crystal Songs)
4. **Final Solutions**, *Eat Shit* (Therapeutic)
5. **Clone Defects**, *Shapes of Venus* (In the Red) 
6. **Lids**, *Too Late*(Die Slaughterhouse)
7. **Inversions**, *Hung by the Phone* (Rapid Pulse)
8. **Inversions**, *Domestic Disturbance* (Rapid Pulse)
9. **Stuck-Ups**, *Last Chance* (Jonny Cat)
10. **Deadly Weapons**, *Backstabber* (Lipstick)


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**Know Crap Mailorder, Oregon**

1. **The Fix**, *Vengeance b/w In This Town* (Spam-hamo) 
2. **Blowchunks**, self-titled (High School Refuse)
3. **Incontrollados**, *Hvem Vil Det Gavne* (Kick-n-Punch)
4. **Briefs**, (*Looking Through*) *Gary Glitters Eyes* (Screaming Apple)
5. **Geeks**, *Dreamland in Machineland b/w Hey Wreck* (SS)
6. **Various Artists**, *What Records? Sampler* (Bacchus Archives)
7. **Superhelicopter Ltd.**, *White Nigger Rock-n-Roll* (High School Refuse)
8. **War of Destruction**, self-titled (Kick-n-Punch)
9. **The Funtional Blackouts**, self-titled (Electrorock)
10. **The Highbeams/The Stuck Ups**, split(Dirtnap)

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**Disgruntled Mailorder, California**

1. **Neon King Kong**, *There's a Party* (Vinyl Dog) 
2. **Broken Bottles**, *Bloody Mary* (Revenge)
3. **The Orphans**, *Chinatown* (Kapow)
4. **Rolling Blackouts**, *Add-Vice* (Kapow)
5. **Alleged Gunmen**, *Audio Invasion* (Kapow)
6. **Flash Express**, *Ride the Flash Express* (Headline)
7. **BellRays**, *They Glued Your Head on Upside Down* (Poptones)
8. **Bikini Bumps/Lipstick Pickups**, split (G.C./Erectords)
9. **Catholic Boys**, *Brainwash City* (Kryptonite)
10. **Stuckups**, *A Last Chance* (Johnny Cat) Tie
10. **Kill A Watts**, *Kill City* (Kryptonite) Tie



also nice enough to include a re-recording of "Lester Sands," which originally appeared on one of their earliest bootlegs as "Drop In the Ocean." Considering I physically winced as I put this on, terrified that one of my favorite bands was going to disappoint yet again, I am not ashamed to say that I really like the noise that's coming from my speakers and that said noise is growing on me with each listen. —Jimmy Alvarado (Merge)

#### **BUZZCOCKS: self-titled: CD**

I'm confused. For twenty-five years, thousands of punk kids have tried to sing like the Buzzcocks' Pete Shelley, and now Pete Shelley sings like Carol fucking Channing. It makes no sense. Listening to this new Buzzcocks album is akin to being in a public toilet stall and realizing that the guy in the stall next to you is both shitting and talking on his cell phone — in both cases, it's not exactly the end of civilization as we know it, but it's definitely the sign of a culture on the decline. So I conducted an experiment. I really did this. I made my wife sit down in front of my stereo. I played the Buzzcocks' amazing song, "Fast Cars." Then, I said, "Out of the next two songs I play, pick which one is the new Buzzcocks." First, I played the first song off of this new Buzzcocks album. My wife said, "That's not the Buzzcocks, and make it stop." Then, I played "Live Alone" by the FM Knives. My wife said, "That's gotta be the new Buzzcocks. It's awesome." We listened to the rest of that FM Knives album. Just to make sure it wasn't a fluke, I tried this test with *Razorcake* reviewer Toby Tober. The results were so similar it was scary. So the results are in: if you want to hear a new Buzzcocks album, buy the

FM Knives (who, incidentally, are from Sacramento and have nothing to do with the Buzzcocks). But, for sake of all that was once holy about the Buzzcocks, don't spend your money on this one. —Sean Carswell (Merge)

#### **CAT POWER: You Are Free: CD**

*You Are Free*, Cat Power's first album of new material in almost four years, shimmers with beautiful and fragile lyrics that dance over sparse instrumentation and simple, but-in-a-good-way, hooks. Tiny moments of strength and confidence are tackled by feelings of confusion and heartbreak. This is Chan Marshall; full of struggle, dazzling purity and seething bitterness. And for all of the mixed emotions her music stirs inside, it at least does that — it feels. It feels all inner conflict that we experience, but are too afraid to confront. On "Good Woman," her voice trembles, "I don't want to be a bad woman, and I can't stand to see you be a bad man." Creating music, even in its most stripped-down form, she still has the power to make you ache. But *You Are Free* is more than just blue; it's spilling over with warm and fuzzy songs — practically stretching its arms around "Moon Pix" and giving it a great, big hug. The simplicity of "Free," soft rocking of "Speak for Me," and the "hey, hey, heys!" of "He War," conjure up the word, dare I say, pop. Not in a Blondie kinda way. Think more fucked-up. Like the devastating pop of The Velvet Underground. But I wouldn't kick back and enjoy the sunshine just yet. Just when you think you are free, Chan Marshall has a way of creeping back to haunt your head. —Kat Jetson (Matador)

#### **CHROMATICS: Chrome Rats vs. Basement Rutz: CD**

Arty noise rock, not unlike a punier Birthday Party. It took me two listens, but I'm gettin' pretty into this. It may be noisy and atonal, but at least it's creative and it doesn't sound anything like Blink 182. —Jimmy Alvarado (GSL)

#### **CINCH, THE: self-titled: CDEP**

I am hacking out a special wing of my brain to house data regarding a seemingly newly emerging subgenre as we speak: I dunno what I call it yet, but The Cinch (from Vancouver?), the Rotten Apples (from Seattle), and the Lovelies (from Milwaukee) are in it, and inclusion seems to mandate an almost-continually midtempo pace, slightly breathy female lead and backing vocals, disillusionment with failed relationships as the only allowable lyrical subject matter, and musical genetic coding apparently evolved from both '90s *120 Minutes* era alt-rock bands and pert '80s girl groups such as the Go-Go's, without ever actually sounding like anything either slightly truly Go-Go-esque or adamant about publicly attempting to push its ROCKING-ness (in the most ROCK sense of the term) as being crucial to the end result. The Rock is insistent, yet the songs are clearly not designed to blow up white mice in the Rock-O-Meter™. The songs (the "hits," anyway) have a blatantly well-crafted form to them, yet are never cute or overly poppy (e.g., the "hit" here — "Once a Week" [money shot line: "I've been waiting for you for a while / I've been staring at those pretty tiles"]) — utilizes both maracas and tambourine in the ongoing textural structure of the song, not as mere bells and whistles and/or ear candy; end result (for entire subgenre) leaving me, Al Franken,

with the sensation that these songs are deserving light-rotation phantom MTV demi-hits from a bygone (maybe?) era which may or may not have ever existed to begin with. MTV-rock as Pop? Alt-pop as Rock? Would I understand this better if I just broke down and got cable? My major grievance with this whole newly-minted and as-yet-unnamed subgenre is that the "hits," as they were, in their stern-jawed mission to be neither "cute" nor overly "poppy," yet "hits" nonetheless, lack sufficient spectacularness-above-and-beyond-the-call-of-duty to float the more rank-and-file (note: not the band) numbers in their wake (by contrast, Elastica's big smasher [to me], "Stutter," was so overwhelmingly genius that the rest of their material more or less had to do nothing but mop up after it), although most of the material herein is admirably well done and crafted. That said, in case you're wondering how they made out on the Modern Lovers cover, it doesn't really put over the depth and texture of the original, but does achieve a nice, thin, trebly, Saints-first-album character by song's end. Further, the (female) vocalist's non-switching of the song's gender is, apparently by some heretofore undocumented law of physics, counter-balanced by her juxtaposing the words "shit" and "garbage" in the classic line "She / eat garbage / eat shit / get stoned." Rock & roll is a beautiful thing. BEST SONG: "Once a Week" BEST SONG TITLE: "French Maid," *mais naturellement!* FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The band's website is given as "www.thecinchorocks.com." Memo to bands who find that "www.bandname.com" is taken: Going with "www.bandnamerocks.com" is fucking GAY with a capital A. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT WAIT-

ING TO HAPPEN: One of the guitar players is named Mark Epp. Might he possibly be related to the guy from Mr. Epp & The Calculations??? ("Mohawk Man" was their big hit) –Rev. Nørb (Dirtnap)

#### **CLUSTERFUX:**

##### ***Thrash Mongrel: CD***

Clusterfux have dual female/male vocals screamed to the extreme over metallic crust. The guitars are a little thin in the production but that doesn't take away the power there are trying to achieve, which is heavy on the riffing to power through each song. The bass has the right amount of distortion to accent and fill what deficiencies the guitars lack. The guitar solos might discourage some punk purists, but metal heads will see it as an added bonus. Reminds me of the crossover period of the mid-to-late '80s. –Donofthead (Rodent Popsicle)

#### **COCKNEY REJECTS:**

##### ***Out of the Gutter: CD***

Some bands should just be content to sit and collect the royalties from their early recordings and never revisit music again. This is one such band. If I wanted to listen to bad metal, I'd shell out some dough for the last Metallica album. As a fan of their earliest work, I'm horrified. –Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi)

#### **COFFIN CHEATERS, THE:**

##### ***Porno Serial Killers: CD***

One of the things successful writers always say is that you never want to write about something you don't truly know about. But I'm going to break that rule right here and state that I think the Coffin Cheaters' music is the aural equivalent of a blumpkin. The word "blumpkin" is a slang term for the scato-

sexual act of receiving a blowjob while sitting on the toilet taking a shit. Now, I'm not just saying this because I'm afraid my Mom might read this someday, but I have, in truth, never experienced a blumpkin. So I'm sticking my neck out here a bit, comparing the Coffin Cheaters to a blumpkin. But I think it's a safe gamble. In fact, I probably wouldn't be too much off the mark to spice it up even more by saying it's like GG Allin getting a blumpkin from El Duce. The fact that those two guys are now rotting corpses has nothing to do with the simile – the Coffin Cheaters' music is anything but dead (or homosexual, come to think of it...) This is macho, meaty, bruising porno-thug punk complete with missing teeth, b.o., and a loutish insensitivity to anything even remotely politically correct. This is the kind of music that has patches of bristly body hair in spots that have no business being hairy. *Porno Serial Killers*, unlike their previous 7" offerings, captures the full metallic wallop of their live sound, which is something like a cross between Nine Pound Hammer and the Meatmen. Be forewarned: this disc is oozing with an indelicate sense of humor that's bound to leave prissy tight-asses seething. Fundamentalists who find things like the Exploited off-putting will choke on their lattes when *Porno Serial Killers* enters a room. The Coffin Cheaters play scum-humping blumpkin rock deserving of all the white trashy, pit-stained perks that go along with inclusion in the Confederacy of Scum. Antiseen take note. –Aphid Peewit (Sell Your Soul)

#### **COMMUNIQUÉ: A Crescent**

##### ***Honeymoon: CD***

Egads, this is awful! Synth and attempting to be somewhere between Supergrass

and Weezer adds up to suckin' ass. –Megan (Lookout)

#### **CONSUMED:**

##### ***Pistols at Dawn: CD***

Hey, they jumped ship! Once Fat Wreck staples, they come down the coast to LA's BYO. It's kind of the same network anyway. It's their third release after the debut album *Breakfast at Pappa's* and the sophomore release, *Hit for Six*. Consistency has been the key for this band. This release shows that they have continued to grow. The songs are catchy yet strong. The production has always been used to their advantage. Not coming off bubble gum, they tear forward using a palatable aggression that won't turn off many. The musicianship is not overboard, but interesting enough to keep their identity. They've got a good mix of loud guitars, strong vocals and solid rhythm section as a backbone to mix melody with rocking riffs. I was kind of wondering where these guys have been. A definite highlight in what's coming out in the UK. –Donofthead (BYO)

#### **CRAMPS: THE:**

##### ***Fiends of Dope Island: CD***

This is the first CD from the Vengeance Label, fronted by the only two people who should be in charge of The Cramps – Lux and Ivy. After disastrous stints with IRS and Epitaph and various other shady record companies that wouldn't know what to do with good music even if they had it shoved up their assholes, The Cramps became the boss of The Cramps. This is good news for all you record collectors out there because this means you will be guaranteed better packaging, better attention to detail, and most importantly full creative control by the artist!

Yes! Okay, enough of the celebrations. The Cramps forge on against Father Time's vicious scythe with the greatest of ease and deliver one of the most entertaining new CDs to come blaring out like a drunken drag queen karaoke contest. It's hard to imagine that The Cramps have been around over twenty years; giving a listen to this album would contest any naysayer, who obviously do not know the legend of this prolific band. The CD starts off with the commanding stomp of "Big Black Witchcraft Rock," which hollers the intro by lead vocalist extraordinaire, Liberace reincarnate, Lux Interior, who growls a frightening sexy, "Satan baby, Satan!" This CD packs in more of the campy sinister B-Movie infused Cramps ideology, which confronts your little puny, pseudo-intellectual, Celine and Camus reading minds with such familiar Cramps themes like African witchcraft, and Satan. It's all generously slathered with their invention, psychobilly, switchblade wit and tough girl and boy sashaying into their oblivion of fast cars, alcohol and cannabis smoking doom. Of course, you hear more Link Wray, Sun Records country, real black rhythm and blues, Elvis, exotica and all the cool influences that made The Cramps what they are today – pure fucking legends. So, you wanna know who the new bass player is? It's Chopper Franklin, from local LA act Mr. Badwrench, who got the coveted position and supplying the big beats is Mr. Big Daddy NASCAR himself, Harry Drumdini. Miss Poison Ivy twangs like Duane Eddy's demonic sister and makes black leather look even hotter than ever possible on a woman's body! Whatcha waitin' for? Go get this album and make out with a bunch of sluts. Okay, don't get this album and go fuck yourself on a pin-

hole on the wall where your little dick will fit. –Miss Namella Kim (No address supplied)

**CRASH AND BURN:  
Sick Again: CD**

I wanted to like this. I thought it would be easy – so many people I know love them. I just can't get into it. It's that '70s influenced rock with a bit more power, but it just comes off as frat bar rock to me. People keep saying they hear Black Flag. I hear Bon Jovi, sorry. –Megan (Crash and Burn)

**CRITICS, THE: self-titled: 7"**

Holy moly. From the cover, I wasn't expecting much. It's a pink and black bitmap of four band members without faces. Ho hum. But, as soon as it got played, who went ahead and turned Leatherface into a straight-ahead pop band from Australia with tons of power? I wasn't so up on their CDEP, but these three songs are complexly layered as some sort of a fancy Greek desert and as unpredictable as fireworks with questionable fuses. Maybe it's my ass talking, but I also hear some of the undeniable songwriting and prowess of The Replacements: wall of warm shimmering guitars, stinging belt choruses, rising welt bass lines, and strong-piped vocals that are a notch below yelling. It all sounds so loud but clear and confident as fuck. I was wholly surprised by how good this was. Well worth seeking out. –Todd (Rabbit / Out of the Loop)

**CURSED: One: CD**

You've got yourself some pretty heavy, pretty dark hardcore here. It can get a bit epic (one song is about six minutes), but they can actually pull it off pretty well. It's decent. –Megan (Deathwish)

**DAMNATION:**

**The Unholy Sounds of: CD**

Driving music that skirts a fine line between punk'n'roll and modern OC hardcore. The lyrics ain't spectacular, but at least the proceedings are rockin'. –Jimmy Alvarado (RAFR)

**DEAD END KIDS:**

**Demo #1: CD**

I weep openly in joy for your generation: You now have a Mad Society to call your very own. BEST SONG TITLE: "Captain Pickle (slow)." BEST SONG: Three-way tie between "Captain Pickle (slow)," "Captain Pickle (fast)" and "Captain Pickle (live)." FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: By all contextual indications, one of the members of this band appears to be the offspring of ex-DKs/TSOL manager Mike Vraney, whom I met once at a Dead Kennedys show about twenty years ago, and only remember as being quite tall and wearing a really cheesy leisure suit. –Rev. Nørb (Dead End Kids)

**DEADLINE / BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS: Split: CDEP**

Two bands, three songs each. England's Deadline: I'm a sucker for female-fronted punk bands with a vocalist who can go from a Faye Fife of the Rezillos to an Ève Libertine of Crass to Penetration from song to song without missing a step. Liz's vocals are so clear and powerful that they make Brodie from The Distillers seem like she's still in grade school singing about fuzzy slippers. It doesn't hurt that the entire band doesn't rely on a great voice but plays along like they're lit on classic pub rock while sounding like it's still on fire. I'm surprised how good they are. Brassknuckle

Boys: Don't let the tuggish name fool you, these guys have undeniable power, like the GC5. They artfully tease the fine lines between oi, pride, and old fashioned kick-ass songwriting and turn Tom Petty's "American Girl" into a rough anthem, which is the power to all their songs. What's sobering, after being a big fan of their LP *American Bastard*, is that two of their members are dead. Weird. Great split. –Todd (Haunted Town)

**DEFACTO OPPRESSION:  
Screen Symphony Suicide: CD**

This is a band that is hard to pigeon hole but seems to play with the thrash set. The songs are brutal with blast beats, thrash, metal and some progressive stuff in between. The vocals are expressed with an emotional wail of anger and rage and they accomplish the hard task of making each song sound unique from one another. I didn't know that Wisconsin was such a breeding ground for over-the-top music. Live, they must be incredible! –Donofthedeat (Hungry Ghosts)

**DIRT BIKE ANNIE /  
THE POPSTERS: The Ellis  
Island Rendezvous: split CD**

I'm a sucker for Dirt Bike Annie. Their songs are so poppy and infectious and fun that, even when they sing about being afraid of dying, it puts me in a good mood. DBA have eight new songs on this split (at least I think the songs are new. I haven't seen them on any other release, with the exception of the live versions of "Next Time" and "Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things," which are on *Sweatin' to the Oldies*), and they're every bit as cool as I'd hope. I've been listening to their half

of the split a lot. To be honest, though, I keep turning the CD off when The Popsters come on. Not that The Popsters are bad. I usually get two or three songs into their half of this split before I think to myself, why am I listening to generic pop punk? Then, I get up and start looking for a new album to play. –Sean Carswell (Stardumb)

**DIRTY POWER: self-titled: CD**

Metal. Don't give me any more records like this to review. BEST SONG: I liked one of the guitar solos. I forget which song it's in. BEST SONG TITLE: "Lady Danzig" does have a certain Gary Puckett & The Union Gap-esque charm to it, but "Symptom of the Unitard" is funnier. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: If producing records which have no intrinsic value whatsoever other than the fact they are quite loud is a sport, Jack Endino is Cal Ripken, Jr. Somebody retire this guy's jersey, QUICK! –Rev. Nørb (Dead Teenager)

**DISORDER:**

**We're Still Here: CD**

Who would have thunk it? I'm holding a new Disorder CD in 2003. Not since the 1984 *Under the Scalple Blade* LP have I heard a thing by this band. I knew they had other releases after that LP, but I never acquired them. The only remaining member from the 1984 LP is Taf, the bassist, who now sings, too. They are now a three piece being rounded out by Yaga on guitar and Adey Anarchy on drums. I think they used to fly under the banner of "Noise not Music" when they first started out like Chaos UK – straight forward UK punk that was purposely ugly to the ears. The formula hasn't strayed too far. The monotone buzzing sound is there. However, with the muta-

tion of punk through the years, it's not as extreme now as it was then. I guess I have become desensitized. But familiarity is a good tool for easy acceptance. The songs are sloppy like a good drunken night. The speed varies to keep you on your toes. If you enjoy a good dose of "two fingers in the air" UK punk rock, you will not be disappointed. Recorded in Japan, you would think the production might be over the top, but the recording studio sounds like it did some research and recorded the band as they should sound. —Donofthedeath (HG Fact)

**DOA: *Win the Battle: CD***  
Hoo, doggy, where does one begin with this? Yes, this is the same DOA that's been slugging it out in some shape or another since the '70s and no, this is by no means their finest hour. Most of the songs sound forced and short on inspiration — which is amazing considering the myriad of shit going on in the world these last couple years from which to draw at least an idea or two for a song — although the level of enthusiasm of those performing is strangely high. They cover themselves (a ill-conceived blues rendition of "Fuck You") and ZZ Top (eschewing a more fitting cover of that band's "Beer Drinkers and Hell Raisers" for a stab at "La Grange") this time around, neither really adding much to their legacy. Of thirteen songs, the one that comes closest to sounding like a quality DOA tune is "Return to Lumberjack City," which is shows flashes of the swagger and self-assurance that makes their best work so damn listenable. Still, one song does not a great record make and, while I have nothing but love for Joey Shithead and Randy Rampage, maybe it's time to send the old warhorse back to the showers for a spell, at least until a vein of steady inspiration can be tapped, 'cause this stuff ain't doing nothing but tarnishing the good name and reputation of one of the best bands in the history of punk rock. —Jimmy Alvarado (Sudden Death)

**DREXEL, OHIO: self-titled: CD**  
The little sticker on the front of this disc refers to Drexel, Ohio as "one of America's most unique acts." I don't know about that. It is a quirky package that defies easy categorization. Soundwise, it's like what you might hear at any smoky lounge at some Holiday Inn somewhere in rural America: cheesy keyboards and schmaltzy vocals with lyrics that you either think are "funny" or "really stupid." But I don't know if it's really all that unique. I know several people who do the cheeseball lounge lizard shtick — like Minneapolis' own Mike Suade — and do a funnier send-up of it. I think the best these guys can hope for is a spot on an upcoming Dr. Demento collection of "wacky" songs. Humor, of course, is a very subjective thing, so I'm sure that there are people out there who'd think this is a real kick in the pants. I'm just not one of them. —Aphid Peewit (Donger)

**EDISON ROCKET TRAIN: *Yes! Yes!! Yes!!!: CD***  
Think Wesley Willis done by people with no creative ability. —Megan (Steel Cage)

**ENDS, THE: *Teenage Detox: 7"***  
Newer bands that I really start to dig remind me simultaneously of so many different bands. It's almost like looking through fifty slides in the projector at once. The Ends are that type of band, except the final effect is something clear, fun, and realized, not a muddled mess or

dick-to-back-of-throat worship of undeniably great bands that came before. It's also strange that bands I really like seem to go through small metamorphoses in my ears. On the twentieth spin, I'll start hearing something completely different than what I heard on the first. The proof is in the infection. I keep reaching for this 7". At times, it reminds me of a supercharged Stitches with a smokier vocalist. Other times, when they cover Eater's "Room for One," they play it so forcefully that it comes across like they ripped the song's clothing completely off. Other influences that seep in sound like they'd be at odds with one another, but aren't: The tunefulness of the Saints, the inspired recklessness of Scared of Chaka, and '77 UK punk by way of early Texas hardcore. It's much better than good. Trust me on this one. —Todd (Super Secret)

**EVIL BEAVER: *Lick It: CD***  
Would've been great a decade ago on a bill with 7 Year Bitch and them other proto-riot grrrl bands, although the sludgy quality of their songs might be more bumper inducing than inspiring. I've heard worse, but I ain't exactly doing cartwheels over this or anything. —Jimmy Alvarado (Johann's Face)

**EXPLODING HEARTS, THE: *Guitar Romantic: CD***  
I love this. Throw Thee Headcoats, early Elvis Costello, Teenage Head, and the Dead Boys in a blender, this is what you get. More pop than edge, but you get a snarl here and there. So damn catchy you're bound to annoy everyone by gushing over them (at least I do.) —Megan (Dirtnap)

**EYES OF AUTUMN: *Hello: CD***  
As difficult as it may be to believe, and I realize that this allegation will sound utterly preposterous, this is emo and, much to my surprise, these dissonant, unfocused, fuzzed-out songs featuring quavering, tremulous vocal stylings (which aren't quite ululation) have made my life immeasurably worse for having heard them. Fuck this. I'm going back to listening to The Blood Brothers. —Puckett (54 40 Or Fight)

**FATAL FLYING GUILLOTEENS: *Get Knifed: CD***  
I've heard a lot of good things about these guys. They're frenetic, loud, fast and really good. It took a little while for this to grow on me, but the more I listen, the more I like it. —Megan (Estrus)

**FILTHY VAGRANTS: *Watching Them Burn: CD***  
Barely competent Rancid punk. Nice pic of a guy giving the finger to the White House. Dude, punk rock. —Jimmy Alvarado (Ninety-Six)

**FLESHIES: *The Sicilian: CD***  
Me gusta. About ten seconds after Johnny Polymoniker knocked my glasses clean off my face (but right into my hands, thanks) with his swinging microphone, Dan Monick said, "These guys are like the Cows and Iron Maiden." Dan Monick takes a lot of pictures for this magazine. He's insightful. I try to keep my glasses on my face. Then that got me to thinking. Perhaps, for future reviews of Fleshies, I could just mix a great AmRep'y noise band with a heavy metal band that had at least five good songs and that'd be the review. Slug and Judas Priest. Kinda works. Take weirdness, give it focus, heaviness, and catchiness. Mix in one or two no-interference, fuck-

yeah punk gems (like "Rosa"). Kerplow! Fleshies! Only it's better. What works so well in their favor is that their albums and EPs (get the futbol one) neither ever get too stupid-trippy nor wank-a-thonic. Although I do suggest this record, I do have complaints. Are the lyrics written on fuckin' microfiche for the CD? C'mon, Alternative Tentacles, give 'em a couple more pages so I don't have to be reading, what, two point font. Secondly, whomever put the athletic sock over Johnny's microphone for this recording should stop doing that in the future. He sounds muted. Complaints aside, as it stands, Fleshies are a delicious cross of Melt Banana and Motley Crue. See? It sorta works. Sorta. Go see 'em live with glasses firmly strapped. —Todd (Alternative Tentacles)

**FM KNIVES: *Useless and Modern: LP***  
This album isn't exactly new, but here's my two cents on it anyway: What Amdi Petersen's Arme is to hardcore punk, the FM Knives are to '77 punk. Unlike a band like the Briefs who sound like a modern update to that sound, this band sounds like one of the bands that pioneered that sound. And they're good. Real good. Also, on a purely historical note that will interest everyone, this album was recorded on my seventeenth birthday. —Josh (Broken Rekids)

**F-MINUS: *Wake Up Screaming: CD***  
F-Minus play fast, aggressive hardcore with just enough hooks to keep it from being a wall of noise. They alternate male and female vocals and it works especially well because neither of them can sing, but both of them sound really

good. With *Wake Up Screaming*, they've lost their bass player/other female vocalist from earlier records, which is a shame. I like the way she sings. Still, this album rips through fifteen songs with enough power and pogo to keep me smiling. —Sean Carswell (Hellcat)

**GEE STRINGS, THE: *Bad Reputation: 7"***  
I've often sat and pontificated: What would have happened if Penelope Houston of the Avengers didn't become a big, German adult contemporary pixie after her divorce from punk rock, and instead secretly was in a German band that fucking ripped it in relative obscurity? Weirder things have happened. If we didn't have stuff like history, facts, and figures, you can just lay back and imagine The Gee Strings picking up where the Avengers dissolved. I can bask in that quite nicely. The b-side, "Dullish," is the gem. No flabby skin, no reek of cashing in, just perfect punk. The cover of the tune that Joan Jett made famous, "Bad Reputation," ain't too shabby, either. —Todd (Stereodrive! c/o Green Hell)

**GLOBAL THREAT, A: *Earache/Pass the Time: CDEP***  
A quick one this time around from one of the new American bands that play the early UK punk style. Like the Casualties and the Virus, this band, I feel, is the best of the genre today. The songs strike you with the jagged edge of a blunt knife. While many bands that currently play this style of music sound like bad reproductions of bands past, A Global Threat keep it fresh and powerful. —Donofthedeath (Rodent Popsicle)

## GLOBAL THREAT, A: *What the Fuck Will Change?: CDEP*

A street punk band having this as their album title when the CD cover and half the inset is filled with pictures showing off their many fashionable belts and mohawks makes me think of the old Corrosion of Conformity song off *Eye for an Eye* – “Rebellion’s not the clothes you wear or the way you spike your hair... nothing’s gonna change because you’re music’s fast, nothing’s gonna change while you’re sitting on your ass.” What is in A Global Threat’s favor is that it is hard to sit on your ass while listening to this CD. Surely, it might be nice if they seemed a bit less concerned with what they look like (not so much that they are that overly dressed so much as they have SO many posed band photos.) This is loud, fast and angry, but musically adept and fairly diverse from song to song. Not diverse the way Alice Donut would have a fast punk song next to a folk sounding song, but diverse in that songs don’t all sound alike – most of them have fast circle pit parts and o-infused sing along parts, but with that framework, they go all over the place. Lyrically, well, I didn’t learn any new political information from this CD, but the words are far more than filler so the vocalist has something to do between “fuck the systems.” This would probably have been my favorite CD if it came out when I was an angst-ridden teen, and it can be used to wean totalchaos.com fans off the idea that street punk has to be one dimensional. –Rich Mackin (Punk Core)

## GRABASS CHARLESTONS, THE: *The Greatest Story Ever Hula’d: CD*

Sweat-dripping, whisky-drowned, dirty Florida punk at its finest. First off, the split these guys did with Billy Reese Peters, pick it up. Ever since I reviewed it, it’s just gotten better and it’s now firmly lodged as one of the top twenty releases of 2002. I’ll be completely honest, on first listen to this I wasn’t hooked. The vocals are a tad slower and the instruments aren’t as instantly dazzling and frenetic. Also, this full-length seems sadder, more morose. (Apparent evidence is the song title “Suicide at \$8 an Hour” and the supporting documentation is the lyrics sheet.) Then the netting takes hold – little flashes, little hooks, little dips and wanes. Some horns on one song. Then, around the fifteenth time I popped this on, I didn’t hold it up to the expectation of their split, but held it up to itself. Now, I hate to use words like “songwriting maturity,” because that’s usually for dildos, but these songs are denser, richer, and a slightly bit more of an acquired taste. They look at wreckage (their own ashes) more than bombast (like going after their boss man). So, let’s compare. Like Tiltwheel, the tones are bright and happy, but the sentiment is dark, ultra-articulate and sad. (“We’ll be making a better resource sleeping six feet underground” and “I had the weirdest dream/ Where I went a whole day with a spear in my chest/ I kept waiting to die.”) Like Leatherface, the guitars weave in tight, then splay apart and shimmer. It’s like you’re immersed in their songs, filled with metaphoric life preservers and harpoons. Like Dillinger Four, no instrument takes the easy way out. Pure propulsion and fireworks. Like the Beltones, Will is drumming, but he’s also singing, and it’s catchy hard-drinking, working class without-the-cliché

punk rock. Ultimately – and the final testament – is that The Grabass Charlestons are a band that others will start being compared to. A top of 2003 for me, no doubt. –Todd (No Idea)

## GRAVY TRAIN!!!!: *Hello Doctor: CD*

“You’re missing out on hot-ass humps cuz I spread legs like anthrax, and Kenny G-type blowjob cuz I play a mean skin sax.” Now if this, dear reader, is your idea of a “hugetime,” than Oakland, California’s Gravy Train!!!! (with four exclamation points, please) is your ultimate raunch-attack party band. They are four ex-Catholics (ah!, that explains it) living out your nastiest sexual fantasies via a couple of thrift store Casio synths, a sixty dollar drum machine, and a whole lotta sing-along, naughty-words raps, that’ll leave you hot, bothered and wet for more. There’s a B-52’s call and response element here, but Hunx (the dude) is far more flaming than Fred Schneider could ever hope to be, and the fly girls – Drunx, Funx and Chunx, well... they ain’t no beehive-wearing, sweet-voiced betties. And that’s fine by them. Gravy Train!!!! seem to revel in their perviness as witnessed by the two-minute blasts pumpin’ and grindin’ out your woofers and tweeters. “Don’t blame me for being sick for dick, sometimes it’s titties that I wanna lick,” pouts Hunx on “Double Decker Supreme,” a threesome song “‘bout blowin’ loads in a butt while loads are blown in mine.” Mom must be proud. Without reprinting all of the lyrics here I doubt I could do their brilliance justice, so to achieve maximum listening pleasure, I suggest reading along while giving this a spin. And if you’re tuning in for purely educational purposes, lift the tray card for a “How to Pussy Thrusts” lesson. (Complete with diagrams.) –Kat Jetson (Kill Rock Stars)

## GRAVY TRAIN!!!!: *Hello Doctor: CD*

Cool minimalist synth-rap-new-wave thingamabob, reminiscent of a less intense, female-driven Le Shok. Too bad the lyrics are so fucking pathetic. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.rapbitches.com)

## GREEN ANGEL: *Re-Igniting the Sun: CD*

Imagine if Metallica were a bunch of zitfaced teenagers with a thing for the Misfits... wait. Oh yeah. Well imagine Green Angel are a bunch of zitty teenagers with a thing for (early) Metallica and the Misfits, and no desire to break new ground (or take singing lessons). –Cuss Baxter (Suburban Justice)

## GREEN ROAD SHOTGUN: *Bang: CD*

Uninspired geek rock that never gets to the rock part. –Megan (8 ohm)

## HENRY FIAT’S OPEN SORE: *Patmos or Bust: 7”*

I think I had given up on ever finding a band that had *everything* I ever wanted in a punk band all rolled up together in one nice, messy, demented little package. And then I stumbled on Sweden’s Henry Fiat’s Open Sore. Fast, ridiculous, sloppy, sick, and funny as all fuck; kind of like a *Blood, Guts, and Pussycera* Dwarves if the Dwarves took all the drugs they’ve ever ingested, but all in one night – and then they wrapped their heads up in diapers. As HFOS 7 inches

go, I wouldn’t put *Patmos or Bust* up there with psycho scorchers like *Headshots or Makes Your Cock Big*, but it’s a worthy addition to the Sores’ library of hebephrenic punk. –Aphid Peewit (Wrench)

## HERESIA/ GRITOS DE ALERTA: *Split: 7”*

I don’t know if most people are ready for something like this. You get in a rut and you don’t buy new music for a while. A comfort zone has incased you and you are not ready to burst out of your familiar bubble. I go there sometimes. Some CDs haven’t left the CD changer in my car for over a year. But the great thing about hearing new music is the spontaneity of feeling your blood rush. You lose track of time and space. Feel like someone is going ape shit for you when you can’t yourself. I popped this on the turntable and was totally floored by what was coming out of my speakers. If you don’t like fast punk, go away! Here are the facts of this release that I received from the guy who released this. This was originally released in Brazil. The singer of Gritos De Alerta runs the label Terrotten that initially half released this with the label Usina de Sangue. I was told a member of Heresia also plays in the band Sick Terror. This US pressing is limited to 500 and on grey splattered vinyl. Heresia: Serious D-beat meets Sweden damage here that is so fucking heavy, I barely could breath from the weight. Sounds like the rumble you hear before an earthquake shakes your house and belongings. It’s a sound that, if done right, can be so powerful even though it has been replicated. Gritos De Alerta: Fast, blasting punk rock that ventures into crust territory. It’s got Energizer bunny drumming with a guitar that sounds like it’s hooked up to a boombox and not an amp. If you like the screamo vocals, that’s what you get here. To sum it up, I preferred the Heresia side, but was not displeased with the Gritos De Alerta side. –Donofthead (Ponk-111)

## HOLLYWOOD HATE: *Product of Our Environment: CD*

The word on the street was that these kids had it goin’ on and, wonder of wonders, they do, in fact, got it goin’ on with more to spare. Totally rockin’ without having to resort to some formulaic Detroit cliché, tough enough to share a stage with the hardest of the hardcore, and tight-as-hell playin’, this is destined to make more than a few top ten lists come next January. Next time someone whines that punk rock ain’t as good as it was “back in the day,” plop this puppy in the player and watch their jaw drop. –Jimmy Alvarado (TKO)

## HOOTON 3 CAR: *1994-1998 Recordings: 2xCD*

Man! Where was I when this band was around? This release has forty-six songs! They were only together for four years? I think I had a split of theirs a few years ago. I don’t know what I did with it. This compiles a 12”, three albums, four 7”s and tracks off of three splits. Whew. That’s a lot of work for that short period of time. I guess they never made to the states but had a following in Japan as well as locally in the UK. Well, let’s start like I have never heard this band before. Actually that’s part true since I didn’t remember what they sounded like. To me, the band sound is reminiscent to the early Goo Goo Dolls when they were punk and the Replacements mixed with some Squeeze and a little

XTC to add some flavor. It reminds me of some of the music I was listening to during the late ‘80s to early ‘90s. I can’t take the pop out of this punk. The melodies are dead on, the guitars drive things forward, and the musicianship is spectacular. Definitely a release that will return to the CD player for a listen. I like it when a discography catches me up to something that I might have missed. –Donofthead (Crackle)

## HUNCHES, THE: *Yes, No, Shut It: CD*

Okay, by the time you read this they will be well on their way to the success cruise ship commanded by Jack and Meg White, the fluffy haired members of The Strokes and those Goonies rejects – The Vines. There’s nothing wrong with making it, as long as it’s done on your own terms and you don’t forget where you come from. If you’re reading this and wondering if I am talking about you – then chances are – yes, I am talking about you. The LA Shakedown was a disappointment for the most part; The Hunches and The Mystery Girls made it painfully clear when they packed out the rival Juvee venue while The Garage pandered to a minute Shakedown “crowd.” Pouty lead singer Hart sounds like Jon Spencer on crack, which is a good thing cause Jon Spencer needs to be on crack. Fuck, everyone needs a little crack now and then, since the world is just too damn easy these days! The Hunches brought the bigbeatfuzzdistortioncrazehop and had the kids jumping around like a freshly caught fish gasping and pouncing for water. The kids just went nutz. We saw chicks being literally hurled at Hart and punk rock spiky haired folks jumping onto Silverlake hipster chicks in lowrise pants, I mean the world was just coming down in that room. This record is a dirty little record that makes you wanna wash your ears afterwards – replete with sound bites of children, vacuum solos and enough fuzz to make Guitar Wolf wonder, “what’s their secret?” It’s probably the uncompromising Mike McHugh production. It’s probably safe to say he’s the only producer in Southern California worthy enough to work with raw genius like The Hunches. Get it now before your gay cousin starts getting into it. –Miss Namella Kim (In the Red)

## IMMORTAL LEE COUNTY KILLERS II: *Love Is a Charm of Powerful Trouble: LP*

Oh my God! I was reading the new Rolling Stone and they said that this band was hot, right up there with Snoop Dogg! Dude, that magazine is so hip. I mean, do you remember the Britney interview? Well, she’s rock. And you know Rolling Stone rocks ‘cause it’s like that band the Rolling Stones. They got their name from there, right? Yeah, like the Immortal Lee County Killers are part of the new guitar and drums “back-to-basics” garage stuff, you know? Like, if you like the Strokes and the White Stripes then you’re gonna like... Enough of that. The Immortal Lee County Killers II, are not one of the new “back-to-basics, drums and guitar” bands. What they’ve got going on is old. It’s been around since before we were all born and will be around long after we are gone. It’s power over yourself. It’s freedom to live. It’s creeping. It’s low down. It’s up there in the heavens waiting. Or it could be just around the corner. The Cheetah and **RAZORCAKE 87** The Token One have



been shaking sweaty souls in the South for years. "If you don't know, you better ask somebody." These boys are doing it as right as it can be done. And that's with respect for the roots from Willie Dixon, to the unknown authored songs of hard times past, and all the way up to the present-day R. L. Burnside. They're bringing a message for the times to the poets, to the people, to the philosophers, to our history, America the Troubled. It's all hell and bad weather these days. Hold on people and pull it together. A lot of uncertainty lies up ahead. It's times like this where we'd be wise to check with our history, to call up the voices which have been lying stacked on the shelves. It's time to look on back and find the strength and wisdom for today. It's in our hearts. It's in our souls. —BD Williams (Estrus)

**INFLUENTS, THE:**  
***Some of the Young:* CD**

Think of Green Day meets Squeeze, but even more poppy. If you can imagine that. —Donofthedeath (Adeline)

**INVISIBLES, THE:**  
***Walking Away from Things We Are Not:* CD**

Well, get ready to walk away from being a good band, then. Super generic music, super affected vocals (the cockney 'A's) I wish they'd disappear. —Megan (we\_the\_invisibles@hotmail.com)

**JAMES MASON:**  
***Carnival Sky:* CD**

Tries to do the breathy Elliot Smith thing, but in a way that makes Elliot look tough. —Megan (Sonoface)

**JANET BEAN & THE CONCERTINA WIRE:**  
***Dragging Wonder Lake:* CD**

Session musician '70s-style easy listening which is rarely good, interesting, groovy, charming, fun, challenging, fast, or worth a dollar. —Cuss Baxter (Thrill Jockey)

**JEA: *We Know You Suck:* CD**  
Like the best works of art and literature, from Milton to Dante to Bosch to Grunewald, the records of some bands just deserve to be perpetually available so future generations can readily get their hands on them and glean some influence when the need arises. Case in point this disc here, which contains some of the most influential and exemplary music ever produced by a hardcore punk band. Collected for your listening pleasure are the tracks from the *Blatant Localism* EP, the *Valley of the Yakes 12"*, damn near every track that appeared on a compilation (conspicuously absent are the versions of "Guess What" and "Middle America" from the *Sudden Death* and *We Got Power* comps, respectively), and an unreleased gem here and there. What makes them so damn special, you ask? Well, let's not touch upon the fact that they almost single-handedly dragged the whole skatepunk out of the dark corners of the scene and into the limelight. Let's put aside that they managed to come up with a sound wholly original and singular in a subgenre that was, at the time, up to its eyeballs in stagnant, hypocritical dogma and monkey-see-monkey-doism, by melding high-speed hardcore (then referred to as "thrash," which, like "hardcore," apparently means crappy speed metal these days) and unintelligible lyrics with surf-rock, infusing the whole thing with a sense of humor and fuck-it-all attitude and making it sound like not only the most normal combination on earth, but that any asshole could pick up

a guitar and do the same. Let's ignore the fact that the bulk of their first four releases quite possibly served as the soundtrack for damn near every grind, ollie, boneless, acid drop, front-side air and face plant attempted in a backyard pool or half-pipe in 1980s America. What makes them so special? Simple. They fucking rocked and, twenty years down the line, even the most dated track on here STILL fucking rocks. Sure, we can gripe about the fact that the *Mad Gardens* EP and their self-titled LP aren't on here, the latter of which included arguably their shining moment, "The Day Walt Disney Died," but that would be like your mom making a great meal with all your favorite foods and you whining 'cause she forgot the mashed potatoes and the corn. If Alternative Tentacles has any kind of heart, they'll rectify the situation by following this up with a disc compiling those releases in short order (and while we're at it, what are the odds of a retrospective CD of Tucson's Conflict? Just thought I'd ask), so shut up and enjoy what's already on your plate. Let us all rejoice, for a huge chunk of JFA's best, most important material is back in circulation and readily available, and, like the reissue of Oscar Zeta Acosta's book, *Revolt of the Cockroach People*, let's just hope it stays that way. —Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

**JUMBO'S KILLCRANE:**  
***Carnaval de Carne:* CD**

Noisy metal. Not bad, but not particularly interesting, either. It is noisy, though, and I guess that can be construed as a good thing. —Jimmy Alvarado (Crucial Blast)

**KISSING CHAOS:**  
***Enter with a Bullet:* CDEP**

Well-behaved Foo Fighter type rock that blows open into these screamy, angry Vision of Disorder parts. So are you trying to attract the coquettish sorority girls or scare them away? (Hint: sorority girls need to have the rabbit turds scared out of them from time to time. It's good for them....) Go away until you make up your minds. —Aphid Pewit (Fueled By Ramen)

**KNOCKOUT: *Searching for Solid Ground:* CD**

This pop-punk release from Fearless, a label which is apparently trying to lay claim to being the ancestral home of nearly all music that sucks, made me consider playing Russian Roulette with a Glock 21. I want to hunt this band down and demand an explanation from each and every one of these tattooed, pierced, plugged, spiky-haired pop-punk fuckheads. And as I brandish the crowbar at them, I will demand that they simply answer this — do they really think that mainstream Hot Topic punk doesn't suck enough already and that they single-handedly need to provide us with conclusive proof of how much worse it can get? Hate isn't a strong enough word to describe my complete and utter revulsion and antipathy for this album. —Puckett (Fearless)

**KOWALSKIS, THE/ THE LULUBELLES: split 7"**

This is a split of two mid-tempo, female-fronted rock'n'roll bands. The Kowalskis: strange thing about The Kowalskis is that they can sing a song called "Depression Overdrive" and make it sound fun. That's a good thing. They round off their side of the split with a cool anthem that could've been written by most of the women I've dated in the

past: "I Love You Baby But I Hate Your Friends." The Lulubelles: these ladies pick up the pace a bit and rip out of the speakers like a Dutch version of Fabulous Disaster. They have good harmonies and a lot of energy. This side of the record didn't grab me at first, but now it won't let me go. —Sean Carswell (Thunderbaby)

#### LANGHORNS:

##### **Mission Exotica: CD**

Straight-outta-the-'60s (by way of present-day Sweden) neo-loungesurf with Middle Eastern and Latin influences that push it past the level of other popular astroplaner surftwangers, so far past that you can't even go there without a highball in one hand. If Langhorns were a cereal, it'd be inedible because they don't make shit like this anymore. —Cuss Baxter (Bad Taste)

#### LANTERNJACK, THE:

##### **Look Alive: CD**

Kinda rock, kinda punk, kinda like Soundgarden, kinda sure it's gonna end up in the shit pile. —Jimmy Alvarado (Lowdown)

#### LAST TARGET:

##### **What Caused the Problem? b/w God's Gamble: 7"**

Fuck yeah! Right when the needle hit the wax I knew this was going to be good. It's a Japanese band featuring one of the ladies from Thug Murder oscillating her vocals with a guy. It's snarly, seamless, tooth-rattling punk rock with both barrels a-blazin' that's less oi and more straight-ahead punk than her previous outfit. If I have to make some comparisons, I'd go with she sounds like a glass-gurgling Joan Jett in a band as talented and scorching as The Urchin (lots of effortless time changes and bits of flash) but more intentionally rough and burly. I have no idea what they're singing about, but at the end, it sounds like "Death Star, Death Star, Death Star. Grrraarrh!" Can't help but like this. Recommended. —Todd (TKO)

#### LOADS, THE:

##### **Beach Banshee: 7"**

Have to give them credit. Most of the band members are still in high school and are getting a head start in the right direction when their schoolmates are sucking whatever disposable nu-dong music the radio's currently playing. They've got a lot of the trappings of prototypical OC punk — Crowd-style bright guitar, Tim McVeigh of Smogtown on drums, early Social Distortion scratchiness, and a love of the beach. It's also mixed in with a more straight-up love of rock (mostly with the mid tempos). All that said, it's okay. My jaw's not dropping and I'm not rushing out the door to see them, but I'd stick around and see them play and, if they needed it, help them lift their bass cabinet up on stage. —Todd (Pelado)

#### LOST SOUNDS, THE: **Rat's Brains and Microchips: CD**

This band just keeps getting better and better. It's more doomy, creepy, and complex than anything else that they have done, while still retaining the great hooks. I'd say more but I'm kind of at a loss for words, although I do hope that one day "FORMER MEMBERS OF THE REATARDS! REATARDS REATARDS REATARDS!!!" won't be such a selling point for the Lost Sounds. —Josh (Empty)

#### MACHINE GUN PETE AND THE AMMUNITION:

##### **The Rawness of Truth: 7"**

These guys make Billy Childish's output sound like a 48-track studio, but the absolute crudeness works, somehow, and it's got me scratching my belly in slight wonder. Underneath the tin cans acting as cymbals, the bass lines falling out, and the spittle-strewn, cancer polyp screaming there are some undeniable hooks. Kinda the aural equivalent a weaving drunk who was a golden gloves boxer decades before. It's deviant trashcan rock by people you'd probably never invite inside but enjoy on the street corner for at least four songs. Forget garage rock, here's curb rock in league with the Crypt Kickers and Hasil Adkins. —Todd (Dylaramma)

#### MARVELS, THE:

##### **self-titled: CD**

The Marvels are in my top five best live shows ever and I've seen them more than fifty times, easily. Originally from Portland, ME, transplanted to Boston, these boys put on such an energetic, drunken cluster fuck that leaves you drenched in beer, sweat, and insults and only wanting more. The CD lets you actually hear how fucking good it really is, but the energy just doesn't come through as much in the recording. There's a lot going on in the music that I never caught on to live. It all blends and works off one another, rather than one part played over the other to cover up a weakness, kind of like D4 that way. They just don't have weak spots. Staffy's vocals are raspy and raw (think Black Halos), which just make it even better. Whodda thought a tubby-ass band could sound so good? —Megan (www.themarvels.net)

#### MATERIALISTICS:

##### **Tomorrow is Fat and Old: CD**

Think the Dead Boys without the Detroit influence. Not bad. —Jimmy Alvarado (Super Secret)

#### MEET THE VIRUS:

##### **self-titled: CD**

I absolutely LOATHED Naked Aggression and, seeing as two of the people responsible for that monstrosity-cum-band are involved in this one, suffice it to say that this ain't one iota better. You would think that someone who studied classical music might be able to come up with at least one good song, but that doesn't seem to be the case. Particularly frightening was the hidden track, an abysmal cover of Judas Priest's "Breakin' the Law." —Jimmy Alvarado (Know)

#### MIDNIGHT EVILS, THE:

##### **Straight 'Til Morning: CD**

Ah yes, good ol' straight-up, nut-crunching rawknoll is alive and well and kicking heads in — despite all the ghastly Mengele-esque experiments that have been done to it recently. Overall, the mighty Midnight Evils fall somewhere between the Candy Snatchers and *Super Shitty to the Max*-era Hellcopters. Good company in my book. Dirt-spitting, beer-soaked bad ass punk rawk that will clear out a room full of emos quicker than a sweater sale at TJ Maxx. —Aphid Peewit (Estrus)

#### MILKMAN: **Is This Punk Enough for You?: CD**

Nothing like a dose of speedy Dutch hardcore to get the blood bumping while you're at work waiting for the leader of

your country to break damn near every international law available and wave his middle finger at the rest of the world by engaging in the business of "regime change." This is really good stuff here and fans of DS-13 and the like should take note. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

#### MONSTERS, THE:

##### **I See Dead People: CD**

Trashy '60s fuzz rock with an over-the-top screamer leading the pack. Some of the tracks are a little more formulaic than's good for 'em, as you can pretty much guess which tunes they're based upon, but in all, this is some pretty good stuff. —Jimmy Alvarado (Voodoo Rhythm)

#### MOONEY SUZUKI,

##### **THE: *Electric Sweat*: CD**

Oh, thank god. Another crucial reissue of forgotten garage rock from way back in the garage rock heyday of nine months ago. If you don't know what this crap is all about, I will warn you. The lead singer of the Mooney Suzuki looks like the lead singer of Steppenwolf. The cover of this album looks like the cover of the first Grand Funk Railroad album, and in fact, my dad actually thought it was a Grand Funk Railroad CD. "In a Young Man's Mind" is what "Kick Out the Jams" would sound like if it were played by soulless Grand Funk Railroad fans who replaced the revolutionary lyrics with dumb rockstar stuff about Jimmy Page and girls. A couple of songs sound like Neil Diamond minus the kitsch factor that makes Neil Diamond appealing to some people. Most of the songs sound like (surprise!) Steppenwolf and Grand Funk Railroad, complete with all the wanky arena rock clichés that appeal to the legions of Aerosmith and Bon Jovi pants-pissing fanboys. I would have forgotten what this sounded like if the "look how cool we are" attitude hadn't irritated me so much. If you like licking testicles and you listen to the Strokes, this is an essential part of your CD collection that will be traded in when you read about the next fad in *Spin*. Garage rock revival? If garage rock is what you are looking for, Tim Kerr has been in about seventy-five bands and they are all better than this. —Josh (Columbia)

#### MUNICIPAL WASTE/ BAD ACID TRIP: **Split: 7-inch EP**

Municipal: Hyper-speed hardcore band pays tribute to Kurt Russell. Fast and tight musically, but was kinda put off that they didn't pay homage to the man's career with Disney, which included starring roles in such unforgettable films as *The Absent Minded Professor*, *Follow Me Boys* and *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes*. Bad Acid: Although the grind influence is still in full effect, it actually sounds like they've slowed down a bit. Strangely, they remind me of early Bulimia Banquet on a couple of tracks. —Jimmy Alvarado (Municipal Waste)

#### NAKED RAYGUN: **Free Shit: CD**

This is two lives shows melded into one and these are Naked Raygun's last two shows from their hometown of Chicago in 1997. It could be a dicey affair. Live CDs usually blow. Either they're fake-live (like Social Distortion's *Live at the Roxy*) or they reek of "you-had-to-be-there"ism because the sound is recorded from a hand held recorder in the crowd. Although a huge Raygun fan, I'll admit that they had a couple of songs that sounded out of gas near the end of their

run. Those two potential caveats aside, holy fucking shit, this is an awesome CD. Not only is it a great, clear, very alive document of one of the finest punk bands ever to come out of the Midwest, it's a perfect capsule of NR's finest hours distilled down to twenty-two songs. Being so, I'd actually suggest this as both an introduction to someone who's never heard their inventive, challenging, yet rock solid music and to someone who owns all of their previous output if they're looking for a perfect set. Fuckin' cool. When's the last time you listened to twenty-two songs in a row and kept on saying, "No, that's my favorite"? —Todd (Haunted Town)

#### NIKKI CORVETTE: **Love Me b/w What's On My Mind: 7"**

Remember Nikki Corvette? Super poppy, cutesy stuff with a bit of edge in the late '70s to about '81. Well, she's got a single, the first thing released in over twenty years. Can she still pull it off after all this time, you ask? Hell yeah she can! Fans of the Pinkz, Exploding Hearts, and Manda and the Marbles will love it. —Megan (Rapid Pulse)

#### NINETEEN:

##### **Tearing Me Apart: CD**

Wherein Nineteen chronicles their career thus far, from their early work as a thrashy pop unit (at the tender ages of fifteen) through their evolution (at age seventeen) into a highly competent and invigorating, slightly poppy thrash outfit. They could've issued just the latest sixteen tracks and had a satisfying, if short, set of A-list hardcore, but there was space so they put their two other sessions on there and I, for one, am glad of it. Top notch codfish. —Cuss Baxter (Dark Front)

#### NO CHOICE:

##### **Dry River Fishing: CD**

My affection for this album, such as it is, is colored by what I see as a lack of explicitly political punk as the United States marches to and engages in war. Even so, this had to come out of the U.K. It doesn't tread new ground in terms of beliefs, expression or form. It's typical left-wing punk. It's not even that it's good left-wing punk; it just seems to stand alone amongst songs about high school and girls that bad guys want and other pop tripe to appear necessary, if only for the moment. Musically, it falls somewhere between Four Letter Word and *Fore*-era Pegboy with hints of Leatherface, Fuel and Propagandhi thrown in for good measure. And for shits and giggles, the breakdown in the middle of "Wonderland" sounds like it might as well be a cover of Jane's Addiction's "Ted, Just Admit It ..." which just puts the final stake in this whole record. There's not much here, here. There was just enough to make me think that it might be worth listening to again. And now I'm done with that idea. —Puckett (Newest Industry)

#### NOFX: **Regaining Unconsciousness: CDEP**

A teaser of sorts, with three tracks from the upcoming album *The War on Errorism* and an exclusive track. Fat Mike and the gang have come a long way. In their early years here in LA, they were another of a hundred punk bands that played around. Mike (as he was called back then) was just a young punker who attended Beverly Hills High. Somewhere along the line, he moved up to SF. Bad Religion put out the classic album **RAZORCAKE 89**

*Suffer* and a light bulb went on in Mike's head. The band had a transformation and became what they are now, after endless touring and recording over many years. I may not be a fan of their music, but I do respect them. When punk was dead, they were in the van touring all over. I have a friend in Canada who used to tell me what shows were happening in his area and NOFX seemed to be up there as much as they would come through LA. That is a tough life. Me, I'm a wimp. I hated being in the van, driving up to Bay Area to play a couple of shows. The new tracks will not turn away fans and should continue to recruit new ones. They have perfected their songcraft after all these years. The hidden track with snippets of songs from their new album formatted as a commercial is pretty funny. Hey, a band that can sell over a million copies of a release with no commercial airplay or videos can't be half bad. —Donofthedeath (Fat)

**OKMONIKS: *Rustle Up Some Action with the...: 7***

We get a lot of music at Razorcake that just seems to chase trends. A lot of trashy garage rock, a lot of new wave revival bands, stuff like that. Then, something like the Okmoniks comes along and it manages to dance circles around those trends and come out rocking. The Okmoniks play quirky garage rock that's backed with an electric organ and a really bouncy rhythm section. And, boy, does it work. *Rustle Up Some Action with the Okmoniks* is a three-song seven inch that follows right along in style with their first seven inch, *Rock'N'Roll with the Okmoniks*. It's great stuff. Side A and Side B are exactly the same, but I usually end up

flipping this record every time I play it, just so I can finish dancing around my living room. I can't wait until this band puts out a full-length. —Sean Carswell (Lo-Fi)

**PANIC:**

***When Monsters Move: CDEP***

Following their last Crackle release, *Get Well*, the band comes back with six tracks of melodies and pop harmonies. Imagine going to elementary school and the Ramones are the music teachers and the Queers and Screeching Weasel are the students. The students are converted and go out in the yard and pick on the kindergarten kids because their music teacher taught them that Britney Spears and Mariah Carey was real music. After a number of beatings, the kindergartners are converted and become the band Panic. Now that Panic have graduated from school, they start their infection tour around Europe and its effects are now trickling here to the states. How can you pass up a band with a song titled "Stupid Music Played by Idiots"? —Donofthedeath (Crackle)

**PAPERBACKS, THE:**

***self-titled: CD***

So fucking terrible. "You better go for broke! You're already broken!" —Megan (Enabler)

**PINE HILL HAINTS, THE:**

***Alabama Country Ghost Music: 7***

The title says it all. Well, maybe not the ghost part, as they are lacking a saw player on this release, but this is still good, down home country music by people whose definition of country music is not Brooks & Dunn or the Dixie Chicks. Unless you are some crusty gutter punk

that only listens to Crass, you'll probably like this. Caveat: The label on the record is blank and you have to look at the engraving in the runout groove to see which is the A-side. Who cares? Send 'em five bucks and tell 'em to keep up the good work. —Josh (Nation of Kids)

**PISTOL GRIP:**

***Another Round: CD***

So much better than their debut, *The Shots from the Kalico Rose*, that it's surprising that this is the same band. The street punk is still there but the music sounds more mature. The production takes them off the streets and makes them sound more legitimate. They seem to have more hooks than a bunch of fisherman on a chartered fishing boat this time around. The music is definitely more rocking than they have been in the past, almost like they have taken the influences of Youth Brigade (since they are on the band's label) and punk pioneers of the past to truly fine tune their sound. Now I have to make the effort to go see them live. —Donofthedeath (BYO)

**PLAN A PROJECT:**

***self-titled: CD***

Kind of like ska-punk without the ska. Crap. —Megan (Go-Kart)

**PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS: *Spearheading the Sin Movement: CDEP***

This is the clash of metal and emo; it's really strange. My friend Phil said that this is a pretty different direction for them. He also says it's kind of like early Metallica, but I don't see it. I'm not sure how I feel about this. —Megan (No Idea)

**PONYS: *self-titled: 7***

This is the second band (Kill Me

Tomorrow was the other) in as many months that takes elements of early Cure — the swaying rhythms, more than a couple of guitar lines, and mooney wry-smile vocals — and turn them on their ear for a satisfying, updated effect. The entire affair, instead of being plugged into the gray clouds, feels less theatric (it's not glam mope) than the Cure. It's not frenetic but it's not super polished and the slower parts build a nice atmosphere that's dense and you get the feeling that a ton of original thought went into these songs, much like The Starvations newest record. —Todd (Contaminated)

**RADON: *We Bare All: CD***

If you're not hip to Radon, now's the time. Although they've been broken up for years, they're Florida's answer to the riddle of what happens when you take Husker Du, make them squeegee off and drink their own sweat like pints of beer, have Leatherface become restaurant managers in some backwoods southern town while holding the place hostage, and the whole thing somehow mutates — with duct tape, exhaust pipes from broken vans, and some sort of unidentified fungus — into one of the best sheer will punk bands that most of America's never listened to. The playing, although not in the slightest flashy, is amazing in a tight/sloppy way. It's all about dichotomies, humility, poor judgement and shooting themselves in the foot while still having a good time, ending with an occasional microphone up the ass. Anyhow, on this pup are their first two seven inches (that, since their release, have never more than twenty 7's deep from yours truly's record player. Evan Dorkin, the man behind Milk and Cheese, illustrated the cover of *In Your Home*), some of their comp tracks, and

live tracks, five that have never been released. (The last track, listed "Misfits," is actually several Misfits songs.) Long time favorites continue to be so. If you're in the buying mood, get their album, 28, too. Great shit. Four years after its release, I finally don't mind the last song on it. —Todd (No Idea)

**RAMBLER 454:**  
**Talk Down the Sky: CD**

Think "alternative rock's answer to the Black Crowes" and then head for the hills. When they described themselves as "emo-billy," I should've taken them at their word, 'cause this pretty much bites the weenie. —Jimmy Alvarado (ReadyFireAim)

**RAMBLER 454:**  
**Talk Down the Sky: CD**

Adult contemporary country crossover, anyone? I need a Q-tip. My ears feel dirty. —Megan (Ready FireAim)

**RAW POWER: Still Screaming (After 20 Years): LP**

This is the newest output by these punks who put Italy on the international punk map. At least for me, they were the very first Italian punk band that I heard back in the early '80s. The *Screams from the Gutter* LP and the *Wop Hour* EP were in constant rotation at my house. Those two releases and the *Mine to Kill* LP are my favorites. Those records are crossover classics. I actually got to meet the band and see them live, if I remember correctly, around 1985. They were amazing shows and nice people. This is the last recorded work by guitarist Giuseppe Codeluppi, who died unexpectedly last year. The singer Mauro Codeluppi remains as the

only original member from the beginning. This new release is consistent with their last two releases, *Reptile House* and *Trust Me*. The songs are more straight forward punk with less metal leanings. Luckily for us, their age hasn't slowed these guys down. The band and the songs still pulverize with their aggression. The lyrics haven't strayed from the original formula. Their lyrics are still pissed off and are questioning what irritates them. It's an interesting choice though for a cover on this one. They cover Nirvana's *Territorial Pissing*. Isn't it usually the case a younger band covers an older one? This band was around before Nirvana. —Donofthedeath (Six Weeks)

**REAL MCKENZIES, THE: Pissed Tae Th' Gills: CD**

It's the third full length from these Vancouver, BC kilt-wearing, Celtic punk playing, hard drinking, Robbie Burns loving, Scotland worshipping lads. It's their second time around being on Joe Keithley's (DOA) Sudden Death Label. The last release was 2001's *Loch'd and Loaded* on Honest Don's. This time around, you get a live set that was recorded, I think, three years ago. It features many songs from their 1998 first release, *Clash of the Tartans*, plus many Scottish traditionals re-done with their tongue and cheek flavor. If this is all new to you, this band mixes punk rock with a bagpipe to make a ruckus. They make songs that make you want to hold your pint high in the air or at least drink to the point that the evening never existed. Fans of Flogging Molly, the Pogues or Dropkick Murphys will appreciate the craft of this band's wares they have created in the last ten years. —Donofthedeath (Sudden Death)

**RED CHORD, THE: Fused Together in Revolving Doors: CD**

I never thought I'd be grateful for receiving a modern hardcore record in my review pile, but after the other piles I've reviewed, this sounds great. Think metallic hardcore — the *really* brutal stuff. Think power violence. Think grindcore. Think Carcass. Think Entombed. This seems to fall *just* on the punk side of death metal and only because the contact email address begins and ends with X. With that said, if I hadn't just finished listening to three albums which consisted of the most mealy-mouthed, treacly pop-punk I've heard in weeks, I probably wouldn't like this either, but right now, it seems like a shot of atropine straight to the chest. —Puckett (Robotic Empire)

**REDD KROSS: Neurotica: CD**

Today i am officially old: I am now receiving promo CD reissues of albums to review that i received promo vinyl versions of to review fifteen years ago. This record was originally released in 1987, during my two-year stint as a college radio DJ (before the men with the walkie-talkies and pistols escorted me from the premises) on the ill-fated Bigtime™ record label, who went belly-up soon afterwards, thusly allegedly rendering said album somewhat difficult to capture. I wouldn't know; at least at WGBW, this thing was the darling of the "College Rock" set (sort of a precursor to "alternative," i guess, with R.E.M. as the spiritual point guard — take from that what you will), and overplayed (especially "Play My Song," yecch) to the point of near-absurdity both on the air and at parties, to the extent where it was so ubiquitous for a time that i to this day

have a hard time believing it ever became difficult to find used vinyl copies on the cheap, ever. Anyway, inasmuch as this reissue seems to be accruing at least moderate buzz as the "great, lost" Redd Kross album (that YOU, who might have missed it the first go-round, must acquire immediately or court certain lack of status amongst your more knowledgeable peers), allow me to weigh in on the subject: Not only do i NOT consider *Neurotica* to be particularly "lost," i also don't think it's that "great" either. I mean, i'll cop to playing "Frosted Flake" on my radio show with some regularity for a while (occasionally reprising same with "Peach Kelli Pop" or "Janus, Jeanie & George Harrison" if i was in a particularly pro-Redd Kross mood that night), but, for the most part, i thought this seeming bulwark of punky psych-pop — recorded at the intersection of Brady Bunch Boulevard and the Charles Manson Freeway — was just a gateway record (drug?), the thing that signaled to me that hey, these guys might actually be able to pull off something REALLY GREAT in their post-first-EP period AFTER all — the record that bridged the credibility gap between the "i could care less what that band does these days" state i'd been in since 1982's *Born Innocent* (my review of which earned me my first ever real Hate Letter, signed by the band and kept in my desk to this day), and my prostrating myself before their one TRUE masterpiece, 1990's *Bubblegum Factory* CD (the succeeding *Switchblade Sister* EP and the *Phaseshifter* album are also quite worthy). In short: THIS RECORD AIN'T THAT GREAT. This point is rendered moot by the fact that, even if i was as big a fan of this album as many of my peers were, i'd have to insist you steer the fuck clear of this CD: The

aggravating sonic thinness that was always part of the record (thanks to production by, of all unlikely villains, Tommy Ramone??!) has been aggravated to aggravatingly aggravating new heights of aggravation in the transfer to digital; that is to say, IF YOU'RE GOING TO BUY THIS RECORD, GO FIND AN OLD VINYL COPY. THIS CD SOUNDS LIKE SHIT. The crackly ultra-treble (the hi-hats in particular) renders this version practically unlistenable, as far as i'm concerned. On the vinyl, there's enough Shake-Yo'-Booty-ism left in the bass groove that the title track still sounds a bit like "Taxman," as i'm sure was the intent; that's not the case with the CD - further, on the vinyl, the sitar (or guitar-which-sounds-like-a-sitar) solo in "Play My Song" actually still sounds passably sitar-like; again, not the case on the CD. Etc. What a drag it AIN'T gettin' old! BEST SONG: "Frosted Flake" BEST SONG TITLE: "Ghandi Is Dead (I'm the Cartoon Man)" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Excerpts from 1982 Red Cross hate letter, verbatim: "You'd sound pschycadelic too if you recorded on 10 hits of acid (and that's just the engineer). As a matter of fact, we're on Angel Dust right NOW!!! doesn't that make you sick? Well tough shit you little hardore turd! I bet you're bald!" and "My favorite drug is Angel Dust it's got for you it helps you be creative. Im on it right now HA HA HA dont you wish you had some dildoe" and, finally "We hate you shit head." Right on, man. -Rev. Nørb (Five Foot Two/ Oglío)

#### **REGGIE AND THE FULL EFFECT: *Under the Tray*: CD**

I have done a lot of things in my life that I'm not proud of. I have woken up on strange floors after benders, vomited on girls who I had been in love with for years, gagged on my own sick in my sleep and lived to tell the tale, pissed myself after drinking too much, gotten into drunken brawls that I barely remember, shattered glasses in my hands to prove points and bled all over myself and others while sitting in the middle of restaurants - you get the idea. However, even at my lowest moments, even when dimly regaining a drunken sort of consciousness next to a girl who was shouting, "What the fuck is all this puke in the bed?" at 3 A.M., I knew there were things that I would never do. I knew it might take me a while to identify them, but getting this record helped because I will never defile myself by willfully listening to any Reggie And The Full Effect song again. -Puckett (Vagrant)

#### **REVENGE THERAPY: self-titled: CDEP**

Spotless, relentless hardcore in the classic fastpart/moshpart style with a tiny bit of overarching melodic guitar and screamy but legible vocals; too bad it's only five songs (your CD player will say it's six, but stop it before the extra track. Trust me.) And dig this: they're named after the Jawbreaker record, and they have a split EP out with a band named My War; how something is that? -Cuss Baxter (Amendment)

#### **RISE AGAINST: *Revolutions Per Minute*: CD**

As I get older, the facts in my brain are more and more disorganized with all the new music I am introduced to each month. I'm not complaining, by any stretch. Pulling facts out of my peanut-sized brain becomes a marathon event. I was first introduced to this band by hear-

ing their track on the *Live Fat, Die Young: Fat Music Volume 5* comp. I was totally blown away by the song "Join the Ranks." Their full length debut, *The Unraveling*, came out but I missed out because of the transition from one magazine to this one. I had it on my list to buy, but never got around to buying it myself. I forgot about the band and received *Uncontrollable Fatulence: Fat Music Volume 6*. Their track, "Generation Lost," reminded me that I had put them back on the list of music I needed to pick up. Time passed once again and I never got around to purchasing said item. Low and behold, their second full length was sitting in my box at the almighty Razorcake empire. Knowing that I was going to enjoy this, I pop this puppy into the CD player and get a familiar sound of power mixed with melody. The songs are aggressive but not overtly abrasive. Their lyrics are well written, personal, and political. Production-wise, you know what you are getting from Fat. Fans not familiar with this band but are familiar with bands like Anti-Flag or Good Riddance will appreciate the sonic energy this band produces. Hearing them again is like a swift kick in the butt to go out and buy their previous release and maybe go see them live. Let's see... -Donofthedeat (Fat)

#### **ROCK KILLS KID: self-titled: CD**

Rock did NOT kill the kid - what killed the kid was a whopping overdose of syrupy-sweet, cry-baby, cuddle punk like this sickening heap of butt marshmallows. Ugh. The band that does the theme song for *Friends* is more threatening, and for that matter, one hell of a lot more interesting. I can just feel new cavities chewing through my teeth as this drippy little disc continues pumping its candy coated crap into my room. Time to go brush my teeth six or seven times and make it all go away. Thank god for "stop" buttons. -Aphid Peewit (Fearless)

#### **RUBBER CITY REBELS: *Pierce My Brain*: CD**

Punk rock, '77-style, from a band that was actually around at that time, so there's no doubt they know what they're doin'. This is newly recorded material from this veteran band and, while the lyrics are kinda iffy in places, the music is dead-on solid rock'n roll with just the right amount of sneer to separate 'em from the Stoooge-poseurs saturating the subgenre. -Jimmy Alvarado (Smog Veil)

#### **RUINERS, THE: *How's That Grab Ya?*: CD**

I think it's supposed to be a punk band - there's a song called "Punk Son" (which goes, "Father, love your punk son". Maybe it's not supposed to be punk) and the guy's all bloody on the back cover, but dude, this things got all the power of a chopped-in-half AAA battery, and the abundance of keyboards and girlman vocals doesn't help, either. A couple songs are about vampire dating and graveyard lawn jobs, so let's call it lame gothpunk for turkeys. -Cuss Baxter (Disaster)

#### **SHEMPS, THE: self-titled: CDR**

Here's seventeen raw tracks from those New York hooligans, The Shemps, who introduce rock'n roll into their unabashed punk rock with glorious results. It's catchy, toe-tapping fun that brings to mind the renaissance of the garage years, pre-mock blues and major label interest, when bands like The Devil Dogs, The Candy Snatchers (god bless



the bleeders), etc. brought the clubhouse shreds down, back when nobody really cared for this type of music. So, The Shemps went through a major lineup overhaul since we last heard from them several years ago when they invaded Japan two years ago. Dave the Spazz (of WFMU fame) left his post as lead singer under mysterious circumstances. Taking over the helm is Artie – the loveable, diminutive yet energy laden new vocalist that howls and hoots like Screamin' Jay Hawkins in the punk rock era. Artie brings a fresh shot of urgency and Bill Florio, their long time be-boppin' bassist and *MRR* contributor told me Artie crashed his car into the side of a club where The Shemps were playing one night – they've been inseparable since. Ah, I love a good love story. Rounding out the line up is Sue (who has left since this writing) on rhythm guitar, Jimmy The Love Machine on those solid drums and our good friend Squeaky (ex-*Flipside*, *Fizz* contributor/ Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black go-go dancer/ Larry Clarke model/ ex-Stallions guitarist and all around good guy) who takes a violin bow to his guitar like a head-hunter goin' to work on the other tribe. Eat your heart out The Creation! The best thing about The Shemps is that their longest song clocks in at an epic 2:18. I love a band that doesn't waste my time with Beatles chord progressions and all that unnecessary studio time wanking! The Shemps came down here back in December where they played a series of shows with The Stupor Stars, which brought us the long awaited reunion of old friends, Mr. Rick Hall and Squeaky (they were both in the Stallions.) The shows were fun filled with breakdancing, dildoin' mics, Squeaky doin' the splits, and a couple of unnamed girls doin' their best "Don't Talk to Me" GG Allin karaoke. Artie topped it off by telling me he once macked on a chick with one arm. Those zany Shemps! –Miss Namella Kim (The Shemps)

#### **SINCE BY MAN: We Sing The Body Electric: CD**

Metal, but metal of that new fancy kind where they use slick, spare, modern artsy graphics, have a lot of different parts to the songs, appear to be making some manner of aesthetic overture to pseudointellectuals and occasionally wear hammer and sickle t-shirts. I kinda wanted to read thru the lyrics just to see if they used the word "sophistry," but I never got around to it. **WORST SONG:** Whatever one's longest, i guess. **WORST SONG TITLE:** "Parole En Liberta." **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** Back cover contains claim that "Helvetica Is The Typeface Of Bourgeois Consumption," which was a pretty rad typographical thought, say, IN ABOUT 1985 or something. In contrast, the font the band uses for the lyrics – Monotype Ehrhardt maybe? – looks like the kinda thing one typesets theater programs in, or maybe those sissy menus they have on the chairs in the good seats at Chicago Bulls games. –Rev. Nørb (Revelation)

#### **SIoux CITY PETE & THE BEGGARS: Sodomy & Failure: CD**

Like a John Holmes spoof shootin' all over the room, this band of bent and bawdy buttholes makes a mightily magnificent mess kicking the corn-cruised crap out of the Gun Club and the Immortal Lee County Killers with delirious disregard for regular rules of fidelity and finesse and fancypants fashion. Nine

noxious nuggets of blues-punk bombast blast, bug-eyed, through turgid trash-heaps and straight-up sonic sadism, leaving lacerated lollygaggers and weeping windbags in the wake of the aggravated aural assault. Also, Pete's from the Chicken Hawks. –Cuss Baxter (Welfare)

#### **SNOW DOGS: Deep Cuts, Fast Remedies: CD**

Yo! Punk rock MTV style. –Donofthead (Victory)

#### **SNUFF: Disposable Income: CD**

Oh boy! Pure pop bliss! This is the follow-up to the *Blue Gravy: Phase 9* CDEP that was, in my opinion, above average. They come back with a bang and show their superiority to the world. The songs are as infectious as ever and continue to put my face into contortions, forcing a happy face. The production has been the key for many years. The guitars are thick and add little shards of metal chugging while not being too aggressive. A band with a Hammond organ is all right with me, too! Duncan is still behind the kit, banging away like a spastic monkey while keeping it together to sing the vocals. I like the fact they do experiment and try to add new elements to the music to keep things fresh. They brought in more players this time around to fill the sound to new expanses. It might be blasphemous to say, but I think they are the Beatles of punk rock – music that immediately takes you to another world without leaving the outside area of your speakers with melodies that I would die for to write. If you haven't taken the giant step and sampled these musical masters, what are you waiting for? While you're at it, you need to check out Guns n' Wankers and Dogpiss, which are side projects of Snuff from the past. Why did they leave Fat? –Donofthead (Union)

#### **STALAG 13: In Control: CD**

Bill from Dr. Strange comes through again and brings back another classic from the dead. Originally released on Upstart Records (Jorge Newberry, where are you?) in 1984 and bootlegged numerous amounts of times by Lost and Found out of Germany, this Nardcore classic is available to the masses again. This record was on regular rotation on so many punks' stereos back then that I barely ever played my own copy. I actually burned out hearing them and never played my record ever again. I bought the three limited edition copies of this on vinyl recently and never played them. What a collector nerd I am sometimes! While at Razorcake HQ, I saw that this was in my box. I slap the disc into the CD player and see if I will like it after all these years. Like the hypocrite that I am, I fuckin' love this! The songs are familiar as ever but welcomed. Hearing the song "No Excuse" again was a reenactment of getting a boot to the head. The booklet has pictures of the band at the long-defunct Cathey de Grande here in Los Angeles which brought back good memories of seeing them there on a regular basis. There are also pictures of flyers that are still on the bedroom wall at my mother's house that I haven't taken down even though I haven't lived there in over fifteen years. Hearing the four bonus tracks was a welcome surprise. Three songs were recorded in the studio and the track "Selfish" was on the *We Got Power* comp. The last track, "Make a Change," is recorded live. I had put them below Nardcore greets like Dr. Know, Aggression, RKL, Ill Repute, and False Confessions, but I do step up on the

dummy box to admit that I was wrong. I sometimes wonder why I think the way I do. They were equals in a scene that created many great bands. –Donofthead (Dr. Strange)

#### **STARVATIONS: THE: Get Well Soon: CD**

The Starvations have been able to cinch the dark heart of so many styles of music, to squeeze it, have it languidly bleed down their arms and meander deep under their skin. Stains, that with no amount of scrubbing, will never come out. Equal parts sickness, celebration, and the macabre. The Starvations, immediately upon listening, have so much figured out: chemistry, alchemy, fermentation. The playing is too assured, too other-worldly realized. Possessed. There's a vision that doesn't have to stoop to the past in a constant bow of reverence, but to scoop it up by the ladle and have it violently sizzle over the glassy shards of the present. Yes, it's punk, but, thankfully, in the widest dilation. Touchstones are merely that – starting points: early Gun Club, The Blasters, fiery Nick Cave and I also hear distant echoes of Bauhaus. Not in sound, but in intent, they're also akin to what Throw Rag's all about. Then it's all boiled and shantied up with occasional piano, accordion, harmonica, and congas in a way that makes it seem more stripped down and closer to what I've always thought true roots music should sound like. True gothic, (in the original definition of the word) before it was attached to a genre of music – highlighting decay amongst the decadence. –Todd (GSL)

#### **STITCHES, THE: Twelve Imaginary Inches: CD**

What is there to say about the Stitches that hasn't been said before? You know the score here: snotty vocals, great mid-tempo punk rock, lots of creepers, and lots of intoxicants. Catchier than a venereal disease in Baltimore. I can't tell you which song is my favorite because the only place where the song titles are written is on the CD itself, but they are all good. There are a bunch of little keyboard parts on this. These guys must think they're Hawkwind or something. –Josh (TKO)

#### **STUPOR STARS, THE: Bernadette: EP**

This is snotty, snotty, snotty punk rock 'n' roll with a power pop twist. There is a real sense of urgency that translates well with a band like The Stupor Stars, one of the most overlooked bands ever. In the far future, after all is said and done, there will be some members dead and a group of geriatric punks who claim to be the real "Rick Hall or May Lou or King Roberto or Lowell or Alan" like all those fools who tried to say they were Buckwheat – nigga please. I was paid well in advanced by the band to tell you that this EP is good. Regardless of that bounced check, I still think this record rules. The B-Side is "Born to Run" by Bruce Springsteen – don't panic – it sounds nothing like the original. I asked Rick Hall, the singer "What's the deal with the Springsteen cover?" He answered, "The band decided to do it." I quipped back, "Oh so the ENTIRE band has bad taste?!" You know, I'm not down with The Boss because The Boss never existed. All I can remember is reading that Andy G admitted to liking Bruce Springsteen. Man, I thought that was pretty bold. I'm not bold – I just hate everything, except for this Stupor Stars EP. Satan bless the Stupor Stars. –Miss Namella Kim (Honeyhole)

**SUBVERSIVES, THE: From Here... to Nowhere: CD**  
This is supposed to blow – older looking American (or living in America) guys going back to UK punk roots. It's an activity that's been whipped more than a mistreating slave. But, for some inexplicable reason, this CD isn't only catchy solely an old familiar way. (Like, "Ooh, nice Partisans riff" or "so that's what the Toy Dolls would sound like when they're pissed" or "Man, the best of Cock Sparrer, that's some great shit.") The Subversives have actually introduced new wrinkles to a genre that I thought had been dry cleaned, hung up on a rack, and sold back as new to bondage pants-wearing teens at the mall. So, if you're at the store and your hand's burning from touching Total Cash Register, and you want something that's heavy, catchy, and you don't feel like they're singing solely to sell records to thirteen year olds with tall hair – and you like U.S. Bombs' *War Birth* or Dropkick Murphys *Do or Die* – this ain't a bad soundtrack to spend an evening playing darts or bowling to. Thumbs up. –Todd (Charged)

#### **SWINGIN' UTTERS: Dead Flowers, Bottles, Bluegrass and Bones: CD**

In the last five years, I sure have listened to a lot of punk. It tends to make a person jaded by hearing so much music. Things that I buy for myself might sit for a month before I actually listen to it. Not that it's bad, but sometimes it takes a lot more oomph to get me excited. So when I hear something progressive, it catches my attention. The Swingin' UTERS have progressed from album to album to continue to catch my attention. Their progression from an average street punk band to now is night and day. They still take the old school sound and add elements of piano, violin and other instruments to give their songs more flavor. Also, the three vocalist attack makes for a more layered appeal. The mix of songs on this release makes this an enjoyable listen from start to finish. The songs vary in style and tempo from each other. Many bands releases sound like one big song. That is not the problem here. One thing I can't get out of my head is that this band sounds like Social Distortion to me when Johnny sings. –Donofthead (Fat)

#### **THIS IS MY FIST!: I Don't Want to Startle You But They Are Going to Kill Most of Us: 7" EP**

The title of this 7" is reminiscent of the great book on the Rwandan genocide by Philip Gourvitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*. If you haven't read it and still think the holocaust is the only mass slaughter this century, I can't suggest it highly enough. The singer, Annie's (ex-Ambition Mission, an excellent Chicago band), voice is startlingly clear and distinct, much like how Allison from Discount could belt it out. It's both tender and barbed and can get nice and growly. From the name of the band, I was expecting some knuckleheaded floor-punching schmubs. Thankfully, it's more of a nice warning, much like This Bike Is a Pipebomb's name and intent is. Also, thankfully, it's a power trio that takes transposed cues from Jawbreaker (sensible time changes to keep the tide flowing), crunchier, less pop Tilt (nice and buzzy), and if it was ever bottled like a musical fragrance, it's got that East Bay Sound that's hard to

describe but is instantly recognizable. I like it lots. It's very realized for a band's first seven inch. Thumbs up. -Todd (Left of the Dial)

### **TIMVERSION, THE/ BAGGAGE: split 7"**

The Timversion: how do I accurately describe to you how amazing The Timversion are? Do I talk about how their sound is in line with some of my favorite bands like Tiltwheel, Super Chinchilla Rescue Mission, and Panthro UK United 13? Do you even know those bands? Do I talk about how, amidst the noise and chaos of their songs, there are a really cool, Replacements style melodies? Or do I just say, "Forget about everything else I've recommended to you and buy something by The Timversion first"? **Baggage:** maybe it's enough for me to just say that - in light of all my praise of The Timversion - I'm still happy to flip this record and hear the **Baggage** side. **Baggage** are in line with other bands on the Snuffy Smile label in the sense that they take a solid Leatherface influence and blend it with a fuzzy, Japanese rock'n'roll sound and end up blowing my mind. My only complaint about this seven inch is that it's so tough to get ahold of Snuffy Smile stuff in the US. If anyone knows of a US distro for these guys, please let me know. -Sean Carswell (Snuffy Smile)

### **TONE: Ambient Metals: CD**

Tone: by the haful. Ambient: yes. Metal: no. I got a little excited when I saw that Geordie Grindle from DC's Teen Idles was in it but that turned out to mean nothing. As the title sort of implies, it's a sub-Sonic Youth exercise in rhythmic instrumental drone that's thoughtful, unintrusive, and mild without being wimpy. -Cuss Baxter (Dischord)

### **TOTAL CHAOS: Punk Invasion: CD**

1) This album has covers of Twisted Sister and the Exploited. Take those two bands and make them one. Keep in mind how old they are by now. Keep in mind you can still listen to those songs as originally recorded. 2) "This record is dedicated to the true punks of the world, those who stand against conformity... and raise their middle finger to authority." Funny thing about guys who very clearly put a lot of work into making sure that they look like all so many other punk bands from the last twenty years. Funny thing also about raising a middle finger to authority. It just pisses off authority. Then authority keeps oppressing you. Why not either get rid of authority through political action or set aside your own lifestyle without much inclusion of authority? 3) Every time I see the Total Chaos logo with the circle A of anarchy, I secretly wish one day to interview the band and ask them a lot of questions about Emma Goldman and the differences between Anarco Syndicalism and Primitivism. 4) There are no lyrics in the inset, but MAN are there a lot of photos with people who spend a lot of time on their hair. 5) Looking punk is really important because it defies the classist conventions of late 1970s British society. If any old Brits come to California, MAN are they going to be pissed. 6) I opened for Total Chaos once. Long story. One of the members had just dyed his hair and it ran all down his face. Wow, even when I was a teenage postcard punk, even I knew the importance of proper rinsing. And some kids came and heckled EVERY act. 7) Yes, I am focusing more on what they look like than the

music on this CD. This seems in keeping with the attitude of the band. 8) Most of the high school aged punk bands I have seen in my life could come up with a better cover concept than this has - a poorly drawn skull with septum piercing (through the bone, I guess) and Discharge hairdo, holding a globe with continents that almost look like those of Earth. 9) Where are the punks invading? 10) Just when I was about to give a nod to this CD being filled with not entirely bad music that the kids can at least get a catharsis out of, on comes the bad Rancid rip off mid-tempo song that shows why punk vocalists are often called vocalists and not singers. 11) I would give a nod to the audio collage track about the death of Brian Deneke, whose killer got away with it since it was a "clean cut" kid in a fight against a punk. But it was pretty uninformative and half-assed, and having been in Amarillo lately, even the punks there want to kind of move on. 12) "Hey guys, see how popular the Dropkick Murphys are? Let's rip them off too, and have a bagpipe and everything." 13) Wasn't there already song called "Jock O-Rama"? I get it when multiple bands use a title like "Betrayed" or something, or when obscure bands use something not realizing another obscure band did as well, but I am pretty sure that these guys know who the Dead Kennedys are. 14) Why is it so hard to send a reviewer a real CD, not just the CD and inset? Having to unstaple stuff is annoying, and lose contents are easier to lose, and I just plain think it's funny that they put a hole in the UPC. 15) The last track is called "We Are the Future." Apparently the future is a bunch of aging guys who hold on to the image of the past and the mindset of their adolescence. 16) TotalChaos.com butt flaps. Need I say more? -Rich Mackin (Reject)

### **TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR: self-titled: CD**

Weird, crazy music that would be very close to noise if the production values weren't so high. Energetic, scary, dischordian stuff but it has a good beat and I can dance to it. Somewhere a bunch of scruffy kids are flagellating with fingers pointed skyward and smiles painted on their faces. -Rich Mackin (Level Plane)

### **TRIGGERS, THE: Shoot Your Mouth Off: CD**

I don't know what is with Dirtnap. I get a comp and I don't really like it, but then almost every album to cross my ears I go nuts for. The Triggers go balls-out from the get-go. Tons of energy. The female vocals remind me of The Brat. It's loud and loose, yet wound tightly together at the same time. One of the best albums this time around. -Megan (Dirtnap)

### **UNDEAD: First, Worst and Cursed: CD**

A retrospective of a band that started their reign of terror in Los Angeles back in the late '70s and went on to greater fame after a move to San Francisco. As can be expected, the sound is rooted in Dolls/Thunders/Ramones country. On the whole, the proceedings are well worth a listen and, although most Bobby Steele fans will probably groan when they realize this is not the band with ties to the Misfits, I suggest they give it a shot, 'cause it really is pretty good. If the bands you like just HAFTA have some kinda tie to hardcore, guitarist Joe Dirt also played in the legendary Fuck Ups, and you

can't get any more hardcore than them. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dionysus)

**UNKNOWN, THE:  
Radio Lied to Me: CD**  
Picture Poison (not *Look What the Cat Dragged In*, either) mix it with Weird Al. Take out the humor. Pure ass. -Megan (Boss Tuneage)

**U.S. BOMBS: Covert Action: CD**  
Not too long ago, I saw Duane Peters and the US Bombs play a show, and I fell in love with Duane even more. That man knows how to dance. And the Bombs know how to rock. The Bombs were in fine form with *Back at the Laundromat*, and their follow-up tracks in *Covert Action* are tight. The Bombs have their sound *down*, but they're still trying new stuff. I especially enjoyed Kerry Martinez's contribution, "Faith of Marie," an instrumental that really showcased Martinez's often-overlooked talent. Man, I hope I see these guys live again soon. I wanna dance with Duane. Preferably to "Faith of Marie." -Felizon (Hellcat)

### **VANILLA MUFFINS: All Give Some - Some Give All: CDEP**

A new EP with four tracks from this Swiss powerhouse, one of which is a reworking of their classic "My Angel," and another co-written by skinhead legend Frankie Flame. As can be expected, there's a truckload of pop sensibility evident and not a bad tune to be found anywhere. Thumbs up. -Jimmy Alvarado (Haunted Town)

### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: ClePunk.comp: CD**

The Dexter Chumley Attack! As far as I can tell, one of the few sound reasons to live in Cleveland in this day and age, but what a reason! From their two brisk tracks here alone, I'm fixing to pack up and go, and while I'm there I might check out Allergic to Whores, which I think would round out the whole of Clevo's full-throttle thrash scene. Other styles represented by the twenty-four bands here include streetpunk, ska, all kinds of poppy punk, and a few heavier acts like Disengage and Los Fiascos. As scene comps go, not bad, but records this diverse generally leave me limp. But the Dexter Chumley Attack! Gracious! And, oh yeah, I seriously hope God kills me before I ever have to hear the red hot chili poop of the Kirkendahl Voyd again. -Cuss Baxter (Smog Veil)

### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: RadioDick 3-Sided LP Series: CD**

The American Plague, Windfall, and Vanguard: pretty unremarkable stuff here - except for Windfall. That chick has got just about one of the worst voices I've ever heard. I sing better than she does and I suck. -Megan (Pal-Tone)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS:  
Streets of Philadelphia II: CD**  
Emo, screamo, college rock, metalting "hardcore," radio friendly pop punk, all of it primed for overground mass consumption and all of it sounding just as plastic and fake as one would expect. More succinctly, utter crap. -Jimmy Alvarado (Wonka Vision)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: We Still  
Keep on Running with D.O.A.: CD**  
This is an interesting covers comp that features six Japanese bands playing D.O.A. songs. Another interesting fact is

D.O.A. contributing two songs. I like the concept and that should be done more often by others who do tribute comps. My favorite track is Smash You Face's cover of "America Is Beautiful," but the tracks by Constricted, Total Fury, Wagplaty, First Alert, Go, and D.O.A. are no small chump change. You can feel the love in the air when the bands contributed to this. With so many bad comps coming out these days, it's good to see that some sneak through the cracks and turn out to be good. -Donofthead (Mangrove)

### **VIC BONDI/ ARTICLES OF FAITH: Fortunate Son: CDEP**

When Vic Bondi wrote for Hit List, he sure the fuck didn't take a liking to a lot of punk being made in the present tense. From the sounds of "Hardball" and his cover of John Fogerty's "Fortunate Son," I guess that means he really just missed bands that sounded like Helmet mixed in with high piles of donkey poo. Articles of Faith I won't shit talk about. "Buy This War" and "American Dreams" sound as vital today, perhaps more so, than when they were released in the early '80s. Give thanks that Articles of Faith's stuff was kept in print by Bitzcore, then compiled in Complete Vols. 1 and 2 on AT (these two songs are on those LPs) and see why they were truly one of the lesser-known hardcore greats that were creative, bombastic, smart-as-fuck, hyperspeed, and dead-eyed. Skip this hinky EP and get the collections for the real meat. -Todd (Alternative Tentacles)

### **VOIDS, THE: Kill a Generation: CD**

They recently opened for the Subhumans at a show I attended recently here in LA, but I missed their set trying to deal with guest list issues. I knew I had their CD at home for review but hadn't listened to it. It's a female-led band that reminded me of Sin 34 and a little bit of Beki Bondage from Vice Squad. Unfortunately, this band from Whittier, CA sounded like early '80s So Cal due to the bad recording production. The guitars were thin and the drums sound like tin cans. The bones were there but the meat was thin. Lyrically, they hold their own. It didn't sound like remedial English and thought was put forth. They cover Ill Repute's *Strike Back*, which was a tad slow but wasn't half bad. Pretty good. Hope to hear this band once they record in a better studio. -Donofthead (Destroy All Records)

### **WHERE EAGLES DARE: In a Thousand Words or Less: CDEP**

A self-proclaimed hardcore band out of Arizona takes you on a fun-filled ride of your life with a soundtrack of seven songs to make your ear drums bleed. I feel an '88 straight edge sound ringing in my ears. Energetic and fast makes for a rocking good time. -Donofthead (Endwell)

### **WHITE FLAG: R Is for Rocket, U Is for Unreleased: CD**

A kinda odds 'n' sods type deal here, purportedly containing their "first" album, *R is for Rocket*, along with some outtakes, live tracks and a video for the computer geeks. Many of the songs here are demo quality versions of songs that appeared on *S is for Space*, and "Hoppity Hooper" and "Question of Intelligence" appeared on BCT's *Eat Me* cassette comp and the first Flipside comp, respectively. The real meat of this, though, is the live show, record- **RAZORCAKE 95**

ed at a graduation party back in 1982, identified as the band's first gig. Some of the live banter appeared between songs on *S Is For Space*, but this is the first time to my knowledge that full tracks have been available. More recent fans might take note that this sounds nothing like their poppier stuff. As for the rest of you, I hear they're planning to reissue *S Is For Space*, so consider this the appetizer platter. —Jimmy Alvarado (Artifix)

**WILLOWZ, THE:**  
***That Willowz Feelin' b/w***  
***Think Again: CD-single***

The amazing thing about this being the first release on the legendary/infamous Posh Boy Records in frickin' ages is that you'd swear — you'd fucking SWEAR! — that Robbie Fields marched these guys into some cryogenic chamber at gunpoint twenty years ago (hey, from what I've heard of the guy, I wouldn't put it past him) and put 'em on ice for two decades, just to unleash them when the world least expected it (sort of like how when you're a kid, you always try to stash a snowball in the freezer in March, figuring in the middle of July you're gonna come out and blast the neighbor kid with it — except your Mom always throws the snowball away by mid-April). I mean, if somebody told you this was recorded in 1979 or 1980 — or on the "good" side of the one *Rodney on the ROQ* album you never got around to buying — there would be no overt cause for doubt on your part. It's on *Rodney On The ROQ Volume Four!* It's on *Posh Hits Volume Two!* Virtually

every stylistic idiosyncrasy I associate with classic Posh Boy — the robotwist beat (kick, snare-snare, kick, snare!) of the Red Cross EP, the nasal vocals and somewhat cleanish guitars of the Simpletones, occasionally the lyrical meter of The Crowd, etc., etc. — all twisted up in some manner of latter-day Franken-Posh French Braid O' Vintage '79/'80 LA Punk-Pop that screams out for the classic peach-colored label and the generic purple/yellow/green/red "PARTY!" die-cut 12" jackets ca. 1980! I listen to this too long and start thinking I'm late for Drivers' Ed or something! B-side, such as it is, sounds like a mildly more contemporary reworking of the central thesis to the Real Kids' "Up Is Up," but maybe if the lead vocalist was in one of the earlier Rip Off Records bands and his original impetus to start singing was Kepi of the Groovie Ghoulies. It grieves me to say this, but here goes: Posh Boy 1, 21st Century 0. BEST SONG: "That Willowz Feelin'" BEST SONG TITLE: "Think Again" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Songs are published by Covina High Music, for added stimulation! —Rev. Nørb (Posh Boy)

**WIRE: *Send: CD***

I honestly didn't know what to expect from this. Seeing as the odds have been stacked against old punk bands releasing anything interesting, and that Wire has been all over the musical map over the last three decades, one must approach a new Wire album with some trepidation. Lo and behold, it's pretty interesting. There's a high "art" quotient to

the music, but things are still very noisy, and strangely eclectic, sometimes touching upon their *Pink Flag* days, other times sounding vaguely like Coil, and then going off on a tangent you'd expect from a contemporary band like Trans Am. Some will probably blow this off as sounding like shit because none of the tunes qualify as a sequel to "12XU," but this bad boy is gonna get a lotta spins around this boy's house. Nice to know that at least some of the geezers still get what the whole thing was about. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.pinkflag.com)

**Z/28: *Wrecks from the Highway: CD***

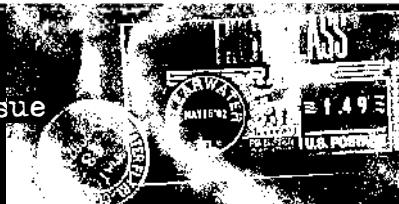
I picked up this CD just because it was from Scotland, and I was curious about what was going on over there. I kept it because it was a competent rockabilly CD, and I don't have much rockabilly. It's a good album to listen to when I've been listening to punk and hardcore for a while and I need a change up after all the fastballs. The guys in Z/28 play their instruments well and pull off a rockabilly sound that could just as well come from a front porch in the hills of Arkansas as from Scotland. I can't say that it rises above the rest of the greaser pile. It's just a good change of pace. —Sean Carswell (JSNTGM)



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- **8 Ohm**, 195 East Rd., Cookeville, TN 38501
- **Adeline**, 5245 College Ave. #318, Oakland, CA 94618; <[www.adelinerecords.net](http://www.adelinerecords.net)>
- **Alien Snatch**, Morikewg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, Germany
- **Alone**, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126
- **Alternative Tentacles**, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141-9092
- **Amendment**, 580 Nansemond Cres, Portsmouth, VA 23707
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- **Bitch Slap**, PO Box 952, Grover Beach, CA 93483
- **Blackout**, PO Box 1272, NY, NY 10010
- **Boss Tunage**, PO Box 74, Sandy Beds, SG19 2WB, UK; <[www.bosstunage.com](http://www.bosstunage.com)>
- **Broken Rekids**, PO Box 460892, SF, CA 94146-0892
- **Burning Heart**, 2798 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90026
- **BYO**, PO Box 67609, LA, CA 90067; <[www.byorecords.com](http://www.byorecords.com)>
- **Captain Oi**, c/o PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP 10 8QA, England
- **Casual**, c/o Franco Griesi, Via Falcone 13, 20010 Bareggio (MI), Italy
- **Charged**, PO Box 157, High Bridge, NJ 08829
- **Common Enemy**, c/o Justin, PO Box 138, Earlville, PA 19519
- **CoolGrrls.com**, PO Box 186, Balaboa Island, CA, 92662
- **Crackle**, PO Box 7, Otley, LS21 1YB, England; <[www.crackle.freeuk.com](http://www.crackle.freeuk.com)>
- **Crash and Burn**, PO Box 753, Allston, MA, 02134
- **Crucial Blast**, PO Box 364, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0364
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- **Dead End Kids**, PO Box 33664, Seattle, WA 98133
- **Dead Teenager**, PO Box 470153, SF, CA 94147-0153
- **Deep Six**, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510
- **Deroffen**, Via Nervi 4, Vicenza, Italy
- **Despot Hut**, 3410 Regalwoods Dr., Doraville, GA 30340
- **Destroy All Records**, PO Box 26806, LA, CA 90026
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- **Dionysus**, PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507
- **Dirtnap**, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA, 98111
- **Disaster**, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510
- **Dischord**, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington DC 20007
- **Disturbing**, 3238 So. Racine, Chicago, IL 60608
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- **Hungry Ghosts**, PO Box 620241, Middleton, WI 53562
- **In the Red**, 1118 W. Magnolia Blvd., PO Box 208, Burbank, CA 91506
- **Johann's Face**, PO Box 479164, Chicago, IL 60647
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- **Lookout**, 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA, 94703
- **Low Down**, PO Box 4502, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-4502
- **Mad Butcher**, Kurze Geismarstr. 6, D-37073 Göttingen, Germany; <[www.madbutcher.de](http://www.madbutcher.de)>
- **Mangrove**, ACP Bldg. 3F, 4-23-5, Koenji Minami, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 166-003, Japan
- **Matador**, 625 Broadway, NYC 10012
- **McCarthyism**, 7209 25th Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20783-2752; <[www.mccarthyism.org](http://www.mccarthyism.org)>
- **Merge**, PO Box 1235, Chapel Hill, NC 27514
- **Militia Group, The**, 7923 Warner Ave., Suite #K, Huntington Beach, CA 92647
- **Municipal Waste**, PO Box 6311, Richmond, VA 23230
- **Nation of Kids**, 804 Stevens Ave., Huntsville, AL 35801
- **Newest Industry**, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Rd., Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK
- **Nightraidermortarsquad**, 687 Soc's Lane, Cold Spring, NJ 08204
- **Ninety-Six**, PO Box 932, Yucaipa, CA 92399-9998
- **No Idea**, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **Out of the Loop**, <[www.outoftheloop.com.au](http://www.outoftheloop.com.au)>
- **Pal-Tone**, PMB 422, 267 Cherry St, Milford, CT 06460
- **Pelado**, 521 W. Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA 92627; <[www.peladorecords.com](http://www.peladorecords.com)>
- **Ponk-111**, PO Box 4664, Walnut Creek, CA 94596; <[www.ponk111.com](http://www.ponk111.com)>
- **Posh Boy**, PO Box 4474, Palm Desert, CA 92261
- **Punk Core**, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953; <[www.punkcore.com](http://www.punkcore.com)>
- **RAFR**, 11054 Ventura Blvd., #205, Studio City, CA 91604
- **Rapid Pulse**, PO Box 5075, Milford, CT, 06460-1475
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- **Sessions**, 60 Old El Pueblo Road, Scotts Valley, CA 95066; <[www.sessionsrecords.com](http://www.sessionsrecords.com)>
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- **Sound of Subterranea**, PO Box 10 36 62, 34036 Kassel, Germany
- **Split Seven**, 12405 Venice Blvd. #265, LA, CA 90066
- **Stardumb**, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, the Netherlands
- **Steel Cage**, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA, 19125
- **Suburban Home**, PO Box 40757, Denver, CO 80204
- **Suburban Justice**, PO Box 56055, Portland, OR 97238
- **Sudden Death**, Cascades PO Box 43001, Burnaby, BC, Canada V5G 3H0
- **Super Secret**, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767
- **Susspool**, 1269 Commonwealth Ave., Box 11, Allston, MA 02134
- **Tee Pee**, <[www.teepeerecords.com](http://www.teepeerecords.com)>
- **Thick**, 409 N. Wolcott Ave., Chicago, IL 60622
- **This Is My Fist!**, 4830 Telegraph, Oakland, CA 94609
- **TKO**, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221; <[www.tkorecords.com](http://www.tkorecords.com)>
- **Tortuga**, PO Box 15608, Boston, MA 02215
- **Union**, 78 Rachel St. East, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1C6; <[www.unionlabelgroup.com](http://www.unionlabelgroup.com)>
- **Upper Cut**, 4470 Sunset Blvd., #195, LA, CA 90027
- **Voodoo Rhythm**, Jurastrasse 15, 3013, Bern, Switzerland
- **Wonka Vision**, PO Box 63642, Philadelphia, PA 19147
- **Wrench**, BCM 4049, London, WC1N 3XX, England



Send all zines for review to Razorcake, PO Box 42129, LA, CA 90042. Please include a contact address, the number of pages, the price, and whether or not you accept trades.



**AQUATULLE #5**, \$3.95, 8 1/2 x 11, full color cover, newsprint insides, 96 pgs. Aquatulle hovers on that impulse to have a finger on the register, to cash in on '80s nostalgia, yet, thankfully, does a good job of reeling it back in. How? By interviewing the movers and shakers of pop's past (Like the Police's Andy Summers, Siouxsie and the Banshees Steve Severin, and The Damned's Captain Sensible) in the present tense. The interviews are well done, drawing equally from the participants' pasts and their future goals. I was equally impressed with the fact that several of the interviewees – like photographer Roberta Blayley (who took pictures of The Heartbreakers *Live at Mothers* where it looks like they have their hearts ripped out) – go out of their way not to slag the current state of the underground due to the fact that they're no longer a part of it. Bonus points go to full reproductions of interviews in earlier fanzines from twenty plus years ago and how cleanly the entire magazine is laid out. Minus points for the full-color Benetton ad on the back cover. If it was me, I'd be shooting for K-Tel or the makers of the Chia Pet to keep the feel throughout. –Todd (Raquel, 332 Bleecker St. #K-15, NY, NY 10014)

**CARBON 14**, #22, \$6, 8 1/2 x 11, glossy, 116 pgs. What's my favorite four-letter word? S-M-U-T. What word is on the cover of this issue of Carbon 14? S-M-U-T. That's right, lots of boobs in this one. Cool interviews with the Celibate Rifles and the Cynics, a column (somewhat) about Love (the band, not the emotion), a column by Thee Whiskey Rebel, and most importantly, lots and lots of boobs. The only thing I personally don't like is their obsession with the Confederacy of Scum redneck punk bands. That's just me; I get enough of the rebel flag waving here in Alabama, but overall this is worth it for the boobs. –Josh (Carbon 14, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)

**CHINMUSIC!**, #5, \$4, 8 1/4 x 10 1/2, newsprint, 60 pgs. Really very nicely done mag whose subject matter is taken from the hitherto underexplored confluence of the twin realms of music and baseball (ha! And here you thought the only time you'd hear the word "confluence" in a sentence was when your team played the Pirates!); noteworthy above and beyond its mere existence simply by virtue of the bigness of the figures interviewed (Mike Piazza, Barry Zito, Johnny Ramone). And, while, admittedly, reading Barry Zito's thoughts on the Dave

Matthews Band or Mike Piazza's fleeting description of jamming (as a drummer) with Mötörhead ("it was pretty cool") or even Johnny Ramone's conversation with Oakland A's GM Billy Beane (who bought *Rocket to Russia*, the Sex Pistols and the Dead Boys on freakin' 8-track back in The Day) might not make for a veritable Grand Slam O' Thrills for a reader completely disinterested in baseball, i tend to think that any fan of both rock & roll and The Sport Formerly Known As The National Pastime would find this an at least moderately fascinating artifact. Amazingly, the best baseball anecdotes AND the best musical anecdotes come from the seemingly highly unlikely source of Alan Vega of Suicide — whom the interviewer first came into contact with, just as i did, on a 1979 episode of the old Midnight Special late night teevee show (one presumes the interviewer came away with a different opinion of the duo than my own, which, for the record, was something akin to "wow, that was the worst thing i've ever heard in my life"). **THE PROOF IS IN THE PUDDING DEPT.:** I started reading this issue – quite by coincidence, i assure you – during the bottom of the sixth in Bob Uecker's radio broadcast of the Brewers' home opener. By the time the Giants had retired the side, the Brew Crew had gone yard no less than **THRICE** in the inning. Milwaukee lost, of course, but i'm not really expecting miracles at this point. –Rev. Nørb (ChinMusic!, PO Box 225029, SF, CA 94122)

**CLUTCH #9**, \$1 ppd, 5 1/2 x 4 1/4, photocopied, 36 pgs. Greig is a genius in that he is really good at simplifying his day into four panels in these autobiographical comics. For fans of the style, the obvious comparison would be John Porcellino's *King Cat Comics* but it's much more than that as Greig has a truly interesting life (despite what he will tell you). He's a zine librarian at the Independent Publishing Resource Center ([www.iprc.org](http://www.iprc.org)) and is a big fan of basketball while simultaneously running a record label and dealing with his romantic woes. Greig's drawings give good depth to his personality and worldview and it's always a good time reading *Clutch*. Few zines get me this excited. –Joe Biel (Clutch, PO Box 12409, Portland, OR 97212)

**DEMOLISH**, #2, 5 1/2 X 8 1/2, glossy color cover, 52 pgs. *Demolish* is a pretty good Australian punk music zine with its heart in the right place and great graphics that would greatly benefit from getting more personal. By

that, I don't mean getting all ooey goeey, and putting bow ties on puppies, but by conducting more interviews in person. Coming from the perspective of conducting interviews for seven years straight, one of the joys is meeting bands and people in the underground is having things go not quite as planned or scripted. It's the difference between strictly internet dating and actually meeting someone of flesh and blood right in front of you. Most of the interviews in *Demolish* are conducted via email and have that slightly more distant, little more stale and static tone. I understand that not a hell of a lot of folks come through their neck of the woods and there are other considerations, but even phone interviews would result in a bit more fluidity and zip. All said, I salute their drive. Interviews with The Virus, The Locust, *Pea Zine*, Boy Dot Com, Model Citizen, Che Chapter 127, and *Razorcake*. –Todd (Demolish, 12 Connemara cs, Kelso, Townsville, QLD 4815, Australia)

**DUNK AND PISS #9**, \$1, 4 1/4 X 5, xeroxed, 60pgs., available for trade, free to prisoners *Dunk and Piss* is awesome. The basic concept is one you're probably familiar with. A person in high school has a little bit of free time, thinks they have something to say, visits Kinko's, voila, shitty zine. What separates Alex from the throngs of people who have mixed up the words "diary" with "zine" is that he can tell a hell of a story. If he's aware of it or not, he also does a great job of letting you into his world, treats the reader like a buddy, and has a hell of a lot of fun in the process. For all you non-readers, there are helpful stick figure diagrams to fill in the blanks. The basic equation for Alex to have fun is to rule out good judgement, get hopped up on caffeine, and see what happens when running amok. Issue #9 definitely has the best writing so far. Topics include a burial scenario on the occasion if one his friends finally gets hit by a train ("...the rest of us would continue to visit his frozen carcass on the side of the tracks and take pictures of him. And poke him with a stick. I wouldn't mind that kind of burial setup."), tricking a girl to swallow mouthful of red paint who didn't seem to care that it wasn't cherry juice, and strapping fireworks to a mannequin and rolling down a steep hill on a skateboard, then hitting it with a bat. Even his grammatically cleaned stream-of-consciousness writing didn't blow. Well worth a buck. –Todd (Dunk and Piss, 11 Alger Dr., Rochester, NY 14624)



**GIRLYHEAD**, #4, \$4.95,

8 ½ x 11, glossy cover, heavy stock paper, 96 pgs.

I, for one, still miss *Fiz*, but *Girlyhead* helps patch up the holes in the drywall of my heart with its romance issue. The playfulness wins me over. There's paper dress up models of the Murder City Devils (replete with paper coffin, paper hatchet, and paper beagle), beauty tips by Beth of The Gossip, *TigerBeat-y* and comb-flailing profiles of the Briefs, and a fireside pictorial of Spike (Swingin' Utters, Me First and the Gimme Gimmes) and his special other. On a personal note, they also cover the Madonna Inn. When I was a little kid, my parents would stop there just so we could all piss. It was cool. The urinal was a waterfall activated by the pee stream. To an eight-year-old, that beats out landing on the moon. Almost equally impressive as urine-activated restrooms is the in-depth article on Adam and the Ants, who, because of this article, re-sparked my interest. (Quick quiz, Q: who stole a couple of ex-Ants and formed Bow Wow Wow? A: Malcom McLaren. That, I did not know.) To round it all out, is an interesting – from a psychological, lives-with-mom way – series of interviews with Girl Band Geeks. Totally worth the dough, even for those not romantically inclined. –Todd (Girlyhead, PO Box 225029, SF, CA 94122)

**MODEST PROPOSAL**, #1, \$2, 8 ½ x 11, newsprint, 30 pgs.

The content in *Modest Proposal* is, for the most part, fantastic. I think it's a great idea to have a zine based primarily on underground (both by not being known and also by subject matter) people who's job it is to make you laugh – comedians, satirists, and comic drawers. I don't claim to know much about the current state of comedy – hell, I just saw *Mr. Show* for the first time when someone lent me a copy of the DVD last month – but it seems like the folks at *Modest Proposal* know what they're talking about and cover it well. It's one of those deals like the movie zine, *Cinemad*, does. I just get out a notebook, jot down a bunch of names, and when I come across them, I'll pick up the video at the library or the video store. I also very much enjoy the tone of the zine. It's light-hearted, often very funny, and mirrors the subject matter (as in, it's smart but doesn't seem to be trying too hard). Standouts were the interviews with David Cross (of *Mr. Show*), Doug Stanhope, and Henry H. Owings (of the venerable *Chunklet*). My only main word of caution for this zine is that the printing is absolutely horrible. I try not to get down on new

zines – it's a tough gig – but it looks like all the pictures were printed on a deep shag carpet and it gets especially difficult to read text that's placed over a background. That aside, I feel bits of early *Punk* and *Mad* creeping in around the corners and that's a good feeling, indeed. –Todd (Modest Proposal, PO Box 3211, Tempe, AZ 85280)

**MY PINK SCARF** #11, \$2.00,

5 ½ x 8 ½, xeroxed, 84 pgs.

This zine started very emo, very acoustic coffee house. Graphically, it's well put together and visually interesting. There were quite a few passages talking about people's clothes and the color of sunsets. It read a bit limp and out-of-focus, pretty much how you expect a diary to read. (i.e. "All morning I watched the lawn furniture through the window while I sighed and turned over many times." And "Nothing else interesting happened that weekend except I went to the bathroom once and couldn't find any toilet paper so I had to use a maxi pad.") I don't want to get down on the guy too much, but it was aggravating how most of the observations were arbitrary and pointless because we're never meaningfully introduced to the author, although most of the stories are told in first person. (He doesn't explain such potentially interesting observations as "Since I live with three other guys, I decided this is my chance to be the woman of the house.") To be fair, he might have introduced himself in the previous ten issues. Then, the more I read *My Pink Scarf*, the more creepy it became. The author, Brandt, reveals as little of himself as possible, except that he likes pizza, visiting graveyards, and riding his bicycle. Sure, he lets you know his impressions of things and people that come his way, but chunks of this zine are making non-flattering judgement calls on co-workers and roommates. Lastly, there are two stories of tailing people with the intent of not being seen. Why he's doing this is never explained. –Todd (Brandt Schmitz, PO Box 260, Corvallis, OR 97339)

**NEWS FROM NOWHERE**, #2,

free/60 cents postage, 17 x 11, newsprint, 8 pgs.

Pretty cool anarchist newspaper type thing. An article about community gardening in Mexico City, advice on culture jamming, and, of course, enough faith in people to think that we could actually have a society based on unselfishness and solidarity instead of a government. This zine is cheaper than soda, so you should get it and be enlightened. –Josh (NFN, PO Box 10384, Eugene, OR 97440)

**NO ONE TOUCHES THE DREAM TEAM**, #8,

5 ½ x 8 ½, 27 pgs.

Reviews of people ("sometimes lego girl is ok and other times she is a total worm fucker"), an overwhelming hate of Keanu Reeves and Nicholas Cage, a theory that we're all going to have one leg in the future, a call for the creation of "negicore" (think opposite of posicore), a list of which diseases are the best (genital warts wins), and a serious plea for the readers to buy the editor the right type of bulldog is the basic gist of this zine. I have a feeling these guys were brought up on a serious diet of *Mad Magazine* and a bong that never leaves arm's length, but as it goes with blatant satire (like hamsters being cross bred with humming birds for the Department of Homeland Security), either you laugh all the way through you shrug and go, "It coulda been funny." Picture me shrugging here. *NOTTDT* is the poor-man's *Cracked*, which is still the poor-man's *Mad*. (Name *Cracked*'s mascot. See? Not funny.) –Todd (NOTTDT, PO Box 19561, Boulder, CO 80308-2561)

**ON SUBBING** #4, \$1 ppd,

5 ½ x 4 ¼, copied, 72 pgs.

Dave is a punk rock substitute teacher in the Portland public school system and these are his diary entries of getting taunted by students, changing diapers, assisting students in the bathroom, breaking up fights, having his glasses made fun of, and constantly being questioned as to whether he is a student or a teacher. It's a pretty powerful read to have him bonding with students one day and reading about his difficulty leaving a classroom, to the next day where he is simply abused all day long. As if it couldn't get any better, the cover is a screen door with a spray painted stencil. –Joe Biel (Dave Roche, 1036 N Shaver, Portland, OR 97217)

**PROCESSED WORLD**,

20th Anniversary Edition, \$10, 8 ½ x 11, glossy cover, 112 pgs.

If you're looking for a serious, thorough, and insightful book-like zine on how technology has irrevocably changed our lives in the last fifteen years, I can't recommend *Processed World* highly enough. At the time of reading this magazine, I was in the depressing and agonizing throes of repairing three computers and getting them to talk to one another without crashing. In essence, *Processed World* does a magnificent job at cutting down and examining the fallacy that the emergent technologies centered around personal computers has pro-

vided workers with more free time and higher productivity. Through a series of well-researched and informative articles, *PW* confirmed what I've suspected since I purchased my first PC. The entire idea of work has been fractured. Instead of driving to work, working for eight hours, then calling it a day, the portability of technology (cell phones, faxes, laptops, pagers, pdfs, etc.) has made it possible for work to bleed into every facet of life; constantly interrupted, constantly multi-tasking. Several articles also do a good job of pointing out that the time and energy that a lot of folks used to put into getting a goal accomplished has been replaced by trouble-shooting technology that isn't working how the box had promised or fixing things that were working mere seconds ago. What's refreshing with *PW* is that they don't come across as Luddites, either. They don't propose we revert to *Gilligan's Island* and use solely coconuts and chalk diagrams. I believe they realize the power of the computer – many of their writers work in the computer industry – but haven't bought into the cult of its omniscience. Also in this issue: an article of the San Francisco Bike Protest of 1896 – which inadvertently paved the road for the auto boom right around the corner, the creative appropriation of billboard liberators (putting a neon skull in a Camel ad), and some very funny ads that aren't real ads but parodies (there are no ads in *PW*). Ten bucks may seem a bit steep on first look, but take my word for it, it's totally worth it. –Todd (41 Stutter St. #1829, SF, CA 94104)

**RIOT 77 MAGAZINE** #5,

\$5 US / 2.50 Euros,

A4, glossy offset, 52 pgs.

This zine was entertaining because it clings so desperately to the "old school," even completely washed up rehash stuff! Guys (because it's so utterly male. I doubt there's a woman on staff), I hate to break it to you, but the punk world didn't stop churning out creative music in 1980. There's been new, inventive renditions of punk styles for over twenty-five years now! With that said, this is well written and some of it was pretty engaging. I learned a lot about which European bands from 1977 were still at it and which ones got back together and even about a few bands I had never heard of from that era that were releasing posthumous records. I wish a lot of the interviews were more in depth and critical though, particularly the one with four men who are now touring as the Dead Kennedys. I know those three former members aren't the most articulate bunch, but it'd be nice to at least give them some difficult questions. Maybe it's

a cultural Irish thing not to ask rude or invasive questions. –Joe Biel (Riot 77, Cian Hynes, 31 St. Patrick Park, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Ireland)

**SLUG AND LETTUCE**, #74, free/60 cents postage, 17 x 11, newsprint, 20 pgs. All you have to do is read this zine and you will understand why it has been around for seventy-four issues. Plain and simple, this is a great DIY publication. Some of the writing is of the personal slant, some of the writing is of the political slant, all of the writing is good. Except for the guy who reviewed the Stitches CD and didn't like it. He's like the Jimmy Alvarado of *Slug and Lettuce*. –Josh (Slug and Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632)

**SNAKEPIT, Anthology II**, \$3, 5 1/2 X 8 1/2, 104 pgs. The idea is easy to follow. Ben draws three panels that make up his day and includes the name of a song and artist on the top of the strip. This anthology covers an entire year. He lives in Austin, works in a record store, rides his bike, gets high, plays in a band, and gets sweet on girls who rarely seem to reciprocate. At first, you may be thinking, "Hey, no big

deal." And you'd be right. It isn't. There isn't anything grandiose or overblown about this comic. Whenever he labels himself in a drawing, he calls himself dumb-ass. He never oversteps his observations. So, thankfully, the early-*Simpsons*-esque quality of his drawings are matched by the Homer-esque ability of Ben. He may not be the smartest or most observant guy in the world, but he sure knows what his abilities are, plays them to his full potential (with often hilarious results, like shitting in a frat boy's jeep), and at the end of the day, just seems like a guy you'd like to hang out with. The deeper meanings in life come from the entire months that stack up on one another to form a bigger picture that the reader has to put together themselves. It's just like life. You begin to see patterns, you see little details that repeat, but not in completely the same way. Take Ben's paydays, for example. Sometimes, he's decked out like a pimp or a player or has dollar signs for eyeballs. And if you pay close attention, for you avid music fans, there's a bunch of visual jokes, like Ben turning into the DRI logo when going to a particularly good show or when the very young band, The Snobs, play an in-store, they're

drawn as babies. Awesome stuff. An instant favorite of mine. –Todd (PO Box 49447, Austin, TX 78764)

**STOLEN SHARPIE REVOLUTION**, \$3, 4 1/4 X 5, cardstock cover, newsprint, 96 pgs. This is a zine on how to make zines by Alex Wreck, who has been doing *Brainscan* for some time now. It's part conceptual; it's part pragmatic. It's all very helpful and definitely fulfills its promise in "documenting a sub-culture for educational purposes." What's also evident is that Alex is very concerned on being thrifty and cutting cost, not quality. There are tons of tidbits on how to make your very own paper, how to silkscreen your covers, and different ways to bind your zine beyond staples. She also has a Kinko's scam that I've never heard of, but sounds intriguing. If you can get your hands on a high-powered magnet, you can reset their copy counter keys. Other sections of the zine do a good job of helping people new and old in the zine culture from avoiding some of the inevitable pitfalls. For instance, she explains why getting a PO Box is a great idea, how to set up distribution, and how to

take rejection like a champ. At the end is a short, well done essay by Joe Biel on how to put out a DIY record. A very handy zine, indeed. –Todd (Alex Wreck, PO Box 14332, Portland, OR)

**WONKAVISION**, #20, \$2.95, 8 1/2 x 11, glossy cover/ photocopied inside, 90 pgs. Indie rock, indie rock, indie rock. This is pretty much a thinner *Punk Planet*: an unabashed love of all things indie, attempts to branch out musically into stuff like rap, people who "aren't into punk anymore," etc. They actually review *Gideon's Bible*, which is funny as hell, and they interview the Locust about their sexual habits, so this actually isn't a bad read. The CD that comes with it is another story. With the exception of the Curse, every band on here is pretentious, whiny (you guessed it) indie rock, including a band called Zolof the Rock and Roll Destroyer that, curiously enough, sounds nothing like rock and roll or destruction. Go figure. –Josh (Wonkavision Magazine, PO Box 63642, Philadelphia, PA 19147)

Check out [www.razorcake.com](http://www.razorcake.com) for more zine reviews.





### **Addicted to War**

by Joel Andreas, 69 pgs.

I kept seeing this book at anti-war protests and on the campus of the school where I teach, and there was even a billboard on Sunset Blvd. advertising this book, so I requested a copy from AK Press, just to see what all the buzz was about. Well, the buzz is about a pretty fucking good book. It's only sixty-nine pages, but the book is 8 1/2 x 11 inches, and it's full of information. It reads like a sort of Cliff's Notes for anyone who doesn't feel like wading through a Noam Chomsky book, or who doesn't want to tackle all 634 pages of *A People's History of the United States*. *Addicted to War* is written in a very direct way and illustrated with some simple (but very well done) comics. The book covers the history of US militarism, from US expansionism across North America all the way up to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It includes details and statistics about the US wars or military actions with various Native American tribes, with Mexico (the war in which the US snagged New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and California, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming, from Mexico), with Spain, with the Philippines, with Hawaii, and so on. All of this history includes the rhetoric surrounding these wars, which is interesting. When you see the reasons for various wars lined up in a row, it becomes clear how bizarre and unconvincing war rhetoric is. The next chapter explains the Cold War and how, after World War II, the US economy became based upon the escalation of weapons and war. The next chapter deals with the first Bush administration, and his wars with Panama and Iraq. Apparently, these first three chapters make up what amounted to the first pressing of this book. It was originally published

alone would make an interesting book. *Addicted to War* has been updated after Sept. 11 and the beginning of the war on Afghanistan, though, so it takes militarism pretty much up to date. I know that, in this day and age of the US picking a war with any country it can find to bomb, keeping this book really up to date would be a full-time job. Still, Andreas does a great job of demonstrating how and why war works, who profits from it, who pays for it, and why our culture is permeated by it. And probably the best thing about this book is that, while it's well-researched and intelligent, it's really easy to read. You could hand this book to any high school student or slack-jawed yokel and give him a quick education on the foreign policy that the mass media never discusses. Also, *Addicted to War* is exactly the kind of book that you want to buy multiple copies of and hand around to everyone. Highly recommended. —Sean Carswell (AK Press, 674-A 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Oakland, CA 946120)

### **Charles Krafft's Villa Delirium**

by Mike McGee & Larry Reid, 96 pgs.

*Juxtapoz* magazine had an art exhibit in Los Angeles, and as I was walking around the exhibit, I came across what would've been a very traditional-looking china tea set except that the teapot was a bust of Adolf Hitler's head with a spout sticking out of it. Accompanying the teapot was a quote: "Ah, the smell of blood and

snow. If I could bottle that scent, I'd create a new fragrance for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and call it Forgiveness." I didn't know what to think about it. It was such a bizarre clash of class, history, and politics that it literally stopped me in my tracks and forced me to think about the artwork in front of me. The artist's name was Charles Krafft. A couple of weeks later, *Charles Krafft's Villa Delirium*, a book about the artist and his delft pottery works, showed up in the Razorcake mailbox. The book is full of big, full color photographs of various pieces of china, porcelain, and earthenware that all has a similar effect on you as the Hitler tea set does. It really makes you stop and think. There's a china set called "Disasterware," a series of plates that initially appear to be very traditional decorative dinnerware, but actually have paintings of the Hindenburg exploding, a guy about to be clubbed to death, ships sinking, and so on. There's even a Desert Storm memorial plate with an American flag and a clown pointing a bazooka at you. Beyond the plates, Krafft has expanded his delft works to include ceramic, ornamental weapons. He's made a series of grenades, chemical weapons, rifles and pistols all out of porcelain. Some of the weapons are more overtly political than others, like the pistol with the painting of Jesus on the handle, or the uzi with "Be An American" painted on the barrel. Some pieces are more abstract, like the bunny with a switchblade sticking out of his back. These porcelain weapons originally appeared in an exhibit that Krafft did at the Slovenian Ministry of Defense in the former Yugoslavia. The book goes on to tell the story of how, when Krafft was developing his porcelain weapons of war series, he got a commission to go to Sheboygan, Wisconsin — the home of the Kohler Company (according to this book,

Kohler developed the modern bath tub and they're the world's largest manufacturer of porcelain plumbing fixtures) — to use the Kohler production facilities for his artwork. Originally, Krafft intended to use his time at Kohler to work further on his weapons of war project, but the Columbine shootings occurred just before Krafft arrived in Wisconsin, so Kohler asked Krafft to avoid making weapons. Instead, Krafft developed a series of porcelain skateboards with ornate designs of things like Martha Stewart's face.

The book goes on to tell more about Krafft's diverse life and his arresting artwork. It delves into Krafft's Forgiveness™ series, showing the pristine Forgiveness™ perfume bottles with a swastika etched ornately into the bottle that presumably holds in it the patented smell of blood and snow. *Villa Delirium* also tells the story of Krafft's association with the Slovenian artists' group, the NFK. Further chapters of the book also explain how Krafft developed a new form of china that is made out of human remains and how Krafft made a love letter out of his human bone china and sent it to a woman with whom he was smitten. And so on. Krafft has definitely had an interesting life, and this book captures some very intriguing aspects of his life and art. In the end, it's clear that Krafft is successful in doing what most artists aspire to: he puts every day icons in a new context, and he forces you to think about the world around you in a different light. —Sean Carswell (Last Gasp, 777 Florida St., SF, CA 94110)

### **Hostile City or Bust**

by Phil Irwin

(aka *The Whiskey Rebel*), 105 pgs.

This is the second book by Phil Irwin, and it deals with the move that he and his family made from Portland to Philadelphia. In one sense, it reads like a journal or something written for a personal zine. It's very honest and personal, and it gives a raw insight into Irwin's character. In another sense, this follows the longstanding literary tradition of the odyssey story. The characters have to undergo various tests and tribulations in their journey to return home. Unlike, say, Homer's *Odyssey* or even *Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?*, the obstacles the characters face aren't great ones. They're mostly things like dirty hotel rooms and slow vans. Still, Irwin manages to keep you reading and manages to make his day-to-day adventures somewhat interesting. After reading both *Hostile City or Bust* and *Jobjumper* by Irwin, I've come to realize that, in much the same way the Philadelphia Phillies' John Kruk wasn't an athlete, he was a ballplayer, Irwin isn't a writer, he's a storyteller. This can be a good thing, and, throughout *Hostile City or Bust*, it usually is. —Sean Carswell (Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)

### **The People Are Revolting**

(in the very best sense of the word)

by Jim Hightower, audio book

If you've never heard Jim Hightower speak, then you're in for a surprising experience. He's a real Texan, always pictured with his cowboy hat and bushy mustache, and his voice sounds like he should be selling Jimmy Dean sausages. His talks are rich with down-home colloquialisms like, "Hogwash and horsehockey to that," and "The CEOs and swells are getting fatter than butcher's dogs," and "If you find that you've

dug yourself into a hole, the very first thing to do is quit digging.” At the same time, he’s funny and intelligent and has a knack for explaining global politics in a very common-sense manner. He’ll talk about things like democracy, and how it’s never handed down to the people; it’s taken by the agitators, and how that’s a good thing: “The agitator, after all, is the center post in the washing machine that gets all the dirt out.” I’ve read a lot of articles by Jim Hightower, but I’d never actually heard him speak until I got this CD. Now, I see that, not only is Hightower a great writer, he’s an even better speaker. He’s able to take global politics and economics and make them understandable and exciting and hopeful. And it’s the hopefulness that really sets Hightower apart from other political writers. He not only discusses the problems of corporate control of the US government and the problems of the WTO and IMF, he makes the issues understandable and he offers viable, obtainable solutions.

One of the things that’s interesting about this CD is that half of it was recorded before Sept. 11 and half of it was recorded after Sept. 11, and you can hear the difference in attitude and approach that that event inspired. Another thing that’s interesting about it is that, unlike most spoken word CDs, this is one that you’ll listen to again and again. It doesn’t matter how many times you hear him call George W. Bush “an absolute corporate wet dream,” it’s still funny. This CD is a great introduction to a brilliant public speaker, and even if you’re familiar with Hightower, this is well worth the twelve bucks. –Sean Carswell (Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 90042)

### **Sci-Fi Western**

*Curated by Sunny Buick, 96 pgs.*

This is a coffee table book, full color, on paper that if you cut the pictures out, you could frame on your wall. The gist is the juxtaposition of science fiction and western imagery, which isn’t as far-fetched as it first may seem. Essentially, that’s what *Star Wars* is – intergalactic good guys in white, bad guys in black with horses made out of alloys instead of flesh. In the ‘50s, kids were donning either space helmets or raccoon hats, and Winston Smith taps that duality seamlessly in two of his collages here. Since there’s such a deep gully of interpretation, my favorite paintings are the ones that go for the not-so-obvious. I was drawn to compositions that seemed to have been done with these two concepts firmly in mind, not just circumstantially (like putting chaps next to a space ship). Particularly, I kept flipping back to Douglas Fraser’s “Dead Astronaut” that shows a space explorer face down and full of arrows and Ron English’s “Alien Cowboy Clown,” which mixes a cowboy-hatted Teletubbie next to an alien, all through what looks like round speaker meshing. Fancy-assed art book, worth flipping through. Immaculately laid out. –Todd (Last Gasp, 777 Florida St., SF, CA 94110)

### **Stand Up, Ernie Baxter: You’re Dead**

*by Adam Voith, 251 pgs.*

As the title would suggest, the main character of this novel is dead. The book starts off in the afterlife, where Ernie Baxter is coming to the realization that, after a fairly uneventful life, he’s dead. Ernie was in his twenties when he died of cancer, and he didn’t exactly leave behind a wake of mourners. The two people who

are most shaken up by Ernie’s death are Ernie’s mother and Ernie’s old high school girlfriend, Kyra, both of whom live in a small town in Indiana. The bulk of the novel drifts back and forth between Ernie’s mom and Kyra dealing with his death, and Ernie adjusting to his upcoming eternity in the afterlife. But the novel is not nearly the downer that you would expect out of a plot like that. Actually, one of the things Ernie left behind was a laptop. Since his mother apparently can’t operate the laptop, she enlists the help of Kyra to read the documents that Ernie wrote on his death bed. As it turns out, Ernie had been living a second life as a stand-up comic in Seattle. His final documents dealt with all of his stand-up acts and his life in Seattle. Now the surprising thing about *Stand Up, Ernie Baxter* is that the stand-up acts aren’t what livens this book up. To be honest, the stand-up acts aren’t very funny at all. I’m even half-convinced that the author didn’t intend to make the stand-up acts funny. I think part of Adam Voith’s intention was to show Ernie as a misdirected kid, and his stand-up was one of his misdirections.

Kyra’s life, on the other hand, is sadly funny. She lives in this little farm town in Indiana in a house that her wealthy parents (who aren’t farmers; they moved to this town because they were rich and had dreams of returning to the land) built for her and her husband. And just as her parents are ironic farmers, Kyra’s husband is an ironic redneck. He’s a guy who lives off of his trust fund and off of his in-laws, a guy who’s apparently never worked a day in his life, yet he embraces all the worst clichés of a mid-western redneck. He goes out of his way to pose as one of these clichés. As you’d probably expect, Kyra’s husband is a dick and he treats

her poorly, but the interactions between the two of them make for some exciting, well-written scenes. Also, Kyra develops as a very cool character when you see her dealing with both her ex-boyfriend's death and the kooks who make up her family. We see the stand-up acts through Kyra's eyes as she reads them off the laptop, and we also get to learn about her relationship with Ernie through old notes that he's passed her in high school and that she kept.

As the novel develops, we find out that Kyra is pregnant with the ironic redneck's baby and that Ernie's mother is a bit of a kook herself and that Ernie's time in the afterlife is making it clear to him that he didn't do much with the life he was given. All of these things lead up to a pretty exciting climax and conclusion, and the end will surprise you. Overall, *Stand Up, Ernie Baxter* is well-written and a good read. The pages just flow by. My only complaint about the book is that, even though the whole premise of the book surrounds the death of the main character, the book lacks any real insight into these bigger issues of life and death. There is a healthy dose of regret and sadness and the ability to bring humor to dark situations, but there's not a whole lot of depth. Still, this book is a page-turner. It'll hook you and keep you reading, and it's exciting to see such a high quality novel come out of a purely DIY effort. Also, all of the stand-up acts are drawn out as comics in the middle of the novel, which is a pretty cool touch. —Sean Carswell (TNI Books, 2442 NW Market #357, Seattle, WA 98107)



**Bouncing Souls: *Do You Remember? 15 Years of the Bouncing Souls*: DVD**

Fifteen years? I still consider them a new and fresh band. This is an enjoyable documentary that shows the trials and tribulations of a band that became successful, using interviews of band members and friends to tell the story. Starting in 1988, they were your typical, run-of-the-mill high school garage band that had no direction. Once out of high school, they decided to commit to the band and not follow the path of the average. The scenes of their early period were hilarious when their musical direction was all over the map. Then the light bulb sparked and they came to fruition to be the band that it is now. There is a ton of footage that they have accumulated through the years and is edited to tell the story of their past. I commend them on putting the ugly parts of their past to truly show what they are about. I like the fact that you can identify and learn about each member of the band. A lot of time is taken to not dehumanize each member and show that they

are truly human as you and I. You get to experience through dialog and film how hard it was to deal with a member's difficulties in life and to be associated with them. This is a two DVD package that I only received one of. Can't wait to see the second disc so I can see the fifty live songs and the six videos. However, from what I experienced off the one disc, it was stimulating and enjoyable from start to finish. From the uninitiated to the diehard fan, this

is a well produced archive of a band that has made me more appreciative of their music. —Donofthedeath (Chunksaah, PO Box 974, New Brunswick, NJ 08903)

**The Shoes of Pleasure: VHS**

Did they dub the wrong tape? Because the "film" I got doesn't have much to do with shoes or pleasure, just a couple guys who probably smoke too much weed (I heard that could make you dub the wrong tape) driving around listening to the Dead Kennedys and visiting Krystal Burger looking for their friend who was abducted by aliens. Obscure references to German philosophy and boring documentation of shit that is not real rounds out the two hour mess and I just figured out the title but it should be *The Shoe of Pleasure* because I only had to stomp it with one foot. —Cuss Baxter (\$3 or a "pile of stamps": Resident Occupant, PO Box 1177, Fortson, GA 31808-1177)

