

CUTTING. TASTY. BUTTING. PASTY. CUTTING. HASTY. JUTTING. WASTY. NUTTING. BASTY. STRUTTING. TRASTY. PUTTING. CLAYS

RAZZORCAKE

TASER

WORSERWAKE. QUASARSHAKE. GLAZERBAKE. BLAZERSTEAK. LASERFAKE.

#17
\$3

THE GRABASS CHARLESTONS

ANTI-SEEN

THE RED ONIONS

THE IMMORTAL LEE COUNTY KILLERS II

WESLEY WILLIS



FINE FOOD AND WINE
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It's strange the things you learn about yourself when you travel, and the last two trips I took taught me a lot about why I spend so much time working on this toilet topper that you're reading right now.

The first trip was the Perpetual Motion Roadshow, an independent writers touring circuit that took me through seven cities in eight days. One of those cities was Cleveland. While I was there, I scammed my way into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. See, they let touring bands in for free, and I knew this, so I masqueraded as the drummer for the all-girl Canadian punk band Sophomore Level Psychology. My facial hair didn't give me away. Nor did my obvious lack of national health care. I got in for free.

I saw some cool things, like the bass Mick Jones smashed on the cover of *London Calling*, and I saw some lame things, like all the teen idols' outfits. I wandered upstairs to the exhibit on rock'n'roll magazines and stared at a huge glass case full of *Rolling Stone*, *Spin*, *16*, and other equally weak stuff. One of my friends saw me staring at the display and said, "Where's *Razorcake*?"

I laughed because it was absurd. Why would *Razorcake* ever be somewhere like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and why would I want it to be there, anyway? I hope nothing I write ever ends up behind a glass case, where people can't touch it and read it. The truth is, the place where I tend to see *Razorcake* the most is on the top of people's toilet tanks. And that's where I want to see it. Besides, I kept reminding myself, it's the Hall of *Fame*, not the Hall of *Talent*. What kind of thing is fame to aspire for? Why would you want to be so famous that you'd have to spend your life in a glass case? And what could be more fleeting and vacuous than fame? I don't know. The top of a toilet tank?

This made me ask myself what all this work is all about. What do I aspire to?

AD DEADLINE FOR ISSUE #18

December 1st, 2003

AD DEADLINE FOR ISSUE #19

February 1st, 2004

EMAIL OR MAIL US FOR THE RATES AND DETAILS

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- Full page, 7.5" wide, 10" tall.
- Half page, 7.5" wide, 5" tall.
- Quarter page, 3.75" wide, 5" tall.
- Sixth page, 2.5" wide, 5" tall.
- Please make all checks out to Razorcake.

ADVERTISING STIPULATIONS

- All ads are black and white.
- Make ads the right size and orientation.
- We don't reserve ad space.
- Send good laser prints for the ads. Use solely black ink on all art. Do not output your ad on a bubble jet printer even if it looks black and white.
- All photos must be halftoned using a 85 LPI (85 line screen).
- If we need to invoice you, we won't run your ad until we have the cash on hand, so make those arrangements before the ad deadline.
- So on, so forth. Yep.

Razorcake and *razorcake.com* are untangled and wrangled by Sean Carswell, Todd Taylor, Megan Pants, Skinny Dan, ktspin and Felizon Vidad

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Thank you list: "Are you crock potting ribs?" thanks to Julia Smut for her ever-diligent mauseusing of our cover; Jason "Part of the Problem" Willis for his cannonball of a front cover; Grass stains that'll never come out thanks to Petite Paquet for her Red Onions interview; "Hello, I'm Wesley Willis and I'm a rock star" thanks to Scott Cox-Stanton for his remembrance and the Willis family and Eyeosaur Productions for the pictures; Pabst fuck-yeahs to our new contributor Ben Snakepit; fake blood thanks to Randy Iwata for helping out with Nardwuar; burning dumpster thanks to Tito for his first column; "Wow, you're self-taught" thanks to Rob Ruelas for the Rich Mackin illustration; high-kicking thanks to Bradley Williams for the ILCK II interview and Jeff Johnson for the pics; barbed wire, blood, and libertarian thanks to Art Ettinger for the AntiSeen interview and Jason Griscom, Allana Sleeth, Greg Bailey for the photos; creeps plus vanity equals real icky thanks to Patricia Geary for her column; Harry and Nancy Carswell for watching the birth of rock'n'roll and then birthing Sean, so he could write about it; it's an addiction with few rewards thanks to Jimmy Alvarado, Cuss Baxter, Donofithedead, Aphid Peewit, Mike Beer, Puckett, and Wanda Spragg for their reviews; newsprint on the light switch thanks to Greg Barbara and Speedway Randy for their book and zine reviews; fuck this job, 52-hour Greyhound bus ride thanks to Not Josh for all of his reviews and coming out to visit us.

I took my second trip to go to the wedding of an old friend, Tommy. Tommy and I have been hanging out together since we were about four years old, and we've been listening to punk rock together since before a lot of *Razorcake* readers were born. Tommy came to pick me up from jail when I got arrested for being a smart ass. I dragged the best man out of Tommy's wedding after the best man dropped his pants at the bar. Friendships like this don't come along every day.

Before the wedding, we had the obligatory bachelor party, which led to the obligatory visit to the strip bar, which led to the obligatory bachelor on stage, drunk and dancing with strippers. We don't make these rules. We just live by them. So Tommy was up there, with a topless woman ripping the buttons off of his fancy shirt, only to expose that underneath, Tommy was wearing a *Razorcake* t-shirt. It made me proud to see *Razorcake* representing up there on that stage. Seriously. Think of it metaphorically: when the societally acceptable costume gets torn off and life's suddenly just about the down and dirty good time, there's *Razorcake*, close to the heart.

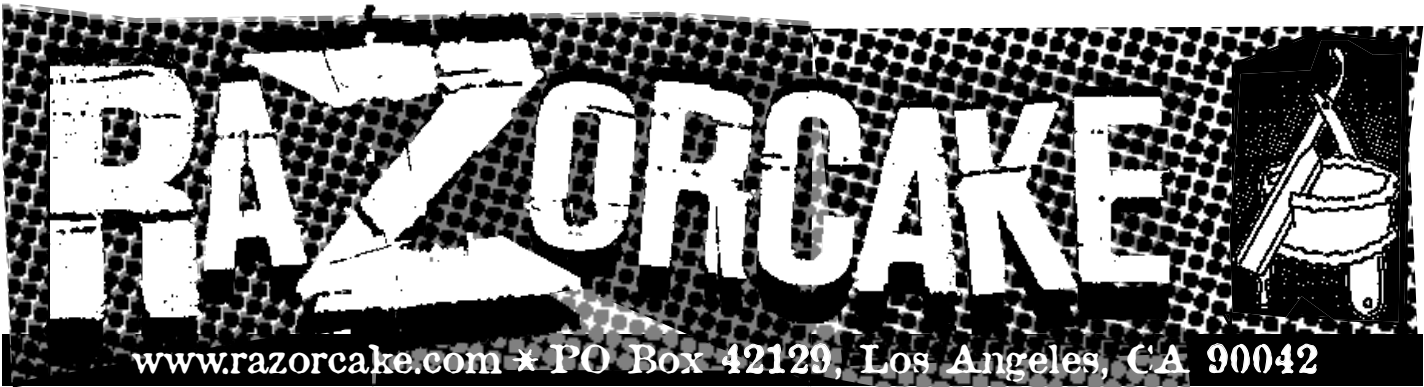
Okay, so I was pretty drunk.

Later that night, a barely standing Tommy introduced me to his uncle. Tommy pointed at me and said to his uncle, "This is the guy who took all the crazy shit we did and put it in writing." Even through the haze of a dozen beers, and beyond silly strip club metaphors, I realized that this is what I aspire to: the stories themselves. The idea of taking this wild life and this mad subculture we're all a part of and putting it in writing. Spreading it around. Helping everyone know that we're not completely alone. There's no glass case separating us from life. It's all right here. Nothing's keeping us from reaching out and touching it.

-Sean



Davey and Mark Tiltwheel bid you fine hellos.
Photo by Seth Swaaley



Issue #17, December 2003/ January 2004

“I can see that otter’s dick”

—From the liner notes to the posthumously released Wesley Willis Greatest Hits — Volume 3

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SEAN CARSWELL

A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG



...she came out on stage wearing a skin-tight silver dress, looking very ladylike. Then, she picked up her trombone and started blowing. The crowd went crazy.

My Mom the Rock'n'Roller

(Sean's note: My mom used to go to all of the Alan Freed rock and roll shows back in the mid to late fifties, and when I was growing up, she would tell me stories about them. I've always thought that they were great stories, so I got my mom to tell me about going to her very first show. I did a bit of research to fill in the details that she couldn't remember, and I wrote out this story from her perspective [so as you're reading, the "I" in the story is not me. It's my mom. I was never a thirteen year-old girl]. For all of us who still go to rock'n'roll shows, here's an account of what it was like fifty years ago, when rock'n'roll was just a baby.)

Cathy Lobasso's uncle agreed to take us all to the show. I was so excited. My father would ordinarily never let me go. I think it was because I was the only girl in a family of three boys. My brothers could do whatever they wanted, but whenever I asked my father if I could do something, his automatic answer was, "No."

This was different, though. Cathy and I could take the bus to the Long Island Railroad, like we'd done a hundred times before, and her uncle would meet us at the Jamaica station and take us the rest of the way to the Brooklyn Paramount, where we'd see our first Alan Freed rock and roll show. Since we'd know where we were going and we had adult supervision, my father couldn't say no.

He did say no, of course. My father hated rock and roll. He always used to tell me, "That goddamn music will never last." He would only let me listen to it in my room, with the door closed. But almost every night after dinner, I'd go into my bedroom and tune in Alan Freed's rock and roll radio show on WINS New York. Alan Freed was the best. He had a good ear for music. If he

liked a song and he played it, you knew it would be a hit. He was one of the first white DJs to play music by black musicians. He didn't seem to care what color you were, as long as the music was good. He was also one of the first DJs – black or white – to play guys like Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Chuck Berry on the radio. Remember, this was before record companies made cheap forty-fives. The only records were the big seventy-eights, and they were expensive. We never had enough money to buy records, and even if we had had the money, my family didn't have a record player. So the only way I could listen to rock and roll was when Alan Freed's show was on the radio. And I listened to it all the time. I learned to dance while listening to his show in my bedroom.

In late 1954, he started promoting rock and roll shows at the Brooklyn Paramount. He'd book ten or twelve acts to perform over the course of about an hour and a half. There was a house band that would play the music for all the acts, because the show was mostly doo-wop bands. They could sing and dance, but they didn't play any instruments. Sometimes there were musicians like Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck Berry who played the piano or guitar, but even they needed the house band to round out their sound with drums and guitars and all. Each act would do one song, and, at the end of the show, a feature act – whichever act had more than one hit – would play two or three songs. The shows always sold out. Everyone at my high school went to them, and they always talked about how much fun they were. So when Cathy's uncle said he'd take us, I couldn't wait. I talked to my mom about it. I told her how much I wanted to go and she told me, "You can go. I'll talk your dad into it."

Cathy and I met her uncle and her cousin at the Jamaica station. Her cousin was our age – thirteen or fourteen – and she was dressed

in the typical teenage uniform of the time. We all wore jeans and saddle shoes and cardigan sweaters that we wore backwards. Cathy's cousin also wore a scarf. Her uncle, though, looked like the typical, little Italian man you used to see around New York in the fifties. He wore a suit even though it was Saturday, and he had a copy of the *Daily News* tucked under his arm. He nodded to us and steered us onto the subway. As soon as we got on the train, he opened up his *Daily News* and started reading. He didn't say a word to us.

We got off at our stop and walked up to the Brooklyn Paramount. We were more than an hour early, and a line had already formed outside the Paramount. We got in line. Cathy, her cousin, and I were so excited that we couldn't stop talking about the acts we were going to see and all. Cathy's uncle just pulled the *Daily News* out from under his arm again and stood there reading it.

As more people got in line behind us, more activity started to build around the Paramount. A lot of the singers in the rock and roll shows were guys and girls who'd started by singing on the street corners, and who were discovered there. That's how Dion and The Belmonts – the guys who did "Little Runaway" and "The Wanderer" – got discovered. They used to stand on a corner on Belmont Avenue in the Bronx, making up songs, and a record company guy heard them there and signed them to a record contract. It seemed like every corner in the Boroughs had five guys standing there, singing doo-wop songs in those days. All of those doo-wop guys dreamed of being discovered, of having one hit song and playing the rock and roll shows. So different groups of doo-woppers hung out outside the Paramount, singing songs for everyone in line, hoping Alan Freed or someone would discover them.

While we were standing there,

we could also see the different acts coming in. We didn't know who was who. We knew their music, but we'd never seen any of the musicians. We didn't know what they looked like. There was a group of girls behind us, though, who had been to these shows before and knew who everyone was. We'd be standing there and one of the girls would say, "There's The Flamingos," and everyone would be talking at once, trying to get the attention of one of the guys in the band. The band members would smile and wave and sometimes stop to sign an autograph or two. You could tell the performers loved all the attention. They were just kids a few years older than us, and this was their way off of whatever street they were from.

With all the activity, the wait in line didn't seem too long, and, at one o'clock, the doors opened. You couldn't buy tickets ahead of time. It was all first come, first serve. It was the same way with the seats. You could just take whatever seat you wanted, so we raced up front. We wanted to be as close to the stage as possible. We ended up sitting in the third or fourth row from the stage. The seats would be great for the show, but not so great for the movie. You see, before the rock and roll show started, they'd always show a full-length movie.

Because they charged so little to get in and they had to pay all the performers, they didn't spend any money getting a good movie. They always showed the worst movies in the world. I remember this one had something to do with giant grasshoppers taking over the world. No one watched the movie. Everyone in the place seemed to be talking. Everyone except Cathy's uncle, who fell asleep as soon as the lights went down.

We talked all through the movie. We were so excited; we couldn't wait for the bands to start. I'd like to say that we ignored the movie, but when you're in the third row and these giant grasshoppers

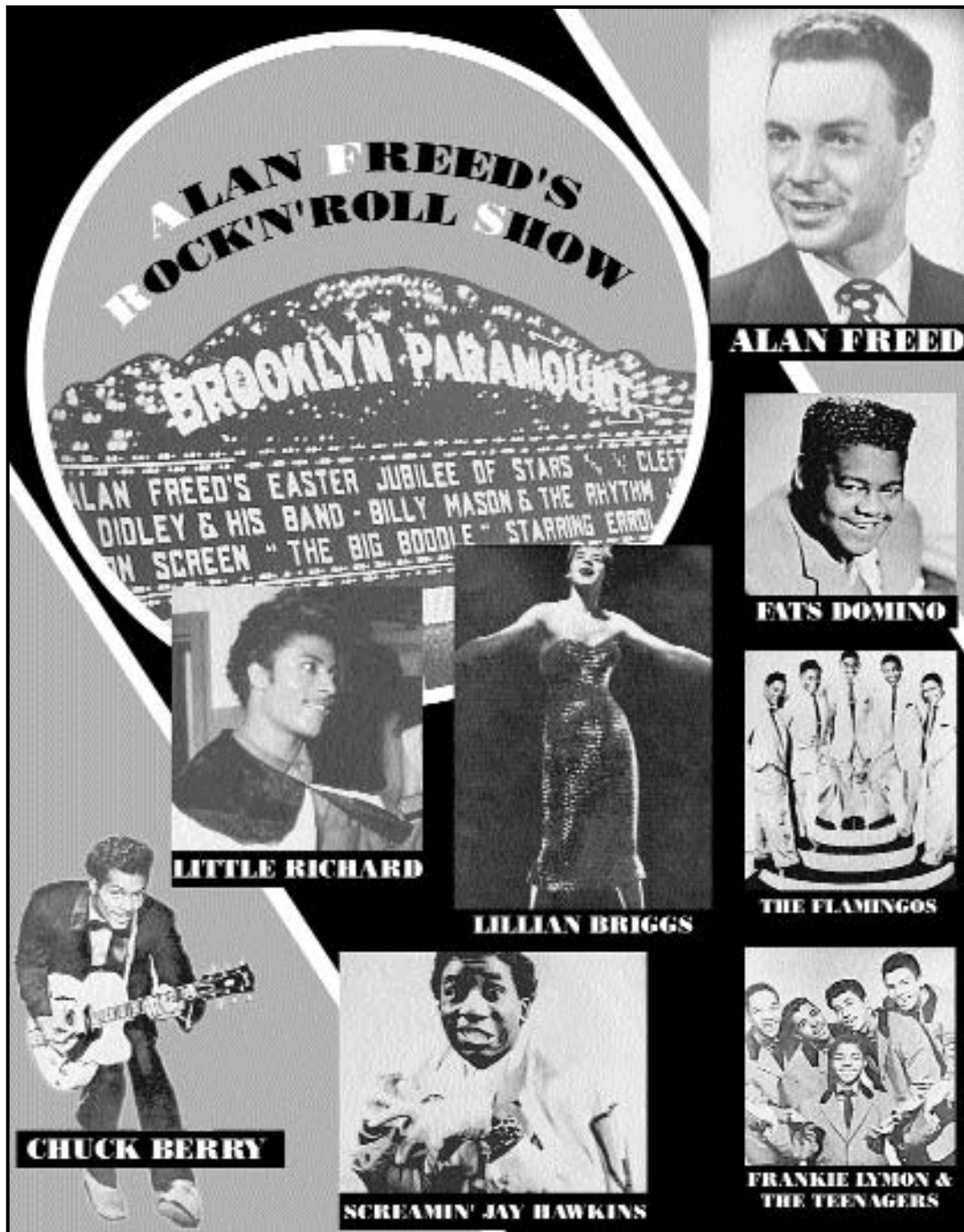
keep hopping around on the screen right in front of you, you can't really ignore it. It was awful.

Finally, the movie ended. The spotlight turned onto the stage and Alan Freed walked out to the microphone. He was a sharp guy. He wore a plaid blazer and slacks and a black bow tie and parted his hair to the side with a little bit of pomade. There was nothing too flashy or loud about it. He was just a really gung ho guy. He loved the music. He was excited about it, and he wanted everyone else to be as excited as he was. And it wasn't that he didn't have an ego. He had a big ego. It was his rock and roll show, after all. These performers were where they were because of him. It was his radio show that everyone listened to. It was his promotion that brought everyone here. He was even the first guy to use the term "rock and roll" to describe music (before that, "rock and roll" was ghetto slang for sex). But Alan Freed knew all of this and everyone knew it, so he didn't have to play it up. He just introduced the acts, said really flattering things about them, and let the performers do their thing.

The first act on that night was The Penguins. They'd just had a hit with the song, "Earth Angel." As soon as their song started, the crowd went nuts. Cathy, her cousin, and I all jumped up from our seats and started screaming. It seemed like everyone did. We couldn't really dance much. We had to stay in front of our seats. There were ushers who walked up and down the aisles, making sure that everyone stayed in line. They wouldn't let you dance in the aisles, and they didn't even like it when you got up from your seat. So all the kids would stand in front of their seats, jumping and screaming and singing along to "Earth Angel." In the meantime, Cathy's uncle just sat there, reading his *Daily News*. The Penguins did all their synchronized dance moves and sang their song, then left the stage.

Alan Freed came out and introduced the next band. It was The Nutmegs. I don't remember what The Nutmegs' big hit was at the time. I think it was "Story Untold." I remember The Nutmegs, though, because they all dressed in matching gold lamé suits. I guess because they thought it looked like the spice, nutmeg. I don't know. They had the synchronized dance moves, too. All of the doo-wop bands did. It was the cool thing to do at the time.

All of the performers weren't doo-wop, though. We also saw Lillian Briggs that night. Alan Freed called her the trombone-



playing truck driver. She was one of Alan Freed's favorites. He booked her at a bunch of his rock and roll shows. And she really had been a truck driver. Before she'd been discovered as a musician, she drove a laundry truck in Allentown, Pennsylvania. That night, though, she came out on stage wearing a skin-tight silver dress, looking very ladylike. Then, she picked up her trombone and started blowing. The crowd went crazy. We all loved her. She sang her big hit, "I Want You to Be My Baby."

About ten different acts came on stage in a row. They all did one song apiece. With the exception of Lillian Briggs, almost all of the performers were black. Even the house band was mostly black, because

before Alan Freed started pushing rock and roll, he did the "Moondog" radio show, which was all rhythm and blues, and before his rock and roll shows, he put on R&B shows with guys like Muddy Waters. Most of the musicians in his house band were holdovers from the Moondog days.

I don't remember the race of the musicians being a big deal, though. A lot of the press made it out to be a big deal. They wrote about rock and roll as if it were the end of civilization. *Life* magazine ran a big article that talked about the "frenzy" and "juvenile delinquency" of this new form of music. The worst thing, according to *Life* and the rest of the reporters writing about it, was that all these white

kids were listening to black music. But we never thought about it that way. It wasn't black music or white music. It was just rock and roll.

When I was a kid growing up in Long Island, race wasn't a big issue. At least I don't remember it being a big issue. I have a friend named Ida Miller. She's my age and she lived in New York when she was a teenager. When her family first moved to New York, Ida didn't know one neighborhood from the other. She heard that Little Richard was playing at the Apollo, and she wanted to see him, so Ida and her sister took the subway to Harlem to watch Little Richard play. They were the only two white girls in the Apollo that day, but no one hassled them.

When we went to the shows in Brooklyn, the crowd was pretty well mixed, ethnically speaking, too. It was Brooklyn, after all. You get all kinds there. I never gave it a thought.

Race was a big deal in other places, though. In the fifties, there were “white” radio stations and “black” radio stations in the South. The “white” radio stations would-

and roll than R&B. He came out and belted through two or three of his hits at the time: “Blueberry Hill” or “Ain’t That a Shame” or “I’m in Love Again.” When he was done, Alan Freed came back out, thanked everyone for coming, and that was it. Including the hour and a half movie before the show, the whole thing only lasted about three hours.

a stick, singing “I Put a Spell on You.” I saw The Platters sing “Only You” and “The Great Pretender.” I saw Little Richard stomp on the piano and sing, “Good golly, Miss Molly, she sure like to ball.” I had no idea what he was talking about until I was much older, but I sang along, anyway. (I also found out much later that the original words to “Tutti Frutti” were “Tutti

their songs. It was called “payola.” The majors urged Congress to investigate the practice of payola. Congress focused their investigation on two famous DJs: Dick Clark and Alan Freed. This was in 1960. I don’t know if either of them had done anything, but WINS fired Alan Freed when the investigation started. It pretty much killed his career. He tried to get back on the

He was even the first guy to use the term “rock and roll” to describe music (before that, “rock and roll” was ghetto slang for sex). But Alan Freed knew all of this and everyone knew it, so he didn’t have to play it up.

n’t play any of the hits by the famous black stars like Little Richard or Fats Domino, even though those guys were from the South. Instead, white musicians like Pat Boone and The Diamonds would listen to the radio in the northeast, and, as soon as a song became a hit, Pat Boone or The Diamonds or someone like them would go into the studio and record the song. So the white stations wouldn’t play Little Richard’s version of “Tutti Frutti,” but Pat Boone had a big hit with his version of the same song.

The white versions of the songs usually weren’t as good. The difference was really obvious if you listened to the radio show that came on after Alan Freed’s, Jocko and His Rocket Ship. Jocko was a black DJ, and he played really soulful music, like Sam Cooke songs and Ray Charles songs. For a while, he always played a song called “Hearts of Stone” by a black group called The Charms. When you heard The Charms do “Hearts of Stone,” it was a really low down song with a kind of “bop-bop-boom” bass to it. After “Hearts of Stone” became a hit, a white, female group called the Fontane Sisters covered it, and they took the low down song and sang it like a bunch of perky cheerleaders. Their version was really white bread. It was a different thing altogether.

Anyway, getting back to the show, Cathy, her cousin, and I got to see The Penguins, The Nutmegs, The Flamingos, Lillian Briggs, and about a half dozen more acts all do one song each. During the whole show, the energy in the Paramount was incredible. Everyone was screaming and jumping around, but staying in front of their seats. Cathy’s uncle kept reading his *Daily News*. At the end of the show, Alan Freed came out and introduced one of his all-time favorites, Fats Domino. Fats Domino had been doing Alan Freed shows since Alan Freed was still the Moondog, but Fats Domino was more rock



The house lights came on. Cathy’s uncle folded up his newspaper, stuck it back under his arm, and stood to leave. The ushers were quick to clear everyone out. As we left, we saw another line stretching down the side of the Paramount and around the corner. It was full of teenagers waiting to see the day’s four o’clock show.

We walked back to the subway, and Cathy’s uncle and cousin rode with us all the way to the Jamaica station. When we got off, we thanked Cathy’s uncle for taking us. He said, “You’re welcome.” I think it was the only thing he’d said all day.

Over the next few years, I went to something like twenty to twenty-five different Alan Freed rock and roll shows at the Brooklyn Paramount and the New York Paramount (after the Brooklyn one was torn down). I saw a whole bunch of the big, rock and roll pioneers. I saw Chuck Berry do his duck-strut across the stage. He was amazing, and he was a feature act, so I got to see a few of his songs. I saw Screamin’ Jay Hawkins jump around, waving a shrunken head on

Fruitti, good booty,” but the studio made Little Richard change “good booty” to “aw, rootti” when he was recording it.)

I saw the Big Bopper before he got into that plane with Buddy Holly and Ritchie Valens. I saw Sam Cooke before he had a one-night stand with a woman who robbed him, and he got shot and killed trying to run her down. I saw The Shirelles sing, “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?” I saw Dion and The Belmonts sing “Little Runaway” and Little Anthony and the Imperials sing “Tears on My Pillow.” I saw Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers before Frankie Lymon’s voice changed and he could no longer hit the high notes that made him famous. To tell the truth, I can’t remember who else I saw play, but the shows were always different and they were always fun.

After high school, I moved to upstate New York to go to college. During my first year there, a few of the major record companies insisted that songs by independent record companies were becoming hits only because the independent companies were paying DJs to play

radio a few times, but nothing worked. He basically drank himself to death by 1965. Nothing ended up happening to Dick Clark, though. He kept doing *American Bandstand*.

No one could replace Alan Freed after that. A few DJs tried to fill his shoes, but it wasn’t the same. There was something about him and his shows. He was so gung ho, and there was just this sense of everything being fresh and new.

A bunch of those old performers are dead now. A lot of them got famous and suddenly had a lot of money when they were used to having nothing, and they killed themselves with drugs and wild living. A lot of them had one hit and went back to being nobody again. A few of these old acts still perform. I’ve seen some of their reunion shows on TV. It’s funny to see these seventy-year-old guys singing songs about teenage love, but I still love those songs. I think it’s funny, too, that, fifty years ago, my father told me that rock and roll would never last, and it’s still around now.

Music has always been like that, though. One generation never seems to understand the music of the generation that comes after them. Parents rarely understand their kids’ music. They never think it will last, when really, it’s not that different. It’s just the next step in a long musical progression.

When I think about this, I always think about Cathy Lobasso’s uncle, because he didn’t care about rock and roll at all. He just read his paper through the whole thing, through all my favorite bands and all the songs that are the soundtrack to my generation. It was like he wasn’t even there. He tuned the whole thing out because the three of us wanted to go, and he knew that we could only go if he took us. He was a good sport. Without him, I may have never made it to any of those rock and roll shows.

–Sean Carswell

SEAN CARSWELL





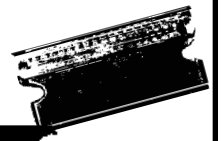
PUNCH!
KICK!





REV. NØRB

LOVE, NØRB



NEEDLESS TO SAY, A 364-POUND BLACK MALE SCREAMING OBSCENITIES AT THE VOICES IN HIS HEAD IN PUBLIC PLACES IS GENERALLY FERTILE GROUNDS FOR MISINTERPRETATION.

I have terrible news for the world: I may have been the last known humanoid to sing karaoke to a Sheb Wooley song whilst the redoubtable Sheb was still among the living. But wait! It gets worse! Okay, granted, it doesn't get any worse if you're Sheb Wooley; for the non-Sheb demographic, however, as the butcher told the young German housewife, the wüorst is yet to come. How much worse, Rev. Nørb? Well, i dunno: How much time ya got? How much time (TIME!) ya got tick-tick-tickin' in your head? Has time come today? Can you give me anything but time? Is time on your side? Etc.? Well, first off (or are we already on "next off?"), i finally got some decent hate mail (well, "hate e-mail" is actually the more technically correct term, but, you know, as long as the hate is there, i'm happy), so bloated and juicy with comedic rebuttal potential that i spent the last two months or so dancing in place with mischievous glee a la Dave Roller, just waiting for the chance to STRIKE - to merrily sever the metaphorical head of the plaintiff with a rusty waffle iron and display it on a pike to amuse friends, scare off enemies, and vex the overly front-yard-conscious neighbors - and then i fuckin' go and ACCIDENTALLY DELETE ALL MY E-MAILS, including the offending gripe in question, WHICH, i have no doubt, WOULD HAVE SURELY



WES AFTER RECENT BOXCUTTER-INDUCED HELLRI DE, 1992

SERVED TO RESUSCITATE MY FLAGGING CAREER AS THE PUNK ROCK EQUIVALENT OF TRIUMPH, THE COMIC INSULT DOG, thereby DELIVERING PLANET EARF UNTO A NEW GOLDEN AGE OF MERRY BILE AND CONTENTIOUSNESS, with myself as the highly-regarded and well-compensated point guard, o' course. As a result, i (and, by implication, you) am left with only the following single (analog) letter - carried for months in my back pocket, and molded by sweat and heat to the form of my highly analog buttocks - to base a column around this issue: "Dear Rev. Nørb: What do you think explains the large number of Portland (OR) based comic artists, zine & misc. indy media types?" This fiery screed comes to us from a Mr. NAK of Attica, NY, who also identifies himself as "Stir Crazy Editor," which raises more questions than it answers. Well, S.K., the truth of the matter is this: I've never-ever-ever in my long-legged life been to Portland, or anywhere in Oregon, for **REV. NØRB** 8 that matter - it always struck me

as the kind of place where facial hair and hiking boots were continually in vogue, and, hell, that's just for the wimmenfolk. My gut feeling is that the underground creative types always tend to gravitate to where the good cement is, and, i mean, if one can't score quality cement in Portland, where might one be expected to score

said, either that or the cement. Again, i'm not sure, as i've never been there, though i can say that i've always really fucking loathed Bill Walton (Dear Bill: Fred Gwynne called. He wants his act back), and i never rooted for the Lakers one day in my life (having nothing to do with the Lakers' aggravating combination of glitz and success and everything to do with my Bucks' Kareem Abdul-Jabbar v. the Lakers' Wilt Chamberlain being the marquee NBA matchup when i was a five year-old) until the Portland Trail Blazers pulled that "Hack-a-Shaq" shit in the 1998 (i think?) Western Conference Finals, at which point in time i prayed to the golden calf of Baal (one thing you gotta say about Baal... he got his ass kicked by God a few times... but the guy was a true Baaler) that Shaq would perform a two-handed reverse dunk on (Portland coach Mike) Dunleavy, and leave him hanging upside down in the hoop that the ospreys who will certainly one day make feast of his liver get a head start right then and there. But soft! What light over yonder window breaks??? Do i seem... say... BITTER in some wise regarding Portland in general, and Nike™ in specific? And, whysomever would an even-keeled gent like myself wield such a burden of grumpitude? Could it possibly be that, say, oh, i don't know, i, at one point in

time, owned 10,149 shares of Converse™ stock? And that Nike™ bought out Converse™ this year??? And that, mais naturellement, i'm thinkin' "YEAH, BAYBEE! MY FAITH IN THE VERITABLE SOLE OF THE SCENE HAS FINALLY PAID OFF! BABY I'M A RICH MAN! BABY I'M A RICH MAN! BABY I'M A RICH FAG JEW!" (er, delete the untoward Beatles reference there if you see fit), only to find that i actually DON'T own the 10,149 shares of Converse™ i own, because Converse™ had declared bankruptcy, then "reorganized," THEN was purchased by Nike™? Like, my 10,149 shares of the CHUCK TAYLOR WORLD EMPIRE were somehow rendered completely NULL AND VOID for JUST LONG ENOUGH that Nike™ could swoosh in (har!) and take them and now i got NOTHING? Not to put too fine a point on it, but HOW EZZACTLY THE MOTHERFUCKING FUCK DOES THAT SHIT FUCKING WORK??? Who the hell is in charge of making up these rules, Brad at Rhetoric? How does the

it? (for those scoring at home, "portland cement" is a hydraulic cement made by finely pulverizing the clinker produced by calcining to incipient fusion a mixture of clay and limestone or similar materials) Of course, the real reason is, most likely, that Asian slave labor (must... resist... joke... must... resist... joke...) affords multinational corporations like Nike™ enough extra jack that some of it is bound to eventually trickle back down into the communities where they're headquartered; money, like drugs, is the type of thing where if you got enough of it bouncing around your community, you're gonna wind up getting your hands on enough of it to get by - so, ultimately, the reason why one'd assume that marginalized aesthetic types cluster around Portland - if, indeed, not for the cement - is that Sri Lankan sweatshops bolster the area's collective disposable income enough that ventures that would be flatly unprofitable in other areas of the country are actually able to scrape by there. See? Just like Ronnie said! Trickle-down economics DOES work! Well, as i

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company i own 10,149 shares of manage to strike my 10,149 shares from the book, and THEN sell the company???

ALL THIS SHIT WAS DEVISED SPECIFICALLY TO PISS ME OFF, WASN'T IT??? But wait! But wait! My black cat bone of contention protrudes even further thru the gaping wound! This "Holiday Season™" (that means "Christmas," but i'm not sure if people are allowed to say "Christmas" any more), i found myself at an after-bar party with some formerly-local twenty-year-old lass (i know, i know... a little old for me, but what the hey, i'm desperate) and her similarly formerly-local twenty-year-old female roommate, and similarly formerly-local roommate is blathering ON and ON to me about the magnificence of Portland, where the bot' of 'em now live: "Oh, Rev. Nørb, the TOLERANCE that is in evidence upon the gilt-edged streets of my newfound community! Humans of EVERY POSSIBLE sexual orientation, all milling about the avenues and thoroughfares as one, untrammelled by the small-town myopia that makes Green Bay such an unlivable pit of small-town yuck! All may exist in harmony, to pursue life, liberty, and the orifice(s) of their choice, with nary a look askance! Every shape! Every size! Every race, color and creed! We exist as one, whipped to a homogeneous slurry like Hostess™ Fruit Pie filling by the depths of our divine TOLERANCE! UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY, MOTHERFUCKER!!!"

Approximately twenty minutes later, the same chick who was giving me the speech about the majesty of Portland's "tolerance" had her friend in the bathroom, reading her the riot act because she and i were making out. It was great. I'm standing by the door, jingling my car keys, waiting for Girl A to emerge from the bathroom, the door flies open, Girl A bursts out, Girl B yanks Girl A back in the bathroom, yelling "GODDAMMIT, GIRL A, HE'S THIRTY-SIX FUCKING YEARS OLD!!!", the door slams shut, more yelling, more jingling... it was all i could do to restrain myself from kicking in the bathroom door, grabbing Girl B by the lapels, if such a thing even were present, and screaming "FUCK YOU, YA CUNT! I'M NOT THIRTY-SIX FUCKING YEARS OLD!!! I'M THIRTY-SEVEN FUCKING YEARS OLD!!! NOW LET ME FUCK YOUR FRIEND BEFORE I SEND YOU BACK TO PORTLAND IN A GODDAMN CEMENT MIXER!!!" ...i mean, if a were a forty-year-old black guy who liked wearing bras and giving blowjobs to seventy-year-old white colostomy patients, HEY, SURE, NO PROBLEM! PORTLAND WELCOMES YOU! But a perfectly normal thirty-seven-year-old weird caucasian dude who's caught the fancy of your twenty-year-old roommate? WHEEEET!!! WHEEEET!!! EVERYBODY OUT OF THE POOL!!! A GROSS ABOMINATION OF THIS NATURE CANNOT BE COUNTENANCED!!! Needless to say, the fact that i view Portland as a scurvy swab-pit full of stock-swiping slave-mongers and cock-blocking wenches can not help but addle my general perceptions of the community in a negative sense; mitigating this is the fact

that, as of about 10:33 PM CDT 1 October 2003 A.D., the Epoxies are likely the best band in the world (the qualifier "likely" does, in fact, indicate a certain hedging of the bets, true: However, i compensate for this vacillation by stating, in no uncertain terms, that as of about two Fridays ago, Pink Reason from Green Bay WI are the absolute worst band i've seen in my life, by a long shot, without question, and i am kind of old, so i've seen a lot of really horrible shit in my day, so this should certainly stand up). The reasoning behind this is four-fold: 1. Their records are good; 2. Their live show is good; 3. The underlying concept behind the band is good; 4. I forced a reclusive friend of mine to come out and see them and not only did she love the band, she wound up having sex with me that night. THE MATH SAYS "PARTY ON!!!" WHICH, OF COURSE, brings me back to the original thrust of my grumblings: On the selfsame night i last saw the Epoxies (and formulated the thought that, hmmm, shit, i'm kinda getting somewhat a little bit sure that this is, in fact, the best band in the world), their immediate stage predecessors, the Returnables (a fairly great band whose *Unrequited Hits* CD was carelessly and erroneously left off my Top Ten of 2002 list) (sorry, operator error) played an Exploding Hearts cover, presumably for the very reason of playing up the Portland connection without actually invoking cement or making out with girls seventeen years one's junior or Asian slave labor or the like (and, at this point in time, i assume you, the merry reader, are saying "by gosh, Rev.

enced it - just as, i assume, having a parent or sibling die would be. These types of events tend to yield pains with a pretty f'n long half-life; i can't even imagine what the surviving guy is/will be going through. For the rest of his life. See, i told you it got worse. Anyway, my take on the Exploding Hearts album is this: I dunno, i only listened to it once. Reason being that it went "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da" in not ONE but TWO different songs [don't know the titles offhand - like i said, i only listened to the album once]. Why THIS has any bearing dates back to the first time i heard the Strokes: Once upon a time, there was some late-night after-bar convocation at my friend/ex-bandmate Erik's house. Eventually, a female guest was able to finagle the Strokes debut album onto the stereo [chicks are like that] [or so i hear]. I had never even heard o' the band before, but, apparently, some veritabably DuChampian ready-made argument was already in place, whereby the hills were more or less alive with the sounds of drunken and impassioned "THE STROKES ARE THE NEXT BIG THING AND THEY RULE!" v. "THE STROKES ARE THE NEXT BIG THING AND THEY SUCK!" discourse. Being an even-keeled Scientist, of course, i just sat on the sofa [futon, actually] and drank more and listened. For a while, i just shrugged: Eh, i guess they're doing a halfway decent impersonation of VU era Velvet Underground [if such a thing even really exists], who the fuck even cares? Can i have some more chips? But then...THEN! The Strokes veered into the one territory into which all Rock Propriety insists they Should Not Veer! They went "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da." I leapt to my feet. "I HATE THIS BAND!!! THIS BAND ARE A BUNCH OF FAGS, AND THEY SUCK!!! They go 'doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da,' and i HATE 'doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da!!!' FUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!!! [or words to that effect!]" In any event, this led to a 4 AM screaming match about the validity of "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da." My feelings on "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da" are that, like a penis, it's fine if it goes where it's supposed to go - which would be in vaguely catchy/aggravating faux-soul AM radio hits like "You Can't Hurry Love" and "Walking on Sunshine." If, however, "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da" winds up in a more, say, ROCK context - "It's Not My Place" by the Ramones, "A Town Called Malice" by the Jam, "Touch Me" [ugh] by the Doors - it is as unwelcome as a fully erect penis ravaging one's anal tract unbidden would be. I mean, "doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da" is, to me, the first last refuge of the aesthetically bankrupt [the aesthetically bankrupt generally have more than one last refuge; how they are able to pull off such a dazzling musical feat is unknown to this correspondent]; the tell-tale Mark O' Cain of the musical scoundrel; the white flag hoisted on the fifth or



NOTE BRUISE IN MIDDLE OF FOREHEAD FROM LIFETIME OF BUPPING HAIDS

Nørb, we have yet to hear you utter comment #1 regarding the Exploding Hearts. Please slake our thirst for eternal knowledge regarding your feelings on this tragedy-wrought ensemble, remembering all the while, of course, that there is NO FOOD NOR DRINK allowed in the library," to which i can only respond: "um, i'm not sure." First things first, however: Very real sympathies to the family and friends of the members killed in the crash. Further, i offer up whatever inadequate sympathies i can give to the surviving member of the band. I've had two bandmates die in car crashes over the course of my rock'n'roll lifespan, and it's not the kind of thing one can fully articulate to anyone who hasn't experi-

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sixth album by a band whose initial impetus has run the fuck right on outta gas. The presence of “doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da” on the Strokes first album, to me, indicated that the band did, in fact, blow dog, and should fuck right the fuck on off. In point of fact, my entire argument against the Strokes that night – and every night, and any night – was, cleanly and simply, predicated on the fact that they did “doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da,” and i HATE “doon-doon-doon, da doon-doon, da-doon-da-doon-da,” save for special circumstances mentioned earlier. The end. Case closed. Pencils in the trays. WELL! Some time later, i acquire and plop the Exploding Hearts album on my turntable, and it’s fucking GREAT. Or so i think. Until i hear the sound that freezes the lymph in my unapologetically Burroughsian nodes: “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA.” I am paralyzed. “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA” is, was, and has always been the sure sign of the poseur, the spiritual leper – and here said bugaboo is, manifesting itself in the unseemly temple of what had appeared to be a top-notch album. SO! I’m reeling with the various perplexities that surround such a discovery, unsure what should be made of the confounding presence of “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA” in such an incongruous setting – i mean, do i press charges? petition for a redress of grievances? request a written apology? – when, IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SONG, i hear “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA!” I’ve come Undun! I pull the record off the turntable. This record is good – possibly even great – yet it exhibits a characteristic i find to be an immediate disqualification over the course of my studies in the Scholarly Contemplation of All Things Rocking. I decide i will mull over That Which I Have Heard, and play the record again some time in the future, when my objective judgment is not quite so clouded by the upper-level Chinese Calculus of “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA.” Whilst i am in the process of so processing the initial troubling data, i get word that three-fourths of the band have been killed in a van crash. So NOW what do i do? Obviously, in light of current events, there is no way to be legitimately objective about the record any more; i couldn’t even come to terms with it when the entire band was alive. What if i play it again, and decide the band can get posthumously fucked because they go “DOON-DOON-DOON, DA DOON-DOON, DA-DOON-DA-DOON-DA?” I mean, thinking such a thing is hardly called for, given the circumstances. So what the fuck? What should i do? Play it again? Sam? Let it sit in front of my stereo untouched for the next thirty years or so? In a very short while, this album has become the most unnerving item in my fairly substantial record collection [edging out the amazingly

by Simon & Garfunkel, and if you think i speak this in jest, listen to the fucking thing once!]. Now, how this relates to you, Al Franken, is this: The same week that the Returnables – a Chicago band – gave rightful props to the Exploding Hearts was the week that the legendary Wesley Willis died of leukemia (at age 40, mind you. I dunno. Whenever i know an adult who gets stricken by leukemia, i really hafta stifle an urge to quip “Leukemia? Aren’t you a little OLD for that shit?” [hard to milk any humor out of that, since everyone i knew



WESLEY ROCKING OUT WITH THE WESLEY WILLIS FIASCO, CA. 1993

who’s ever had it died]). Yep... my friend Erik (op. cit.) and i had made plans earlier in the week to go visit Wesley the afternoon of the Epoxies/Returnables show. Around 7 PM that Thursday, i informed my buddy Tom of said plans to see Wesley that weekend. Two hours later, Tom called me to say that Wesley was dead. D’oh. But, i mean, fuck, that’s what kinda year it’s been: Bands lose 75% of their members in van crashes, Johnny Cash and John Ritter croak simultaneously, my grandma dies one month and my uncle the next, the kid i babysit for’s two-year-old cousin falls down the stairs, gets brain damage, and dies two days later – heck, let’s not even bring Sheb Wooley into the mix right now, we have more than adequate misery to sustain us. ANYWAY! Let us Sing a Song of Wesley here. You either know who Wesley is, or ya don’t. Wesley was a six-foot-who-knows-how-tall, 364-pound schizophrenic autistic street artist and rock star from the Chicago housing projects. Perhaps you’ve met him? To jog your memory, he would be the humongous guy in the ill-fitting Goodwill™ suitcoat whom, upon making your initial acquaintance, robotically extended his hulking paw your way, informed you that he was Wesley Willis from Sha-Cawgo Illinois, and then either asked you if you were interested in buying one of his “compact discusses” or to bump his head. COME ON!!! BU’P MAH HAID!!! KEEP THEM EYES LOOKIN’ AT ME!!! BU’P MAH HAID!!! Perhaps you saw him on MTV, heard him on the Howard Stern Show, or are merely a connoisseur of one-man-

plus-keyboard-accompaniment compact discusses, of which the Wes-meister released, i believe, in excess of fifty (okay, quick: How many of you have the first Wesley Willis CD? If more than one of you raised your hand, thou art in grave error: Wesley’s first CD was a CD-R, made back in the day [like about twelve years ago or something] when having a CD-R burned was a pricey rarity... Wes went into some studio or another, paid \$400? \$700? \$1000? and came out with That Which We Would Now Call A CD-R. A while later, Wes found himself in need of a bit of cash, so he went down to the local prerecorded musical entertainment emporium, and told the guy behind the counter that he had a CD he’d like to sell to the store. His asking price, of course, was merely That Which He Had Paid for the CD initially – yep, \$400 or \$700 or \$1000 or whatever. The guy behind the counter offered Wes four dollars. He took it. Good luck huntin’ that one down)? Regardless! Since, in my infinite brilliance, i have deleted my e-mails – and since i am virtually incapacitated on cold medication right now (i can’t help it. The mucus-based alien behind my sinuses is threatening to shatter my left orbital bone even as we speak! How can this small mind cope?) – i have decided to fill up the rest of this column with Incoherent Tales of Wesley (anyone neither knowing nor caring who or whom Wesley Willis is should likely mosey on to the book reviews at this juncture). SO, ANYWAY, the first i ever heard tell of Wesley Willis was from my sometimes-drummer Ron. Ron used to be in a band with this

guy Dale, who was a loftmate of Wesley’s, or something. Ron and my other sometimes-bandmate Erik had gone down to visit Dale one weekend, and had videotaped much of the proceedings, which was mostly Wesley asking everyone who entered the loft if they were there “to see the keyboard.” They kept on detailing how crazy Wesley was, so, naturally, i asked if this Wesley guy was as crazy as Walter, a mutual friend who essentially set the standard for legitimate mental unwellness amongst people we knew. Ron and Erik said the unthinkable: Wesley is CRAZIER than Walter. WAY crazier. Didn’t believe it for a minute. I mean, Walter was a pretty tough act to follow, insanity-wise: He was the kind of guy who would walk around your apartment in his underwear babbling about the Turtles or something with his polo shirt on backwards and the upturned collar covering his mouth, having no inkling whatsoever that his shirt was on backwards and he was following you around in his dirty underwear, to say nothing of grasping the apparently complex concept that many consider it bad form to roam around the house of an acquaintance babbling obliviously in such a fashion. I thought Erik and Ron were exaggerating Wesley’s craziness for effect. They were not. The first time i actually met Wesley, he was sitting in Ron’s yard, working on one of his six trillion spiral-bound notebooks of song lyrics (this was right around the time of “Casper the Homosexual Friendly Ghost,” which remains, to this day, my favorite Wesley song). I offered a generic greeting, and asked if Ron was home. Wesley responded by asking me

what it meant to “vamp it up.” I attempted to illustrate the concept, as i understood it, with an overabundance of phrases, examples, and ludicrous pantomimes – after which Wesley, who had not taken his eyes off me since he posed the question, followed up his initial question with, “Does it mean ‘to make new friends?’” What can ya do? His definition made more sense than mine, so i agreed with him, after which, i’m certain, he asked me to bu’p his haid. Which i did. We were buds thereafter. This would be a good time for a paragraph, but i don’t believe in such David Beckham Metrosexual fol-de-rol, so fuck you. Anyway! One of the problems up Wesley’s cranium was that he had two demons – “Nervewrecker” and, i believe, “Homebreaker” – yelling at him. A simple “Hi, Wes” might lead to a disoriented Wesley yelling “ARE YOU REAL, OR ARE YOU A VOICE???” – which, of course, almost anyone would instinctively reply “I’m a voice! A disembodied voice! I exist purely in the vale of your demented perceptions! Et cetera!” to, so ya kinda hadda watch what you said around him. On occasion, Wes would have an “outburst,” where either Homebreaker or Nervewrecker would be yelling at him to such an extent that it was necessary for Wes to verbally return fire. Needless to say, a 364-pound black male screaming obscenities at the voices in his head in public places is generally fertile grounds for misinterpretation; the most grievous example of which was Wes’ ill-fated bus trip where his verbal outburst v. his personal demons was interpreted by another passenger as threats, et al, to the extent where the other guy viciously slashed Wesley across the face with a box cutter in reprisal (the “other guy” was the subject of the Wesley tune “He’s Doing Time in Jail” – needless to say, said other guy’s name has been long since deservedly forgotten, if anybody even knew it to begin with). Wesley could, on demand, on a good day, imitate both Nervewrecker and Homebreaker – they both kinda sounded like Flip Wilson’s transvestite alter ego Geraldine – which, like everything else in Wesley’s life, never seemed as horrific as it truly was simply by virtue of being blunted by Wesley’s gift of being CLASS FRICKING CLOWN OF THE WORLD, forever and ever, Amen. If Wesley was able to take the bus from Point A to Point B without his voices yelling at him, it was defined as a “harmony joyride.” A “hellride” was just the opposite. Occasionally, you’d be standing in line with him at a convenience store or somewhere when he’d suddenly break into “SUCK MY MOTHER-FUCKIN’ DICK! LICK A LLAMA’S BOOTY HOLE!” whilst yelling at his voices; when one reminded him that he needed to mind his language, he’d apologize, and explain that the voices in his head just called him a “foul toad” and a “smiggeroo.” Then you could just say something like “Wesley, i assure you that you are neither a foul toad nor a smiggeroo,” and he’d be all right for a while – the bottom line being that, all the while that the guy was flailing around, screaming at his own head to DO HIM A FAVUH AND SHUT the

FUCK UP, he was writing song after song after song after song and drawing ballpoint skyline after ballpoint skyline after ballpoint skyline after ballpoint skyline. I mean, i see no other being on the planet being so maniacally productive in the face of such multi-faceted adversity, do you? And Wesley stories? I got your Wesley stories! How ‘bout the time we were driving down to some gig with Wesley in the passenger seat, and Ron, driving, goes “Hey Wesley! Can you adjust the rear view window for me?” and Wesley goes “Yuh,” and immediately SNAPS THE REAR VIEW MIRROR OFF OF THE VAN, tosses it out onto the interstate, and resumes doing whatever it was he was doing before he was pestered with such a request? Or how ‘bout the time we were in the van, and Wesley kept having to piss, so, finally, we refused to keep pulling over for him, and made him pee in a Sunny Delight™ bottle, and told him to throw it out the window – ‘cept that Wesley didn’t bother to cap the bottle up before he tossed it, and we had the windows open? How ‘bout the time we were driving thru a black neighborhood Milwaukee with Wes, and he started leaning out the window yelling “KILL WHITEY!!! KILL WHITEY!!!” for no real reason other than the mood struck him? How ‘bout



WES AND STUNT DOUBLE

the time he stayed at my house, and asked if cough drops would make him fat? Then ate an entire 30-count bag of my Halls™ Menthos-lyptuses? The time he had soiled his garments, so i dressed him in cast-off Nørb-wear, including green-and-gold Zubaz™ pants? The time i taught him the phrase “KICK OUT THE JAMS, MOTHERS AND FUCKERS!!!”, and he kept screaming it at Wanda Chrome & The Leather Pharaohs all night while they screamed back at

him to shut up? The time he kept asking Kim Shattuck if her band was called “Da Mupps?” And she kept saying “NO!!! IT’S THE ‘MUFFS!!!”, completely un-grasping the situation? The time he didn’t show up for a gig opening for the Gaza Strippers, so i went home, got my keyboard, shoved a box under my shirt and essentially played his set for him? The way everyone would cluster around him, trying to persuade him to write a song about this person or that, to which he would invariably respond “DO ME A FAVUH... SHUT THE (pause) UP!!!” The time he ate the entire eons-old box of King Vitamin™ cereal i couldn’t even persuade my rabbit into eating? The time he was hanging out in the mall in Green Bay, and was mistaken for a member of MC Hammer’s entourage? Don’t even get me started on the “Can I have a banana?” story! I – or anybody who knew Wesley – could go on for days (it’s not really the same without the vocal mannerisms – let the record show that the majority of ex-members of Boris The Sprinkler have incorporated various Wesleyisms into their speech patterns to some degree [and, in case you’re wondering, my name, in Wesley-speak, is “Rebrin Nø,” although simply calling close personal associates by both their first and last names will generally work]). I think the main thrust of my babbling is that there are plenty of people who claim to be “possessed” by their creative impulses; Wesley comes the closest to a literal definition of that as anyone i can conceive of. BUT ANYWAY, MR. NAK, back to your original question, which i believe was about Sheb Wooley: Yes, i sang karaoke to “Purple People Eater” in the early morning hours of August 30th, 2003; seventeen days later, Sheb Wooley was gone to his eternal purple-people-eatin’ reward. If anyone knows of any individual who sang karaoke to a Sheb Wooley song in the interval following the wee hours of August 30th but preceding Sheb’s death on September 17th, speak now or forever cede the glory to me (and, if you’re gonna challenge my claim, i’m gonna need witnesses. Plenty witnesses. I’ve got the Figgs and former Replacement/current Guns’n’Roses-ite Tommy Stinson to back me up [and, for the record, Tommy said my rendition of “Purple People Eater” was “GREAT!”, and expressed open admiration for my knowing where all the goofy breaks were {why do i rock? On accounta Tommy said so... Tommy said so... Tommy said so, so, so, so what}. Of course, after some anonymous wag punched in “Sweet Child O’ Mine,” i had to defuse the mounting tension by tackling that number as well, with much less glorious results... but Pete Hayes of the Figgs said to keep that quiet, because T.S. could get in trouble with A.R. over such monkeyshines, should word reach him... so, needless to say, mum’s the word on my end]). In summation: Rock over London. Rock on, Chicago. WESLEY WILLIS: If he wasn’t dead, he’d be the ultimate survivor.

–Love, Nørb

REV · NØRB





I made it to about five feet from the shore, pulled my lone white garment to my ankles, pointed my precarious poohole lakeward, and just let loose.

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

WARNING: This issue's Dinghole Reports contains a Roy Rogers song and portions of the Fleet Farm 2003 calendar! So it's come to this.

**Dinghole Report #32:
 More Ruckus in the Ladies Room
 (Rhythm Chicken sighting #8675309)**

Last autumn I was living in my northern Wisconsin woodshed when I received a phone call from Timebomb Tom in Green Bay. He wanted the Rhythm Chicken to supply some audio ruckus for his upcoming Bob Log III show. I accepted the invitation and the next Sunday night my Hen and I made our way down to Titledtown, USA. The show was at 29 Steps, a second-story bar in Green Bay's wild downtown. We lugged the chickenkit up all 29 and waited for the Sunday night show to start.

Being a Sunday night show, it started out rather ill-attended. Ten or fifteen people showed up early and Tom gave me the green light. I set up my stage in the ladies restroom with the door open. The two gentlemen playing pool had to step aside so the rest of the club could witness my restroom rock. I think I might've interrupted their game. I unleashed my earth-scorching rock opera on the masses! My ruckus shook the foundation and chaos flowed from the crapper! I hope no ladies had to go potty, because that restroom was IN USE! Being the first opening act, I wanted to leave a little of the venue left for the rest of the acts to burn up, so I pinched off my audio stampede (remember that word!) and retired to the bar. There I was paid for my performance, one tall cool bottle of Pabst! I felt like a king.

Being a Sunday night and seeing as how my Hen had to work up north the next morning, we couldn't stick around long. We did manage to catch the first song by the next act, Green Bay's Mystery Girls. I could be mistaken, but I think they were attempting an "unplugged" set that night, but then again my mind was on that tall cool bottle of Pabst and a quick chat with Mr. Log III. That was the extent of my exposure to the Mystery Girls, a band that, I

believe, began after I left town.

Now, fast-forward about nine months. My Hen and I are relaxing in our steel and cement post-commie apartment in Krakow, Poland. It's Friday night and we are listening to the BBC World Network because it's in English, and because it's time for John Peel's weekly show! Well, he plays four or five songs by various underground acts, and then announces a song by the American band the Mystery Girls called "Green Machine." My Hen and I stare at each other in disbelief. The band sounds kinda bluesy and swaggery, and quite electronic. I began to entertain the possibility of there being another band with the same name, until the song was done.

As the song faded John Peel comes back on the air and says, "Well, that was the Mystery

quent helpers! I take it you guys managed to fix your ham radio?"

[To tell the truth, Mr. Chicken, we've just been sitting in the Cactus Club for the last four months. Then the Christreater serves us our last drinks before he and the Mistreaters leave on their European tour. It then occurred to us that we should sober up enough to check in on our favorite Polish chicken. - Dr. S.]

(Yeah, we thought that if we'd leave you alone for a while you would create some more worthwhile ruckus to write about. Then we opened up the newest *Razorcake* and found out that we missed Mannertag! DAMN! I drained the Pabst off the radio, drank it, and here we are! - F.F.)

You two can only blame yourselves for missing Mannertag. Then again, I don't think your livers could've handled it! It even took me a few days to feel like a chicken again! So, tell me what's been going on back home!

[Well, the saddest news by far is that Johnny Cash has passed away. We played "Dirty ol' Egg-Suckin' Dog" on the jukebox for you, Mr. Chicken. We also decided that your first tour after returning home will be in honor of the Man in Black. - Dr. S.]

Done.



Girls with their song 'Green Machine.' I wonder if that has anything to do with the Green Bay Packers, a very popular American football team. You see, their record label Trick Knee Records hails from Green Bay, Wisconsin. But, anyway, that was the Mystery Girls. Thanks for listening. Good-bye." We sat there dumbfounded, staring at our potato dumplings. I was soon on our Russian-made rotary phone, dialing up Timebomb Tom back in the States with the odd news. I guess I can fully expect to hear the Horshacks next week.

-For the first time in months, the Chicken's ham radio comes to life. -

[(Hello? Hey, Chicken! Hello?? Milwaukee calling Rhythm Chicken! - F.F. & Dr. S.)]

Well, well, well! If it isn't my little delin-

(Hey! So what's been going on with you two in Poland? There's people here who think that you're just hiding out in Pulaski somewhere. - F.F.)

Pulaski?! No, but I really did get homesick when we missed this summer's Pulaski Polka Days. The only thing that made up for it was that fact that we are IN POLAND! That has to be good enough! What have we been up to? First of all, WE WENT TO HEL! Yes, HEL! Honest Chicken, there's a small Polish tourist trap on the Baltic Sea named "Hel," as in "H-E-single hockey stick"! We even walked out onto the highway leading into town to sing a few choruses of "Highway to Hel." Last week, I made my first batch of "barszcz" (more commonly known by its Russian name of borscht). Beets, where have you been all my life? It made my poop bleed! Then my mom and two elderly uncles

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from Wisconsin came to visit for sixteen days. Attempting to show my family around Krakow and Prague was more tiring than a Rhythm Chicken parade gig! Then I became acquainted with a Polish band named "Wiewiorczeni." With a name that roughly translates to "the Squirrel Men," I liked them from the start!

[It sounds like you've been busy, but if you can't deliver any new ruckus reports I will have to do my own part! With your permission, Mr. Chicken, I would like to share with the readers my first Dunghole Report! – Dr. S.]

I already gave the kiddies a Dinghole Report just before you two decided to pull your heads out of the Cactus Club. I've still got plenty to cluck about, Doc! You see, earlier this week I had a revelation! I was hanging around our little sardine can home listening to the same Roy Rogers CD over and over until one song exploded out of the music box like a burning bush! My Holy Church of Ruckus felt the first pangs of a new entity threatening to burgle my thunder! Until now, I was so sure that ruckus was the grandest state of being, the holiest condition, the supreme law of all lands. Then this song sang to my liver and my liver knew there was a new way. Ruckus is still the law, but behold the newest form of revolt! The Son of Ruckus! Decades before there was a band called Slayer, true evil was born in song. It sprung from, of all unlikely sources, Roy Rogers! The song... "STAMPEDE!"

Let me share with you some of Roy's Holy Scripture:

*Cold black clouds like funeral shrouds roll down their icy threat
And we faced a fight this raging night with the odds on the side of death
For a stampeding herd with its panic stirred is a thing for a cowboy to shun
For no mortal man ever holds command when the cattle are on the run!*

STAMPEDE!

*The rising of the wind sends out its wail
Driving cattle down an endless trail
Rolling thunder booms sending cattle to their doom, STAMPEDE!*

*There's lightning! There's thunder!
There's wind and rain, STAMPEDE!*



Now, do you understand? Is STAMPEDE the new RUCKUS!!!! Can STAMPEDE and RUCKUS share the throne? Is this a signal warning of the forthcoming split in the Holy Church of Ruckus? Does this all not reek of Martin Luther? Or is STAMPEDE a golden calf? This gets even scarier when I backtrack on my Roy Rogers CD and on just two songs previous to "Stampede," Roy sings, "How do I know? The Bible tells me so!" Sicnarf! You're an educated man, tell me your thoughts on all this!

**[Dunghole Report #1:
Sprayin' Crap at the Party!]**

It was about seven years ago and I was living in the upstairs attic of a bait shop just ten feet from Lake Michigan. That evening I must have consumed some strange fibrous materials before the gallons of Pabst, and then crawled into hibernation in just my tighty-whitey underwear. At some point in my slumber, I was half-awoken by some urgent need of which I didn't quite understand yet. All I knew was that I HAD TO GET OUTSIDE AND I HAD TO GET OUTSIDE IMMEDIATELY! Still half asleep, and quite flustered from the growing anal pressure, I stumbled down the stairs and flung open the outside door. Once outside, I became more aware of my need to excrete, and the immense

urgency of this need! I made it to about five feet from the shore, pulled my lone white garment to my ankles, pointed my precarious poohole lake-ward, and just let loose. Still not fully awake, I almost fainted when the sonic blast shot my liquid feces out over the water. It was scary. The eruption was so intense that I thought some of my intestines were shot out with the doody. BLBLBLARSZTBLBLBLSHHHHHH!!!! I was one big spray-power painter, spraying the moonlit lake brown.

Pressure was relieved and I felt I could straighten up and attempt to tidy up. I pulled off the tighty-whiteys and used them as toilet-paper. I was about to toss the browned whiteys aside when I became more aware of my setting. The bait shop was right in front of a harbor full of boat rental slips. I turned around to see a fancy yacht tied to the nearest dock, and there was a full-blown cocktail party out on the deck! I stood there naked, momentarily staring at the fifteen or twenty wealthy yachters. They were standing motionless, holding their martinis and staring at me with horror in their eyes! In my mind, I tried to go through everything they just witnessed. I then stumbled back up to my bed and pretended nothing ever happened. –Dr. S.]

(MWAAAAHAHAHAHAHA!!!! I can just see the looks on those FIBs' faces! – F.F.)

–The Rhythm Chicken turns off his Polish ham radio and continues solo again. –

I can see that those two are taking all of this even less seriously than I am. I feel as if my "one-Dinghole-Report-per-column" quota has been met, so now I can just cluck on about a few more tidbits and scratch along. I will now make the smooth transition to Fleet Farm! In north-eastern Wisconsin we have these stores called Fleet Farm where men can go to shop man-style and stroll around the farmer's hardware store that also sells Lee jeans and hunting gear. The rest of America has Menards, because Fleet Farm was Menards before Menards was Menards. Yeah, it's the old school Menards. I think I was just a nine or ten-year-old chicklet the year I did ALL my Christmas shopping at Fleet Farm! Daddy sure made an early man outta me! (Note to self: try to get Fleet Farm to sponsor America's first **RAZORCAKE** 13

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Mannertag next summer.)

ANYWAYS, I found myself in Green Bay's west-side Fleet Farm last December and grabbed one of their free 2003 calendars, just in case we didn't get any for Christmas (which we didn't). Actually, I really prefer having a Fleet Farm calendar in our cement Polish cubbyhole. This whole year we have been kept up to date on all the really important dates in the Midwest! I don't know how they decided on these days being important enough to be on their calendar, or why they didn't include Pulaski Polka Days or the Kewaunee Trout Festival. Just to give you all a better idea as to what us Midwesterners celebrate, I thought I'd share with you some of our shining moments, and yes they make me homesick. Even though some of these are outside of Wisconsin's borders, they could still be included under the umbrella of Wisconsinism.

My Favorite Highlights of the Fleet Farm 2003 Calendar:

- Jan. 18 - Brainerd Jaycees Ice Fishing Extravaganza, Gull Lake, Brainerd, MN
- Jan. 29 - Legend Fest 2003 (Formerly Winter Dance Party), Clear Lake, IA
- Feb. 2 - Otter Street Fisheree, Oshkosh, WI
- Feb. 7 - Hudson Hot Air Affair, Hudson, WI
- May 18 - Pigeon River Street Days, Clintonville, WI
- May 25 - Ole Oppe Festival, Alexandria, MN
- Race Into Summer Beaver Dam, Swan City Park, Beaver Dam, WI
- Jun. 6 - Walleye Weekend, Fond du Lac, WI

- Jun. 7 - Waite Park Spass Tag (fun days!), Waite Park, MN
- Jun. 19 - Musky Festival, Hayward, WI
- Juneteenth Day (????????)
- July 12 - Beaver Dam Lake Days, Beaver Dam, WI
- July 15 - Wisconsin Farm Technology Days (formerly Farm Progress Days!) (no location listed)
- July 25 - Lumberjack World Championships, Hayward, WI
- Aug. 5 - Crow Wing County Fair, Brainerd, MN
- Aug. 10 - Musky Jamboree, Boulder Junction, WI

My ruckus shook the foundation and chaos flowed from the crapper!

- WI
- Aug. 15 - Northeast Wisconsin Antique Power Association Thresheree Horse and Tractor Pull, Sturgeon Bay, WI
- Aug. 16 - Boyceville Cucumber Fest, Boyceville, MN
- Aug. 22 - Barnesville Potato Days, Barnesville, MN
- Sep. 20 - 16th Annual Hodag Muskie Challenge, Rhinelander, WI
- Sep. 26 - Oktoberfest, La Crosse, WI
- Sep. 27 - Oktoberfest, Appleton, WI

The calendar also informs you of Fleet Farm being open on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Christmas Eve, and

New Year' Eve. However, they are closed on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day. You are told of the exact days of Quatrads, Lyrids, ETA Aquarids, Delta Aquarids, Perseids, Draconids, Orionids, Taurids, Leonids, and Gemenids meteor showers! So whenever we get to wondering what's REALLY going on back in the States, all we got to do is glance at our trusty Fleet Farm calendar. We are TRULY informed!

Drawing this column to yet another long-desired close, I would like to share with you my newest favorite Polish discovery. Just when I thought the Polish language couldn't get any more difficult, I was taught a Polish tongue-twister! W Szczepreszynie chrzaszcz brzmi w trzciniel! Yes, that's really a sentence! If you don't believe me, just ask Wojtek in Plock! And finally, I believe I left you in terrible suspense at the tail end of my last column. Answering my first ever joke I conjured up in kindergarten, why DID the birds have a seance? A: To pee in the nest! Well, it was funny in kindergarten. Maybe I should eat some more beans and meet you in Grandma's bedroom. Tune in nest time for more RUCKUS vs. STAMPEDE hooshwash!

Today's Dinghole Reports have been brought to you by the Fleet Farm, and the letter E. Morda w kubel, I nie bulgotac!

-The Rhythm Chicken

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MADDY

SHIFTLESS WHEN IDLE



*At this moment, one thought came shining through my alcoholic stupor.
I DO NOT WANT TO MAKE OUT WITH A UKRAINIAN MAN IN HIS MID-FORTIES!*

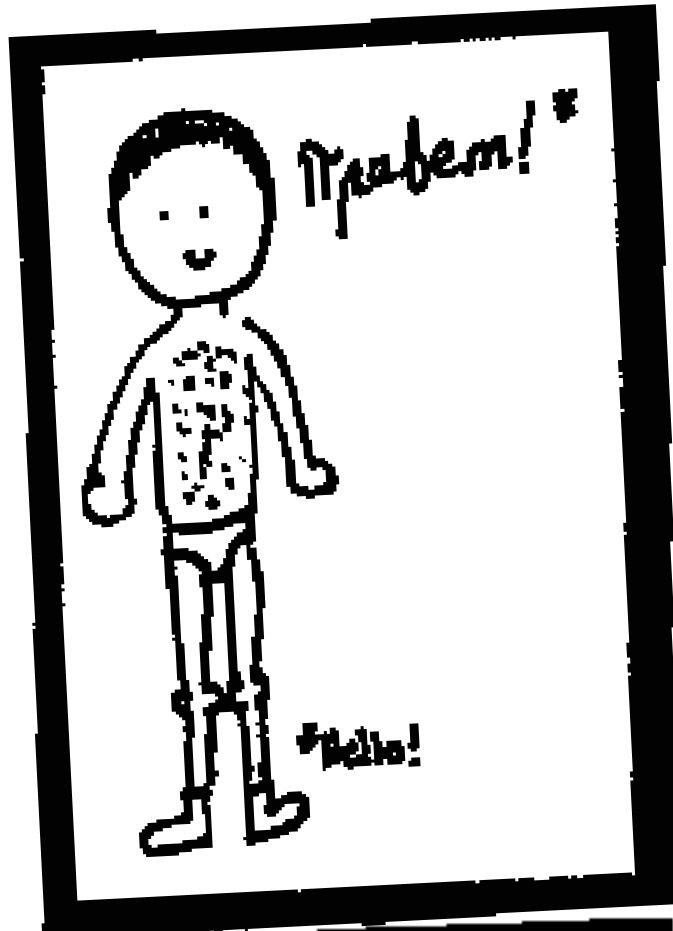
Greetings from the international headquarters of the Tight Pants Enterprises! From deep in this lair, tuned to the sweet sounds of an album that, curiously, is called *Emo* but still gets a high TP-rating (ah, the strange wonders of Mr. Weasel!), and wearing a Vindictives shirt and the most dreaded pant-item of all time (sweatpants), a CRISIS is brewing! No, not the latest Earth Crisis album! Not Desert Crisis or Life Crisis or the song "Identity Crisis" by Thrice! (Ah, the wonders of a google search for "Crisis Punk!") No! This crisis affects the heart of the Tight Pants operations! Yes, this crisis could very well SHUT THE WHOLE SYSTEM DOWN! (And, no, black bloc punk, I'm not talkin' 'bout Seattle!)

Right next to TPH (Tight Pants Headquarters) in Brooklyn, in the same building, on the same floor, with only about two feet of drywall in between, lurks - Ukrainians!

Allow me to explain.

I live on the third floor of a three-floor building. Two apartments on each floor. On the first floor, there's an Israeli couple and some guys with a Get Up Kids bumper sticker on their car. On the second floor, there's a bunch of Latino families. And, then, on the third floor, there's us. And several Ukrainian men. Since I know about twenty sentences in Russian, including "What filth!", "You are a mistake!", "Stalin speaks the truth!", "What a beautiful businessman!" and "What lies!" I figured, you know, we'd hit it right off, and be toasting to Mir in no time!

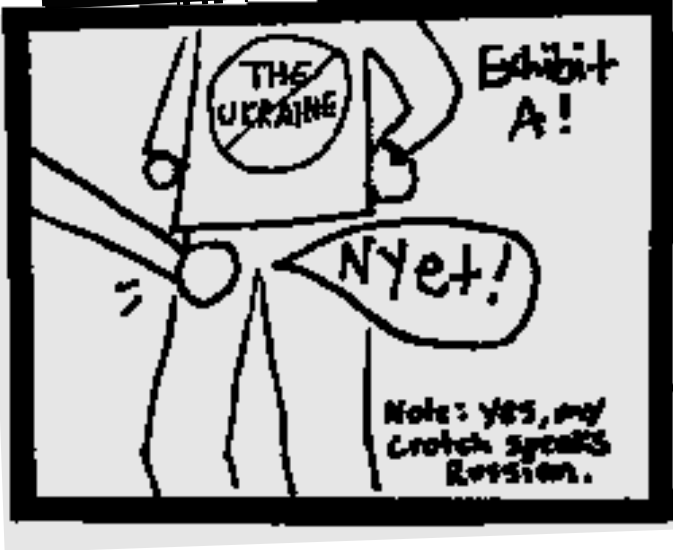
At first, things went pretty well. The Ukrainians (one fat guy and one skinny guy, both in their mid forties), would help me carry my groceries upstairs, open the front door for me, and exchange the standard Nod-and-Smile (NAS) to indicate their goodwill. Alright! Perhaps in no time at all we'd be singing traditional Russian peasant songs together! Or, if I was really lucky, the Internationale! (Which, being the dork that I



am, I have printed out, in phonetic pronunciation, in Russian. If that wasn't proof enough of my idiocy, I can also sing it in both French and English, and I have a CD with a Hungarian version. And I'm not even a Communist! Fuck punk, dude! Let's hear it for uniting the human race!)

It all seemed to be leading in that direction, especially when, one day, I came home only to realize that I had locked myself out. I got into the building, but couldn't get into my apartment. To make things worse, it was the middle of a huge blizzard. I contemplated my options. 1.) Attempt to break down the door by ramming into it. (This option was rejected after a cursory glance of my five feet 105 pound body and the seven foot tall metal door.), 2.) Walk thirty minutes to the nearest coffee shop and wait it out. (This option was rejected after I realized that it was eight hours until my roommate got home.), 3.) Suicide. (I dunno, it's ALWAYS an option!), 4.) Pretend to be at a Minor Threat show and spend the afternoon thrashing around in the hallway. (There ARE worse, if not dumber ideas...), and 5.) Knock on my Ukrainian neighbor's door and ask them to climb out on the fire escape - which was already covered in ten inches of snow - and climb through my kitchen window, opening my door from the inside of my apartment. Yes! That was it! Luckily, they were home, and performed the required task in no time at all, braving snowy fire escapes and possible death! And they even gave me some Russian chocolate when they were done! Punk!

So everything was going great, and the Ukrainians and I were on our way to a beautiful friendship. And then, one night, when I was getting off the bus, I ran into them on the way home. Using the five English words they knew "You, us, bar, drink, food?" they invited me to a bar at the corner of our street to drink with them. This, I knew, was not an opportunity to be missed! So I joined the Ukrainians, who were



lugging several pounds of various fruits, cheese, bread, and, yes, even plates! When we got to the bar, they arranged all the food and offered me some. Then they ordered me a glass of wine. Then another. I soon realized that the phrases "Stalin speaks the truth" and "What a beautiful businessman!" are not particularly useful bar conversation. After about twenty minutes, I communicated where I was from originally, what I am studying, and if I like New York.

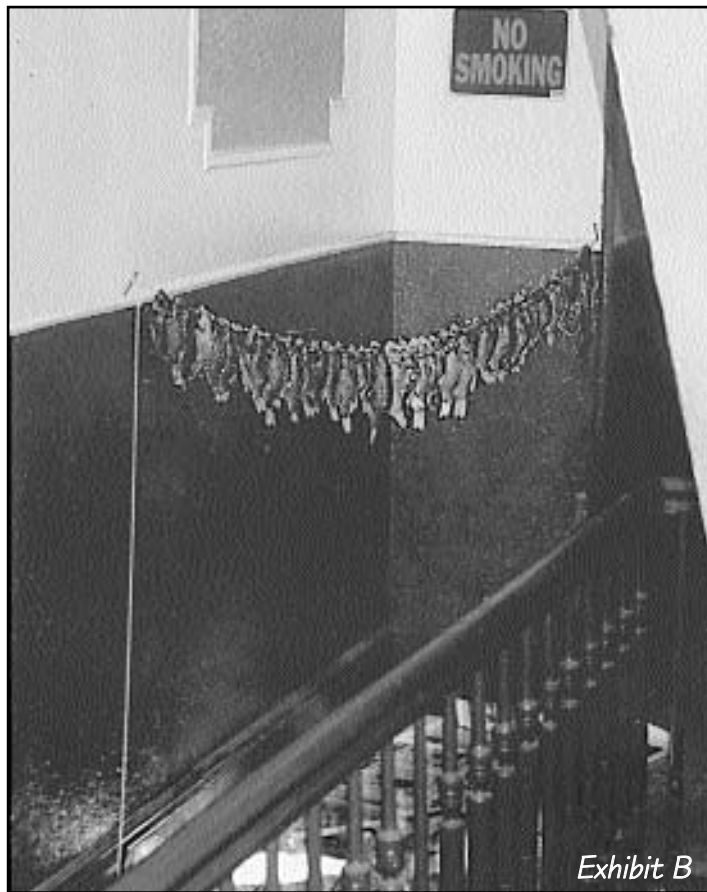
Then came another glass of wine. And more food. We were sitting in a booth, with the fat Ukrainian across from me and the skinny one next to me. Somehow, through my alcohol-induced haze, I started to realize that the skinny Ukrainian was inching his way over towards me. I tried to think of how to say "I have a boyfriend" in Russian, but all I could think of was "Breznev is a mistake!" and "What a beautiful Stalin!" I was screwed! I tried to move over more, but in no time at all, the skinny Ukrainian was practically on top of me, leaning over me and breathing hard. Ack! For all my obsession with things East-European, I have NEVER found Eastern European men appealing. Except for two notable exceptions: Mayakovsky (famous Russian poet) and, interestingly, my boyfriend (whose relatives came over from Hungary and Russia back in the day).

Anyway, with every second he moved closer. Ack! No! At this moment, one thought came shining through my alcoholic stupor. I DO NOT WANT TO MAKE OUT WITH A UKRAINIAN MAN IN HIS MID-FORTIES! Unfortunately, the exact same moment that my realization of the situation crystallized, the skinny Ukrainian decided to PUT HIS HAND PRACTICALLY ON MY CROTCH! Ack! No! Uncool! Uncool! Less cool than even L.L. Cool J himself!

I stood up in the booth and said I was going to leave. The skinny Ukrainian man didn't move. So I pushed him and, unfortunately, had to almost mount him to get out, thus unwittingly accomplishing half of his goal! At that point, the Ukrainians looked confused, and said, "No, no. Drink! Drink!" and gestured to the bar. "No," I said. "I'm going home." Then the fat Ukrainian got up and ordered me another drink while I tried to leave the bar. Never one to refuse free alcohol, even in the middle of an unwanted Eastern-European groping session, I gulped it down, and left.

And then the Ukrainians, with grapes and saltines flying everywhere, followed me out of the bar!

Ack! I practically ran the block back to my apartment, up the stairs, and in the door. Behind me, the skinny Ukrainian was yelling, "Come over! Come over!" I slammed the door in his face and dead-bolted it. A minute later, he started knocking. After about ten minutes he gave up and left me alone.



I realized that the beasts on the string were fish, not mice. Although at first I was relieved it wasn't mice, I soon realized that they were FISH, and that 1.) they had been hung through their eyes, and 2.) They stunk!

Ack! Practically defiled by Ukrainians – who live next-door! [See exhibit A] The shame! The humiliation! The sheer nastiness of it all! And the appalling lack of post-Ukrainian groping support groups! You'd think that'd be enough for one Razorcake column, but no! There's more! From that night on, I tried to avoid the Ukrainians and hardly ran into them at all. If I saw them in the hallway, I waited until they were gone to leave, lest I have to fend off Ukrainian Crotch-Grab Part Two! Then I left for the summer.

When I came back, the Ukrainians were still there, but this time, it was a whole new game! Whereas before, they tried to act macho and grab my crotch, now they had degenerated to walking around the hallway wearing only

shorts, chain-smoking, and moping.

Then, one day, when I was walking upstairs, I saw something in our hallway. Something that looked very much like mice hanging on strings. No! What kind of bizarre peasant ritual is this?! When I got closer, I realized that the beasts on the string were fish, not mice. Although at first I was

decomposing fish. No! No! No! Why had my previously clean and vacant hallway suddenly turned into a Ukrainian social club? Not only did this destroy my dreams of discrete prostitution, it also prevented me from making my usual run, clad only in a towel, back into my apartment to take a shower, undetected! If I were to try that now, I would have to 1.) be groped, 2.) rub against dead fish that had just started to leak some sort of yellow goo, and 3.) get a haircut! Ah, the injustice of it all!

At this point, one might consider calling one's landlord. Unfortunately, my landlord loves to accuse me and my roommate of being responsible for any and every complaint. When we first moved in and the bathtub was clogged, he accused us of clogging it with hair, despite the fact that we both have short, blonde hair and the hair coming out of the drain was long and black. And then there was a problem with the electricity. (Our fault.) And a problem with the pilot light on the stove, which, judging by his tone as I explained that methane gas had filled our apartment and death was imminent, he was convinced that it was part of some sort of suicide pact. So, if I were to call the landlord, I would automatically be accepting responsibility for rampant dead fish, sleazy men, and Ukrainian haircuts. No! I will not! Nyet! Kakaya kracivaya Stalina! (No! What a beautiful Stalin!)

So, I was forced to endure the situation. Every day, the stench from the rotting fish increased. After a week, you could smell it right when you opened the building door – three flights of stairs down. I began to have nightmares that I had been captured by the Ukrainians, force-fed maggoty fish and given a mid-'80s (Read: hip in Latvia) haircut! The dastardly dastardness of it all!

After two weeks, the number of fish began to decline slowly, as the Ukrainians began to eat them, one by one. The haircutting season was a short one. After two weeks, every Eastern European man in Brooklyn had been properly shorn, and the hallway barber shop closed.

Everything seemed to be improving. I hardly saw the Ukrainians anymore. And then, three weeks later, my roommate and I were leaving the apartment. We opened our front door, and there, not more than two feet away, was the skinny Ukrainian – wearing only briefs and socks.

Kill me.

madely A

RICH MACKIN

THE TWISTED BALLOON

I COULDN'T EXACTLY SAY THAT HE ROBBED ME, BUT I DIDN'T FEEL THAT HE WANTED THE DOLLAR OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

I first decided to write this when I was talking to my friend Sally about how being accused of assault caused me to research the subject. I noticed that there is a lot of material written about avoiding sexually assault and a lot of material about what to do if you have been sexually assaulted, but there isn't much written about how to make sure that you never find yourself in a position where your actions might be considered sexual assault.

There is plenty of information for women, but not much for males, and surely not for "guys" (to denote what would be called the "average American male"). Since most sexual assault is male on female, there clearly is a need for this information. "We teach our daughters to say 'no' to intercourse – and we hardly say anything to our sons" is clearly stated in the handbook against assault, *No is Not Enough* (Adams, Fay, M.A., Loreen-Martin). Bell hooks, in *Feminism Is for Everybody*, says, "No significant body of feminist literature has appeared that addresses boys." The more I read about sexual assault, gender issues, and feminism, I found more information that I thought most men should read. But most of it was hidden in books clearly marketed towards female feminists or in books with title like *Transforming a Rape Culture*, which doesn't exactly appeal to you as something to read in a park under a tree on your day off or in bed before sleeping.

I acknowledge that talking about how actions might be considered sexual assault can seem strange. "If she says no, it's rape," right? Obviously. Of course. What if she doesn't say "no," but "I don't think so" or "I don't think this is a good idea" or even "maybe"? Maybe is part no and part yes. Arguably, a person should be clearer about their interest level, but shouldn't the person initiating be seeking out a definite answer? Not "maybe," not "I guess," but "YES!"

If you are initiating sexual activity, it is your responsibility to make it completely and absolutely sure that it is desired, not just that there is a lack of resistance. You shouldn't "think" the other person is interested. You should be completely, absolutely sure without doubt of any sort. If you feel confident that the interest is there, what harm is a verbal confirmation going to do you?

That's so simple, but also rather unusual. In some ways, part of the excitement of sex and romance is not knowing what the other person is thinking and trying to figure out what is going on between you. The difference with active consent can be as simple as erring on the side of caution unless intent and consent is clear. A lot of discussion in an activist group that discusses these issues is, "Are we willing to get laid less for the revolution?" I think it's not a question of getting "laid" less, but risking a night or two here and there to make sure that one's "getting laid" isn't the other person's feeling pressured, or worse.

We all should be aware and responsible for inequities when initiating sexual contact. Is one person bigger than the other? Older? Drunker? Is one a rock star and the other a fan? Teacher and student? If you are a six and a half foot tall man who is built like a wrestler, you don't have to only date women who can fend you off, but you DO need to be aware that others might be intimidated by you, so you are responsible for understanding, acknowledging, and respecting that such intimidation MIGHT exist, and how it effects the other's actions. Indeed, in many situations my own actions made women uncomfortable not for my intent to oppress or dominate, but for a complete lack of empathy for inequities of the situation and our relationship.

This is the basic idea of privilege – that one person might have an upper hand that another does not. Usually, this privilege is directly linked to not being aware of the privilege unless one takes a

moment to consider it. It can be simple as the fact that I, as a man, can take my shirt off on a hot day, and it just means I am hot. A woman doing the same is thought to be making a sexual overture. Unfortunately, this important concept is generally not discussed, and when it is, it's almost exclusively by angry people who use it to scapegoat and overgeneralize – because men, as a gender, have privilege, white people as a race have privilege, etc. But anyone who tries to tell you ALL white people have it easy, or ALL men have it better than ALL women, well, the simple term for that is WRONG.

I bring up men and women because, yes, most sexual transgressions and violence are done by men. Most victims are women. But the idea is not men are bad and women are victims, but that PEOPLE have the ability to harm one another, and sometimes do so without realizing it, or at least considering that they might be. There are many ways someone's actions might harm another without it being a case of direct attempt at harm. It's not just one person's intent. It's the other's idea of consent; to quote from *No Is Not Enough*: "Consent is based on choice. Consent is active, not passive. Consent is possible only when there is equal power. Giving in because of fear is not consent. Going along with something because of wanting to fit in with the group, being deceived, or feeling bad is not consent. If you can't say 'no' comfortably, then 'yes' has no meaning. If you are unwilling to accept a 'no,' then 'yes' has no meaning."

The idea that consent is something that should be sought out is not considered by many in our society. Pop culture presents the idea of sex being when the man proposes an idea and the woman accepts or fends him off. This isn't necessarily a result of men being evil scumbags who seek to perpetuate patriarchal oppression. (Patriarchy,

which traditionally means a system of male power heredity, is often used to mean a decided societal sexism where males oppress females, often used as a fancy word for "sexism.") I think this is a combination of other, less obvious factors. Some men might very well be evil scumbags, but most have good intentions and somehow forget what the road to hell is paved with. Forget your intentions and consider the outcome. To quote from the book *Hope and Recovery*, "When in doubt – don't."

Men and women communicate differently. (I realize that not everyone falls into the polarities of men and women, but most do. Even though it's twilight as I write this doesn't mean night and day don't exist.) To sum up the 298 pages of *You Just Don't Understand* by Deborah Tannen, both men and women speak not only in the direct messages they say, but the meta-messages of how they say it. Men generally are concerned with direct information. Women are more concerned with the meta-messages. An example is that a woman might say, "Do you want to stop for dinner?" This means she does, or at least wants to discuss the idea. The man frustrates her by answering "Yes" or "No." He might say, "I want to stop for dinner": a statement, not a discussion. Neither mode is chosen consciously, neither way is right or wrong, and neither is cut and dry specific to either sex. Sex and gender also factor in with ethnicity, upbringing, socializing, and many other factors. But still, AS A WHOLE, men and women talk differently, and thus listen differently.

The golden rule does not always work. You do unto others what you would like them to do unto you. Do they WANT what you want done unto you? A crass example is that many men I know would love to be awakened with sexual contact, especially orally; at least they say as much. Most women I know would be annoyed, if not feel outright violated to be awakened that way – even by long term partner.

Some people appreciate being asked questions; others feel this puts them on the spot.

Men often simply do not “get” how women feel, because even if the tables were turned, the response would not be the same. This clearly was the case for me. It wasn’t that I didn’t care how the women around me thought; it was that I wasn’t attempting to understand their thoughts so much as making assumptions. If a young woman who was forty pounds lighter hit on me, I could easily tell her I wasn’t interested if I wasn’t. It simply did-

interest. (Same sex situations are a totally different issue. They mix consent issues with homophobic issues. That’s worth exploring another time.) As Peter Rutter explains in *Sex, Power and Boundaries*: “The harassment problem exists in a large part because many perfectly decent (and reasonable) men have simply never had anyone tell them, clearly and credibly, that some of their behavior is sexually offensive to the women around them.”

I present a metaphor for sexual consent, in the hopes that it might

within inches of me. He looked angry. He surely was closer to me than most people initiating a conversation would be, and I felt my personal space violated. He asked me for a dollar. He didn’t threaten me, he asked. If I gave him a dollar, I couldn’t exactly say that he robbed me, but I didn’t feel that he wanted the dollar of my own free will. He didn’t say anything threatening, nor did he make any clearly threatening motions (like making a fist or showing a weapon) but all of his actions CAME ACROSS as threatening. Whatever his intent, I

You probably can draw similar stories from your own life – from the subtlety of staying on the phone with someone who doesn’t take into account that you need to get off the line (I know many mothers who respond to “I have to go” as if it was “Tell me one more story”) to finding yourself having to clean up someone else’s physical or conceptual mess, to having to defend your drunk friend in a fight they started – we all find ourselves in situations of various emotional blackmail. Sometimes it’s sexual in orientation.

ILLUSTRATION BY ROB RUELAS



RICH MACKIN

n’t occur to me that she might not have that ease. THIS is the idea of privilege. A critic told me I didn’t know what it was like to be female. Of course not. How COULD I?

A man hitting on a woman could be considered a wonderful, flattering, and great thing; or a horrible violation of personal space; or a lack of tact; or any combination of these. A woman hitting on a man rarely makes the man feel violated. He might reciprocate, he likely will be flattered, but more than likely, the worse case scenario is merely disinterest. It is only in rare instances that men will be seriously offended by a woman expressing

hit home for some guys: panhandling. I might walk down the street and see some unfortunate soul with a sign and cup. I feel like putting some money in. They can eat, I feel like I did something good, everyone is happy. I like a street musician and put some money in his or her guitar case. I get music and reward it financially as I choose. Everyone is happy. In these two examples, the panhandler is relatively passive. The request is known but not forced.

One day I went to the ATM and took out some money. As I turned to leave, a dirty, smelly man who was a full head taller than me came

felt he would become violent if I didn’t give him money soon.

I was a bit scared and felt like I was forced into a situation where I wasn’t in control at all. Yet, I could not honestly say that he was a thief, because he asked for something I could prove, or really even allege, as a threat. If I were to complain to authorities, he could even argue that he merely asked and I willingly gave. He could say that he got a vibe that I wanted to give him money. He might even refer to knowing that I enjoy giving money to other panhandlers because he saw me give money to the guy with the hat.

I can safely assume that most men I personally know would stop if a woman ever said “no” or “stop.” Unfortunately, in real life, human communication rarely is that cut and dry, especially with a subject so complicated. One friend brought up this point: “In our society, women are conditioned to make others happy. Women put someone else’s comfort above their own, sometimes agree to things (sex or otherwise) to make the other person happy, not because they really want to.” Someone else offered the feedback, “Women are conditioned from birth to never say ‘no’ to anything, but **19**

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rather, to make polite excuses.” The excuse is a polite “no” which he addresses at face value. (Consider when someone invites you to an event you don’t want to go to. Do you say, “No, I don’t want to”? Or something like “Oh, I need to _____ that day,” which opens up the addressing of the excuse, not the thoughts behind it?)

To even say “no,” a person needs to have the belief that saying “no” would have an effect, and sometimes that belief level is not there. Sex is a natural biological thing, like eating, but it has levels of spirituality, passion, and emotion. To be sexual in America in 2003 combines your biochemistry, views on intergender and/or homosexual interactions as well as views on your and whatever gender the other person (people?) are with whatever views on sexuality your religion and upbringing put on you, mixed with whatever intellectual spin you put on it as you became your own person. Every sex act you engage in might have traces of every sex act you have ever had, along with any you may have viewed on TV or film, or heard from the other side of the wall. Now take all that and try and have a logical conversation with someone equally confused.

“When she says ‘no,’ it’s rape.” What if she says “yes” because he framed the situation falsely, like forgetting to mention his other sex partners, or in one case I know, removing the condom halfway through? What if she is in no position to say anything? What if HE is in no position to say anything? If both man and woman blacked out from drugs or alcohol, but had sex, can you say it was consented to? If two people BOTH get drunk and wake to find that they had sex, how do they know who initiated and thus was responsible for getting consent? What if she wants sex and HE says “no,” or “not a good idea”? What if he passed out and woke up to her having sex with him? By the way, that last example happened to me. Does that mean I have been raped? I’m just asking to ask.

Ever see *Revenge of the Nerds*? There is a scene where one nerd puts on the same costume as one of the cheerleaders and has sex with the cheerleader who dates that jock because she thinks it’s her boyfriend, since they have the same costume on. Not only is this implausible, but it’s a form of rape. But in the movie, the way he expressed his love and gained hers was celebrated.

When some people first start really thinking about consent issues, they wonder if anyone ever has consenting sex. Some militant

feminists such as Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon have equated all heterosexual sex with rape, and in doing so wrongly accuse men in general and present an extreme feminism that borders on self-parody. But there are many others, perhaps less known because of less shocking views, who are more optimistic. Joseph Weinberg, in his essay in “Transforming a Rape Culture,” suggests that sex is more erotic when it’s a sharing of power, not a power struggle. “Power with” instead of “power over.” This makes me ask, Who do you think should have more say about sexuality? Those who like sex or those who don’t?

We do, and will, and can have both passion and concern about consent, but we need to spend a moment here and there to check the situation and see exactly how both (or all, I guess) parties stand. If the idea of sex is supposed to be pleasurable, don’t we all want the other person to feel pleasure too? Think about how much more willing people tend to do something when they feel like their interest level is being considered and respected? We can still have sex; we just need to spend a few seconds thinking about what to say and how to say it first. Some express the concern of “Simon Says Sex”: “Do you consent to THIS? Do you consent to THIS?” The widely acclaimed Antioch policy mentions stopping for verbal consent at each stage of an encounter, but what exactly counts as a stage? Maybe we don’t need to worry about every little step if we start relationships and encounters with more openness, honesty, communication and respect. I think a few key words here are judgement and foresight.

Not to get all on blaming “the system,” but the way a lot of media is, we are trained to meet strangers in exciting situations, and by mere proximity find sexual compatibility. The way the judicial system seems to work as a moral code is that we feel bad not for what we do wrong, but to feel bad if we get caught. The restorative justice movement is even centered around the lack of being accountable for the HARM someone does to others and making amends, as opposed to the more abstract idea of “breaking a rule” so you should be punished. Meanwhile, much of the recent discussions about sexual assault in “radical” communities center on definitions. Definitions can be helpful, but less important (in my opinion) than what you call something is how it impacts the lives of people.

–Rich Mackin



**Books used as resources/
reading list:**

Beyond the Blame Game, by Dmitri Bilgere, 1997, MPC Press (recommended)
Boys Will be Men: Raising our Sons for Courage, Caring, and Community, by Paul Kivel, 1999, New Society Publishers
Cunt: A Declaration of Independence, by Inga Muscio, 2002, Seal Press (recommended)
Feminism Is for Everybody by Bell Hooks, 2000, South End Press (recommended)
Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us, by Kate Bornstein, 1995, Vintage Books (Highly recommended)
Good Will Toward Men, by Jack Kramer, 1994, St. Martin’s Press
I Never Called It Rape, by Robin Warsaw, 1988, Ms. Foundation/ Sarah Lazin Books
Manhood in America, by Michael Kimmel, 1996, The Free Press (recommended)
Men’s Work, by Paul Kivel, 1992, Ballantine Books (Highly recommended)
My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely, by Kate Bornstein, 1998, Routledge (recommended)
No Is Not Enough: Helping Teenagers Avoid Sexual Assault, by Caren Adams, M.A., Jennifer Fay, M.A., Jan Loreen-Martin, M.A., 1984 Impact Publishers
Psychic War in Men & Women, by

Helen Block Lewis, 1976, NYU Press (Highly recommended. It discusses gender in cultural and anthropological levels, not just in modern culture.)
Refusing to be a Man, by John Stoltenberg, 1989, Breitenbush Books Inc.
 (Note that I used this as a resource. Some parts are great food for thought, others, well, just wait until you read the section about how men want to father boys in order to avenge their lost erections.)
The Secret Life of Men, by Steve Biddulph, 1994, 2003, Marlowe and Company (recommended)
Sex on Your Terms, by Elizabeth Powell, 1996, Allyn and Bacon (recommended)
Sex, Power and Boundaries: Understanding and Preventing Sexual Harassment, by Peter Rutter, M. D. (A good book, but not really worth reading unless you are doing research. Mostly discusses workplace and legal issues.)
Sexual Violence and American Manhood, by T Walter Herbert, 2002, Harvard University Press
That’s Not What I Meant! by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D., 1986, Ballantine Books (recommended)
Transforming a Rape Culture, edited by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher, and Martha Roth, 1993, Milkweed Editions.
You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation, by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D., 1991, Ballantine Books (Highly recommended)

RICH MACKIN



NARDWUAR

WHO ARE YOU?



NARDWUAR THE HUMAN SERVIETTE VS. THE FLAMING LIPS

NARDWUAR THE HUMAN SERVIETTE



Nardwuar: Who are you?

Wayne: I'm Wayne from the band The Flaming Lips, who are you?

Nardwuar: I'm Nardwuar, The Human Serviette.

Wayne: And everybody probably already knows that, right, but I'm probably the first guy you ever interviewed who had a pre-bloodied Calvin Klein suit on, right?

Nardwuar: Yeah, I want to know, is that real blood or is that fake blood, and does the audience ever throw real blood?

Wayne: No, no, I hope they never do that because that would mean that someone had to bleed or someone's dead or something like that. No, that'd be horrible.

Nardwuar: Is there any audience blood on you right now?

Wayne: No, this is all blood that I put on myself just last night at the **RAZORPINE** 22 show. We had to

come through the border this morning, because we were driving from outside of Seattle into Vancouver, and I thought it would be a great challenge for the folks at the border to see me come through looking like this.

Nardwuar: I thought the crowd throws blood on you.

Wayne: Well, they do sometimes, yeah, but it's not real blood.

Nardwuar: Yeah, I wanna know, how do you know it's not real blood if the crowd is throwing it on you?

Wayne: Well, because if it was real blood it wouldn't come out, I mean I've had a lot of experience with blood and I've bled myself, and it doesn't come out of a suit. Plus, you know, it feels different and looks different. And really, what nut is gonna come to the show and throw blood? I mean I know a couple of people who have done it but

that'd be rare.

Nardwuar: Come on, you've played with the Butthole Surfers. They've had blood thrown at them.

Wayne: They have bled onstage and they take their own blood onstage but no, I don't think anyone's ever actually thrown it. You've gotta imagine - you're gonna go all the way from home with some blood. You're gonna be out all night 'cause concerts are a long thing. What are you gonna do with that blood?

Nardwuar: You guys are headlining and stuff, you know. They don't want to waste it on the opening band.

Wayne: It wouldn't make sense. But I did know a guy who actually went to a concert and threw his own human feces. But you could say he carried it with him.

Nardwuar: That's pretty good, but

it's not as good as GG Allin, where he throws feces at the audience. Have you thrown any shit at the audience?

Wayne: I would never do that. I would never ever do that.

Nardwuar: What's the closest you've come to that?

Wayne: No, I throw confetti, which is clean and smells fine and I throw balloons and I actually sometimes throw balloons that have things in them.

Nardwuar: How about throw up? Have you ever thrown up onstage or shat your pants onstage?

Wayne: No.

Nardwuar: In twenty years of rock, Wayne Coyne?

Wayne: No, I've come close, but there's some magic that happens when you're up there onstage, that those things just clamp up. I've never sneezed onstage, or shat

onstage.

Nardwuar: Amazing.

Wayne: Nick Cave almost did once. But I said, "Look, I think you have to rely on nature's own..."

Nardwuar: Were you onstage with him?

Wayne: I was onstage with him, and he was having some trouble because he had eaten some of the chicken on Lollapalooza 1994 and it didn't agree with him. He said, "I can't go up there. I'm Nick Cave,

Doherty?"

Wayne: No, I think they were actually both not on the show when we were there. I think they were already gone.

Nardwuar: What a rip-off.

Wayne: Well I agree, because we walked into it thinking "Man, we'll be walking into them." But I never followed the show that closely. I mean I knew what the show was all about, but when we were on there I think it was already the second

Wayne: Who's Canadian!

Nardwuar: Who's Canadian, so there's a Canadian connection for you!

Wayne: Right, but I don't know Mike Myers.

Nardwuar: I know but you know Heather Graham. How do you know Heather Graham?

Wayne: I guess because she takes a lot of drugs and listens to music. Isn't that how we get all our Flaming Lips fans? [laughs]

always going to be an audience there, but we want to go and sort of see what these places are like anyway. I remember playing in Calgary to probably about four people at one of the nice resorts there, where you go and sort of play while people drink beer and battle off their winter colds. But we did stay at a hotel that was right outside of the leftovers of the winter Olympics, and we watched... I think we watched porn for a couple

IT JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE PROBABLY DOES A LOT MORE DRUGS THAN EVERYBODY THOUGHT HE REALLY DID TO BEGIN WITH, RIGHT?

and if I do one of those "rrrrraarrrhh" sort of screams, the whole thing's going to let out," and I said, "Nick, you've got to believe..."

Nardwuar: You are Wayne Coyne, and Wayne what do you play? You play the recording studio, don't you?

Wayne: Well, I mean people have said that and that's a great compliment, and the way that music works, that really is my instrument in a way. But when I'm onstage, you know, I'm not actually playing the recording studio up there 'cause it would be too big, I mean I'd have to carry it up there every night. So onstage, I play sort of a fake guitar that has sounds coming out of it that I don't actually make. And I have some puppets that I play with, and I have lights that I swing around, I have some fireworks that I set off. I do things that are exciting. I keep the show going. It doesn't mean that music and singing and all that stuff isn't exciting, but I mean, frankly, I don't dance. I don't do any kind of sexy dancing, so I sort of feel like, you know, if you don't dance, you gotta do something. You gotta look crazy, like the way you do or something, you know. [laughs]

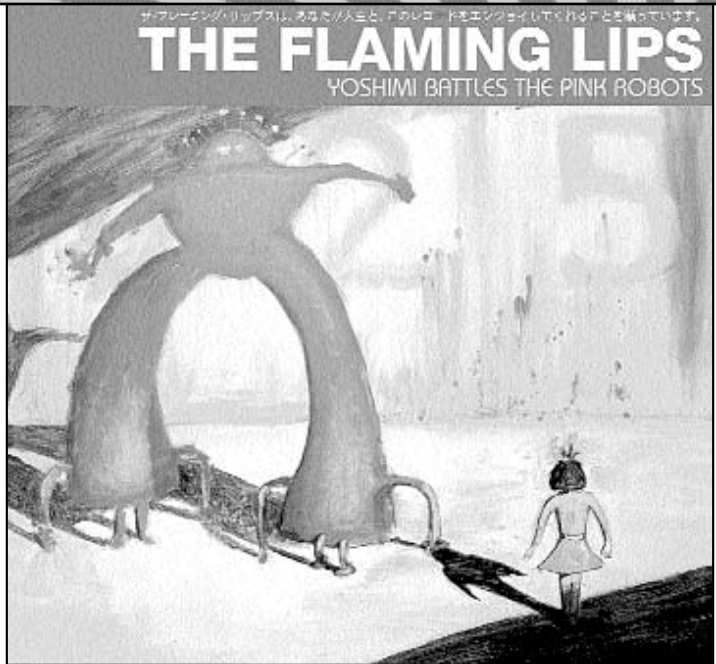
Nardwuar: Thanks very much, Wayne Coyne. And now Wayne Coyne, welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, home of Jason Priestley from *Beverly Hills*... did I spit on you there?

Wayne: Three or four different times.

Nardwuar: Sorry about that, at least it wasn't blood. Ba-boom!

Wayne: Right, but I think blood's better, now that you've spat on me that much. No, I didn't know that he actually is from here.

Nardwuar: Yes he is, and I guess I was wondering, did you ever hang Jason Priestley when you did *Beverly Hills 90210* or did you ever get in any fights with Shannen



rung of folks. Who would that be? I don't remember. But they were real nice to us, and they were all real famous. I didn't know who they were, but I was busy [laughs] that couple of years.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne, Canadian connections. On one of your records you have a Canadian flag. On *Oh My Gawd* there's a Canadian flag. What are the Canadian connections?

Wayne: Well, I mean, we watched some, uh...

Nardwuar: A Canadian flag on the *Oh My Gawd* record.

Wayne: There is, I know. I'm trying to think...

Nardwuar: You're friends with Heather Graham, aren't you?

Wayne: Yes.

Nardwuar: And Heather Graham was in a movie with...

Wayne: With...

Nardwuar: Mike...

Wayne: Mike...

Nardwuar: Myers, who is...?

Nardwuar: Ba-boom! Now Wayne, talking about Canada, did you have some bad gigs in Canada early on? I read about some bad gigs happening in Canada.

Wayne: No, I think when you travel across Canada you travel from what seems to be civilized, sophisticated metropolitan cities like Vancouver...

Nardwuar: Be careful...

Wayne: Over to Montreal or Toronto, but there are some places in between which are wonderful but aren't necessarily rock'n'roll art Meccas... is that, I'm being polite, right?

Nardwuar: Well not really, because The Guess Who are from Winnipeg. Don't dis Winnipeg there, Wayne "Cone."

Wayne: I'm not dissing anybody...

Nardwuar: Wayne "Cone."

Wayne: I'm...

Nardwuar: Wayne "Cone."

Wayne: [laughs] I'm just saying that you don't expect that there's

of days. But we couldn't see it very well...

Nardwuar: You watched the scrambled porn?

Wayne: We did.

Nardwuar: I've done that too. That's fun, isn't it!

Wayne: Back in the late '80s, before there were satellites or anything, so it was scrambled, but if you got lucky, you could see it scrambled. And I think — this is just for me, and I don't think I'm a weirdo — I think porn looks better scrambled.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, tell me about Oklahoma City being a test market. Where you're from, Oklahoma City, is a test market. Very interesting. Tell the people about that.

Wayne: I think that is a polite way of saying that it's the bland middle area, where if it works there, it'll probably work anywhere, and this is the truth. The McRib was tested there, and it didn't work, and that's why you don't get the McRib now. But MTV was tested there, and it worked, see? That proves that we know what we're talking about. You're not going to give us some meat that's been pressed up to look like a rib. We're from Oklahoma, we know what a rib tastes like. But MTV, where you get women walking around with no clothes on, and you get to hear rock'n'roll, now that's something that Oklahomans want.

Nardwuar: And here comes Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips testing quite a bit, now you're testing the blood thing, some achievement. A big achievement, testing the blood and stuff like that. Now what about this mic thing you have, the video mic, what's the video mic, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips?

Wayne: We live in such a great scientifically diverse world these days that you can actually

NARDWUAR THE HUMAN SERVIETTE

go online and go to one of these sort of spy stores and buy all these little things that you can spy on your friends with. So I got this little camera that's on my microphone up there, and I just sort of connect it up 'til you can see my head. And we have a screen that plays behind us. Sometimes you can see my big head and my boogers up my nose and all that sort of stuff right there while I'm singing.

Nardwuar: See, that is a really great achievement.

Wayne: [laughs]

Nardwuar: It's great that you're going out and doing that, you know, true Oklahoma City style there, Wayne Coyne.

Wayne: I don't know if that would be called Oklahoma City style...

Nardwuar: Test marketing. You're test marketing.

he really did to begin with, right?

Nardwuar: Ba-boom.

Wayne: Well, there you go. No, it's because he's a nice guy, and he's up for doing weird things. He likes to have fun.

Nardwuar: You like to have people dress up as animals, and you supply the animals, don't you?

Wayne: We supply the animal costumes, and usually they don't smell of sex, they smell good, they smell fresh and clean like you just did the laundry. But occasionally people do things in them, in the suits.

Nardwuar: And Justin Timberlake didn't care about climbing into the suit. He didn't care about the smell. He wanted to hear the music first, didn't he? He wanted to learn the dance moves!

Wayne: Well, he's got the dance moves down. That's why we want-

Nardwuar: That's pretty damn close to bin Laden.

Wayne: And a couple of times we've had people show up as Jesus, so on one side of me is Santa Claus and on the other side is Jesus. And of course it's Wayne from Oklahoma in the middle, right? Yeah, you should come up tonight. You already look like you're ready to dance with us.

Nardwuar: I want to play in the confetti! Now tell me about the confetti, a little bit about the confetti there, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips. The confetti because you have confetti and so does Fischer...

Wayne: So does... uh, Spooner!

Nardwuar: Fischerspooner!

Wayne: Oh okay, right... you gotta be quick with you, right. I didn't know they did.

Nardwuar: Because you've covered her tune.

Wayne: Right, and that's the reason I say, "Kylie you've gotta come back here," and if she shows up I'm sure she'll let me touch it. I mean I don't want to do anything with it, other than I'll touch it, just so I could have one up on the Fischerspooner folks. How did he get to touch it?

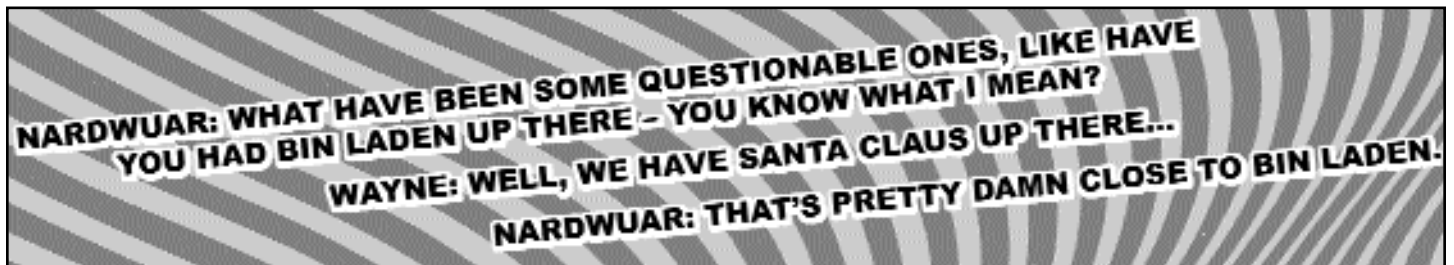
Nardwuar: I don't know. It was arranged through the record company or something like that.

Wayne: Well, was it a touch or was it like a grab?

Nardwuar: He got a nice little grab. He said it was awesome.

Wayne: Did she like it? I mean, did she respond?

Nardwuar: Of course. She came back for more!



Wayne: I agree. I have a curiosity about trying new things. You're exactly right.

Nardwuar: And there is an achievement of The Flaming Lips recently, an achievement, many achievements but one specially.

Wayne: I think the biggest achievement is...

Nardwuar: Getting sponsored by...

Wayne: Did we get sponsored by...?

Nardwuar: Apple!

Wayne: No.

Nardwuar: Don't you have a sponsorship with Apple computers? That's amazing Wayne Coyne!

Wayne: No. We do get a lot of free stuff from Apple, but I was actually in an HP commercial. That's why I think there's some confusion there.

Nardwuar: Oh my god.

Wayne: But we actually won a Grammy a couple of months ago as well.

Nardwuar: That's amazing. Congratulations. But the most amazing achievement you've done recently is - how the hell did you get Justin Timberlake into a dolphin outfit that was smelling of sex?

Wayne: Exactly, well see, I was like wow, I like that. I hadn't used that. [laughs]

Nardwuar: And you are Wayne Coyne of the Flaming...

Wayne: I am, and I think it just goes to show that Justin Timberlake probably does a lot more drugs than everybody thought

ed him to come up there and sort of rock out with us. And he was wonderful. I think it just goes to show, who would ever think that Justin Timberlake would care about The Flaming Lips? But when we met he said, "Yeah, I'd love to come up there and play with you guys and do this song." He even went to his hotel room that night and learned the song.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne, tell me a little bit about the animals and stuff that people climb into. Do they have sex in the outfits? Have you stopped them from having sex in the outfits? And just continuing on there, I'm just curious about, what do you do when that happens?

Wayne: Well, I hope that they just get it over with quick when it does happen, but I don't know if they're having sex with anything other than themselves. I think a lot of times we're drawing that new craze of crowd that's called the Furrries and the Plushies. You've heard of this? And I think that's really why we're drawing bigger audiences these days.

Nardwuar: Is there any quality control of people coming to the shows in outfits? If someone comes to the show, do you boycott any outfits going on stage? Because you encourage people to bring their own outfits don't you? What have been some questionable ones, like have you had bin Laden up there - you know what I mean?

Wayne: Well, we have Santa Claus up there...

Nardwuar: They have the confetti and when they play oftentimes they lip sync. They jump around, lip sync. Have you ever thought about doing that, just totally lip syncing?

Wayne: I have, of course. We do that in our videos all the time.

Nardwuar: But how about on stage, because that's what Fischerspooner does. It'd be a lot easier for you to do your show without actually singing.

Wayne: To me it would really be more trouble than it's worth, because it's just so much easier just to sing. And I don't think one is better than the other, I just think it's a lot easier because you like to talk and change things up a little bit, and it's just more personal.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne, there are some similarities between you and The Flaming Lips and Fischerspooner. Casey Spooner there - are you jealous of Casey Spooner, because he got to touch...

Wayne: I don't know!

Nardwuar: Whose ass did Casey Spooner get to touch?

Wayne: It must be Kylie Minogue's...

Nardwuar: Yes!

Wayne: Because that's the only ass that anybody really wants to touch. There's a lot of asses out there, but...

Nardwuar: Yes! You see, Casey Spooner got to touch the ass, and all you got to do was cover the ass.

Wayne: No, I think I will get to touch it. I've invited her to come backstage...

Wayne: I can't believe that...

Nardwuar: She might have been contractually obligated. It might have been a contractual obligation.

Wayne: I think if I get to touch Kylie's butt, it's going to be because she likes it.

Nardwuar: It could have been one of those things that happened in the press, you know, like Lisa Marie kissing Michael Jackson. It could have been set up.

Wayne: I wouldn't want mine to be in that way at all. I hope mine is a genuine, "Let me touch your butt," and she says, "Do it once and get outta here."

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, the song you have, "Do You..."

Wayne: ...Realize"

Nardwuar: "Do You Realize." Are there dog whistles embedded in that? When my friend listens to that song with his dog, the dog goes crazy! Have you embedded dog whistles?

Wayne: That's because that dog is hearing the lyrics and the lyrics are so moving that the dog's going crazy. That's why.

Nardwuar: No, but the whole album is filled with dog whistles.

Wayne: No, no, no...

Nardwuar: Is the whole album filled with subliminal dog whistles?

Wayne: No, it's not.

Nardwuar: Here I am asking a man covered in blood. Very satanic. But are there dog whistles?

Wayne: No there's not, and you can trust me on that, because I have

dogs, and I play it all the time at the house and nothing happens to them. **Nardwuar:** There's none, you swear to god, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, no dog whistles in "Do You Realize"?"

Wayne: No intentional ones. **Nardwuar:** So why do you think the dogs go crazy again?

Wayne: I think it's because they're Canadian!

Nardwuar: Ba-boom!

Wayne: [laughs]

Nardwuar: Now going back here to The Cramps...

Wayne: Back to The Cramps?

Nardwuar: Well we started talking about The Cramps.

Wayne: Right, right we did.

Nardwuar: Now, when I was listening to your early records, it really does sound a bit Crampish.

Wayne: There is an element of The Cramps in there. But The Cramps are one of those inspirations, because they're just such weirdos, and people don't know how old they are, and where they come from, and all that sort of stuff, and I think there's an element of that to The Flaming Lips.

Nardwuar: But you don't do any of that any more. You only go as far back as "Jelly." You only go to the "Jelly."

Wayne: Well, it's because we have been around for so long and our audience is perpetually like a new audience, and you're always playing to people who just know your last couple of records, which I think is wonderful. And so, we try to play songs that we think everybody out there will know. And so I could play some old songs, but there'd only be like three or four weirdos like yourself in the audience who would know what we're playing, and so I play songs that they want to hear. And when we do radio shows or shows at record stores or something, then we

know we're really connecting to the people who are weirdo, weirdo fans and who are perhaps even weirder than you, and then we will play some of the older stuff, just because we know... [laughs]

Nardwuar: Thank you so much, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips. Now I have a little joke here for you. I was listening to your early records, going way, way back, and your early records don't sound like the Polyphonic Spree.

Wayne: But that's a good joke, right? Because I love the Polyphonic Spree...

Nardwuar: You're supposed to laugh at that.

Wayne: Oh, okay. [laughs]

Nardwuar: Is that funny? Is that funny? Can you tell the people the joke I was trying to get across?

Wayne: Right, the joke is that people think that they sound like The Flaming Lips now, the Polyphonic Spree, right? That's the joke? But I don't think so. I think they sound like them.

Nardwuar: But people have ripped you off, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips...

Wayne: No, no...

Nardwuar: Yes, touring with STP and Candlebox. They ripped you off, didn't they? Tell me the story about that.

Wayne: No, they didn't rip us off. We actually played up here in Vancouver with both of those

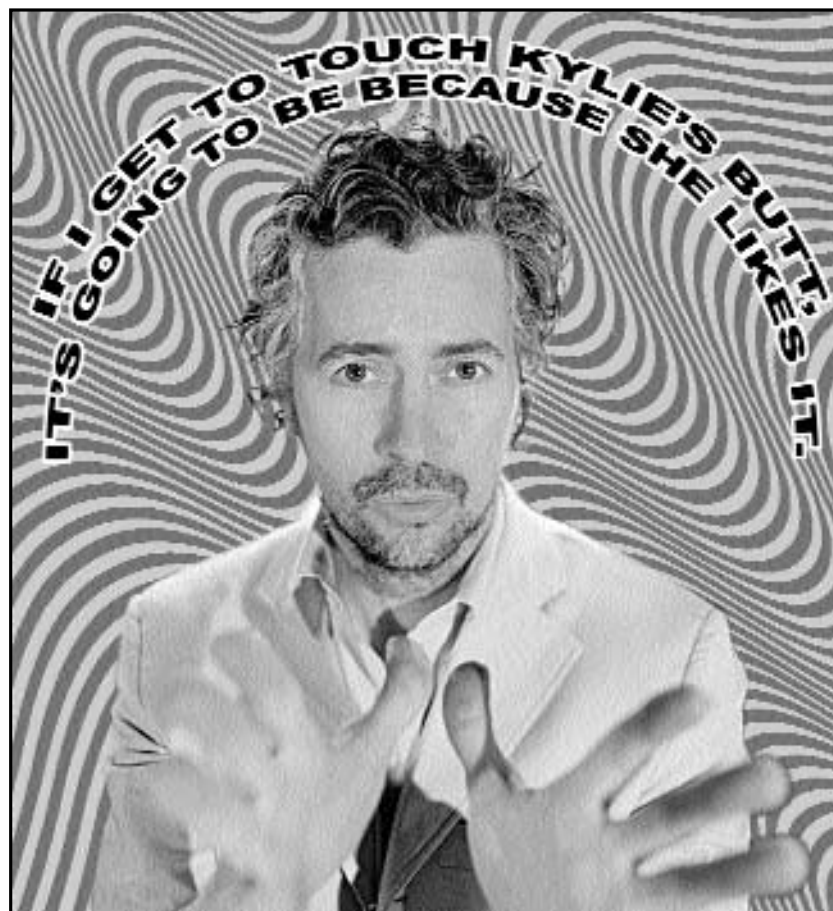
guys." And as you know, a band like Candlebox being experimental, that sounds...

Nardwuar: You see, I was wondering about that, because Redd Kross toured with Stone Temple Pilots, and then Stone Temple Pilots totally ripped off Redd Kross. Would you admit to that, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips?

Wayne: No, I think music is one of those things...

Nardwuar: Come on. Redd Kross were completely ripped off by the Stone Temple Pilots! "Big Bang Baby" – that's total Redd Kross!

Wayne: Nobody owns a certain element of what you can do in music. Everybody is always influenced...



bands.

Nardwuar: I thought you played with Candlebox, and then they ripped you off, and then they failed, because they couldn't copy The Flaming Lips!

Wayne: No, they failed. Who knows why they failed.

Nardwuar: You said...

Wayne: No.

Nardwuar: ...in an interview that they copied you, and then they only sold four hundred records.

Wayne: No. I think because we were on tour with them, and we got to be friends and they really admired our music, and I think they thought, "We want to be more weird and experimental like you

Nardwuar: What sort of kickback are you getting back from the Stone Temple Pilots?

Wayne: [laughs] I'm not, I just wouldn't make... I don't think anybody's even ripped us off. I think you can just do whatever you want.

Nardwuar: [quickly] Polyphonic Spree.

Wayne: No. Polyphonic Spree are great.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, De La Soul. You toured with De La Soul. What's it like touring with a rap band and what other rap bands have you toured with?

Wayne: De La Soul are really gentle, loving, peace-and-love sort of

guys, which is great, but you hope that when you're touring with rap acts and hip-hop acts that it's a constant barrage of smoking crack and having sex and guns and all that sort of stuff, but it wasn't.

Nardwuar: Have you played with any other rap groups? Any other rap groups? Have you met any other rap groups?

Wayne: Of course. We played with Jurassic 5 just last night, and about a month ago with Public Enemy, so yeah.

Nardwuar: What was that like? That must have been a bit of a downer.

Wayne: No, it was great.

Nardwuar: Flava Flav is getting pretty big isn't he?

Wayne: What do you mean?

Nardwuar: You've kept very fit and trim, and you exercise.

Wayne: Flava Flav looks virtually the same, only I think the clocks are getting bigger. He still had the clocks on and everything.

Nardwuar: Ba-boom!

Wayne: [laughs]

Nardwuar: I love you guys because you were, like, covering *Dark Side of the Moon*, the entire album opening for punk bands years ago...

Wayne: [laughs]

Nardwuar: I mean that is punk. That is punk. When did this happen – quickly winding up here – doing that for punk bands?

Wayne: We didn't cover the whole thing.

Nardwuar: Yes, there's a punk band called No Trend from Washington, DC that says you opened for them and you did the entire album.

Wayne: I know, but they're exaggerating that we did the entire album. We would play Pink Floyd songs and that was indeed confrontational to that crowd at the time. But in defense of ourselves, we didn't do it because it was confrontational. We did it

because we liked the music and we thought, "Well, these people are punk rock. They should like it that we're doing what we like." I thought that's what it was all about, but in some ways you see it's very restricted in other ways.

Nardwuar: Just quickly, this interview's winding up. But why did your Brian Wilson interview never see the light of day? You interviewed Brian Wilson! Why did it not see the light of day!? What the hell happened?

Wayne: Because Brian Wilson, I mean – I know me and you are a pair of weirdos – but compared to us, Brian Wilson is just too weird. It's unsettling to see

him interviewed with me on TV, to tell you the truth. I have the interview with me and maybe some day we'll just prove it.

Nardwuar: Do you have it in your bus right now?

Wayne: Well I don't know if I have it. I carried it on the Beck tour so we played it a bunch on the Beck tour and, um, I think it's disturbing. It really is.

Nardwuar: Well, what does he do?

Wayne: Well, he doesn't answer questions very easily, like if you interviewed him he would cry and he may shit himself or whatever, you know? I mean...

Nardwuar: That's my dream, to interview Brian Wilson, Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips...

Wayne: I know, but you'll never do it because he's just too uncomfortable.

Nardwuar: Well, actually it's my second dream because to interview you is a real dream...

Wayne: Well, that is what I was told...

Nardwuar: Because I was researching a bit about you there, "Flaming Lipper," "Wayner Coyner" and I heard that you don't do interviews before you play, that you only communicate non-verbally.

Wayne: [laughs]

Nardwuar: Somebody saw you before a show and you were like [makes choking noises].

Wayne: Oh, well, that was true. If we play too many nights in a row and then I talk, and then I talk too much and 'cause I only have so much of the voice and then bam! You've talked too much and you can't sing that night. So I had to do a bunch of interviews where I was just sort of faking it. They'd ask me questions and I'd shake my head, yes or no.

Nardwuar: You're not faking it today!

Wayne: Exactly, because I knew if I talked too much then I wouldn't be able to sing that night. But it was really only for one day where I had to do two interviews that were going to be on TV and stuff.

Nardwuar: Have the boom-box experiments ever gone wrong?

Wayne: Everything goes wrong all the time but that's the beauty of being in a band and accepting whatever challenges come along. Yeah, they would go wrong all the time, but I like it when you're kind of forced to improvise or just do things. Yeah, of course, yeah.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, will My Bloody Valentine ever make another

record?

Wayne: No, no they won't. No.

Nardwuar: Why is that?

Wayne: Because I don't really think they exist anymore. But, um, I think it's just lost its meaning. But Kevin Shields, he's still a wonderful guy who will probably play weird, strange guitar and make weird recordings for the rest of his life, but I don't actually think it'll be called My Bloody Valentine.

sign them, one of the reasons they signed to Warner Brothers is because they loved The Flaming Lips.

Nardwuar: Aww, and you felt terrible about that.

Wayne: I think they're fourteen, seventeen, and twenty. Yeah.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate it.

Wayne: Well, thank you sir, thank

trip...

Nardwuar: And as soon as you said that, look, the sun just came out.

Wayne: Of course.

Nardwuar: Isn't that awesome?

Wayne: I've been in Oklahoma for almost forty-three years and I've never seen a tornado and a thousand of them come through there every year and a couple of them came through when I was home just last week, but I've only been to Canada you know, maybe twelve times and I've seen the Northern Lights three times. Isn't that wonderful?

Nardwuar: It is Wayne Coyne. Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips, why should people care about The Flaming Lips? Why should people care?

Wayne: Well, they shouldn't care if they don't want to. I mean we make music and we hope people like it and music is a wonderful, wonderful thing, so if you don't like music, I'm sure you won't like us. But if you like music, you should be hopefully looking for weird, wonderful things and we would be one of those, hopefully, that people should stumble upon. But the main reason is because I think we make optimistic music. You know when you have some sadness or some tragedy in your life or something, sometimes you want to hear people who are seeing brighter side of the universe or seeing another way out of this thing or whatever. And I think we represent that here and there, sure.

Nardwuar: Wayne Coyne, I'm so sorry to take your time but I've got one last question if that's okay.

Wayne: Ahh, come on. What do you got...

Nardwuar: One last question here. Michael Stipe. You scared him with UFO stories years ago.

Wayne: I know...

Nardwuar: Has he always been weird? Has that dude always been weird?

Wayne: He has and I thought maybe in the last few years, maybe he finally wouldn't be weird, but recently we played Athens, Georgia and we scared him off again.

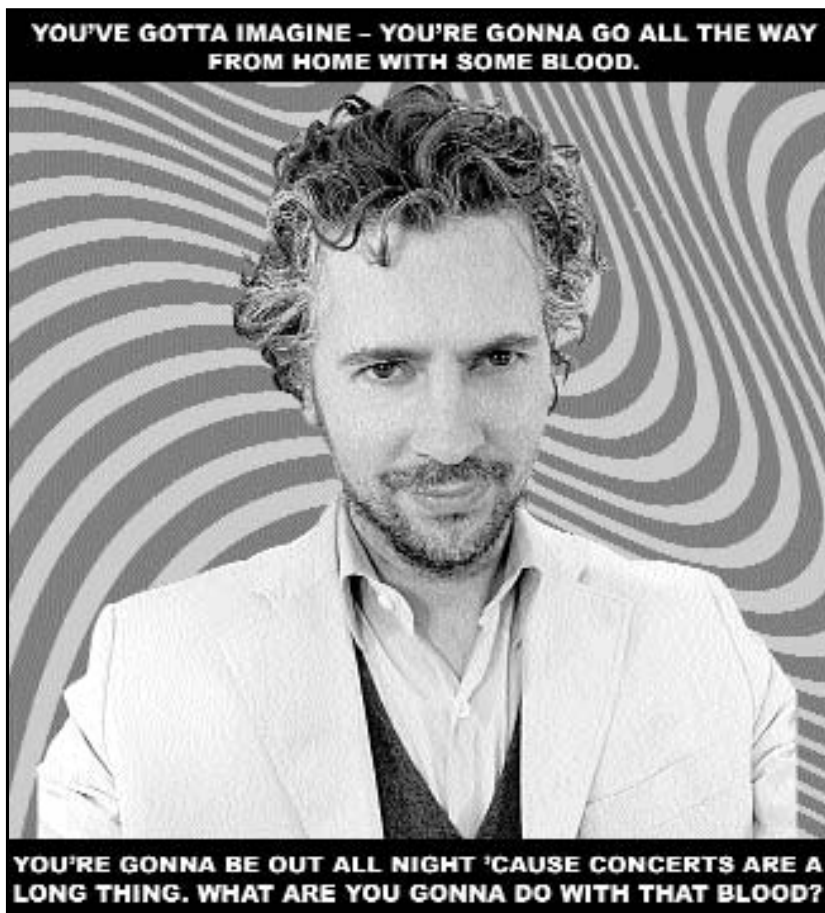
Nardwuar: Thanks very much Wayne Coyne. Keep on rockin' in the free world and doot doola doot doo?

Wayne: [laughs] What? You always do that "bum bum."

Nardwuar: Yes! Thank you!



—Nardwuar the Human Serviette
<www.nardwuar.com>



Nardwuar: Did you ever feel The Flaming Lips were used as bait at all because you've been on Warner Brothers all these years. Are you bait because, "Hey we got The Flaming Lips, they've been here thirteen, fifteen years. You gotta sign with us."

Wayne: [laughs] Well I only recently felt that because yesterday we played...

Nardwuar: Do you feel a bit guilty then?

Wayne: No, I love it now. I never knew how good it felt to be bait before, but I do know because yesterday we played with this band, the girl who sings in the band is fourteen years old so that's bait-ish already.

Nardwuar: Ba-BOOM!

Wayne: I know! They're big fans of The Flaming Lips because we've played their hometown Dallas, Texas probably about one hundred times, so they grew up with us and so when Warner Brothers went to

you.

Nardwuar: Is there anything else you want to add to the people out there at all?

Wayne: Um, to the Canadian folks, um, we love playing everywhere we go or we wouldn't play if we didn't love it. But I don't want anyone to think that we would ever avoid Canada because of its, um — you know, these are weird times and getting over borders and that sort of stuff can be more difficult. No, it's wonderful that we have an audience here and hopefully we'll get to travel to go to Montreal and Toronto regardless of the mad cow disease.

Nardwuar: And it's cool that you like it because you're a test market. If you like it, you're a test market. You're a test band.

Wayne: And some of my greatest adventures, I've actually seen the Northern Lights three times while I've been in Canada and that's marvelous, so yeah. Here's the, the



GARY HORNBERGER

SQUEEZE MY HORN



IF AND WHEN THE STORES CUT ALL THAT PAY OR SLICE THAT MEDICAL, DO YOU THINK YOU WILL BE PAYING LESS FOR A CAN OF SOUP?

I thought I read somewhere in one of the old magazines where some reader was complaining that the magazine was becoming too political. Well, I say, "Why the hell not?" Politics follow us around like the Grim Reaper every day. If not the upcoming recall, it's in our jobs, and even in our music. Right now, as we read this, the mighty gears turn in labor politics for myself. I work in the grocery business and our contract will expire on October 8th. The outlook for a strike looks promising, so look for me out on the curb carrying a sign in a couple of weeks. You see, this country, at one point in its history, wanted to promote competition in business and was afraid that certain industries would be controlled by one entity, so they set into law a governing board that allowed free enterprise to run rampant. Unfortunately, that's not happening.

In the ten years or so that I've been working, I've noticed that grocery stores have been get-

ting bought out by bigger companies so that right now in southern California there are four major players in the area: Albertson's, Ralphs, Stater Brothers, and Vons. I used to work for a red store that became a blue store. That's all I'm telling you about where I work! Anyway, right now, as we do every three years, we are voting on a contract and yes, that contract is always a waste; the company wants something outrageous and the union wants something equally outrageous.

speech at work so that I wouldn't have to bottle things up and contemplate taking anger management classes. The speech thing would come in real handy when talking with management (you know who you are, especially the short girl who works the front end and my nerves) because it's hard to defend yourself when being talked down to because of that whole insubordination thing. See how I have to deal with politics?

Now, for this state recall thing, I'm all for the possibility of anyone running for office but really, is this not mocking the system? Here's another problem: I'd like to vote for the Green Party candidate because I think he's the most intelligent, but because of this union thing they want me to vote "no" on the recall. What the hell do I do (insert nail biting)? It's the same dilemma I had when voting for a president a couple of years ago. I'm being bombarded and I can't keep it together. So whoever said the mag was

Yeah, it's funny in parts, like when he opens a banking account somewhere in the Midwest just to get the free rifle, which they give him on the spot. You think it's not true? I just heard the same story from one of my wife's friends who lived in Wisconsin, and she was saying they had a gun promotion at a jewelry store. The best thing about it though is that Michael Moore is a member of the NRA. I'm sure the movie is more about stupid people than guns.

Hey, I just saw a news report on my union's possible strike. It seems that they want to take our pay and cut it by 15%, make us pay hefty for medical insurance, take away guaranteed part-time workers' hours, and bend us over in several other areas. All of this is to compete with Wal-Mart, they say. Stater Bro's can do it. Maybe if the other three weren't spending all that money revamping stores, their stock would be higher. Let me leave you with this: if and when the



ting bought out by bigger companies so that right now in southern California there are four major players in the area: Albertson's, Ralphs, Stater Brothers, and Vons. I used to work for a red store that became a blue store. That's all I'm telling you about where I work! Anyway, right now, as we do every three years, we are voting on a contract and yes, that contract is always a waste; the company wants something outrageous and the union wants something equally outrageous.

You see, I really don't trust either of them, but going with the union is probably in my best interest. I don't know why they don't ask me to write the frickin' thing. First thing I would put in would be the right to exercise free

getting too political. I say how the hell does one stay away from it? If you're listening to music that is political (I heard a batch from the Dropkick Murphys CD on the way home from work tonight) - and if you're reading this magazine, I bet a fortune that you're hearing a good dose of political attitude anyway. Let me just say that a political viewpoint is not a bad thing. It means you have a point of view and it's probably the same view as thousands of others in varying degrees.

I have these issues on my mind also because I watched *Bowling for Columbine* this weekend, and that movie really makes me feel down about aspects of this country. If you haven't seen it, I've got to warn you that it can be depressing.

stores cut all that pay or slice that medical, do you think you will be paying less for a can of soup?

NORTH EAST PUNK FLYERS
\$3.00 ppd., \$5.00 international

It's not a comic book, but I think flyers are comical in nature. I think it's really cool that this guy put these together in a fanzine kind of format, and I agree with him that some people try to sell these for top dollar. Personally, I think this is a dying form of art along with the independent record stores where one would find them. Back in the mid-eighties, I ran with the guys from Visual Discrimination and the singer, Tim, used to make some of the best and funniest flyers I've

ever seen. He was the king of cut and paste. So, when this came in the mail I got all pumped up remembering running with Tim down to the printers to run off two hundred or so photocopies of the buffed bodybuilder chick flyers. This zine is cool because it has all the East Coast bands in it. It also has an interview with Winston Smith. It has hundreds of flyers from the '80s and covers all the major players - it's history, man, and you can own it for just three bucks. So if you're a fan of punk and you remember going to the shows and having these things handed to you right and left (and I'm talking about the full page ones), then get a copy of this and rip down memory lane. (F.N.S. Productions, PO Box 1299, Boston, MA 02130, www.geocities.com/fnsboston)

PAPING #8

\$3.00 U.S.

You know how when you make a compilation of music and you've picked the right combination and it works? That's what this book is. The blend of writers in this one work really well together. The cover is handmade, so it gives you that cool, artsy feel. Right from the get go I knew this comic was for me, because the first strip has me pegged at second grade. Here's my story first: you see, in second grade at recess one day I was told by the teacher that I couldn't play until I mastered jumping rope. Needless to say, I couldn't do it. This is not to say I was uncoordinated - far from it, actually. I just couldn't figure it out. So for not being able to jump rope, I had to sit on the curb for all of recess. Feeling this was unjust, I walked out of the schoolyard, across the street to my house, and spent the rest

of the school day in a tree. It's the same story in the comic but the kid spends the time in his aunt's car. See, I told you we were on the same page. Now where do I go from here? Let's go with the octopus girl game. See, she's cool because she takes care of bad guys with magic, and if the reader helps her defeat the baddie at the end, you might win a prize. I'll give you one more and then you'll have to read the rest yourself. This one's called LO-FI SCI-FI tale #13 and it's about these idiots in space who are trying to find intelligent life forms and when they can't find any, they enslave rocks to do their bidding. When the rocks don't do anything they, by law, set them free. It's funny when you read it, okay? Remember Paping #8. (Paping, PO Box 128, 45 E. 7st., NYC 10003)

THE NORM

\$4.95 U.S., \$5.95 Can.

Here it is, guys, a comic written for us, about us. The title is "The 12 Steps to Marriage," and it seems to bring back memories of all the things a guy goes through in all that time before and after you say, "I do." For example, why is it in the in-laws' house are all of the wedding pictures of their family, but not even the new groom is in them? Wait, is that in the comic or did that happen to me? Anyway, it's things like that that are covered in this book and it makes me feel a whole hell of a lot better knowing that it's happening to someone else and will happen to others. I'm not sure if the author is doing it on his own or if he's had insight from others, but he sure has a knack for getting the situations right. Now, I could go through this and give you examples, but I think that would be doing it a disser-

vice. I haven't seen this one in the *LA Times* but "The Norm" is in syndication to newspapers worldwide. It has a sort of Calvin & Hobbes look to the art, which lends to the credibility of humorous adventure, but it has the driving speed of Tim the Tool Man Taylor. So, all you men stand proud because now you have a tool to say, "I told you so." (The Norm.com Publishing, PO Box 126327, Dallas, TX 75225, www.thenorm-store.com)

13 GRLZ

\$??? Could be free?

Okay, this is poetry done by a high school buddy who I see now and then. Is it right or wrong that I told him I'd read it? It's not too bad, though I've never read a concert review as a poem. The show was at the Galaxy and the bands were the Hooligans and Los Abandoned (or at least that's what I can pull out of it), but the way he describes the whole night's happenings are kind of cool. The rest of *13 Grlz* is poems about different girls. Now, if he's really met this many girls and they are the way he describes them, I'm going to have to start hanging out with him. I'm talking about girls from all around the world. The "Kitty O' Kilkenny" poem is my favorite, but I'm also a Celtics fan. Now, I'm no great interpreter of poetry. I can't tell good from bad and I don't know what to look for when reading it, but describing women in poems is all right with me. So if you need a copy of this guy's stuff, drop me a line by way of the magazine and I'll send you a copy. (Poetry by MSD)

-Gary Hornberger





DESIGNATED DALE

I'M AGAINST IT



When you listen to one of your favorite records, chances are that you might not have the pleasure of personally knowing the artist or artists who actually created the music you're listening to. The same goes for looking at your favorite kinds of art. Enter Art Fuentes. For over three quarters of my life, I've been fortunate enough to continually watch this guy's artistic style blow my mind (not to mention I grew up with him, and he's been one of the best friends I could ever have). Anyone who's seen Art's work knows that he's more than capable of doing what an artist is supposed to do, and that's to entertain. Consistently. And laugh. A whole helluva lot. As they say, the proof is in the pudding, so if you've yet to sample any of Art's art, hop to it and grab yourself a spoon, dumbass. For those of you who think I'm sounding a tad biased here, it's only because I'm proud of this dude's amazing talent. How proud? More proud than a violent, raging-drunk father about to reign victorious over a bloody, soon-to-be-missing-teeth fistfight with the empire at his boy's very first ball game. Ba-baya!

Dale: As far as you drawing, when did you start your cartoon/animation style? I know you did in grade school, 'cause I've known you for quite some time.

Art: Oh hell, it was before that.

Dale: What was your first recollection of ever drawing something?

Art: I remember drawing Snoopy. I used to buy comic books and just copy 'em. That was my thing. I don't even remember when I started, but I remember I used to do that.

Dale: This is before grade school?

Art: Oh, yeah, this is when I was living with my Grandma still.

Dale: Oh, so this is like before you even started kindergarten! And you'd sit and copy what?

Art: Just anything... my uncles left comics lying around.

Dale: With Snoopy?

Art: [smiling] Yeah, I remember Snoopy, the dog, so... [laughing] I know it's gay, but...
Dale: I was gonna say "Penis" but you say, "No, Penis..." (the comic

strip Snoopy was a part of).

Art: No, not "penis." *Peanuts*. [laughter].

Dale: Even as a kid, you never had any originals (drawings)? When was your first grouping together of originals?

Art: When we were in grade school, I don't even know if you remember, I used to take the characters from the comic strips and make up stories using the same characters, and sell 'em at school. [laughing]

Dale: I vaguely remember you made those. They were like those little religious paranoia paraphernalia pamphlets.

Art: [laughing] Yeah, yeah.

Dale: But yours were, like little, stapled-up notebook paper. You actually sold those?

Art: Yeah, for like nickels and shit like that.

Dale: No shit? Now I wish I had some, 'cause I ain't got any of those. I got some of your original shit, but I don't have any of the books. When you first started finding your original style, who was your first influence?

Art: Shit... I'd have to say Charles Schultz (*Peanuts* creator). Like I said, I used to draw Snoopy. That was the first character I learned to draw without having to look at it.

Dale: You could just do it outta your head? Like that shit you do in the magazines: "Draw Cubby to see if you can get into Fuck Wad Art School!"

Art: [laughing] I did that once! The dude came to our house.

Dale: He actually showed up at your door? What happened with that?

Art: Nothing. He showed up with his little briefcase and gave us the whole rundown.

Dale: Was he in a Pogo the Clown outfit or was he from the actual company?

Art: [laughing] No, he was from the place. I forget how much money it was to sign up for these correspondence courses, but my parents just said "Forget it," you know? "Get your ass out."

Dale: Wait, was the guy full of shit?
Art: No. He gave us the hard sell. I think my Mom, especially, she didn't really want me to do that stuff. She doesn't really support it.

Dale: She wanted you to play baseball...

Art: [laughing] Yeah, or do, you know, other shit. "Oh, you're not really gonna do anything with it."

Dale: But even she had to see, at your young age, how much talent you had.

Art: My mom didn't care if I did, but I guess they didn't wanna shell out money. Plus, I was a kid, and it wasn't like I was in high school, or anything. I just did it - it was in the back of a comic book - I did it, sent it in, and the guy came over and tried to sell the whole thing.

Dale: So, Charles Schultz was your earliest influence. As you got older, obviously there were other outside influences...

Art: Now when I read that, (*Peanuts*) I'm like, "What the fuck was wrong with me?"

Dale: Ohhh, you mean when you got older, you're like, "What the fuck was I reading this for?"

Art: I thought, "This isn't funny!"

Dale: It's kinda in the sense you can read Dr. Seuss now and still appreciate it.

Art: Well, yeah. That's different.

Dale: But then if you read Charles Schultz now, you're like, "What's this hippie bullshit fuckin' attitude?"

Art: [busting up] It just wasn't funny. I mean, at the time, I guess it was, but...

Dale: As you got older, then who else were your influences?

Art: Well, one of my - I wouldn't say influences so much - but I love Will Eisner's stuff. He did *The Spirit*. He was a big guy - he still is a big guy, actually. In the '40s, he did a lot of stuff.

Dale: DC comics?

Art: No, a newspaper comic. *The Spirit* was this guy, Denny Colt. He was a detective and he died/disappeared, but he came back. I mean, he didn't really die; everybody thought he was dead. The artwork is fantastic. He influenced me, as far as wanting to draw. I mean, god, if someone can draw that good, I would like to.

Dale: And this is when? Early high school? Late grade school?

Art: Yeah, I was a teenager. And Walt Kelly, too. The guy who did *Pogo*. I think now I'm more close to that. He's more cartoon-y.

Dale: Whereas Will Eisner's more like realistic/animated drama?

Art: Yeah. His has a lot more

drama. My style is more cartoon-y. I have trouble with backgrounds, so...

Dale: But I've noticed, too, even in your early-on drawings when I started to see your style, I can see some of the stuff you used to do fucking around in high school or even grade school, you drawing on the sides of your homework.

Art: [laughing] Oh, yeah! I still have some of that.

Dale: Yeah! We used to both do it, but I used to laugh at yours because yours would get all high-profile and really detailed. I don't know why you said you have a problem with high detail. You always had the little detail things. Like, for instance, I don't know why - to this day it makes me laugh - the way you draw a mound of shit with the heat coming off it.

Art: [laughing] You know what? That came from reading Japanese comics. That's how they draw little turds. They draw 'em like little frosty cones.

Dale: That's the way they draw the shit sitting by itself? All the Japanese artists do that?

Art: A lot of 'em. A little coil of crap. [laughter] With the little pinchy part.

Dale: Like a soft-serve! Tasty Freeze style! (Tasty Freeze was this kickass old school ice cream/grub stand chain sprinkled throughout So Cal in the '70s. Similar to Dairy Queen, but way better. Very few exist today.)

Art: Yeah, exactly!

Dale: Back to getting older, what three bands or artists influenced you?

Art: When I was in high school, I was into a lot of stuff. I was into punk. A lot of my friends were into rap. As far as bands, like you, I like the Ramones. That's what it was all about - really fast, get to the point, melodic, it's there. I use to put tapes on and draw.

Dale: It wasn't possessing your hand, but it put an attitude in your pen, to say the least?

Art: I don't know. My music tastes are so out there and weird. I like a lot of stuff.

Dale: But like you said, you like a lot of the rap. You even did a few pieces with the spray cans.

Art: Yeah, I used to do that, too. I

DESIGNATED DALE

got into that. I mean, that's what I did on prom night. [laughter] I didn't go to the prom - not cool, but, you know. That's what I did. I did a big mural. Where the hell was it? On Stage (a road in La Mirada, CA)? Yeah.

Dale: In the ditch! The American skull piece?

Art: Uhhh, yeah, I think that was it!
Dale: I might still have a picture of that.

Art: Well, I want a copy, then. [laughter]

Dale: It's funny you said the Ramones, because now that you mentioned them, John Holmstrom (co-founder of *PUNK* magazine) - he did their *Road to Ruin* cover and the lyric sleeve inset for *Rocket To Russia*. John Holmstrom was also the guy who used to do that *Joe* comic strip in *Bandnas* magazine when we were in grade school (mid/late '70s). Did he have any influence on you at all?

Art: Yeah, his stuff was funny. I can relate more to his stuff now to more of the stuff I do now.

Dale: 'Cause I notice of lot of his little underlying details and hints. We read those as kids, but I read those old strips now and you see a lot of the influences of stuff that we didn't even know about or get into until later on - all the little Ramones hints, things about New York subculture, and stuff. But he had to clean it up, because it was for a kid's magazine.

Art: Yeah, I remember. I liked that strip. Real simple, you know? It wasn't detailed or too busy. It was just simple and nice to the point. And funny. That's the main part. It was funny.

Dale: Chris Cooper, The Coop - one of his favorite bands is The GoNuts. He's done artwork for them. He's done artwork for a lot of bands. Who are some bands you would like to personally do stuff for, just because they tickle your funny johnson?

Art: Well, I did that Toys That Kill thing. That was cool because the band is really good, I like them a lot. What was that, issue #7 (*Razorcake* cover art). Shit, there's a lot of bands now. The Gossip, I like a lot. I like that really bluesy kind of music. Shoot, I'm a whore. I'll take work from almost anybody. [laughs]

Dale: You'll spread your crayons for anybody!

Art: That's it, that's it - I'll spread my pad for everybody, you know? [laughter]

Dale: Let's talk about some of the other stuff you've done. You did the CD cover that I actually have right here.

Art: Oh yeah, for Fat (Wreck Chords). That was a learning experience because I'd never done anything like that before. I think I

bugged Brian over there. I asked him so many questions. I'm sure he was sick of me by the time it was over. That was like the first big deal thing that I had ever done, so I didn't wanna fuck it up. That thing came out pretty good. It could be better. I'm always critical of the stuff that I do.

Dale: This CD - was it an import only?

Art: Yeah, I think it was for a giveaway they were doing out in Japan, a sampler, like a comp (*USA Punk Invasion*), with all different kinds of bands - their bands and other bands. And I guess Brian, the art director over there, he emailed Todd (our own Retodd), and then he emailed me. I mean, it was actually from Todd. I appreciate what Todd does for me, because I'm really bad at self-promotion. I'm not a really schmoozy kinda guy. I'm not gonna go and pretend to be friends with you just for a job. And that brings me to the animation business [laughs]. That's what it's all about. I tried to get into it.

Dale: But, ultimately, it's what you wanna do, Art, isn't it?

Art: You know what? Not any more. I think I'm gonna stay with just graphic design. Just logos and...

Dale: Commercial type of stuff?

Art: Yeah. I've been doing fonts and stuff. I think that's more up my alley. I like doing the illustrations for the articles in the magazine (*Razorcake*); those are good, too. I think I finally realized I'm more a "one thing" guy.

Dale: What do you mean, "one thing" guy?

Art: Like one drawing. I don't think I could...

Dale: But your strips! Like Lil' Beez, Shizville, Rummy Duck - I mean, c'mon dude - those are funny! Even if I didn't know you, I would fuckin' laugh my ass off at 'em!

Art: I like those. Those are actually enjoyable, 'cause it's not a chore. There's a lot of things that people ask me to draw 'em and it gets to be a chore sometimes, because either I don't like it or I'm not interested. But a lot of the stuff that I do nowadays is the stuff I enjoy doing, like the article illustrations. The cover drawing was great. I liked the way that came out. The comic strips, I enjoy doing those, you know? But as far as animation - drawing the same thing over and over and over again, I don't think I could do it. I mean, it'd be great, I wouldn't turn down a job.

Dale: Like, if Matt Groening (*The Simpsons* creator) said, "Hey, I want to put you in charge of all my Koreans over across the pond?" (It's a known fact that all of *The Simpsons* frame-by-frame produc-

tion cel work is shipped out to be done in Korea, then shipped back here in the States to have the final production finished. It's still one of the last animated shows to be hand-drawn. God bless you, Matt Groening).

Art: [laughs] Uh, he wouldn't want me in charge of all of 'em. [laughter] But I wouldn't turn down a job. To me, I'd have to be into it. It'd be an opportunity for me to get a foot in the door and then maybe do something else. It's very hard to get into the business. I mean, there's so many people who are so much better than you are...

Dale: That's true in any art genre. There's always somebody who's gonna be better than you. If you have a band - there's always gonna be a band that smokes you. Any part of the entertainment business. But to have natural talent like you do - someone's gotta fuckin' recognize that.

Art: Yeah, but it's like I tell all the kids - that you gotta go to school. Talent is great, but a lot of people wanna see something. And I know I lack discipline. I tried to go to college, but it wasn't for me. I just didn't like it. And now I think, "Hey, maybe I should've done that," ya know? "At least get a BA, something." You live with your choices. But, a lot of times, that's what it is - I'll apply to jobs. And I've taken classes here and there. I'm not saying that's who they're hiring - the people with three years (schooling) or whatever - but it just makes it easier.

Dale: Isn't a lot of it right place, right time?

Art: Yeah, that business is more who you know, not what you do. It's very hard. People actually have to leave or die. And even then, they have so-and-so's nephew who wants to get in on it.

Dale: Like a postal or Supreme Court job.

Art: [laughing] Yeah, it's really hard.

Dale: Okay, Art - here's two columns. In one, which artists do you really dig? It could be anything. It could fuckin' be the Blue Man Group, but if you say that, I'm gonna break out in punches.

Art: [laughing] I'll punch myself! I still like Coop a lot. Just 'cause he's original. [Making the horns with his hand] Plus, he's a brother.

Dale: And he draws the most fantastic women in the world! (Right, Yvonne? XOXOXO)

Art: But, uhhh, Kozik [makes face] eahhh...

Dale: [laughing] No, we'll get to that column! C'mon - don't fuck this up, Art! I'm trying to differentiate here...

Art: [laughs] Old John K., yes. (Head of Spumco, creator of *Ren &*

Stimpy) The new stuff - I don't know about that. I applied for a job out there (Spumco Studios). What I sent them was crap. I knew it was crap: my first actual portfolio. But they weren't assholes. They were really nice and said, "Hey, we'll keep your stuff on file." That place really impressed the hell out of me, 'cause it's so small, and they were churning out these great, funny, and weird cartoons. The place is about as big as your apartment, if that. It was great. That was something that kinda inspired me to say, "Hey, I wanna do this!" Uhhh, also - skateboard graphics - the good ones from the '80s! Jim Phillips, stuff like that.

Dale: Lucero? La Mirada's own!

Art: Yeah, Lucero. The holmeses, yeah. A lot of that stuff influenced me, too. A lot of that stuff, still to this day. As a matter of fact, I found some pictures of me skating at the Smurf Ramp (a mini-half pipe constructed in Art's old backyard years ago that was properly named due to the oh-so-blue paint job on his house) with a full mullet in effect with the John Lucero board. Yeah, I think that's why now I'm leaning more towards graphic art. I finally came to realize that it's more of a focus thing for me. If I can focus on one thing, it's better.

Dale: Like a painting...

Art: But, you know I have three million things going on at once, anyway. I'm kind of artsy-fartsy. I can go to a museum and stay there all day. I still like all that stuff.

Dale: Don't get all Richard Hell on me, Art, please. [laughter]

Art: [laughs] Nah, I ain't that bad, but I do enjoy a lot of it. I appreciate it. I couldn't do stuff like that. I don't have the patience.

Dale: Yeah, but if it's something you like...

Art: Yeah, the strips, they come out pretty easy, pretty natural. Even then, I look at them and go, "God, what crap!"

Dale: Yeah, but you're making people laugh. People are getting entertained by them.

Art: [laughs] Well, I hope so. I hope some people out there, at least. I have been getting a lot of good feedback about the Rummy Duck. Everybody seemed to like him.

Dale: Well, he's a drunk! Everyone likes a drunk duck! [laughter]

Art: I guess! I don't know if people relate to him or what the deal is.

Dale: He might stick around?

Art: Yeah, definitely. He's a keeper.

Dale: Now we can get to that other column - the "shizzy" one, as you'd like to call it.

Art: [smiling] I know you want me to talk about Kozik. That's why you brought this up.

Dale: He may be a great guy, but I don't like what he does.

Art: He is. He's a good guy. It's just

that a lot of his stuff, I'm not gonna say all of it, is straight copies. Whoever has even dabbled in animation, they'll know what I say when you pick up a Walter Foster animation book. Look through those pages, and you'll see Kozik's stuff in there. It's not just inspiration. All those little squirrels, the pig - oh, well, he added a butcher knife to him, wow - but the pig is there, the wolves, all that stuff is all in there.

Dale: And the only thing he did was add color.

Art: Well, I'm sure he re-drew it by hand, but it's stuff that's already there. I mean, I don't know if that stuff is public domain. If it's public domain, then fine, whatever, but I wouldn't do that.

Dale: There's already an artist who already did what he did before. Basically, what Warhol did.

Art: I think Warhol is way overrated. I just don't see it. I mean, maybe I'm not cool enough, or whatever, or hip enough. I just don't understand.

Dale: But art's not about being hip. Art's just about being art.

Art: I mean, what if I took a fuckin' Tide box and did it four or six times in different colors? What's the point of that?

Dale: It's just the idea that no one did it before. Don't you think what Kozik's doing is kinda what Warhol already did?

Art: Well, at least Kozik's adding stuff to it. But it doesn't make me mad. I'm not saying, "Oh, shame on you for doing that!" It's just that a lot of people don't know where it came from. And that's where it comes from, those books. He made money off of it. I don't know if those things are public domain. If they're public domain, then, hey, whatever - I'm an asshole. I'm wrong. But if they aren't, I don't know, those books are pretty old.

Dale: Back up a little bit. If you took Kozik's idea and ran with it before he did, would you sleep well at night knowing what you've been doing?

Art: No, I wouldn't be surprised if someone called me on it. If someone comes and says, "Hey, I know where you got those. Those are blah, blah, blah." What am I gonna say? "Well, yeah. I guess so. I'm an ass. Sorry." [laughter]

Dale: I mean, influence is fine. I loved your Yogi Bear and there's even a tiny bit of the Ren and Stimpy influence in your stuff, but there's a difference between influence and just basically making a copy of something.

Art: Okay, you brought the Yogi Bear thing up. Look at the Yogi Bear strip I did. It's based on the Spumco way that it's drawn. But I didn't take the tape and slow it down to frame by frame and draw the frame onto the strip.

Dale: You wrote your own story.

Art: And I drew them my own, out of my own head. I didn't just copy it straight from the TV. I looked at the tape for reference, but it wasn't straight copying.

Dale: But everyone - and I'm sure you'll agree - anyone in any form of art or entertainment medium bor-

I decided to not do that and try something else.

I don't know if you know about this rule I have. I don't know a lot about movies or comics, any kind of visual whatever, that most people really like a lot. I will not look at it on purpose. It's just a weird thing I have. It's happened before. I hear



**I think electronics steal your soul.
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rows from each other.

Art: Yeah, they do. That's the way it is. Look at me. What did I say in the beginning? I learned from copying out of comic books.

Dale: Yeah, but you developed into your own style. Getting back to what you were saying - basically, there's getting the recipe from someone's Grandma to make an apple pie yourself, and then there's just swiping the pie off of the windowsill, right?

Art: Yeah. Shag. I like a lot of his stuff. I'm like, "Hey! I can do that! I can paint like that! It's very simple, very graphic." But, in fact, I wrestled with this for a long time. I actually have sketches and drawings of paintings I wanted to do in that style, but I'm like, "Well, why am I gonna do that? It's already been done." It'll be like, "Oh, those are cool. They're kind of like Shag." [laughs] That's not what I wanna hear. That's why I decided against it. I mean, if I was Shag, I wouldn't want some guy painting like me. So

about this really cool thing, this really cool artist. He does this and it's cool, and everybody digs 'em. And I look at it, and then I'm like, "Oh, I wanna do that!" And every time I sit down and start doing something, even if I don't want to, I'll start doing it in that way. I don't know; it kinda messes me up. I like it so much that I'm like, "Fuck! How come I didn't think of that?" [laughs] It's some weird, neurotic thing that I have.

Dale: To have what you have - to dig in the back of your mind - that's what I always thought about people who can draw. It's almost magical.

Art: Well, okay, let me take you one step further with what you just said. People who play guitar, or drums... I don't get it. I do not understand.

Dale: It's not like you couldn't learn to play.

Art: No. That's not the point. The point is I do not understand how you could put your fingers on a fucking wire, a metal string, and hit it. Just 'cause you move your fingers a cer-

tain way, it hits a certain - I don't get it. I'll never understand. Reading music's another thing. I could play you something just by ear, on a keyboard, but I don't understand how it works. People are all, "Oh, how do you know how to draw? Did you take lessons?" The thing is, I can teach anybody to draw. The mechanics, perspective, shading, all that crap. Teach you the rules. It's just like skateboarding. I can teach you to drop in. I can tell you what to do. But there has to be something else in there that comes from the person. I don't know how to explain it without sounding corny or stupid. Is it gonna have that soul in there, you know what I mean? Something, some kind of something in there. Or is it gonna look mechanical?

Dale: It's gonna look like it was taken out of a Walter Foster book.

Art: [laughs] Chris Francis that did the *Razorcake* #13 cover. The stencil, the spray paint stencil cover with the legs? That just blows me away! I couldn't do that. Yet, it's so great. It's so simple, and it's like... ah!

Dale: It's another medium of art.

Art: Yes, but I couldn't do that. I couldn't cut something out and just, you know? He sure he has his shit down. It's great! I'm like, "Wow! I'm in awe!" I'm like, "Fuck!" Pisses me off!

Dale: [jokingly] Don't get pissed at me. I'm on your side. I think you did a great cover too, Art!

Art: [laughs] It pisses me off, 'cause I can't do that. And that's great, you know? I mean, I'm sure he could teach me how to stencil-paint, but it has to have that something. Like the John E. Miner cover (*Razorcake* #15). He could teach me how to screenprint and do all that stuff, but...

Dale: He's cut and paste. Old school, like Winston Smith, who did a lot of stuff for the Dead Kennedys.

Art: Yeah, yeah! And I love that! That's great! That's like the whole anti-Photoshop shit. Fuck the computers. To me, that's awesome. I mean, just the fact that you had to go out and find stuff. Find articles. Find pictures. Find this, find that. Not look on the internet, right-click, and save it to your hard drive. Physical stuff. I guess I'm just old-fashioned.

Dale: No! I think that's where you draw a line between stealing and creating something with existing...

Art: Well, not so much stealing. It's just too easy. It's too easily done. Anybody can kill people nowadays, 'cause you don't have to get your hands dirty anymore. You can do it from fifty feet away. You can shoot somebody. You don't have to look at 'em in the face and stab 'em, and do whatever it is you're gonna do. You don't have to get your hands dirty anymore! Anybody **RAZORCAKE** 33

can do it. A chimp can do it. Give a chimp a gun - he'll shoot somebody. To me, if that's all you learn and that's all you know, you're kinda short-changing yourself. You just gotta know a lot about the whole process of doing things. I mean, computers are great - the speed, the ease of use. A lot of companies want a lot of stuff on AI file, Illustrator file, or a Photoshop file. You can take your stuff and scan it in and whatever - that's fine.

Dale: But actually making it. Creating a hard copy.

Art: Yeah, the hard copy. Have it just to have it. I know a lot of artists who don't have hard copies of their stuff. Shit, you don't even need to paint. You don't even have to break out the acrylics or nothing anymore. They have computer programs, like Painter, that simulates brush strokes: acrylics, oils, chalk, pastels, water colors, everything.

Dale: It's kinda lifeless, though. Isn't it, in a sense?

Art: Yeah. If the person using it is good, then it looks good. It's awesome. But that's the whole thing. This painting you have here [points to one of the Dan McConnell paintings on my wall] - you can go up close and look at it, and look at all the brush strokes, and look at all the stuff he might have gone over that he didn't like, you know, what I mean? I mean, it's there. It's physically there. And there is computer art, the stuff is fuckin' awesome. Just blows me away, but it doesn't exist. You know what I mean? It's not real. It just exists on their hard drive. And it's not *The Matrix* where you can just grab shit and it's real. It's not. And that, I don't understand that. How can you do such a great piece of art, such a great painting, and then not be able to touch it? The only place it exists is on their screen. You could print it out on canvas paper all you want. It's not gonna be the same thing. I think that's the whole basis of my whole artistic philosophy. Do it yourself. Get your hands dirty, goddamn it! [laughs] Learn the process. Do it.

Like I said - computers are great. That's what you have to know to survive in the business nowadays. When I did that cover, I emailed it. I hand drew it. Brian actually scanned it in for me and I did color it on the computer, I have to admit that. That was the first time I ever did that. And that's why I don't know if it came out kinda weird, I mean, it came out okay, but I'm not a big computer guy. I fuck around on it and I do stuff, but for the most part, all my stuff is hand done. But I think it's more fulfilling, without sounding too corny.

Dale: It's not corny, it's because you're a real artist and the others

that are using the whole computer route are basically doing it to get the paycheck.

Art: Yeah, and if that works, shit, more power to 'em. They're smarter than I am.

Dale: Like anything, it takes away from the natural art form. You go into a studio, Pro Tools the fuck out of a record, and you'll sound like Cookie Monster & The Korn Machine (Pro Tools is a software program used in the recording studio to make virtually flawless recordings. Whatever.) Each note is 'Tooled to death. The only thing you can get more homogenized is vitamin D milk at the fuckin' dairy. You listen to it for what it is, and like you said, for what it is - fine, more power to you. But if you took a band like Throw Rag or The Candy Snatchers in the studio and overproduced it to death, it's gonna take away because anyone who's seen either band live knows what they do in the studio is real. It isn't done to death. That's why I agree with you - get dirty. Do it yourself.

Art: I think electronics steal your soul. It's not there. It's too easy. You don't have to write letters anymore.

Dale: Well, look at kids in school. Computers.

Art: And that's fine, 'cause that's what they need. That's the future. But you know what? Even with my daughter, she draws a lot. She doesn't spend that much time on the computer.

Dale: We were talking about *The Simpsons* earlier: traditional cel-by-cel animation versus the whole computer animation thing. I want you to voice your take on this because you word this the best. What do you think?

Art: To me, I'm a purist. I like to see cartoons that are hand-drawn. That doesn't happen nowadays very often... at all. But, I think there's there's more feeling to it when you do it by hand with anything, whether it's drawing or making a record.

Dale: Oh. Like if someone Pro Tools the fuck out of it?

Art: Yeah! You can have a record that was made by a big company and then you have these guys over here who are doing it out of their

garage, and it sounds so much better than this other one that has all this money backing it. Computers - it's almost like cheating. I mean,



There is some computer art that is fuckin' awesome. Just blows me away, but it doesn't exist. You know what I mean? It's not real. It just exists on their hard drive.

you give a chimp a right program and he can make a cartoon for you. [laughter] I mean, really. A lot of people - this isn't a general statement - but I know some people who are in the computer animation business and they can't sit down and draw a tree or draw a car. They can't.

Dale: 'Cause it's all on their hard drive ready to slip in.

Art: Yeah, but they don't have the basic skills. They don't have the draftsmanship. But, the good thing is that now - now that the computer animation business is really starting to...

Dale: Like all these Disney films? Like *Finding Nemo*?

Art: Not even so much that. Even the TV animation stuff has computerized stuff in it. When it first started, everybody wanted to do it, so anybody who knew how to work the programs was gold even if they didn't know how to draw. But now, they actually want people who have the manual background, plus the computer. And I think that's good because it puts more life into whatever it is that you're doing. *Finding Nemo*'s great. I saw that movie. It's awesome. I'm like, "Shoot! I could never do that!"

Dale: Do you think kids are missing out on a whole different genre of

just cartoons in general? Do you think they're missing out seeing movies like this and that's what they consider animation as to what we considered animation when we were kids growing up in the '70s?

Art: To a certain point, yeah. Kids have to know there's other stuff out there.

Dale: Like music. If kids are wanna dig deep enough...

Art: Yeah, you can't just listen to the radio and think that that's it. There's a lot of other stuff.

Dale: Of course! We'd be one big asshole!

Art: [laughing] There's a lot of other stuff that's a whole lot better that you don't even know about. Like my daughter - we still watch a lot of old cartoons. Like *Looney Tunes*, all the old *Hanna-Barbera* stuff.

Dale: So, when it comes to computer animation - I'm not putting words in your mouth - basically, it's playing with a modernized version of *Colorforms*.

Art: [laughs] Yeah! That's actually what it is, because what you do in there, you make a model and you pose 'em the way you want it. You animate 'em, but it's like a doll, almost. You put 'em in an environment. You still

have to know what you're doing. I like hand-drawn stuff, even graphic design. Illustrator's great. Photoshop's great (both are graphic software programs). But, then again, there's people who all they know how to use is Photoshop and Illustrator. They do all their stuff on the computer. I like to have hard copies of stuff. I could do a lot of stuff like that. I did the lettering on one of my *Razorcake* strips on the computer. I felt like I was cheating. I didn't like it.

Dale: Which one was that?

Art: I think it was the first *Ass Gnome* one. I did it on a computer, and it didn't look the way I wanted it to. And I felt like I was cheating.

Dale: But you knew that you weren't ever gonna do it again once you did it.

Art: Yeah, I didn't. To me, it wasn't worth all the hassle of scanning it in and doing this 'n that, and all the other stuff. I don't know, I just prefer doing it by hand.

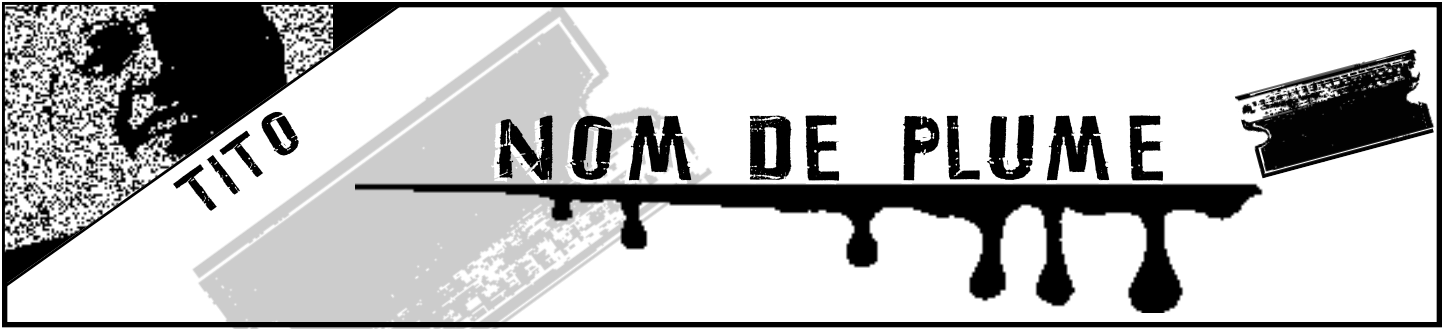
Dale: (being a dick) Doing what by hand?

Art: Everything [laughter].

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Friday afternoon the water resembled milk but a little more on the brown side. The kids couldn't get enough of that pool. Kids of all ages, too. Kids in diapers.

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I used to live in the second to last apartment building at the end of a dead end street. The first thing you would notice when you turned onto my street was the enormous amount of trash piled up at the dead end. I never actually saw it happen but I guess people used my street as their dumping ground because they were too lazy to take their trash to an alley like any other self-respecting person would.

Trash wasn't the only thing that people would leave on my street. Parking was always next to impossible because it seemed like anyone who owned a large truck of any kind knew that they didn't need to pay a lot fee to keep it parked legally because cops never rolled through this neighborhood, so the street was full of landscaping and moving trucks. Thankfully, I had

brown side. The kids couldn't get enough of that pool. During the hot months there seemed to never be an empty moment in that thing. Kids of all ages, too. Kids in diapers.

Speaking of kids, I was the only person in the building who lived alone. Every other apartment was occupied by a family. There were families of seven living in some of those one bedroom apartments. I was always convinced that everyone thought I was weird. I must have been weird. Why would a single white guy want to live in a neighborhood of Mexican families? Most of the kids seemed to like me. They either liked me or were intrigued by the local weirdo. Whenever I would do something outside like work on my car there would be at least one little kid trying to help me. They rarely talked to me. The ones who were too young to be in school didn't even

startled by a man driving a car up and down the street rattling off what seemed to be a manifesto of sorts in rapid-fire Spanish through a megaphone. I had no idea what he was saying. He came around at least every other night. For weeks I thought (I hoped) he was spouting off some kind of political speech – trying to rally the troops or convince his fellow immigrant workers to unionize. One night I left my apartment to walk to the video store just as my favorite political activist pulled his rickety station wagon onto my street. As he started in with his diatribe he was flagged down by a man and his two kids. He stopped his car and a woman opened the tailgate from the inside and started slopping soup, rice and beans out of large pots wrapped in towels. This guy had no political agenda at all; he wasn't trying to enlighten anyone with his views. He was shout-

fruit, vegetable and household product needs. And at least once a week a guy would knock on my door holding two buckets – one with cheese and one with steaks.

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK...

This was the loudest neighborhood I ever lived in. It was the loudest neighborhood I've ever even been to. There were parties every weekend like clockwork. I don't mean that someone would have a little get together at their place on a Friday night, I mean the whole street would get into it: live bands, fireworks, light shows.

Weeknights were no library either. One night I woke in a flash as someone was blaring their music in the wee hours of the night. I quickly gathered my senses and realized that the music was coming



all pictures by Tito

my own parking space in the lot provided by my apartment building.

The building itself wasn't that bad. There were sixteen one bedroom apartments – I lived in number nine, the first one on the second floor. Below my apartment was the pool. I never even dipped a toe in it. The pool was cleaned every Thursday and by Friday afternoon the water resembled milk but a little more on the

speaking English. One day a little girl asked me if I was rich. I thought it was a funny question and, of course, I said no.

RALLY THE PROLETARIAT...

The kids were only a small part of the color of this neighborhood. It seemed like every night there was something interesting going on. The first night I spent there, I was

ing out his wife's menu so they could pay the rent. DIY catering service.

In fact, after a while I found out that you didn't really have to leave the street at all to take care of your daily business. Every morning the tamale guy would come around selling sweet corn breakfast treats. Twice a week a produce truck would come by with all of your

from the house next door to my building and it was outside – directly under my window. It was 2:00 in the morning. The song came to an end and there was a long pause. Cool, I thought, they were just testing out their new outdoor sound system with one tune just to see how it kicks. Now everything will be back to normal. Before I could get back to sleep another song

TITO

kicked in. Fuck. Okay, they just need to run another song through the system and then it will be all over. No such luck. Immediately after the song ended another one fired up. This song sounded familiar. It was the same song that was just played, which, now that I thought about it, was also the first song that was played. This guy is playing the same song over and over, I thought. He must really be trying to ring out the EQ on this new system. After the same song played about five more times I realized something that I think I knew all along but didn't want to admit: this wasn't a guy playing the same song over and over again, this was a live band practicing the same song over and over again. Outside. At 2:00 in the morning. On a fucking weeknight.

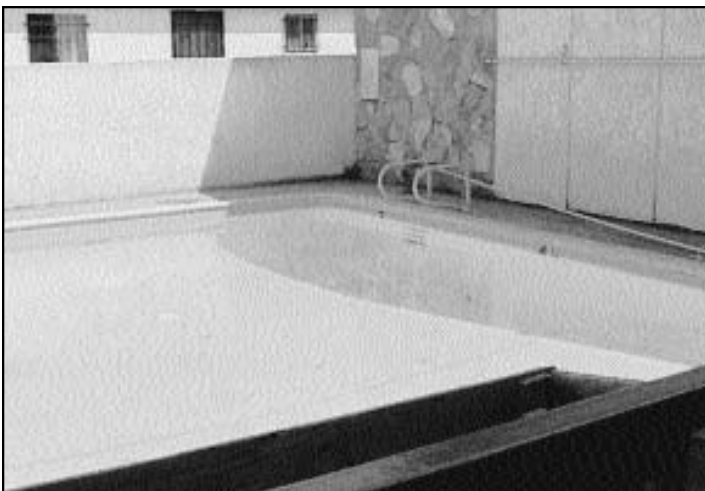
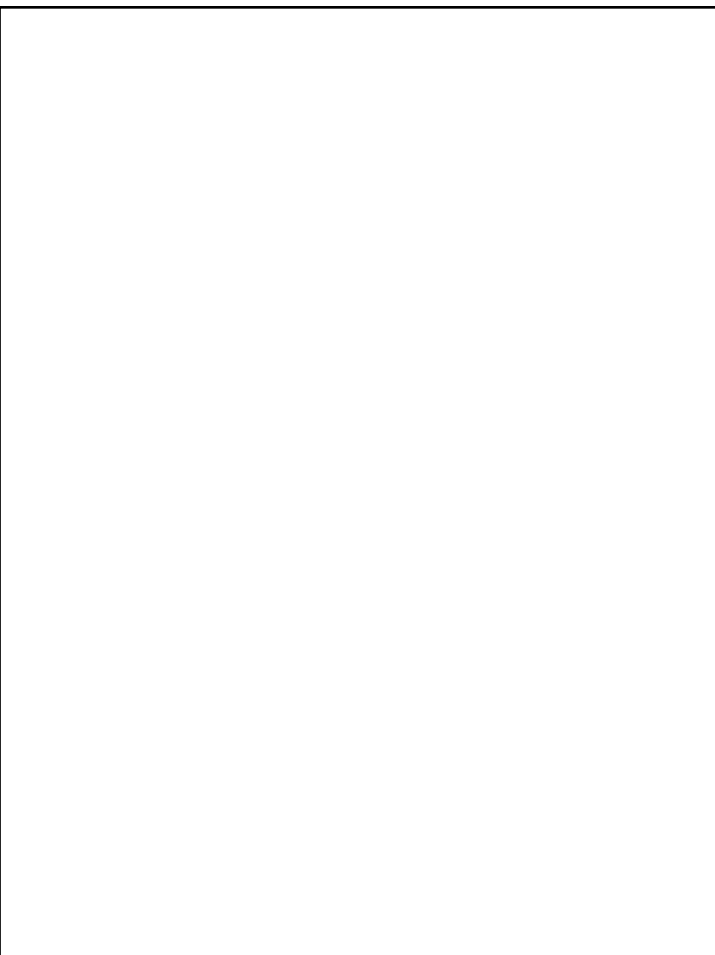
My only guess as to why this was happening was that all of these guys work at different times so the only chance that all of them had to get together at the same time was really late at night. And I could just hear one of the guys in the band now, "Oh, we can practice at my place but my wife and kids will be sleeping so we have to do it outside." Thanks a lot guys. Brilliant.

ARSON OR DIRTY DIAPERS?

One day as I pulled my car into my designated parking space (which was right next to the wall that seemed to lean more and more toward my car everyday) I noticed

looked around to see if anyone else was there to take care of it – I have to admit that I didn't want to deal with it; I figured that I could pass it on to someone else if that person were around. No such luck. I came up with the brilliant plan to fill the bucket that I kept underneath my bathroom sink to catch the water that leaked from the drain pipe and dump it on the fire. I ran up to old number nine and filled the bucket (that probably held no more than two gallons). After dumping its contents on the fire (which at this point was raging a good three feet above the rim of the dumpster) I quickly realized that it would take me hundreds of trips to get this thing put out. Now the dumpster was making loud popping sounds as the metal was buckling from the heat.

Finally, someone else came around. I held up my bucket and shrugged my shoulders in kind of an I-don't-know-what-to-do-about-this-raging-fire kind of way. He raised up his index finger to tell me to hang on for a second. He came back with a length of hose that was no longer than twelve feet. I knew that this thing would not reach the dumpster from where the faucet was and moving the dumpster closer to the faucet was out of the question. So, I quickly screwed the hose onto the faucet, cranked it up as high as it would go, pressed my thumb on the end to allow maximum pressure and held my arm at 60 degrees to arch the stream into



a waft of smoke pass by me. I got out of the car thinking that something under my hood was smoking (I had been having radiator problems at the time). As I opened the hood, another cloud of smoke passed by. I knew that it wasn't coming from my car but I wasn't sure where it was coming from.

On the other side of the leaning wall was the building's dumpster. And now it was on fire. Not the dumpster itself, but the contents. I

the dumpster.

After about five minutes a small crowd had formed. After ten minutes I knew that my arms were about to give out. The stream of water that I had been shooting into the dumpster wasn't putting much of a dent into the flame. By this time, I had help. Two guys had started dumping in buckets full of water. After fifteen minutes two others got the idea to push the dumpster closer using towels as

industrial sized potholders so they wouldn't burn themselves. When the dumpster was close enough for the hose to be placed inside I handed it over to a kid who was standing next to me and retired. I knew that everything was under control at that point.

For the rest of the time that I lived in that building I would see that dumpster that was scarred black on the outside and smile. Much later a friend told me that sometimes, on hot days, dirty diapers will catch on fire in outdoor dumpsters. I'm not sure that I believe that, but it sounds pretty good.

WHERE'S MY UNITY?

No one ever really came over to that apartment. I honestly think that I have too many honky friends who see a neighborhood like that and immediately think that it's a bad place. I don't know if it's just plain old racism seeing a 99% Mexican population and running for the hills or if the culture shock was just too much. I admit that I was a bit shocked for the first week that I lived there and then I realized that this neighborhood was as real as it gets. I had never in my life seen a neighborhood band together the way that they did on that street. I've lived in houses with as many as eight roommates and lived in so-

called punk communities but nothing could ever compare to the sense of community that I felt on that street. Everyone was invited to the barbecue.

I never saw or even heard of a crime being committed (something that I can't say about ANY other neighborhood I've lived in in my whole life). I rarely ever locked my door and even if I did you could easily enter through the kitchen window that didn't lock. Sometimes I even left my keys in my car.

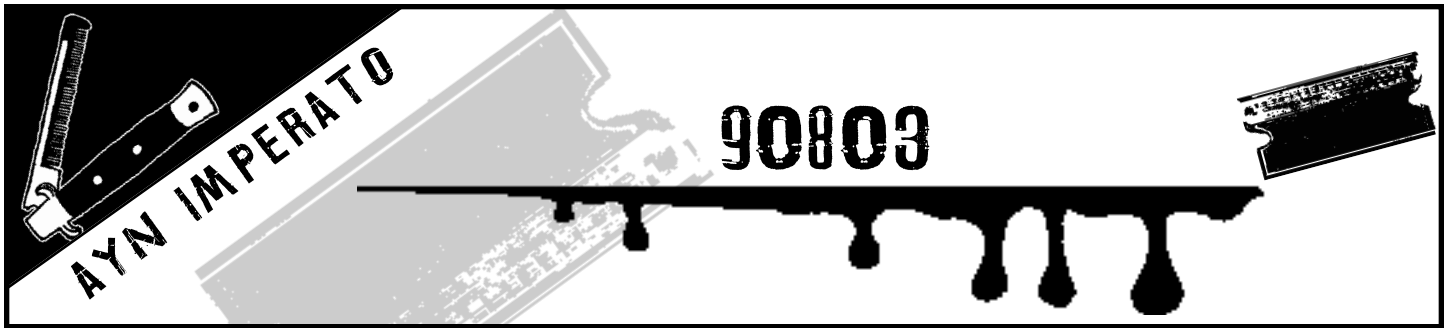
I wasn't the only white person on the street. In the last few months that I was living there, two sisters moved into one of the apartments in my building. They hated it. Sometimes they would complain to me about how shitty the neighborhood was and how the building wasn't well kept. I'm not your white shoulder to cry on. I like this place.

I finally left that apartment to move into a house with roommates so I could lower my expenses. When I took a job at a pizza parlor a few years later there was a sign that listed a few neighborhoods under the heading: Do Not Deliver. On that list was the 1300 block of 227th Street. Fuckin' honkys.

-Tito

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She just gave it to me. Trusted me openly, maybe blindly, to take all her secrets and take good care of her life. And it's because she trusted and respected me, that I did.

Moss Balls

When I lived in San Francisco, I worked for a while as a personal assistant. It was pretty decent pay and, if nothing else, every day was never the same as the next. The position consisted mostly of performing basic and often meaningless tasks – everything from paying bills and answering email to ordering a staggering number of pain pills in obscene strengths from online websites. The lady I worked for was eccentric, festive and she liked to drink.

The apartment I worked at had a panoramic view of the Bay Bridge, Coit Tower, The Transamerica building and Treasure Island. Looking out each window was like watching a real-life San Francisco postcard in motion. Giant cargo ships would sail by and glide under the bridge – you could see the state of the local economy by how many ships would or wouldn't sail by that week. Often my job was to arrange flowers in the kitchen or prepare food while drinking rum and cokes and watching the ships pass outside the window. Yes, I said rum and cokes. I was a stand-in for an employee. And that's why I stayed. Mostly, it was easy.

Sometimes I had to make little crafts that she read about in magazines and wanted to try, but not really do the work herself. I would just sit there at the table and make little napkin rings out of twigs and dried leaves for Thanksgiving or string cranberries and bay leaves for the fireplace mantle. I was a punk rock Martha Stewart in a little apron and a studded pyramid belt. I gained many new, unusable skills. I still can't cook to save my soul but, damn it, can I make a mean Christmas garland.

One day I had to arrange these moss balls in a giant Roman urn on the porch. What is a moss ball you ask? I'm still not sure I know. They're round.



They're green. They're covered with moss. I had to arrange them in this gigantorm cream-colored ceramic pot. I sat there looking at them. How does a person arrange these... these giant green balls?

"Make them look like food for the gods!" she shouted from inside. I paused and stared. *Food for the Gods*. Moss balls. I'm just not sure why ancient supernatural deities would choose algae-covered spheres as their dinner. I'm not even sure they would eat at all, being unable to, I don't know, die and all. But what do I know? It's not my job to know. I just moved them around and let the moss balls do the talking.

If nothing else I have determined one thing. Rich people are weird. My boss is different than

most in that she knows she is weird. She revels in it. I think it was even my job to confirm this weirdness. I think there is something in all that Fendi perfume and idle time that muddles and distorts a person's perception.

My boss rounds the corner. "Would you see if you can find my Marabou slides?" I look up. She's wearing an orange facemask and a leopard caftan. She continues in all seriousness, "I kicked them behind the dresser a few days ago. And when you find them I can put them on, kick them off again and make us all vodka gimlets!"

"Uh, yeah." I nod, still working on the urn. "Gimlets. Yeah."

"Hey, when you're done would you also look online and see if you can dig up some singing cham-

pagne flutes? They would be so perfect for my party next week. But drop them from the belly of the plane! I need them fast!"

"Singing champagne flutes. Right." And she bursts into laughter. I am so cynical she thinks it's a riot. It's like our running joke. I don't think anyone has ever been so blunt or honest with her in her life. I pause with a ball in my hand. "I'll just put those overdue tax bills on my desk aside and look for *singing flutes*."

"Forget taxes," she cries. "Singing flutes!" She cackles and heads back down the hall to her room.

Earlier in the week my job for the day was to track down a topiary plant for her hallway – a specific one with the right amount of tiers, the right height, etc. I spent half the day tracking just the right one down, then picked it up and brought it up to her apartment. She placed it in her main hallway where we passed by it every day.

At first, everything was fine. But after a day or so, a spider web began to form. At first it was just a few white, light hairs on the upper tier. Then it spread, slowly, into a multi-layered web-nest, spanning all three tiers of the plant. My boss noticed it then – I mean you couldn't miss it – it was like arachnophobia in her entryway, and she began to holler, "That web! Ahhh! The web!" She locked herself in the bedroom and would barely leave, except to hurry to the kitchen to eat. I told her I would get rid of it, but she wouldn't hear of it. She simply couldn't deal. "The spider," she said, "wherever it is, will get loose in the house. Just leave it alone!"

Then the spider came out. It was a monstrous spider, nearly an inch and a half long without the legs. When you walked by it would scurry towards your end of the web, prompted by, I can only guess, vibrations from feet passing on the wood floor. My boss would just cry out every time she passed, "Aaugh! The web!" and the spider would scurry towards her. And even

though she turned pale with grief at the very thought of it, she wouldn't remove it for days.

When I completed one of my menial tasks, she would cry out and act like I'd performed a near Herculean event, though they were mediocre at best. Even bringing her a tall glass of wine, when I sensed she was stressed, would bring about extravagant praise. "You are *amazing!* Pure genius! Thank you!"

We drank beer when we were working, champagne when we were celebrating. Of course my accounting got a little funny after several beers in the afternoon. At how many jobs can you show up, be incredibly hung over and it is really, really all right? In those cases she fetched *me* Advil and offered up a bloody mary to kill the pain.

She was very thoughtful like that at times. She wouldn't let me lick the envelopes when I paid the bills – she says the glue they use is bad. So I had to run them along a tiny wet sponge she bought specifically for that purpose.

She had a small room dedicated to the dog. Inside were an impressive array of doggie treats – from liva snaps to yogurt-beef drops. And blue piddle pads, for when she couldn't take the dog out for a few days. It was one of my many tasks to walk the dog, a beige Shitzu, on occasion. If I was too busied up looking for singing champagne flutes or stringing holiday garland, then the dog used those pads. Thankfully, it was not my job to change them. I didn't even go near them. I fear the piddle pads. I just threw a few liva snaps in the room and closed the door or clipped on the leash and took her outside, far away from traumatic blue cloth pee-pads.

Why did I work this basically meaningless position? Why did I give up other offers for slightly better paying, more glamorous sounding jobs? Because of the extreme flexibility that it allowed – if I wanted to take a day or a month off to kick around Hawaii or Thailand, or go on tour with my band, I could. No explanations, no fears. I knew I'd have a job when I got back and that she'd be happy to see me. Also there was the matter of the pay. It was really good, especially considering the mainly unskilled labor required, plus the benefits – free booze. And I could literally roll out of bed, throw on jeans or Dickies and put my hair up and I was dressed for work, since my boss would in all likelihood still be in pajamas when I got there. And wearing hose and heels would be laughable while hosing down the garden upstairs.

It wasn't all vodka gimlets and garland though – some days, especially around the holidays, were really stressful, and managing the bills and virtually all the money coming in and out was a pretty grim and huge task. There were days I left, went home and straight to sleep. There was this one day I was left to try to reconstruct all the expenses from an entire previous year, for the upcoming taxes. In the next room she played R&B songs for the better part of the day while I attempted to reconstruct her financial life in the next room with a ballpoint pen and several sheets of copy paper. I can't forget that long, frustrating day when I could hear Aretha Franklin singing, "Freedom... Freedom... Freedom!" growing quiet in the distance as I left.

And then there was the downtime. I found it in strange places. Standing over the copy machine, waiting for copies of recipes of seared asparagus casseroles, I could jot down a few ideas for songs or stories. Waiting in line at the grocery store was a moment to work on some lyrics in my head or write some quick idea on my hand. I wonder what it must be like to not have to work and have nothing but time to do these creative things. I can't even picture life without coming home from some shitty job with a fist full of paper scraps with little guitar chords jotted down on them.

I don't think a person can truly claim to be an adult unless they've worked at some crummy job they hate for a few years. Some say it builds character. I think it defines it. If you can work through that for a few years and still find it in you to do what you love – after work, on weekends, at breaks, or in my case over the copy machine – then you've beat it. If you give up your dreams and just push them aside or develop an alcohol or drug addiction – then it's got you. Work makes you stronger if in only that it builds the desire for something else. That frustration can be fuel for the fire if you let it, not the water that puts it out. And if you are lucky enough to one day not have to go to a shitty day job every day, you will seriously appreciate that freedom.

Freedom. Outside one of the big bay windows, a flock of wild green and yellow parrots streaks by. Yes, you heard me. Wild parrots. In the middle of the city. It seems that someone's pets escaped years ago and spawned a whole colony of squawking green birds. They launch simultaneously from a large tree under Coit Tower, a giant white phallic-shaped landmark from the past, and swoop down all together through the Telegraph Hill valley, squawking all the way. They circle over the building tops and back up to a giant tree, which serves as their perch. I liked to sit there on a break and watch the freakishly colored birds. There were none of these magic things in our neck of the city. Maybe because there are no trees there. In my neighborhood we have gray, strutting birds who hoot and peck for any scrap they can find on the ground. Not an exotic parrot in sight. I think of how this reflects our general status in life. They get parrots. We get pigeons.

Working as a personal assistant can be a very intimate view into a person's life. My person had health issues, so I managed her doctor files and medicines along with everything else. I took care of her when she was sick, and partied with her when she was feeling really, really well. I learned a lot at this job, though. She has taught me much, in a way. More than piddle pads or toxic envelope glue. It's about trust, to the point of near insanity – just handing it away to a near stranger. She trusted me with her life, with every bank account, credit card number, social security number, all her personal health issues and many, many secrets. She just gave it to me. Trusted me openly, maybe blindly, to take all her secrets and take good care of her life. And it's because she trusted and respected me, that I did.

–Ayn





PATRICIA GEARY

DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH



Dirty Old Men & Teenage Vanity

(Editors' note: We're big fans of Patricia Geary's writing. Not only has she written three amazing novels [Living in Ether, Strange Toys, and The Other Canyon], but she's been slugging it out in the feminist trenches for over thirty years. When Rich Mackin was accused of sexual assault [see issue #16 for more details about that], we turned to Patricia - the most reliable feminist authority we knew. We asked her to write a column about her take on the situation, and she was generous enough to do so. In Rich's defense, he's currently dating someone who's more or less his own age.)

I don't like hearing about my friend Sean being attacked by "feminists" at the Portland zine thing. I don't like hearing that women stomped up to him and told him that HE was the reason that women get raped. Sean is a kind and gentle man, a wonderful writer, and he publishes Rich Mackin, the alleged rapist. Referring to Rich Mackin, whom I've never met, as "alleged rapist" makes me really, really uncomfortable.

PATRICIA GEARY

That's serious shit! That's prison! You don't go around calling someone that unless you're prepared to hire a lawyer.

So, I read the zine that fostered these allegations, and I was not convinced that Rich was, indeed, a rapist. Clearly, the zine seems convinced of its own righteousness, and there are some very solid tips about sexual boundaries, and the enforcing of them. All that is to the good. However, what I noticed the most, and what impressed me the most, was the extreme youth of the writers. I was sort of reminded of a famous virgin in my college dorm who was always talking about all the boys she'd "slept" with. Finally I asked her how she could still be a virgin and yet sleep with all these guys? Easy, she said - she slept alongside them. Wasn't that what everyone else did?

So that was a big joke in our dorm for years, though we liked Gail and didn't make fun of her. But still - my best friend and I thought we were so sexually sophisticated merely because we were sexually active. We considered ourselves worldly because we'd had boyfriends and we'd read a bunch of sexy novels. We honestly thought that we knew how the whole thing worked, but I can see now how young we were, and how foolish, ripe for the picking. Which leads me what I really want to write about: teenage girls who think they're mature and the men who are too old to be "dating" them.

This dynamic rings a bell for me. In the first place, I've been there myself. And, second, I'm employed as a creative writing professor on a college campus, so I see a whole lot of this kind of thing on a regular basis. I've also been involved with the Faculty Women's Caucus and I've convened it for four years. We represent feminist concerns on campus: why the women faculty don't get paid the same amount for the same job, sexism in the hiring and firing process, sexual harassment, and so on. We also try to look out for student interests in a number of ways, particularly the distressing imbalance of power that occurs when professors have sexual relationships with their students. Not too surprisingly, the professor is usually male and the student is usually female. Occasionally the situation is reversed and occasionally the relationship is same-gender, but almost always the professor is older and male and powerful and married and the student is younger and less powerful and female and single.

And it's no good. I just want to throw that out right at the beginning: basically, this inequality in power is a bad idea. I say that knowing that sometimes it sort of works out. Every now and then, the professor leaves his wife, marries the student, they

stay together for a while, and often they have kids. And even occasionally they stay married. But on the whole, the "happy" outcome is rare. More often the professor sleeps with a series of students, who get their hearts broken or attempt to sue the professor or toughen up or (in several sad instances I know about) try to kill themselves. It's not a great dynamic. One student of mine (not at my present university) came to me, broken hearted and distraught because her professor had dropped her because she wouldn't have sex with him. She wanted him back (whatever that might consist of) but he'd gone on to sleep with other students and she claimed he was afraid of her because he could lose his job, if the whole thing came to light. I hated to break it to her, but she didn't have any legal recourse. He was not going to lose his job over sleeping with his students. Most colleges don't even officially declare the situation off-limits. In the case of my university, the whole thing is frowned on, and it's against the advice of university policy, but it happens all the time and I've never seen anyone get fired for it yet.

One of my colleagues makes a habit of asking much younger female students out for coffee, just to get to know them and "chat." He's married, of course, and he's very effusive and friendly to everyone, lots of hugging going on. But I had my suspicions from the beginning. When he invited one of my writing majors out to lunch, I suggested she think again. (He likes to hang out at the swimming pool, and she liked to sun herself in her bikini.) She said, "Oh no! Not Mr. X! You're so wrong! He's just a nice guy, and he loves my writing!" After the second lunch and a lot of "grandfatherly" hugging, he brought up the fact that his marriage wasn't so great. Happily, she kept her distance after that.

Another one of my colleagues (and he's rapidly approaching seventy) has made a career of painting nude women students, and his style is meticulously representational; you could probably recognize someone by her pubic thatch after looking at the completed piece. He shows these paintings at the faculty art show (many male faculty gathered about, savoring the view) and nobody bats an eyelash. And I've had a lot of these same women students in my classes, and they're shocked and horrified when this professor (who often schedules night or weekend sittings) makes a pass at them. And I say, "What were you thinking? That he was interested in your mind when you were sitting there with your clothes off?"

And here's the sad thing - they probably did think that. I sure did when I was in college. I had a writing professor who was in his mid to late thirties (he seemed ancient to me) and I was nineteen. He was married, a well-published writer, and he praised my fiction. To excess. And I was pretty vain about my writing. (Since then,



artwork by Art Fuentes

I've had a writing career and some modest success, but at nineteen I just knew I was going to rival Joan Didion for style and that my name would be a household word. Simply a literary career wasn't where I was headed: I wanted Paris and fame and fortune. And it never occurred to me, at nineteen, that I might not get that.) So it seemed perfectly natural to me that Victor would be interested in me for my sheer talent. Never mind that his wife was his own age and his literary equal: she too had a nice career and published books. She was his peer; their

Again, I was shocked. Apparently, I'd learned little from the Victor experience, and this was somehow weirder and creepier, though Mr. Kiley and I were both single and only ten years apart in age. He'd been twenty-four and just beginning teaching high school and I'd been fourteen when I'd been in his class. Thirty-seven and twenty-seven isn't cause for alarm, but fourteen and twenty-four is. And did he intend to imply that if I hadn't been his student he would have made a move on me?

Who knows. It's in the newspaper all the

handsome. I was convinced I was a bright and shiny intellect, so why wouldn't he want to debate religious perspectives with me? He begged me to show him some of my poems, but the night he called our house at 2 AM, drunk, my mother put an end to the whole doomed debacle.

My point here is that none of the sleazy antics of these men was my fault, but if I hadn't been so vain about my intellect, I never would have wound up in these situations. I was always so sure that I was special, smart and talented.

What were you thinking? That he was interested in your mind when you were sitting there with your clothes off?

power was equal. But what I see now is that she wasn't impressed by him. She wasn't bedazzled.

They say that power is the aphrodisiac for women that physical attractiveness is for men. (And, okay, that's a gross generalization.) Anyway, Victor was short and skinny and had kind of a weasel face. And so when he jumped me and pushed me onto his bed (What was I doing in his bedroom, watching him pack his suitcase? How could I have been so naïve?), I screamed in surprise. We got up and straightened our clothes and I never saw him again, though he pursued me by letter for more than a decade after his divorce. I was 90% shocked and horrified, and, I'll admit it, 10% flattered. He was older and important, and HE had chosen ME. So that made me smart and talented, right?

Sorry, no. That made me clueless, and vain enough to think that it was my mind he was after and not my teenage body.

Even now, the whole episode feels creepy. I was lucky I wasn't raped, off there in the bedroom with him in an empty house in upper state New York; he wasn't a violent man, and he wasn't an angry man. But he did take advantage of me and the situation, and a more mature woman would have known not to get herself into that sort of bind. Sure, it wasn't my fault, but on some level I knew what I was playing with. I wasn't conscious of possible danger, but I wasn't entirely innocent, either.

Creepier, though, was my high school journalism teacher.

When I was twenty-seven, I happened to be visiting the Florida beach town where I went to high school, and I happened to go into Pete's Bar with an old friend from my school days. Pete's Bar is the kind of place where everyone remembers you by what you did in high school. I'd been the editor of the yearbook and I'd also won a bunch of writing awards. I'd also "won" Most Intellectual (which might explain why I never assumed anyone was interested in my body). There was a lot of good-natured teasing when I walked in the door, even though I hadn't been around in quite a few years. So, anyway, I was sitting at the bar, having a drink, when up came a strange man in his late thirties. He offered to buy me a drink, and when I declined, he said, "Don't you remember me? It's Lyle, your ninth grade journalism teacher!"

Huh. I looked more closely: sure enough, it was Mr. Kiley. That's what I'd always called him, of course. So I let him buy me a drink, and very rapidly, the direction of the conversation (old Lyle had been imbibing for a while) turned flirtatious on his part. He confided to me that he'd always found me cute but couldn't do anything about it because I was his student.

time, high school teachers having sex with their students. And in these cases, unlike college, it happens to be against the law. But I'd had a big fat crush on Mr. Kiley when I was in ninth grade (at twenty-seven, I wasn't much impressed with Lyle, and he didn't get my address or phone number) and so did lots of other girls. He was younger than most of the teachers and he had shaggy, sandy-colored hair and wore clothes kind of like ours, and he was smart and funny. I can't imagine how I might have reacted if he'd come on to me when I was in his class. I was the editor of the newspaper that year and I was all puffed up with my writing skills, and whether or not my foray into mere journalism was going to spoil my literary pretensions. In short, I thought I was a hot shit writer. If Mr. Kiley had asked me out for a Coke, I would have been sure he was fascinated by my talent.

After all, that was the year I was meeting a priest, Father Bergen, every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon from five to six to discuss T.S. Eliot and Teilhard de Chardin. I was toying with the idea of converting to Catholicism. And Father Bergen was in his mid-twenties and quite

And I was, in all due modesty. And that was also what made me such a sitting duck.

I don't know if I've had more experiences like this than most women, but I suspect I have, and if you're tracking this and you know something about psychology, then you are right to suspect that there are incest issues in my family, and quite a lot of them. Molestation is a chain, both for the victim and the instigator. I dare say Victor, Mr. Kiley, and Father Bergen had some similar junk in their families. A lot of you know that it's not as uncommon as many people believe.

But that doesn't make it okay, that it happens. Rich, if you're reading this, I think you should find someone talented and attractive closer to your own age. It would save everyone a lot of aggravation. And if you're a teenager reading this, do you really think that you are so original and sensational that someone older cannot actually find someone as smart and appealing in his own age group? Really? Because why else is he coming after you?

And, Sean, I haven't forgotten you. How is any of this your fault? What happened to freedom of the press? It's chicken shit to pick on you, just because you are decent enough to consider a story from every angle.

-Patricia Geary





MONEY

LAZY MICK



TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST.

is often included in the ranks of protest literature, and it deserves its place there.

In the olden days of sail, unruly seamen could expect to be punished swiftly and severely, but the punishment was probably not as gruesome or barbaric as we have been led to believe. The easiest way to discipline a sailor was to threaten to take away his rum or tobacco ration. When this didn't produce the desired results (and it almost always did) life afloat without a daily draught of grog or pinch of tobacco soon brought the scoundrel to his senses.

Only in extreme cases like theft was it necessary to resort to corporal punishment. The thief was tied to the mainmast – the symbol of the Captain's sexual power – and beaten with whatever was handy, usually a rope end. Scenes of jack-tars being brutally flogged were rare. Able-bodied seamen were difficult to replace in the middle of long ocean voyages, and it was impractical to incapacitate the help.

Though such displays were less frequent than Hollywood would have us believe, history tells us it was not unheard of for captains to flog their men just for shits and giggles. When a flogging was unavoidable, it was turned into a gaudy spectacle to humiliate the offending seaman before his mates, thereby deterring them from following his example. Over time, the dispensing of punishment became as solemn as a court proceeding, as ceremonial as a theatrical production and as ritualized as a visit to a high-end boudoir.

That all changed in 1840 when Richard Henry Dana, Jr. published *Two Years Before the Mast*, a stirring account of his voyage around the Horn from Boston to California. Dana, a common seaman, witnessed a flogging while his brig, the *Pilgrim*, was anchored off San Pedro. Thereafter he pledged to "do something to redress the grievances and relieve the sufferings" of working seaman everywhere, and his wildly popular narrative brought flogging to the public's attention. By 1850, corporal punishment was banned aboard all Navy vessels.

Thus, thanks to Dana, the security personnel who intercepted me the fateful night I decided to assault base security guards in San Diego made sure they got their licks in before I was brought into custody. The Navy may have eliminated the lash, but they sure as hell didn't spare the rod when I was face down and spread eagle on the asphalt, clearly resisting arrest.

They hauled me on board in handcuffs and leg restraints and presented to the Officer of the Deck, who sent me below to the forward crew's lounge where I was presided over by a specially assigned watch until I sobered up.



Richard Henry Dana, Jr.



At least, this is what they told me.

I spent the next few days fretting over my fate. The trouble that had been shadowing me for over a year had finally arrived, and there was no ducking out of it this time. I would have to stand before The Man and take my licks.

Once the charges were officially drawn up, the master-at-arms summoned me to the goat locker where I was paraded before an assembly of chief petty officers. Although they had the power to dismiss the charges if they felt they were not worthy of further investigation, they never did.

The master-at-arms announced which articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice I'd violated, and it was a long list. Assaulting a military police officer. Resisting arrest. Drunk and disorderly. Refusing to submit military ID. Disobeying a direct order. The longer the master-at-arms read, the more embarrassed I became, and then he got to the kicker: threatening a military police officer. It wasn't so much that I'd made threats, it was the ridiculous nature of my threat, which he then read: "If I had a dollar, I'd kick your ass."

This produced more than a few grins and chuckles among the lifers smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee, but Chief Cleveland put a stop to that.

"Do you think this is funny?"

"No, Chief," I said.

"You're damn right it isn't," he snapped, although clearly many of his peers disagreed; on the contrary, they thought it was fucking hysterical.

Next I was brought before the XO, the second in command, who was in charge of conducting a formal inquiry into the matter. He, too, could dismiss the charges but the chances of that happening were slim to nil.

The master-at-arms read off the charges again while the XO surveyed my paperwork. When he got to the part about me being a badass short of a buck, he shook his head and glared at me.

My father was the XO on his last surface command. When I asked him what his job entailed he told me it was about dealing with the details so the CO didn't have to. He used to complain that he spent 90% of his time dealing with the 10% of the crew who were dirtbags – his word – and the remaining 10% with the 90% who were good guys. If there was any doubt before there was none now: I was officially one of the dirtbags.

The next day they scheduled Captain's

MONEY

Mast, a disciplinary hearing during which the CO considers the facts and imposes nonjudicial punishment – more serious than an administrative slap on the wrist, less serious than a full-on court-martial. Such punishments could include a formal reprimand, reduction in rate, forfeiture of pay and the dreaded 45 & 45: forty-five days restricted liberty, forty-five days extra duty. Captain's Mast was a lot like court except there was no jury and no counsel – just the CO, the master-at-arms and me.

I was standing at parade rest near the exercise equipment when the master-at-arms come out of the lounge and addressed me by my rank and surname. I'd finally been promoted to a full-fledged seaman – E3 on the pay scale – but I didn't think I would be one for much longer.

I went inside. The lights were on and the CO stood at a podium in the corner. The master-at-arms indicated that I was to stand at attention before the podium, so I did. I was extremely nervous. I would have much preferred to have been secured to a bulkhead and flogged; at least then I wouldn't have to look the CO in the eye.

The articles were read and I waited with dread for the master-at-arms to get to the part about how it was a good thing I didn't have a dollar or there would be hell to pay. The master-at-arms hammed it up for the CO, as if he was just as shocked and outraged as he was, the cocksucker. The CO did not pussyfoot around. He looked down at his paperwork and dispensed my sentence, more for the master-at-arms benefit than mine, as he did not bother looking at me.

"Forfeiture of half of one month's pay for two months. Forty-five days restricted liberty. Forty-five days extra duty. Effective immediately. Do you have anything to add?"

"No, sir."

"You are dismissed."

I did an about face and exited the compartment feeling a mixture of disappointment and relief. While it sucked that I was going to be stuck on the ship for the next six weeks, I was grateful not to have been demoted; but mostly I was just glad it was over. I had the strangest feeling of déjà vu, like I'd just been grounded and had my allowance taken away.



While I was enjoying my restricted liberty (or eyeball liberty, as my shipmates called it, because it was liberty you enjoyed with your eyeballs) I finally got around to reading Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*. It did not take long for me to realize this Dana character was on to something: "There is not so helpless and pitiable an object in the world as a landsman beginning a sailor's life." Amen to that – and that was just page two. On every page I found a description of an event that echoed something I'd witnessed or experienced myself, some 150 years later, on a tin



I was face down and spread eagle on the asphalt, clearly resisting arrest.

They hauled me on board in handcuffs and leg restraints and presented to the Officer of the Deck.



can chugging twenty-one knots-per-nautical mile, spewing black smoke out of the stacks. I felt a strong affinity toward Dana. The intensity of his dissatisfaction with his life at sea rivaled my own. "I had often read of the nautical experiences of others, but I felt there could be none worse than mine; for, in addition to every other evil, I could not but remember that this was the first night of a two years' voyage."

I was in for two years. Dana was on a two-year journey. I was a squid, a non-rate, a deck ape. Dana was a common seaman, a jack-tar. Dana had left Harvard to go to sea. I'd put off

going to college and joined the Navy to get my shit together. (The party school where I ended up was no Ivy League school, but work with me here.) When I read these words – "A sailor's life is at best but a mixture of a little good with much evil, and a little pleasure with much pain. The beautiful is mixed with the revolting, the sublime with the commonplace, and the solemn with the ludicrous." – I knew Dana had just joined Jack Kerouac, Hunter S. Thompson and Joey Ramone in my pantheon of personal heroes.

Who was this guy? Richard Henry Dana was an eighteen-year-old kid brought low by an attack of measles that left his eyesight too weak for the rigors of academic pursuits at Harvard University. His blueblood father, who was friends with Robert Louis Stevenson, among others, offered to send him on a trip to India. Dana declined, joined the merchant navy, and the next thing he knew he was bucketing about the Atlantic on a ship less than eighty feet in length doing all kinds of Byzantine things with gaffs and guys, booms and braces, stays and sails. He was appalled at the way seamen were treated in the best of conditions, and when things got ugly he witnessed wrongs he swore to right. When he returned to Boston in 1835, he went back to Harvard and on to law school, where he became an expert in maritime law. Whenever he had a spare hour or two he worked on the book about his experiences at sea. When it was published in 1840, it was an overnight sensation.

It's hard to overestimate the influence of *Two Years Before the Mast*. As Harold Langley wrote in *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862*, "Dana's work was widely read, and his pledge was fulfilled beyond his expectations. His words added to the growing literature of protest on the subject of flogging." Not everyone viewed Dana's book as a step in the right direction. When Dana's father's famous friend, Robert Louis Stevenson, read the book that had all of Boston enthralled, he was outraged: "With several hundred rude beings confined within the narrow limits of a vessel, men of all nations and of the lowest habits, it would be to the last degree indiscreet, to commence their reformation by relaxing the bonds of discipline, under the mistaken impulses of a false philanthropy. It has a lofty sound, to be sure, to talk about American citizens being too good to be brought under the lash, upon the high seas; but he must have a very mistaken notion who does not see that tens of thousands of these pretending persons on shore, even, would be greatly benefited by a little judicious flogging." In other words: praise be to God and don't spare the rod.

Despite the pressure from his father's peers who, like the farmers who employ migrant workers or clothing manufacturers who utilize foreign

sweatshop laborers today, stood to lose profits if they were forced to pay their sailors a decent wage and provide them with sanitary accommodations and adequate food, Dana soldiered on. He wrote *The Seaman's Friend*, a legal manual for sailors that did as much to help inform them of their rights as men as it did to educate sailors about the vagaries of being a contract employee of a shipping company.

Two Years Before the Mast is often included in the ranks of protest literature, and it deserves its place there, but for most people in 1840 – well before the Gold Rush – it gave readers their first glimpses of California, which was then part of Mexico. Adventure seekers and entrepreneurs alike paid close attention to Dana's vivid and accurate descriptions of the communities along California's coastline. Take this passage from a visit to Santa Barbara: "The country abounds in grapes, yet they buy, at a great price, bad wine made in Boston." Descriptions like these raised more than a few eyebrows and caused many of reader to pack his bags and head round the Horn to seek his fortune in California.

Perhaps Dana's most famous reader was a Boston sailor who, upon returning from an uneventful crossing to Liverpool and back, caught the buzz about *Two Years Before the Mast* and picked up a copy. What he read electrified him, and inspired him to pen stories of

his own. Thus began Herman Melville's literary career, a man whom is regarded today as the father of American letters.

Today there is replica of the boat upon which Dana sailed to California. It's located at a little harbor in Orange County in a city that bears the name of its most famous crewman:



Dana Point. At the harbor entrance is a statue of Richard Henry Dana, Jr. striking a romantic pose as he stares out to sea. It's a beautiful statue, and I'm pretty sure Dana would hate it. It aspires to be sublime and ignores the commonplace, much less the revolting.

Sure, Dana had opportunities that were not available to his shipmates. He was intelligent, a

writer with immense gifts, his father was wealthy and well-connected; but when the *Pilgrim* lost sight of land and he was alone upon the ocean, Dana was nothing more and nothing less than a common sailor. His experience at sea was a short chapter of his life, of which he dismissively referred to his *Two Years Before the Mast* as a footnote. Some remember him as a man of letters; others see him as a man of the law, a man of principles. I choose to remember him as a man who changed the world on the strength of his convictions.

I never went to Captain's Mast again, but I never went to Harvard either. I got out of the Navy and although I've done a half-assed job of staying out of trouble, I haven't kicked anyone's ass for a dollar (the opposite cannot be said to be true with any degree of certainty). Like Dana, I have a story to tell, a story that is every bit as solemn and ludicrous and commonplace and revolting as *Two Years Before the Mast*, perhaps even more so. I haven't changed the world yet, and I'm pretty sure it's not my place to even try. Unlike Dana, I have few convictions, and would be hard-pressed to

articulate them (The West Memphis 3 are innocent? Never say "one more" to a bartender? Be nice to your mom?) But in one sense old Richard Henry Dana, Jr. and I are exactly alike: you cannot stop us from expressing what we believe in. We will not be dismissed.

–Money

MONEY





Let's Get Killed!

the immortal Lee County Killers II

Interview by
Bradley Williams

Photos by
Jeff Johnson

As I sit down to write this, the Immortal Lee County Killers II are somewhere in Europe. Mr. J.R.R. Token (drums, chains, vocals) and the honorable Chet "el Cheetah" Y. Z. (guitar, harmonica, vocals) out somewhere in the wilds of Europe... ah. Sounds good to me. But for a while they were in Southern California, and I was able to convince them that, for five days and five nights, it would be worth their time to let me tag along, drink beer, and do an interview. The ILCK2 hail from a region of the country that is stacked with musical tradition. There aren't really any clubs to play in many places, and most bands down there constantly knock away in the boiling heat of house shows. They do it for themselves. They do it for you. The listing of bands down there, and the people who have contributed to the music that allows people's hearts to open to the world, is enormous. It's music that fights against the stifling stereotypes placed on the Southeast.

Jazz, the blues, yeah, they had their roots in the south. In each state there are

regional styles, all different, but the region is never as important as the heart. At many a first glance a lot of musical history would seem lost to the waves of urban expansion, but if you were to get out and get in the soupy heat, the voice might creep into you ears and stories would live. And you might see something that has fallen under the scope of the big boys. Something primal. Something beautiful and ugly. I miss it. It is my home. But when I met up with the Killers I was living in Southern California, and it was approaching the hotter part of the summer. Instead of the boiling Southeastern air there were waves of searing heat that rolled through the streets of Los Angeles. Palm trees, and In-n-Out Burgers. The Pacific and the sands. Two parts of the country, 2,000 miles apart, each enjoying the other, making a new sound. The region is never as important as the heart. It never is.

This interview took place mostly in Los Angeles traffic. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the Immortal Lee County Killers II!

Bradley: Me, Bean, and JR went and had a double stack with cheese. What did you have for lunch, sir?

Chet: I had a grilled portobello mushroom sandwich, fries, and a coke.

Bradley: You're going kind of light there.

Chet: I'm running on premium octane these days rather than the bargain fuel, the lower octane fuel. My machine, my inner workings, need a little bit more gusto these days.

Bradley: So you're going for the gusto? The lifestyle?

Chet: Yeah.

Bradley: How would the gusto provided by the portobello mushroom sandwich help you to bite a man?

Chet: To bite a man?

Bradley: Yes. How would you bite a man, Chet?

Chet: To correctly bite a man, you do not open your mouth completely wide because if you do, it gives them access to your mouth. They could fishhook you. It's easier to knock out a tooth. You're also not trying to take a chunk of flesh out of a human being. You're trying to cause them pain.

Bradley: How many men have you bitten, Chet?

Chet: I haven't bitten any man yet, but I would bite a man if I had to.

Bradley: Why would you bite a man?

Chet: If it's between me and death or my portobello mushroom sandwich, I would bite a man. I have bitten women and I was not trying to cause pain, either. It was more of a pleasure type of sensation. More of a nibble.

Bradley: So you bite men and nibble women?

Chet: Right on the verge of pain. Right on the threshold.

Bradley: So, you would say that you bite men but nibble women?

Chet: Right. Well, nibble is... I don't know, I guess nibble is... it's... when you bite a man or a woman who's trying to hurt you, it's a self defense bite. Then it's pain.



If it's pleasure then it's right on the threshold of pain. It's a tantalizing bite.

Bradley: This next question was posed to me by an undisclosed, absentee participant in this interview. Why don't you grow a mustache, Cheetah?

Chet: Because mustaches look goofy on me and I don't want to.

Bradley: It wouldn't go well with the portobello mushroom?

Chet: Yeah, I think a mushroom on my face would look bad, and I think a mustache also would look bad on my face, but that's just my personal feeling. I mean I look sexy in many different looks and fashions, and I probably would look fucking great in a mustache, but I have to do things for *me*. I have to feel good about *me*. And when I see a mustache on my face I feel silly. And silly can be entertaining, but I want to entertain without being silly. And I think I have a nice upper lip. I don't want to cover it up.

Bradley: So mustaches are silly?

reputation as being a formidable dog trainer.

JR: Yeah, I can train dogs.

Bradley: I remember one trick where you leashed your dog (Ozzy) to your belt, when you walked down the street.

JR: Yeah, he learned how to heel good.

Bradley: Learned how to heel good – Heel, Ozzy!

JR: Yeah.

Bradley: Who is the Worlds Greatest Drummer (WGD)?

Chet: That would be J.R.R. Token. I'll answer that one.

Bradley: What constitutes a great drummer? I mean, there's a lot of drummers, I'm sure you can't be the fuckin' best.

JR: 'Cause cain't none of these damned little mealy-mouthed sons of bitches hold a torch to this man right here.

Bradley: Mealy-mouthed?

JR: Little bastards.

Bradley: What you been reading here lately, Cheetah?

ing on some good poetry and if the dumbass hadn't killed himself early, he probably would have become a good poet, but I don't think calling him a religious shaman is fair. Saying that someone can lead people in a religious manner to save their souls or transfer their spirits is quite a burden to put on someone who's twenty-seven years old. I think that's kinda all blown up in a negative manner to where Morrison is emphasized, rather than the Doors music, and Morrison as a mystical figure has turned into Morrison as a teen-idol. The Doors have almost ended up becoming a parody of themselves, especially with this new stuff they're doing. It's a shame. Really, they're just an innovative, great rock and roll band and there's not many people who can say that, and it should have been left right there. That's a pretty fuckin' great achievement. But anyways, I was reading a book about the Pre-Raphaelites art movement. I want to know more about the people who were

I wonder how many
people would cringe if
I said the South,
rather than the coasts,
shapes America.

Look through
American History,
brothers and sisters.

You will be surprised.



Chet: On me. In my eye. Now, like I said, another person could see a mustache on me and they will probably think that it looks beautiful, but when I see it on me I think it's pretty silly. I'm a very self-conscious person.

Bradley: J.R., do you think that a mustache might help you on the cell phone? You seem to have a way with the cell phone. (He doesn't like to use them.)

JR: Well, the mustache keeps your cell phone clean, I guess.

Bradley: You have a reputation as a pizza dough tosser?

JR: Well ol' Token cain't do much, but he can make you a mean pizza though.

Bradley: Cain't do much? Some would beg to differ JR. You have quite an underground

Chet: Ah, I've read a book about the Doors. *Light My Fire* by Ray Manzarek.

Bradley: It's good stuff?

Chet: It's good stuff. I like the Doors. I like their story and I wanted to hear Ray Manzarek's side, 'cause I think he's the one who's really fucked up the Doors image. He was a great keyboard player and a great musician. Whether or not he knows, whether or not he realizes what he's done to the Doors rep. He turned Jim Morrison into some sort of pop icon and so-called shaman when I think it'd be much better served to remember Jim Morrison as a great rock and roll singer.

Bradley: More so than Jim Morrison the poet?

Chet: No, I think Jim Morrison was work-

painting.

At the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Tour, they have a notebook of Morrison's where he wrote lyrics. It was pretty cool. We saw Hendrix's notebook of lyrics. Otis Redding's airplane. That was sort of intense.

Bradley: You're here in Los Angeles, you know, "come on baby light my fire." This is the land of the Doors. How's that been for you? There's a big ass painting of him over in Hollywood.

Chet: Yeah, I saw that. I don't know how I feel about big murals. I guess it's not really any of my business. I just like to remind folks, every once in a while, that there's a lot of hype.

Bradley: Chet, with the

ILCK2 you seem to have focused more on influences that were hinted at with the Quadrajets (the previous band Chet was in) i.e. songs like "John Lee Hooker Is My Heavy Metal." Are you able to focus more on your influences with the ILCK2?

Chet: Absolutely. The Quadrajets definitely functioned as a group. The whole equaled more than the sum of the parts. Meaning, the group mind wrote the best music. Therefore, my personal wants, needs, and contributions did not manifest. I did sneak some blues into the Q-jets, like the song you mentioned. Also, we did an original called "She Likes It," which swung like Hound Dog Taylor. We did a great Howlin' Wolf song and a Johnny Shines song. But most of the guys weren't as into blues as myself. We converged somewhere in '70s Detroit, Rolling Stones, and Southern Rock. Great experience.

Bradley: From the *Essential Fucked Up Blues*, to *Love is a Charm of Powerful Trouble*, has there been any transformation in your sound?

Chet: Yes. *Essential* bridged the Q-jets and ILCK. The first ILCK record is loud, noisy, and fast almost all the way through. I still was working on a new song writing direction. We also wanted to leave room for something new for the follow up, which would be *Love*. We didn't want to put all the cards on the table first round. Not wise for gamblers to do.

Bradley: What factors are at work here? Looking at the song titles, we see themes of love, pain, and the blues, not just as a state of being, but as blatant nods to the greats.

Chet: Great art always contains an emotional charge. That charge gives the piece energy and life. We try to put ourselves wholly into our songs. I still think I have some way to go before I can bear all to an audience. It's hard to put everything on the line for strangers. But, I'm much closer now than in the Quadrajets to tell

all. Human beings appreciate the truth. They appreciate others who are willing to share their being and feeling. The reason why is simple: we're all going through similar trials and tribulations on our way toward our first death and transference. We like to hear of other's personal victories and defeats. Helps us with our own struggle. The struggle makes for the human passion I so dearly love and makes for a fucking fun time.

blues and so called "finer" or "trained" arts. The title *Love Is a Charm of Powerful Trouble* is derived from Bill Shakespeare (*Macbeth*). And I mine William Carlos Williams, WB Yeats, and Dylan Thomas for lyrics just as much as JL Hooker. They are all great artists and poets. ILCK2 is not interested in ethnocentrism, racism, purism, or self-righteous intellectualism. We're interested in good music. Sound is a form of communication. The spoken language

allows for direct communication. Music allows for empathy. Both are used in art. Art saves lives. When I kick my amp and the feedback goes "whooom," someone in the audience is going to say, "That dork feels like me."

Bradley: How do the practices of Jeet Kun Do factor in? How much a part of your song writing is pulled from the fighting philosophy of Bruce Lee?

Chet: This could be a whole interview unto itself. Sifu Bruce Lee turned the martial arts world upside down. First, he trained westerners. Something unheard of at the time. Second, and most important, he created a new style of martial arts catering to the individual and free of limitations. The world of martial arts is steeped in tradition and dogma comparable to religion. Lee acted as a heretic to create an all-encompassing style which covered all ranges of fighting, from kicking to grappling. And there is true emotional content in his style. "The only limitation is no limitation."

Martial arts, like music, is an artistic expression. Consider why one fighter will choose to use his fists against an opponent while another may decide to use chokes and submissions. One draws blood while another does not. Along with JKD, I also love Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

Martial arts differs from naked violence because of the ability to express individuality. There's a difference between indiscriminate and intimate violence. There aren't guns, missiles, professional armies and criminals, or weapons of mass killing



Individuals make up our world. No one knows better what to do for themselves than themselves.

On a different level, ILCK is stirring up the socio-ethnic pot by blatantly referencing known blues greats. And sometimes with a little bit of irreverence. Gotta keep things evolving. Gotta let people know that everything comes from the heart. Doesn't matter if you're from white suburbia, like myself, or the juke joints of Mississippi, like R. Johnson; anyone can play blues. But the blues changes from individual to individual. Our experiences are different. The key to the highway is honesty.

Also, ILCK mix references between

involved in the martial arts I'm referencing. Only individuals pitted against individuals. Pussies use guns. To stare a person in the eye and pit skill against skill is an entirely different matter.

Although two opponents are involved in an intimate physical and psychological discourse, the final goal of a martial arts duo is not common. If one fighter sticks to tradition and textbook style, the opponent who creates something new during the fight, the fighter who uses an original move, will win. Martial arts reward creativity absolutely. With music, jazzers can play strict textbook jazz standards all night long to applause. Rock'n'roll or blues cover bands can play all night for significant amounts of money. Unfortunately in music, craftsmen and technicians can be rewarded along with those who are original. Not in martial arts. Personally, JKD has taught me to relax. Taught me more about rhythm and fitting in with another human being. Now, I listen more to Token's drums and can fit to his changes and emotions better. In music, the parties involved work together to realize a common goal – music. In martial arts, fighters must engage but there is a struggle. Therefore, my senses are being sharpened. If I can perform martial arts "in the void," I certainly can perform music. When a fighter or musician is in the void, that means they are completely in the moment.

Completely natural. Operating outside of convention and thought. Pure music. Pure fighting. Total honesty charged with pure emotional content equals absolute art. The martial arts have definitely improved my music.

Bradley: So is there a rhythm to life?

Chet: Sure. Listen for it. If you can't hear the rhythm, stand a day in Los Angeles vs. Potts Camp, Mississippi.

Bradley: Is life music? Is music life?

Chet: Absolutely. I stayed up one night writing about his very subject. Once again, good art requires emotional content. The content comes from life. We sing about our lives. When I spend the night with my lover and put the experience into a song, I have simply transferred and organized the rhythm and sound from a night in my life into a more succinct expression – a song. Poetry does the same. Poetry organizes sounds and

words into succinct combination to best describe life. Now, the clincher, you can live another person's life through their art. A good poem or song allows someone else to share the poet's life. Just like if you'd been there.

Bradley: Is there a revolution in sound going on?

Chet: I hope so. If not, we're close to the end.

Bradley: How does your revolution plan to deal with the battle between the power of the people and the power of the dollar?

Chet: We're all interested in a revolution of the spirit. I used to be more interested in economic and political revolution. I felt that the best political and economic organization would better facilitate my desire for humans to truly live free. "Free your mind and your

themselves than themselves. The people have lost confidence in themselves. They are scared and looking for others to solve their problems. In truth, any person is a dynamic, intelligent, and capable living being. When folks realize this again, we won't need these crooks running the game. We'll run our own. With self-confidence and self-esteem comes integrity and respect.

The consequential socio-political systems will be anarchic in nature. The evolution of the world has to end in this point. Otherwise, war and destruction will occur. Professional politics and governments are based around an Us vs. Them mentality. Politicians and cops are always drawing battle lines. This is part of their job. Someday we the people will learn that battle lines aren't the solution. Reasoning with

oneself and others is the solution. The only solution for living. I advocate "power to the people" in the truest sense of the phrase.

Bradley: Do you feel a strong sense of closeness with your surroundings?

Chet: I'm a believer in the "environment shapes the personality" explanation in psychiatry. I don't think I would have been so compelled to explore soul music, blues, and jazz if those forms of music weren't all around me. I feel lucky to be from an area of the world so vibrant with different cultures and their blending. The Southern United

'Cause cain't none of these damned little mealy-mouthed sons of bitches hold a torch to this man right here.



States holds characters from the worst white trash über-truck driving redneck storm-trooper to William Faulkner to the most cliché gang banger to Martin Luther King Jr. And there are infinite more examples of these kinds of extremities in all kinds of colors.

Now I've decided a revolution of the spirit must first occur, and then the proper socio-economic organization will follow. To be more specific, the world is in need of an ideological revolution. I believe people, especially Americans, have been tricked by the powers that be to believe that individuals do not matter. More and more people are turning toward "authorities" and "experts" for answers. For example, if there's a problem in the neighborhood, the neighbors don't take care of it. They call the cops. If there's problems in the world, people seem to think that governments and politicians are smarter and more apt to cure the problems rather than the people themselves. That's crap. Deep down, we know politicians and cops are causing many of these problems themselves or simply are not the best solution. Individuals make up our world. No one knows better what to do for

I wonder how many people would cringe if I said the South, rather than the coasts, shapes America. Look through American History, brothers and sisters. You will be surprised. The Southern United States provides America with its figurative Id. And we all know from what part of the psyche a person's passion and creativity springs – yes, the Id. We also know what part of the psyche a person blames when something goes wrong.

Bradley: Why do you think some people are uptight and weird when they talk about people playing the blues?

Chet: Purists suck, as do racists.

Bradley: JR, What are you reading?

JR: *Tietam Brown*, (Mick) Foley's first attempt at fiction, and it's pretty humorous so far, and the book I read before that was J. T. LeRoy, *Sarah*. And that's a pretty good book.

Bradley: Do you think that Mick Foley was one of the world's greatest wrestlers?

JR: Definitely one of the world's greatest wrestlers. Cactus Jack, Mankind, Dude Love, Mick Foley, good stuff.

Bradley: Aren't his other books autobiographical?

JR: Yeah. He's the author of *Have a Nice Day* and *Foley is Good*. He's written two children's books as well.

Bradley: Have you read his children's books?

JR: Naw, I haven't read the children's books, but I've read the two autobiographies.

Bradley: Did he illustrate the children's books?

JR: Naw, Jerry Lawler illustrated one of the children's books and I'm not sure who illustrated the other one.

Bradley: Jerry Lawler?

JR: Jerry "the King" Lawler. He's from Memphis as well. You know, him and Andy Kaufman had the big thing going.

Bradley: Oh yeah, that's right. That's in the movie (*Man on the Moon*). And he's an

illustrator as well?

JR: He's actually a very good artist. Impressed me at the time.

Bradley: You've done some paintings in your time haven't you?

JR: I've been doing some painting. Not as much as I have been in the past, but I have been able to pump one or two out, every once in a while when we get a break. I've got one hanging up in Emo's, and I sold a couple paintings to some nice folks in Texas and LA.

Bradley: I think they've got a definite style and a technique behind them that's unique.

JR: We're gonna put some up on the web page pretty soon, so be on the look out.

Bradley: Recently, I was told by a friend of mine that during the Civil War there were minutemen in the south, and they had names which were regional in nature. One name was something like the Blount Mountain Killers. Is that where the Immortal Lee County Killers II got the name? The Civil War?

Chet: Naw. Well, I know there are similar things now in the United States – different militias in different states – gangs. But, no we don't. As far as the Civil War goes, probably the most famous group was the Culpepper Minutemen in Virginia, but no, our name didn't have anything to do with the Civil War.

Bradley: I went with ya'll one time up

towards Memphis and Arkansas. Who was that fella we was looking for in the graveyard, 'cause I remember we kept going from graveyard to graveyard.

Chet: (Walter) "Furry" Lewis. We used to do one of his songs. "When I Lay My Burden Down." It's a traditional song, but we did more of his version.

Bradley: When does something become a "traditional?"

Chet: That song we do, "Rollin' and Tumblin'," that's a traditional. I'm not really sure. There's a body of songs that are folk songs that everyone has done for years and years and years and no one is sure exactly who the author is. It's not just the blues. It's all around.

Bradley: Is there something that's itching to get out?

Chet: Gas station.

Bradley: What has been your favorite gas station?

Chet: [changing lanes] So far I've been really into 7-11 'cause they have sushi.

Bradley: You eat that 7-11 sushi?

Chet: I eat 7-11 sushi. It's a nice snack and there's an element of danger involved, too. It gets my adrenaline going.

Bradley: What kind of 7-11 sushi do you get? Tuna steak, octopus?

Chet: Well, they call it a California roll, but it looks like rice and imitation crab to me. I don't have any problem with it. I think imitation crab is actually cod.

Bean: It's whiting.

Chet: I think it's pretty good.

Bradley: Bleached fished made into crab. Beef into chicken.

Bean: That's the fish you can catch off the Gulf Coast. I used to catch those all the time growing up all the time down in Alabama.

Bradley: Whitefish?

Bean: Yeah down in Alabama. I got fishing trophies. I used to fish in the kid's fishing rodeo down in Dauphin Island, Alabama.

Bradley: Fuck yeah. Did you ever go soft shelling?

Bean: Naw, I don't want to mess with those crabs. I want to catch a king mackerel, the big fish – that's the trophy fish down in the gulf.

Bradley: You were born in a hurricane weren't you Bean?

Bean: I was born during Hurricane Fredrick back in seventy-nine. That's the toughest hurricane to ever hit Mobile. I came in like I plan on going out – with a fury. [laughter]

Bradley: Fuck the Killers. Why didn't you get named Fredrick?

Chet: Yeah, do this interview with the road manager. Fuck us. I'm just talking about the Doors, he's talking about being in the eye of the fury. [laughter]

Bean: My mom went into labor as the eye of the hurricane passed over our house. Then my dad, he piled my mom into his brand-new truck that he'd just got half a year before, and drove down the streets of





Music allows for empathy... When I kick my amp and the feedback goes "whooom," someone in the audience is going to say, "That dork feels like me."

Mobile to the Mobile infirmary to get my mother to the hospital, just in time for me to be born under flashlights. I wasn't named Fredrick. I guess she was too messed up. They put her on drugs, but one of my best friends, Dave, from Auburn, he was named after Hurricane Dave, which was two weeks before I was born.

Bradley: That's something down on the coast I've never heard of, naming kids after hurricanes. So you do a good bit of deep-sea fishing?

Bean: I used to but I've been landlocked for the past six years going to school. But, yeah, I'd like to go fishing sometime soon.

Chet: Landlocked!? Fuck them man! God! Landlocked in your education. They're coming down on Bean, keeping him away from that king mackerel!

Bradley: But where's your education propelling you? What are you in school for?

Bean: I'm going to school for aerospace engineering. I'd ultimately like to work on mission control for NASA.

Bradley: You're a rocket scientist?

Bean: I'm a rocket scientist. Two classes away from earning my master's. What I'm doing right now for my thesis is I'm developing a new method to design inter-planetary space trajectory for spacecraft that have an exhaust modulated propulsion system.

Chet: Tell him about how's there's not enough computing power at the university.

Bean: Right now I'm pretty much done. I have to run a big computer program to make all the calculations, but where I'm stuck at right now, I'm pretty much done with my program, but I need a supercom-

puter to run it. If I ran it on my computer in my office, it would take seventy days to complete the operation of the program.

Chet: So computers aren't fast enough?

Bean: Those sorry-assed computers. They need to do something better with those computers. Auburn University, you guys need to invest in a supercomputer!

Chet: Bean is landlocked and he doesn't have the right computing power either! This guy's tragic. The tragic hero.

Bradley: How did you get doing merch with the Killers?

Chet: We need a rocket scientist. We need someone to make decisions.

Bean: Well, right now I'm doing my damned computer program so I've got seventy days to spare. [laughter]

Chet: You write to Lynn (another Killers roadman and all around wizard for Sarcophagus Studios) and ask him about when he tried to take the doors off a pharmacy with his motorcycle.

Bradley: What?

Chet: He was in the van with us, just another one of the crazy characters who's gotten in this van.

Bradley: Being that you're in aerospace engineering, I assume you do a lot with aerodynamics. There was another band (Soledad Brothers) who recently had a little aerodynamic problem with their luggage rack.

Bean: Yes, they did. I had to step up to the plate and come through in the clutch. [laughter] They're excellent people. I enjoyed their company. They're very, very, nice.

Bradley: But their aerodynamics were in question?

Bean: Yes, they had troubles with the aerodynamics of their van.

Chet: It (the luggage rack) was on backwards.

Bean: They had the luggage rack, on top of their van, on backwards. The first night we played with them, they thought I was full of crap, I told them they had their luggage rack on backwards. You know, we had a few drinks after the show, and in a drunken tizzy I wrote down how they needed to change their aerodynamics schemes for their luggage rack.

Bradley: This was a proposal that was written to change the aerodynamics of the van? An impromptu proposal while you were running the merch stand at the show?

Bean: Yes, it was written on a memo pad. I think they're going to keep that for years and years and hold it close to their hearts, something they can always keep with them that will help them along the way, and improve their gas mileage on their van in their travels across the country.

Bradley: With your calculations, approximately how many miles per gallon have you saved them?

Bean: I've saved them approximately four miles per gallon, and with today's steep gas prices, that's very monumental in the success of a touring band.

Chet: This has been surreal.

Bradley: [After stuff, I bought a Red Bull.] Do you know what taurine is? Do you think it's bull ball juice? I mean Red Bull.

Chet: It can't be.

Bradley: That's what I've heard it was, so whenever you're drinking Red Bull you're drinking bull ball juice.

Chet: That sounds like fuckin' black magic stuff from the Golden Bough. If thou wisheth to have the strength of a bull, eat a bull's cock. From whence the spirit of the bull derives itself.

Bradley: There's a bull for a reason on the label.

Chet: You know, I think you're right. I think it is bull sperm. They've got factories of bulls masturbating. Just like they did humans. [silence]

Bradley: Kind of like milk factories, but gizz factories for the bull.

Chet: The have gizz factories for men, too. Test tube babies and stuff. They don't pay very well for sperm.

Bradley: Have you sold before?

Chet: I've looked into it.

Bradley: What magazines do they provide you with?

Chet: I haven't looked into it that far. I haven't made it to the lobby. Evidently, they give a lot more for plasma than they do for sperm.

Bradley: It's just something I was curious about and I thought you would know.

Chet: No.



GRABASS CHARLESTONS

SHIRTS OFF, DUDES ON

The Grabass Charlestons is a trio of ding dongs from Gainesville, Florida. Hell, I loved their split LP with Billy Reese Peters. Their seven songs were sped-up, tightly wound rock'n'roll, the type that mixes jiggers of Leatherface, warm 18-packs of Radon, the wrung-out shirt sweat of Tiltwheel, and the high-drama of the best episodes of *Cop Boat*. The lyrics are smart and heartfelt. Without being dicks or hoity toity, they extend a fine amount of literacy while covering such topics as direct, gun-toting threats to one's boss and the golden age of Galaga video game mastery. Their songs have no gaps, no stumbling. They sound like chases, through swamps, decaying strip malls, fantasies, and bad dreams. The Grabass Charlestons gamble. They tumble around like that little ball in roulette before it finds a slot. They win.

On *The Greatest Story Ever Hula'd*, there's talk about suicide, waking up with a spear through your chest, and it's still so catchy while poking the careful listener right in sternum over and over again. It's hard not to be affected by its direct-line humility

and passion. And, man, it rocks. We're not talking fey, extended pinky tea-sipping, smile-for-the-camera passion, either. Juggernauts of smiles, bruises, and "where'd that come from?" cuts. The type of crazed passion that comes from years of being poor and finding that music and friends can pull you through almost anything. True celebration among the debris.

Bros, not pros.

This interview was earmarked for complete disaster. It started at four AM. Three hours prior, we'd had a long, not-very-rational discourse if two hundred beers were enough "too keep the buzz on" for the thirteen people staying in our tiny apartment. (By eleven AM, there were seven well-hidden beers left.) I'll give credit where credit is due. The boys pulled through in the clutch. Raise one, or as many as you can carry, to The Grabass Charlestons.

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY TODD

Iron Will: lead singer, drummer, occasional fish tank cleaner
PJ: guitar, loses complete control of his ego after eighteen hours of drinking
Replay Dave: bass, band's most dependable, and a terrible

Todd: Will, you played in Downey, California today. Name the most famous drummer/singer in the world that comes from there.

Will: The douche from the Eagles?

Todd: I'll give you a hint. You're thinking the wrong gender.

Will: The dude...

Todd: No, the dudette. The lady.

Will: I don't know. I'm stumped.

Todd: Karen Carpenter.

Will: Oh, fuck. She's an awesome drummer, too. She kicks ass. She's good. She's got a nice voice, too. I saw a clay figurine movie about the Carpenter family. Documented all the bad shit.

Todd: When was the last time it was eight o'clock in the morning, you were drunk, and you were very happy?

Will: Usually, when it's eight in the morning and I'm drunk, I'm not very happy.

Dave: I was drunk and unhappy at eight in the morning in handcuffs in Texas.

PJ: July fourth, we were in Colorado Springs, Texas and we built a fire. Two bottles of whiskey. Many cases of beer. We got wasted. Dave, he goes out to fetch firewood and he fell in a



cactus bush.

Dave: There was a dead tree that needed a little help coming down and I gave it a whole bunch of help and Newton's laws got involved, and I landed on cactuses.

PJ: We spent about an hour and a half in front of the van lights yanking those spines out. Dave, he's injured, so he's drinking with a vengeance.

Dave: I was celebrating, man. It was the fourth of July. Texas had fireworks for hours. The vantage point we had, had the horizon of Texas. You could see communities competing with one another for fireworks.

PJ: So, the next thing me and Will know, the tent is getting kicked by this – seriously – mirrored shade, mustachioed dude named Tracey Furgeson. "Line up in front of the van."

Will: The man's fighting off lifetimes of insecurities.

PJ: Hoping that we'll give him the respect he needs so bad. Dave, at this point, is handcuffed and shotgunned. Very injured.

Will: I was sleeping in the van at the time. I was looking at our friend Tracey knocking on the window. I was buried under some shit. I looked up and I saw him, "Oh, goddamn, it's the cops." Buried myself again. Then I kinda realized he was still there, so I got up again. He's all, "Get out of the van!" So I got up, stumbled out with no shoes, shirtless. "What the fuck is going on?" Then I snuck back into the van and took a piss in a jug. But then the reality set in when I saw Dave in the back of the white car.

PJ: We're all lined up. They're going to ticket us for the beer. Lame ticket, whatever. "You know that guy?" I see Dave handcuffed, looking really bummed. Shirtless. Haggard.

Dave: I was shirtless the whole night. We got there, started the fire, shirts off.

Will: Shirts off, dudes on.

PJ: After the last time we saw him, he took a spill on the road. This guy was insinuating that we threw Dave out of the van. "Oh, we're driving our van around this state park. Let's throw Dave out for fun."

Dave: I threw myself places. I remember being upside down. I remember my head hurting and then remember my head being wet.

Will: With blood.

Dave: It seemed to make sense at the time. Trying to find campsite 127 and then I was woken up with mirrored sunglasses and a mustache.

Will: [in super cop voice] "That guy's injured. What happened?"

PJ: He fell into a cactus. "That's not cactus injuries. That's road burn. What did you guys do to him? You guys went to sleep and left that guy in the middle of the road."

Will: The cop guy accused us of beating

Dave up, throwing him out of the van, dragging him behind the van. Dave got taken to jail in Colorado Springs, Texas.

Dave: I got to the cell and there's a plate with three sections. There's a pile of grits, jelly, and one of the biscuits had a half corner already eaten out.

PJ: The guard was all, "Tuesday's biscuits. Hell yeah. I don't give a shit about him."

Dave: As I'm getting fingerprinted: "What's the charge?" "Public intoxication." "Fair enough. You got me."

Todd: Hair Beard Combo.

PJ: Bullshit.

Dave: I don't have a hair beard combo.

Todd: There's a band called Hair Beard Combo.

PJ: Aaron (Lay of Billy Reese Peters) and Will live with the Hair Beard Combo

it's the Hair Beard Combo.

PJ: For the millionth time they've listened to it that night.

Todd: What's the best sexual come-on you've ever received? Does this ring any bells – "I want to have the sex with your homeless looking combo"?

Dave: I've actually got a really good one. It was on my birthday. The actual quote is, "You go finish puking and brush your teeth, and I'll be naked when you get back to your room." That's a game winner. And, when I get back to the room, the Elmer record is playing. *Songs of Sin and Retribution*.

Todd: Dave, when was the last time you dressed as a leprechaun?

Dave: That was the filming for *The Revenge of the Leprechaun*. I'll send you a copy.

THE HAIR BEARD COMBO: handcuffed and shotgunned

and they're both very angry about it.

Will: I wouldn't say I'm angry about the Hair Beard Combo. I've been exposed to the Hair Beard Combo more than anybody should. It's a thing and it's something. I'll tell you that. It's there and there you go. Next question.

Aaron: It's two dudes who have this uncanny, weird sense of how to write songs in the sense that they write songs about the most ridiculous, stupid bullshit ever.

PJ: Like blowjobs.

Aaron: But the songs fuckin' rule and you listen to them, and you're like, "These songs are fuckin' awesome. I love these songs, but, goddamn, I hate these dudes because they're so obnoxious about having these songs." Does that make sense? It's a really sad thing because Will and I live with that. There's been times when we come home and Will's in the back yard, throwing a stick for my dog, Doyle. He's freaked out and all pissed off. I'm just like, "What's up, dude?"

Will: They're the type of guys, you're hanging out – "Man, I'm going to put on this Elvis Costello record and then this AC/DC record." "No, wait, let me put on this CD." And before AC/DC,



GRABASS CHARLESTONS

Intensities of Rock and Roll





Will: Do you know who The Leprechaun is? That little dude from *Willow*. I didn't know that until a week ago.

Todd: Has anyone seen Allison from Discount lately?

Aaron: Allow me to speak candidly. Check it out. What are they called? The Kills. Do you know what's really crazy about The Kills? [whispering] They smoke cigarettes on stage and shit. They're real mysterious now.

PJ: What's this guy doing in the Grabass interview? How did you get in?

Aaron: Gainesville is a small town and I just blatantly buh-huh. It's a bummer.

Dave: The last time I saw her, she was there with the other member of The Kills, Couch, or whatever they call themselves.

Aaron: I think it's also cool to include the fact that the Kills... "My name is Building." The other person's name is Bicycle or Chair.

Todd: Since the split LP with Billy Reese

Or that you can't say or you've been meaning to say for a long time. Anyways.

Todd: Here's a quote. "The guitar player has this weird-ass haircut that looked like he fell asleep near a five-year-old."

PJ: That would be Dave.

Dave: (Who plays bass.) Wherever you lifted that source, they were talking about me. I'm the guy with the bad haircuts. I get these really great ideas. See, us being mammals, nature gives us a palette every few months and so many people waste this palette.

Todd: The palette is the pate.

Dave: Touché. I do, honestly, think that stupid haircuts visibly fly the flag. Be the thorn in someone's eye.

Todd: Why Replay Dave?

Dave: You don't have that in your papers?

Todd: Nope.

Dave: Pinball. Wanted to write pinball reviews for a local zine and I needed a cool punk rock name and there's eight

mer) took over for you when The Habituals turned into Killbot Factory.

Will: Yeah.

PJ: Interwoven web of uh huh.

Todd: PJ, are you in some way, shape, or form, related to Tom Petty?

PJ: No.

Will: Yeah, he is. Come on.

PJ: Okay. I'll give you the scoop. Tom Petty is my mother's mother's sister's son, which makes him my second cousin. He gave me his first two guitars and he kicks ass.

Dave: It translates to fuckin' high fives.

Aaron: Here's what this translates to: a badass beach house on fuckin' goddamn.

PJ: Every birthday for the past two years, I'll invite all of these... look at them.

Dave: Upstanding gentlemen.

PJ: Tom Petty has a kickass beach house that no one knows about and I invite them every year to bathe in his hot tub, his awesomeness.

The cop guy accused of beating Dave up, throwing him out of the van, dragging him behind the van. Will

Peters to your newest record – it's *The Greatest Story Ever Hula'd*, correct?

Dave: You're goddamned right.

Todd: I sense a shift. The songs are the full-length album are slower and they're sadder. Is that true?

Dave: Are you talking the straight mood or the mood is getting to you?

Todd: Both. Tempo, slowing down. On the split, "Bossman" is active retribution against an employer, as opposed to walking the entire day with a spear through your chest or "suicide at eight bucks an hour."

Will: The first song you referred to, about the spear, is about a dream that I had. The second song you refer to, suicide at eight bucks an hour is actually about work and the shittiness of work. However, what you're saying, yes, it's true. The songs on that record were written out of a lot of fucked up shit that was going on and a lot of depression. A lot of sadness. I started writing songs as kind of a joke. I'd just write these funny songs. You realize after awhile – you're playing a guitar and writing words – it feels good and it gets to a point where "I have to do this and it's the only thing I can do." That's where I was at that point. I was feeling kinda desperate, kinda shitty about everything.

Todd: Tiltwheel's the perfect example of that. They write songs that sound joyous, but you listen to the lyrics. Depressed. A lot weighing down on you.

Will: It always changes. It comes around and goes around and you feel better and you feel worse and then there's the world and the world makes you say things that you have to say.

million Daves in town, so Replay Dave just sort of flowed. I've heard so many dumb explanations.

Todd: PJ, did you play in Against Me?

PJ: No.

Todd: You're lying.

PJ: End of interview.

Dave: How the fuck did you get that one?

Todd: That was from the Gainesville Family Tree.

PJ: Want to hear the real story behind that? I was on that website one time, updating the Billy Reese Peters information. There's this button. What I done did, I was looking up all of my friends' bands. Army of Ponch. Railsplitter. The Bananas. I looked up Against Me! I was on my page, PJ Fancher Page, and I accidentally typed in "You are a member of Against Me!" instead of "You are searching for Against Me!" So, all of a sudden, I am a member of Against Me! Right after I did it, I looked at Against Me!'s page and it says, "PJ, guitar." I emailed the guy that runs the thing. "I just accidentally typed in the wrong shit. Can you take that off?" And it bounced back.

Will: It's actually a larger plot to get people to think of the Grabass Charlestons as former members of Against Me!

Todd: Will, did you really play for Radon, or was it another mis-pushed button?

Will: Nah, I've never played for Radon.

PJ: But Billy Reese Peters played with Radon at their last show. Radon's bass player used to be in the Beltones.

Will: I played in a band with James Ross, who was the replacement bass player for Radon.

Dave: And Bill (Clower, Radon drum-

Will: Get a bunch of poor people sunburnt and play some horse-shoes and spend all of our money on beer.

Todd: What's so special about your Rules About Poker t-shirt?

Dave: It's not even poker. It's blackjack. We like gambling. We like helping people out. That shirt is a basic strategy for the game of blackjack. You're not trying to get twenty-one, you're trying to beat the dealer. You take that strategy, put it on a t-shirt, and you put it upside down so you can read it when you're wearing the t-shirt.

PJ: It's basically a cheat sheet. It's legal. You can do that.

Dave: I was sitting around one day. I was studying the chart, trying to become a master gambler, currently failing miserably, but having a hell of a time. "Man, I should put that on a damn t-shirt." And then I said, "I should make it a damn Grabass Charlestons t-shirt. All I've got to do is put the words 'Grabass Charlestons' on the top side. Beooooow.

Todd: What's Texas Hold'em?

Dave: Texas Hold'em is the highest evolutionary point in the game of poker. It is the version played in the World Series of poker. You get two cards and share five other cards with the rest of the table. Best five-card hand wins. The structure is simple, yet the play is complex. It gets in your brain and body.

Todd: What happens on April first?

Aaron: Jai alai season starts.

Dave: You're wrong, man. You looked at the website and it was not April first. It was April second. 04/02/03. That was our fuckin' battle cry.

Todd: Did you get the jai alai tattoos in the same place?

Dave: Dub T. (Will) and I did.

Will: It's ("Dub T.") on my belt.

Todd: Will, do you have a lucky hat?

Will: I thought I had a lucky hat. I went to one of the stores, Bubba Ray's, I think. They're a chain in the Carolinas. I bought a really nice Stetson hat with a feather in it. It was gray. I loved it. I paid forty dollars for it, so I assumed it was going to be my lucky hat. I took it around to the local gambling establishments. However, I quickly found out that it was not my lucky hat. It was actually my unlucky hat.

Dave: That don't mean you don't look good.

Will: That doesn't mean I don't love that

owner of No Idea with his wife, Jen.) and he had a sign on his door, "Shitwork is needed." I happened to have been working at a pizza place that went out of business and I was about to start working at China Express and I had two weeks to kill where I wouldn't be employed. And for a young lad living off his pizza job, I kinda needed two weeks of money. I went in there, I put a lot of zine CDs and records together and I was such a fucking badass, they called me up every time they had something new. Then next thing I know, it's five years later. I work there forty hours a week and a nice lady hands me a paycheck every Friday. What do you know. Then I realized college and my other jobs were getting in my way of me

other labels for how to do things. Find what works for your personal goals. Always seek advice, but understand the perspective that the advice comes from. If you have it in your head that Plan-it-X is a great label, which they are, it would be wrong to duplicate what they are doing. Find the points about them you like and make it your own. Any label that has existed five years has a commitment. Having a commitment is key. The rest will happen due to the commitment.

Todd: That's a pretty philosophical way to look at it.

Dave: Well, I have a degree in philosophy.

Todd: Will, what was the largest stunt you pulled off with your brother when you were kids?



hat any less. I still love that hat.

Todd: Dave and PJ, you both work for No Idea, one of the best, most honest record companies and distros on the planet...

PJ: Don't forget about Dub T. He cleans fish tanks there.

Will: I clean the fish tanks once every two weeks. Except when I'm on tour or I don't feel like doing it.

Todd: I rarely do blatant endorsements, but No Idea's awesome. Way over a hundred of releases, they pay their bills, and they're really nice people. That doesn't happen that often.

Dave: *No Idea* #12 came out (No Idea started out as a zine.) and I was friends with one of Var's roommates (Var is the

working there, which was a whole lot cooler than college or working other jobs.

PJ: I started working at No Idea because the webmaster moved to Dayton, Ohio. So, No Idea had no way to update their website. I have a degree in web so I stepped in and did it.

Dave: Other labels can learn a lot from No Idea. However, it's a tricky education. The wisdom is in what we don't do, not what we do. Observe the negative space. We don't waste money on advertising. We advertise a lot, but exercise discretion. We try to be available, but don't "pimp ourselves" and cram a product towards a market. A delicate balance, indeed. Most importantly, other labels shouldn't look to

Will: Me and my brother lived in a tiny little town, Homosassa, Florida. Everyone used to call it Homo Stank Asses. I'm not kidding. I'd meet people in Orlando or Tampa or Jacksonville and they'd all say "Homo Stank Asses." I swear to god, it was a natural reaction. So, me and my brother, we were pretty bored and he was older than me and he had all the good ideas. My brother's a great man. I think he just lost his way along the way. Seriously, dude. Kind of a big bummer. My brother thought of the idea - you take a wig from you mom or grandma's house, right? He figured out a way to hook it up to a fishing reel and hide the fishing line. We lived in a neighborhood

with all these old people. They'd be walking. It's been done in movies, but this was totally before that. This was when I was eleven. We'd sit in the palmetto bushes and reel it in kind of fast and it looks like this bizarre animal. It was awesome. The old ladies would freak out. Cars would stop.

But, then, to improve on that – my brother's an innovator on prankdom – take one of your mom's old purses. Take a shit in it. This is when we were a little more advanced. This is when our friends had cars. My brother's fifteen and I'm twelve. Take a shit in purse, get the shit all over it. Drive the purse to a popular intersection, which is very few in my hometown. We go to the shit bars by the river – the redneck fishermen bars – and he'd put the poo purse, that's what we'd call it, by the entrance. "Holy shit, man, there's a purse. Maybe there's some money in it or something." They'd pick it up, their hand would get all poop. It was grand old times. We had some glorious redneck chases because of that. Those were the good old days before my brother became a southern Baptist.

Todd: Who worked in a human resources office?

PJ: That would be Will.

Will: I never worked in a human resources office. Both me and Dave delivered Chinese food to a human resources office.

Dave: You don't know how deep this shit runs, man.

Will: It bummed me out so bad. It was the human resources office. It's so fucking sinister. Human. Resource. What does that mean? You go in there; there's a big sign. It was a university, an

robot bureaucrats. It's kind of a bummer, seeing that shit. But it definitely made me never want to get an office job.

Todd: Why the extreme hatred for LA by Gainesville bands, even by you guys.

Dave: Panthro (UK United 13). I think it's not the actual geography of LA, but the mentality of LA. The plastic, silicone fake imagery. We come from a non-plastic, passion-filled, ding dong swamp.

PJ: We come from a place where you can ride your bike for five minutes, to go Common Grounds or Wayward Council to see a kickass show, not too much money, and have the time of your life.

Dave: Hollywood produces the images of something that isn't tangible but something you need to acquire to be happy and we see that as, no, you don't

you played at eight o'clock, they were showing a TV program on the entire wall of a club right in front of you guys and on three separate TVs. You had a thirty minute set, people were into it, you asked for an encore and the bar was, vwoop, turned on the lights and blasted the TVs. Get out of here.

Dave, when was the last time you were mistaken for a dead person under a stairwell?

Dave: It was the summer of 2000. (When Dave was living in the storage space under stairs.) I had had a rough night of too much coffee and general unrest, perhaps some mild gallivanting about town. The upstairs neighbors had some guests that involved children. The duo of little ones went into the backyard, my yard, my toi-



I remember being up to the top of the stadium, the lights were hurling and then remember my head belting. -Dave

institution of what's supposed to be good.

PJ: Helping out people.

Will: The strange thing was that it was on the fifteenth floor of a football stadium. So you go into this weird office in the catacombs of the deep depth of this football stadium. No windows nowhere, and that's human resource department of the University of Florida. It's strange. There's a massive waiting room – literally desperate people trying to get a job doing anything. There's a catalog of people who sign up for a job. "Oh, what's your name?" "Oh, my name's Sheila Johnson," or whatever. They look you up in this giant, hellish catalog. So, I'd go in there, still wasted, and deliver Chinese food to these

need anything to be happy except your friends.

Will: Every time I've been to LA, it's I'm driving ninety miles an hour for two hours to get to somebody who lives down the street. Then you're surrounded by bullshitters. This is in general. I've met totally cool people in Los Angeles. I've been surrounded by pseudo celebrities who aren't even close to being celebrities but think they're celebrities and people who have nothing to fuckin' talk about except figures and asinine terminology that I don't even know about. Completely devoid of humanity. It makes me want to freak out.

Todd: The last time I saw you Will, with the Beltones, it bummed me out. When

let, my view from home. I had my door open to let the breeze ruffle through my hair as I took a nap. I heard them coming in, as I hear everything that comes in the yard. I did my best to not attract attention, but a pair of legs visible sticking out from under a house through a tiny doorway leaves little to the imagination of an eight-year-old. There was a gasp, a yelp, and a rapid retreat to Mommy. I heard them mention "a body back in the yard." Yep, that's me. I wasn't in the mood to make friends, so I jumped up and out, locked my door, and hastened to the other side of the yard where I jumped the fence and didn't look back.



THE RED ONIONS

Within the past couple of months Los Angeles has come out with a quite a few good bands; amongst them stand the Red Onions. I'd say they're better than good; they're great. Their live shows are high energy and dancing wildly is always encouraged. As is roughing up the singer. They're like a Hispanic MC5 or Stooges. Like a bomb, singer, Paul Gonzalez, explodes and like shrapnel, he bursts out in the crowd. Rest assured you'll be wounded. Standing at 5'1", he seems a lot bigger when you get to know his charismatic personality. What I want to know is, how the hell could he be drinking Smirnoff Ice every time I see him?! (Of course, I forgot to ask that.) Jorge Gutierrez, pounding feverishly at the drums leaves a definite impression that there's no stopping the Red Onions. Not to mention, he's an educated man, speaking

trois languages and being one of the proud few in charge of caring for kids at an after-school program, which would explain why he exclusively drinks Newcastle. Guitarist Kevin Gonzalez, is cool and one hell of a guitarist, but, like a stick of dynamite with a long fuse you don't know how long it'll take for him to blow. I don't know what he does. I guess he goes on wilderness trips and smokes pot. For this Red Onion, not drinking is strongly suggested due to random violent outbursts. Hugo Salgado, bassist, is a really funny guy who doesn't seem to notice anyone's around when he's playing. He's a full-time bum and all-around stand-up guy. Need I say, he's a Miller 40 oz. man. The Red Onions are one of the few bands that don't shove their political views or ethnic pride down your throat. They use their

funky, witty sound to get their message out and hope you'll like both. Of course they do take the time to sing about sweet, sweet lovin'. I spoke with them about their soulfully cracked-out music, not looking like a hip LA band, fat girls, goats and soccer.

INTERVIEW BY PETITE PARQUET

Petite: Who do we have here tonight?

Paul: Jorge, Hugo, Paul, and... Richie.

Petite: Richie's taking Kevin's place tonight?

All: Yeah.

Petite: Which means he just has to be quiet.

Jorge: [laughing] And he has to say "What the fuck?!" That's our impersonation of Kevin. That's like an inside joke. Well, not anymore. You're in on it now.

Petite: Me and the rest of the reading public, which isn't really that many more people, statistically speaking.

Jorge: I bet I know what they do - 'cause I do this - they'll look at the picture and, if I don't like what they look like, I'll skip the interview. So, I guess if people look at our picture they probably won't even read this interview.

"Kevin": They'll be like, "What the fuck?!"

Petite: How did the band get started? A 4-track and Jorge?

Paul: It was Jorge, Hugo, and Kevin.

Jorge: We've been playing together since '97 but we were never into punk. We liked it, though. I met Paul a little after that. Then one day

he came over and we started writing punk songs. Then we called ourselves OJ Did It. When Paul came up with the name we were rolling. We had a few practices as a punk band.

Paul: It was a really violent punk band.

Jorge: Yeah it was. (Kevin) hated it and ended up quitting.

Hugo: 'Cause we'd always be fighting.

Jorge: Oh, yeah Hugo and me would always fight. (They're cousins.)



PHOTOS BY TODD

Paul: There was one time when Jorge threw a bottle...

Jorge: No, dude, it was a glass of water. No, no, no, it was Gatorade. Then Hugo said, "Fuck that, I'm taking a joint break!" And that was pretty much the end of that. But Paul still wanted to be in a band and I really liked what he was doing. I told him I'd do something with him as long as it wasn't punk. He got me more into it but it took a while. We wrote some songs and presented them to Kevin, who had previously quit. They were the three songs that are on our out-of-print demo. [laughing]

"Kevin": What the fuck?!

Jorge: He dug it and we just kept playing. I was playing guitar and we'd audition drummers and none of them worked out. So I ended up getting, and staying, on drums. We got more serious about it but not really serious, I guess.

Paul: Our first show was at Arts in Action in downtown. We played with a bunch of crust bands.

Jorge: It was all our first time ever playing in public, so I was horrified. Especially because they were all a bunch of crust kids and I show up not looking like a crusty kid. But, hey, they liked us.

Petite: How was it for you playing for the first time?

Paul: I was nervous but I felt at home once I was performing. I like when

people are dancing. I can't stand it when they just stand there.

Hugo: We used to be rowdier when we started.

Jorge: We would get rowdy even during our rehearsals. Kevin would just jump into the drum set and I'd be like, "Dude, we're just rehearsing." I miss those days actually, but it got pricey.

Hugo: There were injuries too.

Petite: Did you ever get hurt, Hugo?

Hugo: After one set we were trashing everything and this fucker (points to Jorge) dropped a cymbal and it cut my string. Just as I was walking over to ask Kevin for a string, Jorge throws another cymbal and it hits me right in the leg.

Paul: Yeah, Jorge is always throwing things at us.

Jorge: That was a landmark gig.

Paul: The cymbal went flying over my head!

Jorge: Oh yeah, then Hugo got mad and he threw it and it went right over Paul's head!

Paul: See, to me, that was punk rock when we first started. There are good bands but all the stuff they call punk is so watered-down.

Jorge: Oh, we were just called "punks." [laughs]

Petite: Yeah, those are my crazy, cracked-out neighbors. So, you guys remind me of like a Stooges burrito.

Is there any influence from them?

Jorge: We get that all the time because of Paul. He kind of resembles Iggy Pop in nature.

Petite: When you're at home what do you usually listen to?

Hugo: Kylie Minogue.

Petite: You watch the videos. You don't have the sound on!

Jorge: I listen to a lot of soul and funk.

[Paul in the background fondles himself while wacha-kaing a song.]

Petite: Is that how you romance yourself Jorge? What about you Hugo?

Hugo: I like Sonic Youth a lot. I also like old stuff, the MC5 and stuff.

Jorge: Kevin's into...

Petite: (turning to "Kevin") What are you into Kevin?



WE WOULD GET ROWDY DURING OUR REHEARSALS. KEVIN WOULD JUST JUMP INTO THE DRUM SET. I MISS THOSE DAYS, BUT IT GOT PRICEY.

"Kevin": What the fuck?!

Petite: He's going to read this and be like...

All: What the fuck?!

Jorge: Kevin's the hippie in our band. He really likes...

Petite: Smoking pot?

Jorge: Yeah, he smokes pot, listens to the Association and the Beatles. I think that's what makes our music sound the way it does. All of our influences come out when we make music and we give it a different shape. I don't think we sound like a typical garage band. I think we get more of a visual reference to that 'cause of Paul. When people ask us what kind of music we play we just say, "Rock'n'roll." The elements of funk, garage, and punk are what make it work.

Petite: I think that comes across pretty well. Kevin looks like the guy you'd sit behind in homeroom and you'd never know he's there until you realized the last day he'd been putting tiny little gum wads in your hair.

Jorge: You can tell we're all into the same thing. That's the best thing. We like that, 'cause we

don't want to look typical. There are a lot of bands out there that look typical (I think he means boring) and it's annoying. What did you want to say, "Kevin"?

"Kevin": What the fuck?!

Paul: We like a lot of the same stuff but there are a lot of bands that I like and he can't stand.

Jorge: There are bands that I like that people can't get into.

Paul: Kool and the Gang.

Jorge: Hey, I was trying to get rid of that record.

Paul: [singing] Emergency.

Jorge: I dig the whole dressing alike stuff but that's just not for us. Our priority is just about making music.

Petite: Yeah, like let's say you're standing outside of a club and you hear a band and you're like, "Wow, that band sounds really fucking good." Then you walk in and look at them and think, "Aw, that just totally killed it." I know it sounds really stupid that one would be so superficial to make a final judgment on looks but it happens. I would venture to say that if you guys weren't amazing, people would probably be turned off because some people have an idea of what a band should look like.

Jorge: Well, we're not the most attractive guys.

Petite: No, that's not what I'm getting at. You guys have an attitude and energy that people feed off of. It's that you'd like people to enjoy it but if they don't, it's no sweat off your

back. You're doing it simply because you enjoy it, not for any other reason.

Hugo: Naw, it's just 'cause we have lazy eyes so they think we don't care.

Jorge: People really appreciate it when bands are sincere when they're playing. I think we're one of the most sincere bands 'cause there's no signs of pretension in any of us. We don't give a shit about being cool. The reason we started a band was because we love music.

Paul: It's the feeling you get. Some bands like to stage what they're going to do. We couldn't do that. I want to see people moving. I want to be *in* the crowd. I want people to push me.

Jorge: We want to make it like a party. We don't want to separate ourselves from the crowd. We're all geeks, you should see us.

Hugo: We all read books during the summer and write book reports. Except for Paul - if it doesn't have pictures...

Jorge: I think there's too



WE ALL COME FROM THE GHETTO AND WE HAVE A LOT TO SAY ABOUT SOCIETY. MOSTLY IT'S ABOUT POLITICS AND SEX BUT WE DON'T GET ANY SEX.

much phony bullshit going on in music, all over the place, to the point where it's bleeding into the mainstream. That's why you see "garage bands" on MTV. It's a turn off for me.

Petite: Well, let's say your popularity took you that far. What would you do?

Jorge: Part of me does want it just to get our music out there and get people listening. Another part of us is that we have meaningful lyrics. The lyrics that Paul and me write are very politically oriented.

Petite: Why?

Jorge: Because we all come from the ghetto and we have a lot to say about society. Mostly it's about politics and sex but we don't get any sex. I think music and lyrics should compliment each other.

Paul: It depends on the band, of course. That's not what we're trying to accomplish.

Petite: What do you guys think of the bands in LA?

Jorge: I think there are a lot of good bands in LA. I think there's something good happening. I feel like it's a backlash to how everyone's hyping up garage. I feel like that's been the talk of the town and it's forced everyone to do it a little rougher and change it up a bit.

Petite: Have any of you ever done anything illegal?

Jorge: I won't lie: I've driven drunk before. But I don't drink anymore.

Paul: For the moment.

Petite: That's interesting. Why don't you drink anymore, Jorge? Let's educate some

people.

Jorge: There were concerns about my liver. My doctor told me not to drink for three months. I've had a few run-ins with the law 'cause I like to be an asshole to them.

(He lasted about three weeks.)

Petite: I heard on Chris Ziegler's radio show that you're pretty good at that.

Jorge: What, being an asshole?

Petite: Yeah, you've got a pretty sharp tongue. Let's talk about fat girls, shall we?

Hugo: [laughing] They no longer go to our shows, thanks to Jorge.

Petite: The Fat Girl Boycott of 2003. What was that, "Kevin"?

"Kevin": What the fuck?!

Jorge: The biggest disappointment is when you meet someone and they're not as nice as you thought they'd be.

Paul: Like one of our first shows we played with the Wives and when they played we got really into it and accidentally fucked up some of their shit. Then the drummer got really pissed and was yelling, "What the fuck! You fucked up our shit!" That was surprising.

Jorge: We're pretty calm guys in that respect, except for Kevin.

Paul and Hugo: Yeah, except for Kevin.

Petite: Kevin?! Like how?

Paul: Well, at one of our shows he got really fucked up and said he was going to fuck me up. I was like, "What?" And he said, "No, seriously. I'm gonna fuck you

up." He started swinging his guitar in a drunken rage.

Jorge: Yeah, don't booze him up. Just smoke him out and he'll be fine.

"Kevin": Hey, what the fuck?!

Petite: Do you guys think you'll ever get the chance to tour?

Jorge: Well, I work, Paul has a full-time job, Hugo volunteers at a homeless shelter, and Kevin owns his own business and has another band. He has another band with his girlfriend. Hopefully we'll get a chance. I don't feel like we've done enough in Southern California.

Paul: We're going to tour Mexico City with El T.R.I.

Jorge: Yeah, in August we're playing with El T.R.I. at the Stadium Azteca in Mexico City.

Hugo: Yeah, we're going to play the halftime show during the America games.

Jorge: Contra las Chivas.

Petite: Chivas are goats, for those of you who are Spanish impaired.

Paul: Goats that play soccer.

Jorge: Yeah, I'm a big Chivas fan.

Petite: Is that why you wear soccer shoes? Always ready for a soccer game, you fuckin' Mexican?!

Hugo: He always has a twelve pack and a soccer ball in the trunk of his car.

The Red Onions are releasing their first 7" single on Revenge Records. Limited to 500.



photo by Jason Grissom



ANTiSEEN

20 YEARS LATER

INTERVIEW BY ART ETTINGER

ANTiSEEN formed in August of 1983 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Since then, they've released seven full-length studio albums and over 40 EPs. Thanks to TKO Records' *Vault of ANTiSEEN* series, all of the band's albums are back in print on vinyl and CD, and Steel Cage records is about to release a tome documenting the band's history, *Destructo Maximus*. They're one of the more distinct bands in the history of punk, adding dashes of country and early '80s hardcore to a fundamental Ramones-influenced sound. I talked to vocalist Jeff Clayton and guitarist Joe Young about common misconceptions people tend to have about ANTiSEEN and about Joe Young's experience running for office.

Art: ANTiSEEN's been around for a full twenty years now – how does it feel being a band for so long?

Jeff Clayton: The part that I really like about having been together so long is some of the respect we get from some people even if they don't like us, because in this kind of music it's pretty much unheard of for bands to stay together this long. Lots of groups reunite, but we've never had the privilege to cash in on a reunion tour. [laughs]

Joe Young: When we started, I figured a year or two if we're lucky, we'd do an EP, get us in shows for free, and that would be about it. In '87 I left the band for a while and moved to Atlanta. At that time, I thought that would be it. I came back in early '88 and once we started getting to the Midwest and up North I had a feeling that we might keep going for a while. We had our first trip to Europe in '92 and started getting better labels to put out our records. I realized "this is starting to get fun all of a sudden. We could keep it going." I think Clayton might have trimmed the split ends of his hair two or three times over the years, but he hasn't had a real haircut since that first gig in '83 when he shaved it completely bald.

Art: ANTiSEEN's on a big label now, TKO – how is that working out?

Clayton: It couldn't be better. The records are actually getting out there. Now it's like virtually every album we've ever done is back in print and you can get it for non-collector prices, which I know some fans are pretty happy about. I'm flattered that some people pay a lot of money for our records, but they really shouldn't have to. [laughs]

Young: TKO's been the best label that we've worked with so far. Mark's doing great. He's really dedicated to pushing stuff and doing it right, and he's got a lot of varied tastes. A lot of punk labels have a tendency to lean just towards one style of punk, but he seems to have a little bit of everything.

Art: You've recently played some very high profile music festivals. How have you been received at these festivals?

Clayton: Every one of them has been really good. We played the Beer Olympics down in Atlanta that's put on by GMM Records. I guess that was just because of our association with TKO.

Art: You had to be one of the only, if not *the* only band with hair there. How was that?

Clayton: Yeah, pretty much. It was definitely pretty wild. We definitely stuck out like a sore thumb, but we were treated real well by the crowd and the other bands. Nothing to complain about at all – it was fun. We played it two years in a row. And we just got through playing the L.A. Shakedown, which despite the mess that it started out as, ended up being pretty good for us.

Art: And you've also done another European tour recently. Why do you think ANTiSEEN is so well received in Europe?

Clayton: It's kind of hard to tell. I think it's 'cuz they really like hard American music, but since we first went over, there have been so many bands coming and going. Germany sees it all. Every band tours Germany. And you'd figure they'd be jaded, but we still get a good response over there. I think from talking to some of the people, a lot of them really like the Southern image and the fact that we don't have to play it up, because we *are* it. We're not like Pride and Glory or something that had to think about it and try it on for size. It's really all we know and the fact that we are this type of person that they envision being one way, yet we play punk rock like the Ramones is something they can't pigeonhole, so they enjoy it, which is fine by me. We really want to play Japan. We put a couple of singles out over there and we're getting ready to have a "best of" album come out on CD over there.

Art: For a better part of the '90s, ANTiSEEN was primarily known for having been a one time backup band for GG Allin – do you agree with that?

Young: Yeah, I agree. That was a bummer because we'd started playing before we'd ever heard of GG or knew him. Once we met him and did that record – which we did right after he got out of jail – it did kind of catapult us up there for a period. The first two or three times we went to Europe, all they did ask us about was GG: did we like recording with him? It's died down an awful lot. They've stopped bugging us about it. One thing I admired about GG was that when he came to stay with you, everything he had in his suitcase was everything he owned. That's the way I've become. I don't have a stereo anymore, don't have a DVD. I don't have a computer at my house. I have a couple of short wave radios. I listen to talk radio probably twelve or fourteen hours a day.

Clayton: Of course, now I'm singing for the Murder Junkies again for the first time in almost a decade. I've been thinking about how we tried so hard to crawl out of that shadow, and now the album's been released again and I'm doing these tours. I'm wondering if that's going to

put us right back where we were. But I think at this point in the game, ten years after he died, we've carved enough of a niche in the underground of our own that we're finally seen as a separate entity now. All of the advertisements for these Murder Junkies shows say "featuring Jeff Clayton of ANTiSEEN on vocals." The sexual deviancy that GG used to sing about – that ain't our bag. We're a little bit more on the violence side of things [laughs]. And I've heard people say, "Why don't you do more songs like GG?" and it's like well, we don't do that kind of stuff. I think some people always wanted us to be the band of four GG Allins and it just wasn't going to happen.

Art: What are some misconceptions people have about ANTiSEEN?

Young: I'm not saying that we're not a political band. We're not an apolitical band, and political issues might pop up from time to time in the songs, going all the way back to "NC Royalty," but by in large we're not a political band. Clayton's not interested in it. I don't even know if he votes. I think he's more interested in telling a story and venting some frustration. It's very seldom to see us doing songs where we're railing at society or trying to fix the world's problems in a three-minute song. That's something Jeff and I always thought was ridiculous. My philosophy always was if the Beatles can't do it, Bob Dylan can't do it, or the Clash can't do it, how are we gonna do it? How is one of our little songs really going to make a difference? Personally, I'm political. But as a band, we're apolitical. Another misconception people have about us is that we get called metal sometimes. I think we're about as far from metal as you can get. Our songs are too short; there are no solos. And I don't see us as being metal at all. I think of our music as being just straight ahead rock or hard rock. I would have called it punk rock in the first ten or fifteen years we played, but in the last few years if you say punk people have a tendency to consider that to be more like Green Day or Avril Lavigne or somebody like that. And we're not in that

vein. The Ramones was the last group that I really latched onto and went, "Alright, I'll be listening to these guys for years."

Clayton: That we're racist because we're from the South. As if the South were the only place with the Ku Klux Klan. In reality, I consider myself a rightwing, conservative liberal, as opposed to a bleeding heart, lefty liberal. The bleeding heart liberals are so hypocritical, but they never get called on it. If you call them on it, you're considered a knee-jerk reactionary so it's a no win situation to even voice your opinion.

Art: Why do you think the more PC factions of punk rock spurn you?

Young: PC is a sneaky way of saying liberal, and we ain't a bunch of panty-waisted liberals, that's for sure.

Clayton: I don't know because it seems like that faction seems to jump on us for things that other people have either done before or done a lot worse. For some reason when we push the envelope a little bit, it's like the end of the world. Or maybe they really care about us. Some of the stuff we say that runs against popular opinion, I think we say with such joy and cheer that it makes people angry. But a lot of it is just people making assumptions because we're from the South.

Art: Do you think that, as a group, poor white people are overlooked, even looked down upon?

Young: Since 1865, it has *always* been open season on Southern white males. Simple as that. Only white Southern males can be called white trash with total immunity.

Clayton: Yeah, of course they are. Just check out TV everyday. You can put down poor white people all you want to, especially if they're from the South.

Art: What does it mean to you to have a rich, unashamed Southern heritage?

Young: It means lots of humidity in the summer and 162 Braves games a year on TV.

photo by Allana Sleeth



Clayton: To me it means not going along with the entire world's belief that everyone in the South was for slavery. Of all the places in the United States, the South gets shit on the most. And it's mainly by people who've never been down here. They think we've all got one tooth in our head and shit in an outhouse and spit tobacco out the side of our mouth. Just look at the show *Dukes of Hazard*. To me, living in a place that does have so much history and things to be proud of, and not things to

antics – do you expect that to change given the recent Rhode Island club fire incident?

Clayton: I imagine it will... pretty unfortunate what happened there. I feel sorry for the families and the band. No band wants to see their audience hurt, much less killed. I don't know. It was just a big series of things that had bad timing there. Look how long that group's been together and nothing like this has ever happened. Nothing like this has ever happened in rock'n'roll. Ever. We talk about it all the time. With the stuff we've done –we don't even have licensed

to be on the prowl more so than ever and that used to be a thing you didn't really have to worry about unless a place was really crowded.

Young: Probably so, because a lot of small clubs that we play, especially the ones that have the little tiny stages and little roofs, are just not going to allow it and some of the places we play around here have already laid down the law to us. We don't really do explosions. We don't use pyrotechnics per se. A little bit of flash

I'VE CAUGHT ON FIRE A FEW TIMES, BUT NOTHING THAT SENT ME TO THE HOSPITAL OR ANYTHING.

photo by Greg Bailey

be ashamed of, like the rest of the country seems to think, just makes me glad. I'm glad I live here and I'm glad my family was born and raised here. Keep the big city crap and the way they see us because if they ever want to experience it firsthand and get their conception blown out of the water, they can just come down here.

Art: How much does sarcasm play into your lyrics?

Clayton: A lot. If we didn't have sarcasm, there would be no vocals on the records. There's hardly any sacred cow that we won't take a stab at. We'll make fun of what we see fit.

Young: The Dead Kennedys didn't really want to lynch the landlord, I don't think, in a literal sense. Neither do we.

Art: Your name comes from the concept that you're anti-scene, but you've arguably started a scene all your own, The Confederacy of Scum – do you see any irony in that?

Clayton: Weird how that worked out, isn't it? [laughs] We were the ANTI S-E-E-N, which was just a clever misspelling of s-c-e-n-e, and then ten or fifteen years into this game there's a whole group of bands going on the same wavelength. It is kind of ironic that we're anti-scene and created a scene.

Young: I do see the irony there and I kind of have a problem with it because I didn't want to be in any scene. And we didn't really start the COS. We called the group ANTiSEEN because when we started there really was one scene to speak of in North Carolina and it was up in Raleigh with Corrosion of Conformity, No Rock Stars, and The Ugly Americans. Three or four bands up there and they thought they were the center of the universe, not just the state capitol. There's always been a friendly rivalry between those of us in Charlotte and those in Raleigh. They always thought they had the best punk scene in the South on the East Coast. And that's why we chose the name we did.

Art: Your live shows tend to incorporate fire



pyro technicians working for us, and most times we do it without any kind of fire extinguisher or anything – we've never had any bad incidences. I've caught on fire a few times, but nothing that sent me to the hospital or anything. Just some stinky hair and my leg catching on fire. In light of the recent events, we will be having the brakes put on that, especially in some clubs, I would imagine. I'll definitely make sure that we ask or talk to them about it first because you know fire marshals are going

powder or lighter fluid on a washboard – that's not pyrotechnics, that's not explosives. It's fire, but not explosives. The biggest stunt that Clayton's done for years is blowing up the washboards. We've never been able to do that overseas or even in California. We never had the time to find the right powder when we were out there.

Art: What do the members of the band do when they're not playing in ANTiSEEN?

Clayton: I'm a stay at home dad. I make my living off selling stuff on the internet and through playing and through drawing. Sir Barry Hannibal is a plumber by trade. Doug Canipe lives the same kind of lifestyle I lead except he doesn't have children.

Young: We've never been a full time band where we're making a living off of it. If we did, I think we would have broken up years ago. The fun of it probably would have worn off really quick if it were something we did for a job. For a job, I run my family's floral business.

Art: In what non-obvious ways do the floral arts and ANTiSEEN enrich one another?

Young: Some burgundy roses match Jeff Clayton's blood in color.

Art: Have your florist talents ever wound up on an ANTiSEEN stage?

Young: No way!

Art: Have you ever done the floral arranging for a

hero of yours?

Young: I don't consider him a "hero," but Senator Jesse Helms' office called in an order one day when a prominent Republican in our town passed away.

Art: Joe, you ran for office as a Libertarian and almost won – how was that experience?

Young: I ran twice. I ran in 2000 and got clobbered for state office, but I ran in 2001 and I missed by just fifteen votes at getting on the city council. I had 735 votes and the

something," and that ended up being printed in the newspaper in town and things like that haunt me. I did not think, especially after getting clobbered in the 2000 election, that I had a chance of winning. I was doing it just to build up the party's name a little bit and get some attention. And I figured that if I came even close I'd be doing good. I thought, "As long as I don't finish dead last out of nine people running....," but I was right on the edge.

Art: Is ANTiSEEN a Libertarian band?

Clayton: It's really funny that for such a

Art: Is the internal ideological consistency of Libertarianism part of its appeal?

Young: It's probably part of the appeal, but it's also part of what holds us back, too. Politics is all about compromise and I believe that's why the Democrats and the Republicans have a stranglehold: 'cuz they're experts at compromising with each other.

Art: Few people with minoritarian political views see electoral politics as a viable means for change. Do you?

photo by Allana Sleeth

I RAN IN 2000 AND GOT CLOBBERED FOR STATE OFFICE, BUT I RAN IN 2001 AND I MISSED BY JUST FIFTEEN VOTES AT GETTING ON THE CITY COUNCIL

guy who edged me out for the last seat had 750. He was an eight-term Democrat incumbent and he'd served on the council before. Just that I could even get close to him was a shock and I finished fifth out of nine people who were running. Now that I look back on it, I tell you I'm glad that I missed it, knowing what I know now.

Art: Did you face negative campaigning as a result of his being in ANTiSEEN?

Clayton: They tried to use it against him big time. "Go look at this guy's website – the things that he endorses. Look at the language on this message board." They pulled everything out they could. He even got attacked by one doctor there in town. Not literally attacked, but attacked via e-mail talking about all the stuff the band says. I wrote the guy back myself and said, "Look, you're aiming at the wrong guy. You need to be mad at me. Joe simply plays the guitar to what I rant and rave about. If you want to talk about people bleeding and tearing shit up, that's me, not Joe." I hope we didn't doom his career as a politician, but we may have.

Art: What was the mistake that caused the recount?

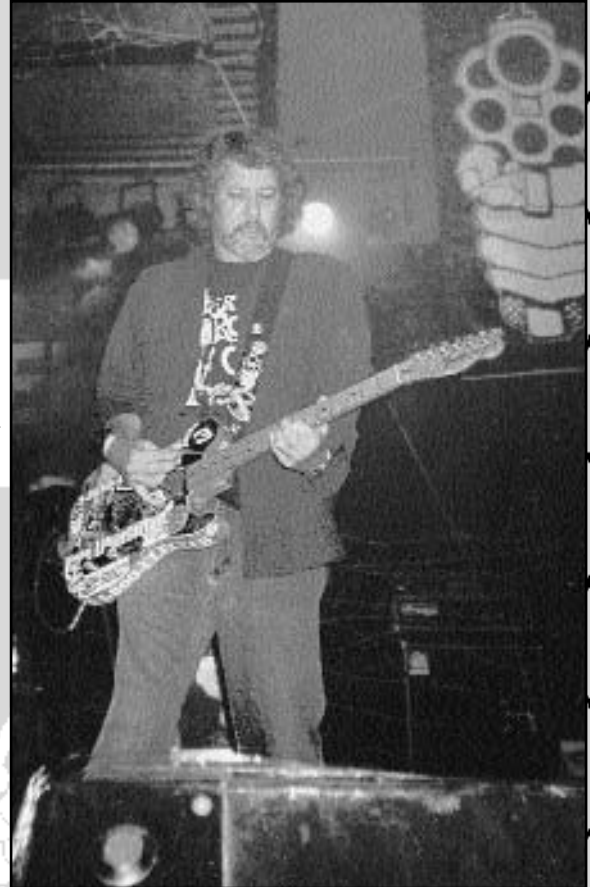
Young: Friday after the election was when we found out the mistake that had been made during the night of the election. What had happened is that they had counted a lot of votes twice. They had counted a whole bunch of my votes twice. Four of the eleven precincts double counted my votes because of a mistake over write-in candidates. There were several write in candidates on the ballot. Almost all of the people who voted for me were voting for the write-in candidates as well. And whenever they would vote for the write-in candidate, it would kick the ballot out of the machine, so my votes ended up being counted twice. I made a comment just jokingly on the board that, "I don't know how this happened. Maybe when the polls closed that night all the precinct workers got drunk or stoned or

nonpolitical band, we sure get asked about politics a lot. I think a lot of the things we believe as individuals do coincide with the things outlined by the Libertarian party. Whether any or all of us are registered Libertarians, I know I'm not. I think Doug is. I can't be sure about Barry. Of course Joe is. But having the "in" through Joe, we've learned a lot more than we would have reading on our own. A lot of it makes sense, just common sense.

Young: I think a lot of our song themes are Libertarian oriented because they're about personal freedom and choices, but I wouldn't say that we're a Libertarian band per se. I couldn't think of anybody who is. I know Mojo Nixon considers himself a Libertarian and that pops up in a lot of his songs. When bands try to write Libertarian, it comes out bad, like Rush. Neil Peart is Libertarian and that pops up in some of their songs. They're not really my style.

Art: Political scientists tend to place Libertarianism on the left of the political spectrum. Do you agree with this designation?

Young: That's funny because a lot of people, especially here in the South, tend to put it more on the right. They seem to think of all of us as conservatives who just like to smoke dope or something. But I like to think of it as not being on the left or the right, but on a diamond chart. Ever seen a Nolan Chart, the world's smallest political quiz? That's where I consider Libertarians to be. I don't consider us to be on the left or on the right. I see us on the top of the diamond, with the authoritarians and fascists on the bottom.



Young: It's either got to be done by the ballot box or the ammo box, but I'd prefer to do it by the ballot box. I'm sure a lot of people who backed Gore or Nader consider the country to be a right wing conservative hell-hole right now, and I have a lot of Libertarian friends who are constantly complaining about certain rights that are being stripped away. I know there were a heck of a lot of people protesting the war, some of whom I think just hate Bush. I knew a lot of people who felt the same way about Clinton for eight years, as if for eight years he could do no right. But I've tried not to be that kind of person. As much as I follow politics, I try not to let the happiness and quality of my life be affected by who is or is not in power.



REMEMBERING WESLEY

1963-2003

by Scott Cox-Stanton

Wesley was my brother, and I never new the bounds of his music. We were all in foster homes as children and, until I was seventeen, I had never spent much time with him. Sure, we had visits but they were all supervised so we never got to play and frolic like children did.

People take things for granted like having a mom and dad and a feeling of security that all children should feel. We didn't have that, but through all the adversity we rose.

Wesley was twenty when he got his first keyboard. It was a Casio. It was so small in his hands. He could barely hit the keys, so when he sold another drawing he got another one, bigger than the last!

Wesley also loved listening to rock bands like The Scorpions, Bon Jovi, Pink Floyd, The Cure, many others. He would ask our brothers Steven and Walter to play songs for him to dance to, and they would play them all night. They had record collections that would rival Dr.Wax! He would hold his arms out to his sides like he was flying and bounce around like he was on fire and would sing so loud!

He also had a love for clocks as well. One day, he came home with a school clock, so I asked him, "Why don't you get a wristwatch?" not realizing his wrists were too large. He said, "'cause I like it." So that was that.

Our mother was very abusive and an alcoholic. She would take his money and drink herself to sleep for what reason I never knew. Roger Lee was her boyfriend at the time. He was far from being a model citizen. He would have my older brothers running back and forth to the liquor store all night long!! He was the straw that broke up our already fractured home.

But Wesley, Walter, Steven, and Richard were the backbone of my teen years. They taught me to appreciate life, no matter how hard it was living in the projects. We were always under ridicule by the people there, getting robbed. Life was very hard, but through it all Wesley reached for his brass ring and head-butted it, PROVING WHERE THERE'S A WILLIS, THERE'S A WAY!!!

To all of his fans/friends, god bless you for the kind words you have for my brother. ROCK ON CHICAGO, ROCK OVER LONDON!!! You gave music and memories never to be forgotten! I'll see you soon, so save me a seat!!

—Michael Willis

With his permission, I've reprinted here the letter that Wesley Willis's brother, Michael, shared with Wesley's family, friends, and fans at his funeral service and on the Alternative Tentacles website. This letter offers a perspective on Wesley that many of his recent friends didn't have. I was lucky to meet some of Wesley's brothers at his service. Michael Willis's words, his sincerity, his personality, and his warmth – not to mention his looks – reminded me so much of Wesley. Like Wesley, Michael downplayed the horrific times that he'd lived through and used his time at the service to honor his brother, to connect with Wesley's fans and friends, to offer a positive perspective, and share more than a few laughs.

When Michael speaks of being "ridiculed" in the projects, he doesn't come close to signifying what most of us mean by "ridicule." The middle-school variety of ridicule that many of us have known pales in comparison to what Wesley and his family knew. I hope we remember that the next time we hear anyone crying about the perils of being a punkrock-er.

Not long ago, I was driving Wesley home from a visit, back to his motel in Mount Prospect, Illinois. As we drove into Chicago and the high rises came into view, Wesley asked if I would drive him by an area of the housing projects he used to live in. As we got close, I could see the fear and silence in Wesley. It was an overwhelming moment. The memories seemed to hit Wes hard, and he said in a very assuring voice (and if you know Wesley, you know the voice I'm talking about), "It was a fucking war zone." I took that as a cue that it was time to move on and head to the suburbs where Wes was staying. I could not even imagine the hell that Wesley went through in his younger life. I am so awed and so thankful that he rose through all the adversity and spread sunshine to so many people. When most of us would have given up, Wesley went forward 100% and channeled his creativity into making drawings of Chicago, which he sold. It was, for him, a way out of his circumstances.

Enter schizophrenia. Schizophrenia, an illness that afflicts about one percent of the population, is the most severe and devastating form of mental illness known to humankind. With its onset, Wesley's life took on a whole new realm of difficulties and complexities that were out of his control. The horrible illness tortured him in so many ways. The very medications, which were intended to provide him relief from the voices in his head, caused innumerable side effects, including weight gain. Gaining so much weight took a toll on Wesley's joy. Getting out of bed to use the bathroom was as strenuous as a five-mile run. Getting in a car and putting on a seat-

belt became a difficult ordeal. But Wesley always insisted that we all wear our seatbelts – another small way that Wesley showed how much he cherished life. I never heard Wesley feel sorry for himself. Instead, he wrote a song about his weight: "I'm sorry I got fat, I will try to slim down." No nonsense. Wesley always cut to the point.

Wesley made the best of all situations. Years after being diagnosed with schizophrenia, Wesley was diagnosed with diabetes. Like all things in life, Wesley handled his diabetes like a trooper. When he'd visit, he'd buy sugarless foods. After he decided he was lactose-intolerant, he'd buy dairy-free foods. He took whatever circumstances came his way and adapted. He wouldn't let anything destroy his joyride!

Then Wesley was told that he had leukemia. It was hard to tell how Wesley felt about this. When Wesley called me and told me he had cancer, in the next breath, he was telling me about his new keyboard and its heavy metal sound. Cancer was just one more thing trying to stop his joyride and he wasn't going to let it. I know he must have been scared as a baby sometimes, but he chose not to dwell on it. He was too busy living to stop and think about dying. And that's how he was until the very end.

When people remember Wesley, I want them to remember his strength, his endless capacity for joy, and

most of all, his dignity. We live in world that's wound-up so tightly, that it's hard for some people to comprehend the immense dignity of someone who has a mental illness and has no problem writing a song like "I'm sorry I got fat," or saying "my dick has to piss" when he has to pee. But he had dignity like no other. He was proud of his work, and rightly so. He had a work ethic that would rival anybody's. He was a truly great, honest, and dependable friend. He was the best bullshit detector I have ever seen. He knew who the "real" people were and he made friends with them. The others, he simply dismissed as customers. When I hear the talk of "is he being exploited?" I laugh. That's an insult to Wesley and to the people who were so moved by his art and music. He was an artist and a musician because he was an artist and musician. He wasn't on stage because somebody made him get up there. He was there to strut his stuff, to make money, and to meet his fans. His "demons" (the voices in his head) did what they could to shoot his plans down, but Wesley's capacity for joy and his enormous will always won out in the end.

Wesley truly enjoyed talking with everyone. There were no hierarchies in Wesley's world. Though Wesley had many "high profile" friends, he didn't care if you were Joe-celebrity or Joe-the-sandwich-artist. Everybody was on the same playing field

In a very small town in the middle of Ohio, Wesley walked in with loads of money in each hand. As he walked toward the teller, relishing the moment, Wesley proclaimed, "I'm Wesley Willis and I'm a motherfucking hustler. You better recognize." The bankers failed to see the humor, and Wesley was escorted out of the bank.



pictures courtesy of the Willis family and Eyeosaur Productions

and he made everyone feel important. Wesley liked to introduce himself to new people by saying, "Hello, I'm Wesley Willis and I'm a rock star." He took that title with pride, and he really did embody everything a rock star should be. He was a rock star, but he was like no other rock star I've ever known. He would stay after a show and talk with his fans all night, giving affectionate headbutts and exchanging phone numbers to make contact later. He loved to visit his fans, as they quickly became not just fans, but friends. Other rock stars visit the homes of their fans for an hour or so, when MTV's cameras are rolling. But Wesley would buy his own

ticket (usually Airtran, Amtrak, or Greyhound), and visit for days or weeks. He would enjoy playing his keyboard and writing new songs about the friends he made on each visit.

I was blessed to have been such a close friend of Wesley's. I was lucky enough to spend time with him right up to the very end. He was still in positive spirits the last time I saw him in his Hospice hospital bed. He was cracking jokes and being the Wesley we all loved. However, we knew Wesley was dying, and it was heart breaking. Wesley was my great friend, my mentor, my muse, and angel. Though his immense spirit lives on in all of us

who loved him, his bellowing voice, his hilarious and tender answering-machine messages and phone calls, his hand-holding, his eyes, and his unfathomable warmth will be missed forever.

Though there's really no way that words can capture what it was like to hang out with Wesley, I do want to share a few of my favorite memories. Those of us who were lucky enough to spend a lot of time with Wesley have an endless supply of stories such as these. I hope these words can convey a bit of the humor, sweetness, and joy that Wesley shared so generously with his friends.

Wesley, the early bird: Wesley was set to visit us in Florida. We showed up at the Jacksonville airport early to meet him at his gate. Much to my surprise, I saw Wes at the front door of the airport in a wheelchair, with a security guard on each side of him. Wes saw me and got a huge grin on his face, "Scott Causey! I decided to come early. I have been here for four hours. Flight 8590 from Chicago to Atlanta was a joyride. Flight 337 from Atlanta to Jacksonville was a hellride. I had an outburst on the airplane." The security guards did not look very happy.

Wesley's bonding rituals: In addition to head-butting, Wesley liked to hold hands – I remember driving all night in our Dodge Stratus rental car, holding hands and singing Roger Miller's "King of the Road" and Glenn Campbell's "Rhinestone Cowboy" at the top of our lungs.

Wesley the headbanger: On one road trip, Wesley strutted his stuff up to the counter of a Wendy's in Michigan City, Indiana, with his headphones blaring. To the woman at the counter, he said (loudly!), "How do, Miss? I'm just having a rock and roll joyride, listening to that satanic heavy metal of Iron Maiden."

Wesley, the Krautrocker: In his Hospice hospital room, Wesley had a little fan mounted on his bedrail to keep his face cool. I told him that if you sing into a fan, you'll sound like a robot. Immediately, he turned toward the fan and belted out Kraftwerk's "We are the Ro-bots... doo doo dee doo."

Wesley, the Christian: Driving through Alabama with Wesley, our radio stopped for a while on a religious station. The preacher said, "The Lord is my shepherd," and Wesley spouted out, "The Lord is my German shepherd."

Wesley, the conversationalist: The day that Wesley was being moved into the Hospice house, due to his severe pain, the doctor came into his room to check on him one last time and tell him he'd be moving. Wes was listening to his music, and when the doctor walked in, Wesley called out to him, "Do you like that rock and roll song called 'The Frogs'?" The doctor looked at me, confused. I said, "He asked if you like his rock and roll song called 'The Frogs.'" The doctor was already a covert; he said he loved it.

Wesley, telling it like it is: Back in his hotel room after a show, Wesley did the first thing he always did. He counted his money. This night, he'd made an especially large amount of money. I walked into his room to find him naked, lying on his bed, surrounded by money. Smiling, he shouted out to me, "I'm a rich black man!"

Wesley, the advocate for the working class: Wesley sang a couple of Beatles songs at a concert. First, he sang "Hey Jude," then he sang, "All the Lonely People," but he did his own version, changing it to "All the Working People." Wesley was fascinated with the working class, and he really did appreciate workers.

Wesley, the human calculator: A young lady at a concert in Milwaukee asked Wesley how



old he was. Wesley answered with cheer, and asked how old she was. She said nineteen. Without missing a beat, Wesley said, "You are 6,935 days old." I remembered the number so I could test Wes later and call his bluff. He was completely accurate, and from that day on, Wes has been my calculator and telephone book. (He remembered nearly every telephone number he'd ever been given – and that was a lot.)

When I hear the talk of "is he being exploited?" I laugh. That's an insult to Wesley and to the people who were so moved by his art and music. He was an artist and a musician because he was an artist and musician. He wasn't on stage because somebody made him get up there.

Wesley, the "good ol' boy": Wesley was lying in his hospital bed, looking very bad. We were scared that he was fading away. Then suddenly, he shook his head and opened his eyes wide, pronouncing, "I'm just glad they got Uday and Qusay."

Wesley the joker: Wesley decided in the middle of a tour that he needed to get larger bills so he wouldn't have to carry such a wad of cash. Wes could get very pushy, and he pushed on. So I drove him up to a bank in a very small town in the middle of Ohio. Wesley walked in, dressed in his Sean John gear, with loads of money in each hand. As he walked toward the teller, relishing the moment, Wesley proclaimed, "I'm Wesley Willis and I'm a mother-fucking hustler. You better recognize." The bankers failed to see the humor, and Wesley was escorted out of the bank quicker than he could calculate how many days were in forty-three years.

Wesley; he ain't no rerun: I quickly learned that Wesley does exactly what Wesley wants to do. He invited me to be a member of the

Dragnews on a short tour of the south and I played slide guitar to accompany his new batch of "country rock songs." During the first show, I requested that Wes play one of his hits, because his fans were calling them out. Wes shouted at me, "Shut the hell up. I'm doing new songs. I ain't no rerun from *What's Happening*." I learned to shut my mouth and play along with the man and his music.

Wesley, the advisor: My wife Tracy taught at the University of Florida. One day, when Wesley was visiting, she came home and told him how discouraged she was with her class. She said she'd given a test and nearly every student had failed it. She asked Wesley what she should do. As if it were obvious, Wesley replied, "Give 'em a re-test." That's what she did.

Wesley, the pop culture encyclopedia: Tracy and I had just heard the news about the fire at the Great White concert. We couldn't quite place the band, and struggled to remember their hits. As with any other time we needed rock-'n-roll trivia, we called Wesley. Without hesitation, he said, "Great White sings 'Once Bitten Twice Shy.'" He proceeded to sing the song. We told him about the concert and he was really bummed.

A final memory: In my final memories of Wesley, he is tended by his caretakers and friends: Carla Winterbottom and Tammy Smith. Their endless, loving care brought great peace to Wesley, and to those of us who loved Wesley. I know that their presence made Wesley's final days a joyride. When I visited him, I knew it was the last time I would see him. It was slow leaving, and I remember standing at the door and telling Wes goodbye for about the twentieth time. Wes got the last words in. To my wife, he said, "I love you, Tracy." He then turned to me and said, "See you later, Biscuithead."

I love you, Wesley, and I will see you later, Biscuithead.



Dan Monick's

Photo Page



*"Any kid who tells
on another kid
is a dead kid"
-Richie White,
"Over the Edge"*



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.



+/-: You Are Here: CD

The band is doing the symbol thing like Prince or it's easier to graffiti your band name around town instead of writing it out as *Plus/Minus*. That was the only thing of interest here. The music bored the shit out of me. -Donofthedeat (Teen Beat)

2+ WORTH:

United States of Hysteria: CD
From Sin City, USA, these guys give you a CD of twenty-one songs. They remind me a lot of older Bad Religion. Fast and melodic. It's a well done CD. If you like Bad Religion or melodic punk, this is for you and it's only six dollars post paid from AVD Records!
-Mike Beer (AVD)

9 POUND HAMMER/SOUTH 75: Split 7"

Four songs by two bands that refuse to let the memory of the Fabulous Thunderbirds and Molly Hatchet fade into obscurity. Take from that what you will, and keep in mind that the labels on this record are printed on the wrong sides. -Not Josh (Eugene)

A FRAMES: Self-titled: CD

Seeing as there's a dearth of information included with his, I know jackshit about both band and release. So far as I am able to deduce, these guys are either some old fringe-punk band from the early '80s or are heavily influenced by such groups. The music is rife with the angular, choppy rhythms and monotone vocals that so many of the bands in that gray area between art punk and edgy new wave seemed to wallow, sounding sorta like Servotron covering the Normal. Either way, old or new, these guys rock somethin' fierce.
-Jimmy Alvarado (S-S)

ABUSE, THE: Are You Ready for...: 7"

Pretty typical American street punk here. Songs about not belonging, living in the "lawless streets;" and, of course, drinking comprise the bulk of this release. They're good on a musical level, but lyrically there's nothing remotely new, exciting or remotely clever. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.theabuse.web1000.com)

ALLEGIANCE: Whose Border, Whose Fight: CD

Based solely on the sound of this, one might mistakenly take these guys for some long-lost British oi band from 1982 or so, but no, this is comprised of fifteen tunes recorded within the last six years in Japan by what appears to be two Japanese dudes and a white guy. True to the style they're obviously influenced by, the arrange-

Sung by what sounds like a pair of short school bus riding coeds in matching his and her hockey helmets after their being partially euthanized with nail polish remover on the way to the studio. Now THAT'S a beautiful thing, man.

-Nørb

ments are spare, yet oddly melodic, and the lyrics are often political in nature, resulting in an overall well executed package. I dog a lot of the newer oi stuff, primarily because so much of it sucks so bad, but this is a nice example of a band managing to keep things "traditional" without resorting to wallowing in a cesspool of drunken, violent stereotypes. Thumbs up. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.ghetto-rock.com)

ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT: Train I Ride: 7"

Ivy, who sings for ATB, has a wonderful set of pipes. She's clear, loud, and can hold a note. The fact that she's fronting a dirty DIY punk band makes these proceedings mighty fine. This'll probably help about fifteen people out, but ATB sounds like Seaweed (nice and sinewy. The songs breathe and aren't claustrophobic) coupled with the occasional fun but sad motivation of Bitchin'. Songs range from the joy of riding a train to the sorrow of being a product of a foster home ("Fuck You Motherfucker"). Iggy Scam (author of the great zine, *Scam*) not only plays guitar but writes an informative essay on a pack of spray-painting, beer-drinking punks and some things to remember when fingered by The Man as a group. Skip laundry for a couple days and send your two dollars to 'em. You won't be sorry. -Todd (\$2 ppd., Half-Day)

ALTAIRA: Weigh Your Conscience: 7-song CD

Although, yes, you could make a very convincing argument that Altaira cribbed the game plan of Hot Water Music's *Forever and Counting* and have looted some from Tiltwheel's basement, I still think they're mighty good. (Translation: burlap vocals, the bass, guitars, and drums all have to work hard, and it's all very personal without resorting to personal attacks or boo hooathons.) Altaira have got a natural feel of song weight and dynamics: not one instrument dominates, the vocals snarl

when they have to, and the playing goes from epic to atmospheric to anthemic without the acrid smell of a band using the musical clutch for the first time and doing that horrid whisper to scream to whisper bullshit. Besides all that, these seven songs are genuinely catchy, take time to breathe, sound heartfelt, and although well played by each member, aren't a wankfest. Thumbs up. -Todd (Attention Deficit Disorder)

ARGIES: Himnos de Combate: CD

A collection of singles tracks released domestically to support this long-running Argentine band's upcoming US tour. Musically, this leans toward the Clash side of the punk equation, right down to the fascination with reggae, yet they manage to retain enough individuality to keep from ending up in the dung heap of bands ripping off days past (cough...Rancid...cough). A damn fine collection and proof that the United States and England aren't the only hotbeds of punk rock greats.
-Jimmy Alvarado (Cochebomba)

ARGONAUT: Shoot the Moon: CD

Sludgy stoner rock about as exciting as the last Soundgarden LP. Pass the bong, I think I'm Ozzy. -Jimmy Alvarado (Infect)

ARTLESS: Plugged: CD

Assuming that most *Razorcake* readers are familiar with *MRR* scribe and perennial fly-in-the-ointment Mykel Board, this is the collected recordings of his punk band, Artless, who were active in the '80s. Collected here are tracks culled from the band's three LPs, and a single or two, plus a few unreleased tracks. As expected considering the source, the lyrics are faux-reactionary in tone to piss off all the lefty sensibilities that permeated the scene back then, with titles like "When You're My Age You'll Be Selling Insurance," "Vegetable Rights," and "We Want Nuclear War."

The accompanying music is sloppy, mid-tempo for the most part and just as obnoxious as the lyrics. In short, this is the perfect holiday gift for your most cherished Crasshole buddy on whom the humor will be completely lost. -Jimmy Alvarado (The Only Label in the World)

ASSCHAPEL: Fire and Destruction: CD

Twelve tunes of blazing hardcore/thrash that is on the borderline of metal at times. All the songs have titles like "Unholy Destruction," "The Sledgehammer Assault," and so on. You get the idea. These guys don't disappoint. This is one kick ass CD. It even comes with a thick booklet too. These guys are scheduled to tour Europe soon. If you don't live in Europe I'm sure you can catch them in their hometown of Nashville, TN! Either way, see them if the opportunity arises. Now go buy this CD. -Mike Beer (Crimes Against Humanity)

ATMOSPHERE: Seven's Travels: CD

I'm no authority on hip hop. The depth of my knowledge goes little deeper than Public Enemy to the Wu-Tang. I ultimately got turned off by the talk about bitches and gats and bling bling and whathaveyou. A couple years back, I got turned onto Atmosphere by their fellow Minnesotans, Dillinger Four and Dan Monick (who takes pictures for this magazine). It's addictive stuff. The rhymes are organic, flow effortlessly, are made by humans I can relate to in more than one way (they name drop Lifter Puller and sing about drinking Jim Beam, among other things), and it keeps my head bobbing. Also, since I know a little bit about the band, they were seriously courted by the majors but decided - partially because they're a diehard part of the underground community and partially because they're not suckers - to pass on the easier sellout route and were able to make the exact album they wanted to. If you want a complete change of taste, or hang out with a bunch of people who loath punk, this may be your bridge.
-Todd (Epitaph/ Rhymesayers)

BENEATH THE ASHES: Nailed to Your Ruins: CD

A personal wet dream of mine would be to one day watch all the whimpering emo bands and all the "AAAUUUR-RRGH!" metal bands (such as this one) take a flying fuck hand-in-hand off the nearest cliff. Well, there's that one and the other in which John Wayne Gacy is free and attracted to boys in horn-rimmed glasses, Beneath the Ashes t-shirts, and sporting the latest in backpack fashion. -Jimmy Alvarado (State of Grace, address thoroughly illegible)

BETWEEN THE LINES: Wake Up Call: LP

Yeah, this is the stuff. Twelve tracks of fast, angry Belgian hardcore punk. The singer screams instead of grunting, the band is tight, and the music kicks pretty hard. It's also slightly melodic and would fit in well with Kill Your Idols, the Get Up and Go'ers, and Paint It Black. Check 'em out. -Not Josh (Rock n Roll Radio)

BLACK JETTS, THE:
3-songs: CDEP

Can you be any hipper? I bet at least one band member has bought leather pants since they started the band. My guess would be that it's whoever is playing that grooovy tambourine. Plus, it's on that "vinyl CD" which I just don't get at all. It sure as hell doesn't fit on my spindle. -Megan (www.theblackjetts.com)

BLACKS, THE/
CIVIC MINDED 5: split 7"

The Civic Minded 5 rules. They're kinda like a cross between Black Flag (the guitar tone and the intensity of the music) and FYP (the spazzed out good times and the we-don't-give-a-fuck attitude). They epitomize everything I like about punk rock, and these two songs are their best yet. And the Blacks...jeez. I've heard a lot of bands, and the Blacks don't really sound like any of 'em, definitely a compliment in this case. It's loud, fast, and noisy, and I like it a lot, especially the drumming, which is unbelievable. Great split. -Not Josh (Recess/Chemical Valley)

BLACKS, THE: Self-titled: 7"

NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. WHAT I THOUGHT IN THE DARK: Song #1: This is the worst Bo Diddley i've ever heard in my life. If i ever emit a Bo Diddley this bad, shoot me. Actually, even if i'm merely WATCHING a band emitting a Bo Diddley this bad, and i don't kill THEM, kill ME, for being a passive enabler. Song #2: Sounds like the second song on an old one-sided Rip Off Records 45. Not bad. Song #3: Hmm, i'm not sure if i can count this as a Bo Diddley or not, but if i could, the first one wouldn't really be all that bad. Song #4: Pretty common "He's Waiting" type chords, drummer occasionally does a neat little Mitch Mitchell kinda thing. Eh. WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON: Hey! Martin Savage! From the Locomotions and the Tokyo Knives! Geez, don't quit your day job, dude (said day job, i assume, being to play "Sigma Attack" non-stop for six or seven hours at a time to small groups of invalids and shut-ins)! BEST SONG: "You Don't Love Me" BEST SONG TITLE: "Mojo Bean" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: I have number 66 of 500, and the only professional athlete in any sport i can think of who wore #66 was Ray Nitschke of the Green Bay Packers. -Rev. Nørð (Zaxxon Virile Action)

BLISTERHEAD:
Punk Royale: CD

One word: RANCID. These guys are very influenced by Rancid. They live in Sweden and I'm sure Rancid is their favorite band. For what this band does, they do it well. The lyrics are good, the music is good and its very singalong-y like Rancid, although I must say these guys do have early rock'n'roll thing in their sound too, which makes it interesting. So if you like Rancid or the style they play, you will love this CD. -Mike Beer (KOB and Mad Butcher)

BORN DEAD ICONS:
Unlearn: 7"

If I say the Motorhead of hardcore, it doesn't do this band justice, but that's

exactly what it sounds like, minus the solos and trimming the song length while still setting a definite tone and not shying away from slower, heavy breakdowns. It's awesome (in the original sense, not the dude/brah sense) and amazingly cinematic. It's almost impossible not to have something play and worm around in your head when the record spins. I picture bombed out cathedrals, but that's just me. I've always wondered what Lemmy and Co. would have sounded like if they were sliced in half, lengthways, and sewn onto the sliced-in-half bodies of Negative Approach. I no longer have to. Rumor is, they've done all Turbonegro sets and called themselves Turbohooker, so they've got to have a sense of humor, too. -Todd (Heart First)

BOUNCING SOULS, THE:
anchors Aweigh: CD

These guys are back once again with a brand new full length. If you're a fan of The Bouncing Souls, you will be delighted. Sixteen songs of what you have come to love from these guys. Melody, soul, and a tuneful experience. To top it off, some personal lyrics, as well. Pop punk at its finest. So if you're a fan, pick this up. It even comes with some bonus CDR footage! -Mike Beer (Epitaph)

BREAK, THE/
LET IT BURN: Split: CD

Rock. Decent enough poppy punk rock, although the emo flourishes of the second track made my flesh crawl. Let It Burn: I really liked the music here, rife with just the right balance of pop hooks and hardcore attack, but that slight whine in the singer's voice and his monotone delivery just grated like nails on a blackboard. A little more vocal melodicism and I would've been all over myself praising these muthafuckas. -Jimmy Alvarado (Doghouse)

BROKEN BOTTLES:
Not Pretty: CDEP

There are two kinds of punk rockers: those who like Broken Bottles, and those who have descended from a feral species of goat-people who live an underwater grotto off San Clemente and subsist on a diet of radioactive cheese. Seriously, I know there are people out there who don't like the Bottles, and I don't get it. The songs are fast, catchy, layered with tension and have epic hooks. For those of you who have only seen them live and haven't listened to their recorded output: you're missing out. It's sharp, sonic, super-clean. The title track, "Not Pretty," is an inverted love song stripped of all sentimentality and "Orange County" is the best kind of anthem: short, savage and emblematic of awful honesty that doesn't need to be articulated to be true. My only complaint is that it only lasts sixteen minutes. This EP gives every indication that the Bottles first full-length on TKO will be the most anticipated release of the year. -Money (Finger)

BUMP-N-UGLIES: All-
American 4-Pack: 7"

NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. WHAT I THOUGHT IN THE DARK: Holy shit, this sounds just like that Bump-N-Uglies 7-inch i reviewed in issue #14, and Toby

RAZORCAKE

Ms. Pants says:
In case of fire,
pack these in the
truck first.

**THESE ARE THE
TOP 7"s SINCE
THE LAST MAG.**



Underground Medicine Mailorder, Connecticut

1. Carbonas, *I'm Astray* (Die SlaughterHaus)
2. Deadly Weapons, *You're So Selfish* (Rapid Pulse)
3. Vaticans, *Commotion* (Pure Filth)
4. The Fitts, *II* (Big Neck)
5. The Bags, *Disco's Dead* (Artifix)
6. The Blacks, *Doin' Me In* (Solid Sex Lovie Dolls)
7. Mystery Girls, *Turned On* (special edition) (Bancroft)
8. Scat Rag Boosters, *Leavin' Town* (Solid Sex Lovie Dolls)
9. Sgt. 6 Assault, *Goin' Down on You* (Rapid Pulse)
10. Henry Fiat's Open Sore, *I Was a Teenage Pretty Boy* (Ken Rock)

**Dr. Strange Records
California**

1. Skulls/Texas Thieves split (Dr. Strange)
2. Operation Ivy, *Hectic* (Lookout)
3. Bay Area Thrash, various artists (625)
4. Aus Rotten, *Fuck Nazi Sympathy* (Havoc)
5. Lower Class Brats, *Deface the Music* (Punkcore)
6. Thretning Verse, *Time for War* (Puke n Vomit)
7. Gnats Sucker, *All Things...* (625)
8. Limpwrist/Knifed, split (Rejected)
9. Caustic Christ/R.A.M.B.O., split (Busted Heads)
10. A Global Threat, *Earache* (ADD)

Disgruntled Mailorder, California

1. Lipstick Pickups, *Better Than You* (Kapow)
2. Loli & The Chonies, *Weenie Choker Rock N Roll* (Repent)
3. First Time, *You Can't Hurt Me* (Johnny Cat)
4. Toys That Kill/Fleshies split picture disc (Geykido Comet)
5. Henry Fiat's Open Sore, *I Was a Teenage Pretty Boy* (Pandacide)
6. Tokyo Knives, *Smell My Ass* (Ken Rock)
7. Flash Express, *Who Stole the Soul* (Revenge)
8. Bebe Buell, *Gargoyle* (Ultra Under)
9. Clorox Girls, self-titled (Johnny Cat)
10. Dirtbombs, *Pray for Pills* (Corduroy)

reviewed in issue #15. WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON: D'oh!!! BEST SONG, BEST SONG TITLE, ET AL: op. cit. -Rev. Nørb (Low Down)

BUSINESS LADY: B Lady: CD
Shit, I'm gonna have a hard time with this one. These youngsters have made a pretty big impression on me lately, and as sometimes happens with bands that really hit me in the face, I'm having a hard time coming up with pigeonholes and reference points. Musically, they remind me a lot of Chicken Scratch, whose 1990 *Important People Lose Their Pants* has high status with me, but I haven't talked to anyone who knows who Chicken Scratch was in ten years, so that probably won't help you. There is (in this Locustian town) a certain post-Locust aspect to it with the keyboards and whatnot, but without all the spasticism or theatre. There's dissonance, so you might call it no wave, or experimental at least. There's boys and a girl taking turns with the singing and screaming (probably all join in for the two minutes of weeping - so, okay, so there's some theatre); I was trying to think of who the lady singing reminded me of and Wanda said it's Kim Gordon. Her voice, when it shows up, exudes a kind of passive authority without really commanding anything. The boys scream and yell more, but that's boys anyway. Musically, restrained noise and creepy beauty undulate together and are reflected in lines like "tears and teeth" and "cause the cuts just a hair bigger." Overall, from the musical presentation to the lyrics to the visual layout, they seem like smart people who don't give a fuck what everyone else is doing and maybe these days that's all it takes to make me happy. Must be; it's working.
-Cuss Baxter (Business Lady)

BUTTLESS CHAPS: Love This Time: CD
College synth-rock is better than Nyquil when you need a good night's sleep.
-Jimmy Alvarado (Mint)

BUZZARD, EL: Self-titled: CD
Noise rock from the AmRep school of thud-punk. Some righteous shit here, if that sound is your bag. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.el-buzzard.com)

CADAVERS, THE: Self-titled: 7"
Three tracks from a demo recorded by the band that became the Bodies. The music is essentially in the same vein as the Bodies, meaning that it's tight, up-tempo and top-notch. The sound quality is a bit muffled, but the songs are strong enough to shine through. Good stuff.
-Jimmy Alvarado (Radio)

CAPITAL SCUM: Freak Show: 7"
New tracks from an '80s hardcore band. The tunes are reminiscent of both Discharge and Battalion of Saints, meaning they are pretty solid doses of thud punk with gruff vocals and just a hint of metal thrown in the mix. Not too shabby. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rocknroll Radio)

CARRIE NATIONS/ THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB: split: 7"

I was super excited to see this one come out. Two great bands, each with two tracks only available on this 7". Both bands have a folk-inspired feel to them and deal with some serious issues, but never lose a dance-y pace. My favorite track is TBIAPB's "Better off Dead," which has the overlapping male and female vocals that they have pretty much perfected. Highly recommended.
-Megan (Plan-It-X)

CATCH 22: Awaken: CD
Thirteen tracks of killer early '80s metal. I'm not talking thrash metal, but mid-paced metal. Full-on bang-your-head metal: Ozzy, Dio, Twisted Sister. There is a little Metallica influence in there, but minus all the whacked-out clothes and makeup. You get it all. Killer solos, great song titles ("Blood on the Bricks" is one of the many), high-pitched drawn-out notes! YEEEEAAAAA! For what it is, this CD is killer, and if you yearn for the early '80s, grab your jean vest, get this CD, and bang your head! -Mike Beer (Molten Metal)

CHEAP SEX: Launch off to War: CD
Parrot punk (nice colorful dye jobs, kiddies) with all the expected trimmings that's destined to serve as great background music as their adoring fashion-punk fans scream "fuck the system" while scarfing down a Big Mac. Jeez, considering the sheer number of bands that look and sound exactly like this these days, it must be mucho profitable affecting the pose and being a walking, talking stereotype. -Jimmy Alvarado (Punk Core)

CHECKERS, THE: Make a Move: CD
I'm very skeptical of new wave's current revival in punk rock, because I wasn't that fond of new wave in the first place. Devo was cool if you didn't try to listen to a whole album, and there were a lot of good new wave songs, but they were few and far between. I've been enjoying a lot of the new new wave, though, and the basic difference is that the newer bands remember to bring in the rock. The Checkers are a good example of this. The vocals are quirky and the music is jerky, but it's faster and more rockin' than any new wave from the first round. They show their influences in their covers, ripping through cool adaptations of "Observer" and "The Fanatic." Really, though, it's the originals that carry this album through. Songs like "Seeing Spots" and "Is He In?" really burrow into my brain and stick with me long after the album has ended and I've moved on in my day. Basically, The Checkers are exactly what the Waitresses should've been, and *Make a Move* is a solid album from beginning to end. -Sean (Teenacide)

CIRIL: Hysteria Driven: CD
Looks like Rudimentary Peni, sounds like Rudimentary Peni, even has English-accent vocals, but they're from Long Beach! That's in California! Spooky, huh? -Cuss Baxter (Know)

CLANN ZU: Rua: CD
Is it bedtime already? Complicated artsy stuff that has me scrambling for my Raw Power record so I don't fall asleep. -Not Josh (G7 Welcoming Committee)

CLOROX GIRLS: Self-titled: 7"
Four tracks of lo-fi, straight-ahead punk rock here. The three mid-tempo tunes were good, but the last track, a raver called "Trashy Daydream," is the pick of the litter. That tune alone makes his worth yer green. Better act quickly, though, 'cause there are only four hundred of these puppies out there.
-Jimmy Alvarado (Jonny Cat)

COLLISIONS, THE: Talk Is the New Action: CD
Boring, arty rock music. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.windjam.com)

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT, THE: Process of Illumination: CD
One of those melodicore bands that are musically competent but didn't get me interested from the get go.
-Donofthedeath (Refried)

CONSTANTINE: Shine a Light: CD
Occasionally noisy alt-rock that starts off strong and then veers off into Boringsville right quick. The fact that the singer reminded me of Springsteen in all the wrong ways didn't help matters much. -Jimmy Alvarado (Sub Pop)

CONSUME: Who's the Real Monster: 7"
Whoo-doggie. Aggressive, masterfully executed hardcore that's thought provoking ("the need for acceptance has overruled competence") while the music's as heavy and dangerous as a bag of hammers thrown out an eight-story window into a crowded street. The guitar work's complex, rough, and eerily melodic, so hints of both Tragedy and No Parade (two bands well worth seeking out) are present, too. (Also super-early Mudhoney. How odd.) By doing that, they make one of the catchiest anti-turning-animals-into-clothing songs I've heard in a long time. Of interest, to keep them being subsumed by the waves of other hardcore bands, they not only have a song about how sharks have been demonized ("Carcharodon Carcharias"), but include an essay on the topic of shark hunting in the lyrics booklet and have a picture of a shark on the cover. Excellent. I love it when hardcore has undeniable hooks and smarts.
-Todd (Consume)

CRESTFALLEN: Self-titled: CD
Seriously over-the-top hardcore, skirting a fine line between bands like Die Kreuzen and the grind noise of Nasum and the like. The covers of "Minor Threat" and "Human Fly" were a mistake, though. Might I suggest something along the lines of United Mutations or Void next time "round? -Jimmy Alvarado (Robotic Empire)

CRIMES OF THE CONSPIRACY: When You Get This Letter, Burn It: 7"
NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. WHAT I

THOUGHT IN THE DARK: Song #1: Cheater beats are definitely a lost art. Song #2: Well, at least it STARTED like one of the weird instrumental songs off the first Meat Puppets 7-inch... Song #3: It's a good thing i restrict my gambling to placing wagers on basketball games, because i would've put fifty-to-a-hundred down that this song couldn't possibly suck as bad as the last one... and lost. Song #4: Uhh... how much would it break your heart if i told you i took the record off in the middle of Song #3? WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON: *When You Get This Letter, Burn It?* I think they actually meant to say "When You Get This RECORD, Burn It." BEST SONG: Song #4, o' course BEST SONG TITLE: "When You Get This Record, Burn It," which i had to invent for them FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The guitar player's name is "XB.J.X." Presumably his friends call him "XB?" -Rev. Nørb (Pop Riot)

CURSES, THE: Throw A Fit: 7"
Energetic pseudo-garage rock with lyrics so simple that one is left to wonder if whoever wrote them either didn't really bother to put much effort into them or is just some sort of unrecognized haiku genius. -Jimmy Alvarado (Home-Bilt Bomb, no address)

CZOLGOSZ: Guernica: CD
In 1937, at the height of the Spanish Civil War, Nazi forces bombed Guernica, a small Spanish town. Ostensibly, the Nazis were bombing Guernica to protect the fascist dictator, Franco, who was attempting to forcibly take control of Spain. On the day when the Nazis bombed the town, though, there were no soldiers in the town and no real military targets for them to go after. They essentially bombed a marketplace, killing more than a thousand people, mostly women and children. The whole point of the attack was to demoralize Franco's opposition. It worked. People in Spain were very bummed out. The bombing changed the face of modern warfare. Since 1937, every military in the world that has dropped bombs has intentionally dropped bombs on civilian targets in order to demoralize their enemies. One of Pablo Picasso's most famous paintings, *Guernica*, is a memorial to this 1937 bombing. The painting *Guernica* used to hang in the press room of the United Nations building as a reminder of the UN mission to stop this type of tragedy. In March of 2003, Colin Powell insisted on covering the painting up before holding a press conference at the UN, during which he announced that the US would attack Iraq. The album, *Guernica*, is the type of smart and angry hardcore that you would expect from a band who would name an album after these events. From the first song, "No War but the Class War" to the last song, "Antifascists," Czolgosz wear their politics on their sleeves and rip through some pretty powerful songs that incorporate the best aspects of street punk and hardcore, not unlike Toxic Narcotic and the Pinkerton Thugs. -Sean (Rodent Popsicle)

DAN SARTAIN: Dan Sartain Vs. the Serpents: CD

I'm not sure what this is. The liner notes say that this Dan Sartain guy recorded this himself and played most of the instruments, except when he was helped out by some semi-famous musicians like Gar Wood and Mario Rubalcada (Rocket From the Crypt). My theory is that it's a huge inside joke made by the incestuous San Diego/Swami Records scene, like Beehive & the Barracudas. The music is basically stripped-down roots rock, and it's pretty good. I hear some echoes of RFTC and Hot Snakes, and maybe a bit of the Starvations here and there. -Not Josh (Swami)

DAN SARTAIN: Dan Sartain Vs. the Serpents: CD

I actually saw Dan Sartain play the same day that this came in. He opened for his label-mates the Husbands. He got me up to the front of the club, but couldn't make me dance. It seemed to teeter on the edge of rocking on out, but then got reined back in. A whole room of people standing in appreciation, but wanting just a little more. That's how I feel about the album, too. The best track is easily the first, "Tryin' to Say," which is a hard one to follow up. It's raw and the emotion seems genuine. From there we go into "PCB 98" which is a huge step down, but then the bar is raised again on "Walk Among the Cobras Part 3." The rest of the album continues on this pattern. Not a bad album. There are definitely some great tracks on there. Best for late night

drinking music when you don't want to piss off the neighbors too much. -Megan (Swami)

DARLINGTON: Moron-a-Thon: CD

...if i ever ran a Pop-Punk Whorehouse - and who's to say i don't already do so? - i think one of the hapless johns i'd invoke my one-way-mirror privileges on would be Christy Darlington. I'm not sure why. The guy just always struck me as "interesting." Not "interesting" as in i'd like to sit him down and ask him a bunch of deep and philosophical questions just to help slake mine own thirst for knowledge kinda interesting, but "interesting" like a big dragonfly with its brains turned to bubblegum on your front window still buzzing and writhing around kinda interesting. I mean, it just seems like the dentist gave him the Loony Gas as a child, and no one ever thought to turn it off. Oh, to be sure, the album starts off deceptively underneath the looniness radar, with a buncha "serious" type numbers seemingly aimed at currying favor with the latter-day Connie Dungs sales demographic; following that, things ratchet up into a suite of honest-to-young-Weasel numbers about pool parties and pajama parties and surfing in Croatia and suchlike, as if the guy could somehow simply WILL life into a long-dead shindig. Only at the tail end of the record does the TRUE Christy Darlington gibbering retard pervert savant-itude finally surface, as if he was ultimately unable to keep up the pretense of being a sensitive and artistic Connie Dungs pop-

punker and/or a dweeb-ass "Teenage Slumber Party" regurge-a-tron for the duration of an entire compact disc. Submitted for your approval in this matter, from "ATM": "She likes to give me head, I like to give her head/She tastes so good I'll lick her back to front, oh yeah/No way I ain't ashamed 'cause I love dirty sex/I love the way she smells and how she tastes, oh yeah" and this, from "Electrocute Me": "I'm a naughty girl, I'm a dirty girl, yeah I'm a filthy slut yeah... Well I love porno sex, I'm really hot in bed, I'm a sinner" and "I love your shorts-n-flops, I love to fingerfuck" and even "Love it when your feet R dirty/Pull your panties down I'll lick it up yeah." I mean, how could ya not love the guy? He's like this hopeless pervo-dork who more than likely really believes that If He Sings It, They Will Come. And then, of course, he will as well - even though Science says one'll get infinitely more pussy singing about how one enjoys slapping women up than one will by pledging one's eternal selfless devotion servicing the Temple of Squack in song. Dunno why that is. Probably because chicks are stupid. Almost as stupid as guys. However, luckily, with Christy Darlington on our side, we'll never relinquish our slight edge in the matter!!! Booyah!!! BEST SONG: "ATM" BEST SONG TITLE: "Electrocute Me" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Darlington were originally known as "The Mess," but they weren't the same The Mess you're thinking of. -Rev. Nørb (Stardumb)

DEAR DIARY I SEEM TO BE DEAD: Self-titled: CD

I don't get this whole screamo phenomenon any more than the emo phenomenon. I mean, some asshole yelling in my ear does not make the music any more creative or less pretentious, and basically you get the same suckass emo crap with the added bonus of a jerkoff bucking for throat polyps. They can keep it. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dead Tank)

DEATH WISH KIDS: Discography: CD

A couple of members of Death Wish Kids, including vocalist Andrea Zollo, went on to Pretty Girls Make Graves. And as inventive, distinctive, and grounded in songwriting PGMG is, this band wasn't. This is a collection of songs from that go from bad (their '95 release) to worse (their '94 demo that sounds like it was recorded with towels wrapped around all of the equipment). It's derivative, clonky, cliché-riddled, monkey beat, scream-athon hardcore that, even if you're so bored that you're reading along with the lyrics, it's close to impossible to decipher them. Somewhere in the middle of the mess, they go on and rape the shit out of the Vibrators' "Whips and Furs." Yeeowch. -Todd (Aerodrome)

DEATHXDEATH: The Glamour of Evil: CD

Classic OC hardcore, from Oakland. Think "Richard Hung Himself" with loads more speed, an overall darker outlook, and updated for today's actual

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LIVE ON THE DRIVE

Cat No : BZ004

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British Streetpunk

strangle all the boybands

Cat No : CY-119/DSS072

adolescents. Says it's got a video on it, but my computer won't do it. Do it, you! -Cuss Baxter

DEEP 13: *Eleven Stories*: CD
Some Louisville hardcore that, while well played, failed to tickle my fancy. Could've been the metal overtones running rampant on this disc, but something just didn't sit right and subsequently failed to keep my interest piqued. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.eugenerrecords.com)

DELTA INDIA ECHO: *They Found My Naked Corpse Face Down in the Snow*: 7"
Angry, noisy hardcore with oodles of violent lyrical imagery and mile-long song titles a la Charles Bronson. -Jimmy Alvarado (Grey Sky)

DEMONICS, THE: *Dunebuggy Gang*: 7"
NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. WHAT I THOUGHT IN THE DARK: Song #1: Neat instrumental, considering it reminds me of both Agent Orange and Radio Birdman, two of the most overrated bands ever, plus i gotta crank the stereo so high to wring any volume out of this 45 i'd probably blow a fucking fuse if i had the lights on right now. Song #2: "Dunebuggy Gang?" Whoever wrote this piece of shit oughtta be dragged thru a gravel pit behind one, unless they honestly woke up one day in such a state of dementia they truly believed they were the male coming of Nikki Corvette, in which case they

should merely be locked up and sedated heavily. Song #3: This song, apparently entitled "California Nightmare," is, without question, the GAYEST FUCKING WASTE OF SONIC WAVES i have EVER heard IN MY LIFE. This song is so fucking gay the only way i'm going to be able to sleep at night is to pretend it was all just a clever and ironic parody. This is the kind of shit your roommates wake you up with at like 3 AM on Thursday morning. In a word: "One Way Ticket to Maniwoc." Wait, that's more than one word. WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON: Wait, the Demonic's? Is this the same Demonic's who didn't used to suck, or is this a whole new Demonic's who have been invented with sucking as job #1? BEST SONG: This record is a piece of shit. BEST SONG TITLE: This record is a piece of shit. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: This record is a piece of shit. -Rev. Nørb (Gearhead)

DETONATIONS, THE: *Victim b/w Rayman*: 7"
The A-side is the keeper and has the feel of the Gears, early Cramps, and a sprinkle of X (with the oscillating male/female vocals). Nervous, sketchy vocals, hollow-sounding guitars, jangling bass and solid songwriting that's got a nice twang and groove. For the B-side, I don't think it'd be a bad thing to cut some of the longer, slower fat that keeps the song together. It drags a little. However, that's partially made up by the beautiful packaging: silk-screened fluorescent and silver inks, and a picture that looks like an alternate to early

Briefs promo shots, but the band's wrapped in explosives, not hit with bats and chains. -Todd (Rhinestone/Detonations)

DISEASE, THE: *Dyslexic Experts in Reverse Psychology*: CD
Holy shit, what a racket.... Take the synth chaos of a band like Le Shok, channel it through yer average grind band, dump it in a blender and hit "puree." Don't think I'm gonna be able to sleep too comfortably tonight. -Jimmy Alvarado (Alone)

DISKORDS/LOW ROLLERS: *Split*: 7"
Diskords: The first song, "Touch of Evil," reminds me of "Tatum O'Tot"-era Red Cross. Their other track is a pretty pedestrian cover of "Summertime Blues." Low Rollers: Lo-fi rock, one praising the '65 Thunderbird, and the other a cover of Elvis' "Trouble." -Jimmy Alvarado (Jonny Cat)

DOWN BY LAW: *windward-tidesandwaywardsails*: CD
I've been dreading writing this review since the disc showed up in the mail. I had to special order this album when it came out to make sure I got a copy, expecting a return to the vintage form that DBL displayed in the first half of the 1990s, hoping that the four years which had passed since *Fly the Flag* would result in something which surpassed the greatness of *Punkrockacademyfightsong*, *All Scratched Up* and *Last of the Sharpshooters*, one of the best runs of

great albums that any punk band ever had. To fully understand this review, you must also understand the following: I am a huge Down By Law fan. I played their first album in my first stint in college radio. *Blue* helped pull me through recovery after a major illness and surgery that laid me out for the best part of a year. I made out with my then-girlfriend while they played their cover of The Outlets "Best Friends" at The Palladium while touring to support *Punkrockacademyfightsong*. Hell, I took the name for my Web site from that album. *All Scratched Up* got me through one of the worst road trips and relationships of my life. *Last of the Sharpshooters* came along after my mom's suicide and helped bandage some of those wounds as I recklessly tore San Diego apart on my mountain bike. If I were ever to get inked with any band-related tattoos, DBL would be the first. And I already have it designed. That's the kind of shit you need to know to understand this review. And with all that said, this album disappoints me. I don't suppose that I should be surprised, particularly given the ridiculously high expectations I had for it. I'll start off as objectively as I can - superficially, this album is a return to musical form for DBL. The songs are short, fast and loud - it's straight-forward melodic punk in the 1993-1994-era SoCal vein. The songs seem political but, again in the vein of vintage DBL, are primarily expressed in personal terms - simply put, people possess politics which are shaped and framed by their experience and DBL has always acknowledged that. And with all that said, there just

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seems to be something missing from this record. While *Fly the Flag* was, by and large, a forgettable album, this disc is infuriating precisely because it's better than the previous release, because it echoes DBL's great records of the past yet somehow still comes up lyrically short-handed with lines like "Now he don't know but he's been told / That no government ever had soul" and "No flag can help the Lone Ranger tonight." And perhaps it's the case that the tenderness and affection that DBL once expressed when writing about struggling with growing up (like "All American") now finds itself framed in lines which seem trite to me ("Teenage nights / Lead to grownup days / That's alright / 'Cause you learn how to play"). However – and this is the hardest part of this review for me to write – if I'm going to be completely honest with myself, I suspect that this album is exactly the sort of thing that flipped my lid in all the right ways back in 1994 and 1995 and that if I had heard this album ten years ago, I probably would have gone nuts over it... but that was ten years ago. It's not now. Some years ago, I wrote a bio of sorts for Down By Law and in it, I noted that punk rock was never supposed to be about the past; it's not supposed to be about who you were, it's about who you are and, more importantly, who you're going to be because the best punk has always been about change, not nostalgia... or, to crib a line from DBL, "I'm looking forward to not looking back." Over the past decade – hell, even over the past year – my tastes have changed radically and while I can listen to this album and hear something that would have

had me down front at a show, howling along with every word when I was in my twenties, it doesn't say much to me about who I am now, what I've seen and where I've been. In a lot of ways, that was always what I loved most about Down By Law's music. The songs reflected where I was and who I felt I was; to crib from the new Give Up The Ghost record, I loved the songs because I lived the songs. In them I found a mirror that reflected *me*. And at this moment, the hardest part of being both a fan of this band and friends with people in it is that while these songs may speak to someone at the same place I was, all they say to me is that I've changed and that, while we can still be friendly and respect each other, our less-traveled roads have parted ways. –Puckett (Union)

EAT MY FUK: *Wet Slit and a Bottle of Whiskey*: CD

Liquored up and with hustling, bustling ding dongs, Eat My Fuk lunge headlong into total fukkin' GG worship, musically cloning (but with better production than) the mid-'80s "You'll Never Tame Me," but vocally closer to the GG of later years: hoarse and gruff. Problem is, Geege was so charming because he tried with all his might to outdo his heroes, and Eat My Fuk just tries to be GG. Very punkrockin' and enjoyable if you can put up with all the hole-fingering, juice-gashing and face-loading of wads. –Cuss Baxter (Bestial Onslaught)

ECFU: *Cassette tape*

Well, hell, I got pissed off when I put out a tape of my band and certain

fanzines had a no-tape policy. I don't know if *Razorcake* has a policy, but this is the first tape I've gotten from Todd, and I think it's exactly the reason certain zines have a no-tape policy: the recording level is so low it's barely audible at top volume on two different tape players, the lyric sheet isn't even set up to go in a cassette case (okay, I guess, since it didn't come in one – it came in a rubber band)(wait, I think it came in a safety pin and I put the rubber band on later), and there's no land or email address, just a phone number. "ECFU" apparently stands for "Electric City Fuck You" but "you" starts with a "y." Songs are about "I hate my dad," "I hate work," "I hate my school," "I hate New York City," "I like to skate" and the movie *Return of the Living Dead*. Call 'em up: 518-346-7291. I think they're from Schenectady. –Cuss Baxter (ECFU)

ELECTRIC EYE, THE: *Electric Wisdom*: CD

CD: Okay. First song!
 Me: Songs that sound like the Tight Bro's From Way Back When covering "Flowers" off of the first Psychedelic Furs album! (DING!)
 CD: Second song!
 Me: Uh... songs that sound like "Play-Doh Meathook" era Electric Love Muffin covering "Hot for Teacher?" (DING!)
 CD: Third song!
 Me: Songs that very briefly remind one of that Love & Rockets cover the Gaza Strippers close their set with? (DING!)
 CD: Close enough. Fourth song!
 Me: Pass.
 CD: Fifth song!

Me: Songs you hear outside a Fireballs of Freedom show that at first you think are covers of "Milk & Cookies" by the Offbeats?
 CD: I'm sorry, time is up.
 Me: Okay, well, thanks for having me.
 BEST SONG: "You Got It Wrong"
 BEST SONG TITLE: "(Fuck Off) Grim Reaper"
 FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: *The Who Sell Out* is generally considered the first rock album to omit the song titles from the exterior packaging. –Rev. Nørb (Dirtnap)

ELECTRIC EYE, THE: *Raise the Sword*: EP

Hard rock punk rock about magic power and wizards and swords and stuff. Not as stoney as you'd expect; more along the lines, musically, of Boston's Hullabaloo, if anyone remembers them: gruff, goofy vocals, sloppy hard rock riffs and endearing who-gives-a-fuck silliness. The Electric Eye are from Portland, Oregon, though. –Cuss Baxter (Super Secret)

ENABLERS, THE: *Sweet Fuck All*: CD

I think the singer is trying to be the modern Bruce Springsteen, even though the Boss is still putting out records. He sings in the same whispery gravel, and he's got the science down pat. Too bad it just sounds like ass. The promo sheet said that they sound like Social Distortion, Leatherface, Replacements, and Hot Water Music. Seeing how I like three of those bands, and don't mind the other, I feel offended for those bands. Maybe I should move to Portland, OR. –Megan (Newest Industry)

"In Praise of"

"...When I heard their EP firstly, I had chicken pots and inside of my chest I felt strong pressure. I felt like to get it out immediately, take a pole and destruct a room demolition -ha ha! But better is to run on dancing floor and starte to dance, or sit in a car and drive like crazy - but on this music there is not such road in Czech Republic, well I said an american rock 'n' roll!"

-Sajfert Pavel of the Czech Republic

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EVIL ARMY:

Conquer Human Life: 7"

If you ever wondered what DRI would sound like with Glen Danzig crooning and providing the gloomy mental imagery, wonder no more. Evil Army embrace crossover metal, fronted by a dude who can sing punk-style opera and threatens to "Overrule this place with fire." Better than Damnation and the current-day Misfits, that's for sure, but not as good as Orange County's Spooky or Japan's Balzac if this is your bag of bloody halloween treats. -Todd (Contaminated)

FACE FIRST:

Ignorant Assholes: 7"

By-the-numbers, vaguely metallic hardcore with a pissed off singer who seems to have some issues with women. I find it interesting that they claim in one song to see right through "racist nazi pig[s]," and then parenthetically title a song "Whoriental" four songs later. I guess if it's in her "nature to be such a whore," a little hypocrisy never hurt, eh? Methinks the title they chose is a tad more fitting than they intended. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rat Town)

FILTHY VAGRANTS:

Watching Them Burn: CD

First off, I think this might have been recorded and released a little prematurely. I can't get over hearing the vocalist fall in and out of time, straining to squeeze in the lyrics. The vocal delivery is similar to Tim Armstrong of Rancid's style. The music has sort of an

early period Good Riddance sound. If the music was played tighter, the songs would come off stronger. I know metronomes suck, but I think it's needed here. The intent is there but this release is hard for me to listen to. -Donofthedeath (Ninety-Six)

FIRST TIME, THE: You Can't Hurt Me: 7"

NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. **WHAT I THOUGHT IN THE DARK:** Song #1: I kinda like this, there's a part that reminds me a little of some of the bridge in "Erotic Neurotic" by the Saints. Song #2: I kinda like this, it's got a cool lead. Song #3: I kinda like this, probably because i liked the first two songs. **Bonus Track: HEY! "THROW IT AWAY"** by the **GERMS!!! I LOVE this song!** This record is cool! **WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON:** That was about it, since the record didn't come with a picture sleeve. **BEST SONG:** "Throw It Away" **BEST SONG TITLE:** "Throw It Away" **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** I like everything the Germs ever recorded in a studio, EXCEPT for the *GI* album, which is kinda weird, if you think about it. -Rev. Nørb (Jonny Cat)

FITTS, THE: II: 7"

Headed by Alicja of the Lost Souls (who also runs the excellent Contaminated Records), this all-female trio plays what I suspect most all-lady bands want to when the world's sucking something awful. The song titles

say it all - there's no love loss: "Contaminated (By Your D*!#@K)" and "Girls Like U (Deserve 2 Die)." But, shit if it ain't catchy in a Pixies, early Breeders way where there's creepy, almost intergalactic, fungus seeping in on the edges, recorded excellently where it's all raw and chafed as an untreated infection, and none of it sounds like mud. As it should be. -Todd (Big Neck)

FIYA: Room for One More: 7"

What is in the Florida water? There are so many good bands coming out of there right now. Fiya is no exception. I don't hear any unifying sound that would place them in with other Gainesville bands that I hold pretty highly, but they definitely hold their own. They play emotional hardcore that sounds like neither of those words had ever been tainted. -Megan (Dead Tank)

FLASH EXPRESS:

Introducing the Dynamite Sound of: CD

Soul-inflected trash punk that, on the whole, ain't as good as some, but is far better than most. I'm willing to bet they rock the fuck out of a stage. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.hititnowrecords.com)

FM KNIVES:

Keith Levine/Valentine: 7"

In the pages of this very magazine, the FM Knives claimed that they sound nothing like the Buzzcocks, but I'm here to tell you that they were lying. I'm gonna go so far as to say that

they're trying to sound like the Buzzcocks, because there's no other way for them to pick up Pete Shelley's British accent growing up in Sacramento. Still, that doesn't stop the FM Knives from taking their influences and making something fresh and new. And, no matter how you look at it, the FM Knives are fucking awesome and this two-song forty-five is worth every last penny. -Sean (Dirtnap)

FORNICATORS:

Brat and Punk Division: 7"



I guess when English isn't your first language, you don't quite realize what a silly name "Fornicators" is. I guess it also doesn't matter, because these Swedish fuckers rock through three and a half cool street punk songs with attitude like the Stiff Little Fingers and tight melodies like Bombshell Rocks. They also have a half of a song that's a ballad, but we'll have to look beyond that. This is their first seven inch, and I have to think that they'll learn to do better and turn into a pretty solid band. -Sean (Fornicators)


FOURTEEN OR FIGHT:

Self-titled: 7"

I like hardcore that's clean, yet jagged, and startlingly bloody, like a fifteen-car pileup on the freeway, only on the stereo. And that's exactly what Fourteen or Fight deliver. Smash'm, crash'm, "Thank you Minor Threat, we'll take it from here" hardcore. If you're looking behind the ears, lifting up the tail, and checking the teeth for pedigree, it contains ex-members of


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lozanga
"live" cd



clock engine
"clock engine" lp



reckless and glenc
"reckless and glenc" cd/2xlp

MK Ultra, Charles Bronson, and Ambition Mission. Sweet in a toothless smile and concussion sort of way. —Todd (Lengua Armada)

FRACUS: On Trial: CD

Their obvious influence is the Misfits and they are pretty close on the vocals, then they add a Bay Area twist on what some Texas bands in the mid and late '90s started playing. Less Lord High Fixers and more The Champs. It's drunk punk and it's pedestrian. Maybe I need a beer to enjoy it. —Wanda Spragg (Cheetah's)

FROM ASHES RISE:

Nightmares: CD

Sweet holy hell, From Ashes Rise have always been able to assemble full arsenal hardcore. *Nightmares* is no exception. Similar in their placement of the audio claymore to musical brethren, Tragedy, the vocals are just on this side of hysteria, they intertwine spools of barbed wire guitars, and the drumming seems to permeate everything like some fuck-you-up biological warfare gas. What's hooked me on From Ashes Rise is no matter where I hear them, dark clouds seem to form from their heaviness. It's not all doom and gloom, actually, and I find myself grinning along quite often because their science is so fucking tight. I think for brief seconds that From Ashes Rise makes songs that could literally, and instantly, change people's lives, just like a car accident. Think of the best of both Black Sabbath and Seein' Red welded together like a new monster that's got new tricks up its sleeve and old scars to show you what it's been through. That said, *Nightmares* differs noticeably from the recently released split they did with Victims on Havoc Records. From Ashes Rise's side of the split was more dedicated to setting a tone and establishing a definite atmosphere. Epic without the cheese, like watching dust settle after a bomb blast. This album seems to be about direction — heading somewhere fast while trampling bodies underneath. If you're new to From Ashes Rise, I suggest getting them both and listening to them back to back. That'll be a mighty fine block of time listening to music. Highly recommended. —Todd (Jade Tree)

FUCKED UP:

Baiting the Public: 7"

I've scratched my head for the better part of eighteen years and continue to do so. What makes some hardcore so patently ho-hum while other bands sound like they're, metaphorically, sticking a firecracker up a cat's ass so the explosion happens right in front of you, claws are flying every which way, and it's sticky? I still don't know, but Toronto's Fucked Up kick all of the excitement knobs as far as they'll go. The songs aren't full-out speed blasts and the mid-tempo suit them well. The guitar work pings off itself and the drumming sounds happy among the chaos, so it's not only trampling and feisty, but the songs are injected with a new sense of urgency. (Very much like Sweden's defunct Get Up and Go'ers.) By doing all that, not only can I tolerate the freakout sax and clarinet overlure on "The Public," it actually sounds good

and well placed. If I were in a masochistic mood, I'd beat my finger with a hammer so I could give this a bigger thumbs up. —Todd (Deranged)

FURIOUS IV: Is That You?: CD

Rancid goes to college. —Jimmy Alvarado (Naked Jain)

GACY SOUNDTRACK: CD

As can be expected from the musical score of one of the more recent entries in the booming serial killer series of biopics, the music is, naturally, moody and creepy sounding (what were you expecting, circus music!?!). If film scores ain't your bag, let me add that this would also make for some primo mood music for your next Halloween haunted house. Two thumbs up for this on that tip alone. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pascal)

GENERATORS, THE:

Excess Betrayal...

and Our Dearly Departed: CD

A bit of a musical departure here for these guys. The songs on this latest release are considerably more mature musically and lyrically introspective than previous efforts, sometimes venturing into mainstream rock territory instead of relying on the oi-inspired brand of rock/punk they usually rely on. There's an interesting progression going on here that might piss off some fans, but nonetheless shows that the boys are putting some work into their craft rather than relying on the same-old same-old. —Jimmy Alvarado (I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison)

GENUINE:

Bury the Hatchet: CD

Complete discography of another band I never heard of before. It's not surprising that I have never heard of them. The graphics on the cover has the XXX. That tells me right of the bat that this is straight edge. Upon reading the liner notes, this is a project band surrounding a guy named Aaron Edge. Some songs, he does strictly by himself. With others, he recruits his friends to help him when needed. Those friends are from the bands Botch, Himsa, and Trial and Champion. I'm a kook here. I haven't really heard those bands either. What I can tell you is this sounds like modern day hardcore. Very metal mixed with that '88 straight edge sound. Solid production. It will be appreciated by those who strictly follow this genre. —Donofthedeath (State of Grace)

GET GET GO/

ARCHEOPTERYX: Split: CD

Get Get Go: Two guys, manning guitar, drums and no bass, turn in seven tracks of skronky noise that sometimes veers into screamo territory. Archeopteryx: Pretty much the same formula as the aforementioned band. Both groups make a helluva racket with oodles of changes in tempo and dynamics, yet fail to impress much. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pandacide)

GG ALLIN

AND ANTISEEN:

Murder Junkies: CD

A reissue of an album released a decade ago that sounds like a weekend jam session for Antiseen with GG ranting

along. Better than some of the other GG-related releases out there, but still nothing to write home about. —Jimmy Alvarado (TKO)

GOLDBLADE:

Strictly Hardcore: CD

This is supposed some hot-shit punk band from the UK, but all I'm hearing is crap rock music with miserable lyrics. I'm willing to bet they're embarrassed by the whole exercise in ten years time, 'cause this puppy sucks pretty hardcore. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.thickrecords.com)

GUARDIA NEGRA:

Adrenalina!: CD

Don't know exactly where they hail from, but they are a self-proclaimed anarcho-communist "redskin" band who play rudimentary punk and sing in French and Spanish about petrol bombs and waging war on the bourgeoisie. Hey, man, whatever floats yer boat. —Jimmy Alvarado (Cochebomba)

GUNMOLL/

ANNALISE: Split 7"

Gunmoll have always been a notch from complete adoration from me. Full-on, gutted vocals, instrumentation that would make sense in almost any Leatherface song, and plenty of punch. "Fantasy" is a pretty rockin' song. But in "In My Place," there isn't that extra "holy shit" element that splinters them off from bands they're similar to, like Hot Water Music, and, to a lesser degree, Radon. Said in another way, they're second tier. Annalise are okay. UK pop punk that crib notes from early Jam and have more than a passing blush to the Connie Dungs, but the end result is more pedestrian and a lot more bland. The vinyl's thick as a poker chip, has cool orange bloopers in clear vinyl, and the packaging is immaculate. —Todd (Boss Tuneage)

HAROLD RAY:

Live in Concert: CD

Some high-octane, high-quality soul from Mr. Ray and his cohorts, not unlike the Sonics in their prime covering James Brown. Although I probably would've preferred studio work to a live recording, the sound quality here and energy level of this live performance make for an entertaining listen. —Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

HAVOC, THE: Our Rebellion

Has Just Begun: CD

Lacking oxymorons in your life? How about a new crusty punk disc courtesy of a Jesus-punk band decked out in all the finest in stereotypical anarcho-poseur accoutrements and parrot-color dye jobs? Normally, my first instinct would be to dismiss them for the bad joke they are, but I'm really working hard on being a little more understanding, so I can really empathize with these guys and their plight. Hell, if I called Whittier home, I'd probably be just as lacking in original thought and sucking on the tit of religion with the same zeal. Just to keep them on their toes and feeling "punk," feel free to drive through Uptown and pelt 'em with crackers and communion wafers. —Jimmy Alvarado (Punk Core)

HEATSEEKERS, THE: In Praise of...: CD

Not essential, but far from disposable garage punk that owes a lot to the New Bomb Turks, both in the high-stepping instruments and the clear, jets-in-the-stratosphere vocals of either Ryan or Owen (they both sing). There's no denying that they're catchy, have much-better-than-average songwriting skills, know what works in the Cramps catalog, and can play well. But I don't hear that extra spark. Take someone along the lines of the Beltones (who used to live nearby, if I'm not mistaken), a band that took a very similar, tightly clustered set of cues and mixed up the mix just enough to stake their own claim. I'm willing to give the Heatseekers some leeway and hear their next release because parts of songs really get moving, but taken as a whole, it sits right in the middle. On related news, the drummer, Chuck Loose, makes some graphically arresting cool gig posters. You can check them out on the internet. —Todd (OHEV; www.ohevrecords.com)

HELLA: Dilute: 2 X CD

Two full disks of free-form jam rock. I just don't get that shit. Maybe I don't have the right drugs. I hope I never get a hold of any. —Megan (Sickroom)

HENRY FLAT'S OPEN SORE:

I Was a Teenage Pretty Boy: 7"

What in god's name has come over me? I get a new HFOS recording and I start to pant and squirm and quake like a pubescent girl front row at a Justin Timberlake concert. I can feel my journalistic dignity wriggling down my legs and flying away from me like a pair of love-soaked underpants sailing stage-warm. I gotta get a grip on myself. But hot damn — these demento-shaman satan grooves have real honest-to-goodness demon blood pouring out of them and splattering everything in sight with a happy dangerous idiocy. Woof. Step right up and get yours. This here HFOS band blasts you in the face like a baseball bat covered with snot. And you will ask for more. —Aphid Peewit (Ken Rock)

HOLY GHOST REVIVAL:

Hot Love in a

Berlin Bombshelter. 7"

Sorry, Jethro Tull was never my style. They should've sent this to *High Times* instead. —Megan (Burn Burn Burn)

HOSPITALS, THE:

Self-titled: CD

Finally! Someone jammed Doo Rag's blues rock plug into Pussy Galore's noise socket and it lights shit up like one of those fireworks accidents where everything blows up at once on the ground and the guy's arm flies off and you're sitting in the stands with a Bomb Pop in your mouth and everyone starts screaming and the guy behind you kicks your neck. The riff on "Friends" alone just beats me to death every time, and it only goes for like twenty seconds and it makes me feel the way I imagine it would have felt to have heard Led Zep or AC/DC for the first time when they were fresh, or, for that matter, the way I did feel when I first heard Black Flag (which, incidentally, I

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keep reading references to in others' Hospitals reviews and I don't hear it, musically, but the punch is there) or, unavoidably, Pussy Galore. Raw (I mean seriously raw), almost sub-rock, bashing gets hurled in all directions by two guys with a few drums and a guitar (and at least one Suicide record, whose "Rock and Roll is Killing My Life" is here) and if ever a record deserved the mantle "in the red", this is it. —Cuss Baxter (In The Red)

HYBRID MUTANTS:
Escape Velocity: CD

For those of you with insufficient science backgrounds, "escape velocity" is technically defined as "distance *d* between sofa and CD player divided by the time *t* it takes the listener *N* to get up, walk over, and hit the stop and eject buttons" — in my case, that's nine feet eight inches divided by approximately three seconds, or 3.2667 ft./sec. Fascinating. Seriously, though, it cannot bode well for those who fret about the continued viability of organically constructed guitar/bass/drum music when packaging and songtitles ("Cassi-O" "Apollo-1: Fire in the Hole") make listener *N*, prior to the actual listening, wonder if he's been assigned some kinda techno thingus to review, and, after listening, cause listener *N* to lament that fact that he, in fact, was not. BEST SONG: "Sunsets & Cigarettes," i guess BEST SONG TITLE: "Cassi-O" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Graphics attributed to one "Heineken Skywalker." Okay, that rules. —Rev. Nørb (LEM)

HYPNOMEN, THE: *Altamont Boogaloo b/w Shake: 7"*

NOTE: All my 7" reviews were done with the lights out this issue. WHAT I THOUGHT IN THE DARK: *OH MY FUCKING GAWD IT'S AN INSTRUMENTAL COVER OF "LATIN SHAKE" BY LT. GARCIA'S MAGIC MUSIC BOX!!! IT'S FANTASTIC!!! IT'S AMAZING!!! IT'S FANTASTICALLY AMAZING!!! IT'S GENIUS IN OUR TIME!!! IT'S TIME IN OUR GENIUS!!! YOU'VE GOT YOUR CHOCOLATE IN MY PEANUT BUTTER!!! WELL YOU'VE GOT YOUR PEANUT BUTTER IN MY CHOCOLATE!!! (WHO IS THIS, CHESTNUT STATION? NAH, COULDN'T BE, THEY'D CRAP IT UP WITH VOCALS OR SOMETHING) THIS IS TRANS-STUPENDOUS!!! IT'S FAB!!! IT'S GEAR!!! IT'S MUNCH-O'S™!!! IT'S GOT ME THINKING IN ALL CAPS JUST LIKE LYDIA LUNCH!!! WHY HAS NO ONE THOUGHT OF THIS BEFORE??? I AM SAVED!!! SAAAAAAAAVED!!! WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON: HEEEEYYYY..! THIS isn't an instrumental cover of "Latin Shake" by Lt. Garcia's Magic Music Box! It's a cover of REGULAR "Shake" by the Shadows of Knight! How could i be so misguided??? HOW I COULD, IN FACT, BE SO MISGUIDED: As you doubtless recall, "Shake" (key phrase: "got her eye on the drummer and the GIT-tar man") was recorded by the Shadows of Knight during their stint on Buddah Records, the quintessential sixties bubblegum label. Being exactly That Kind Of Label, one of Buddah's umpteen studio assemblages quickly followed up the initial "Shake" with a faux*

Latino takeoff/spinoff/knockoff that is, in fact, the aforementioned "Latin Shake" by the aforementioned Lt. Garcia's Magic Music Box — essentially the same song, but with marginally more ethnocentric instrumentation, and dopey new lyrics about some guy named Jose. Many of the Hypnomen's instrumental embellishments to original recipe "Shake" (shakers, percussion, et al) parallel those added in "Latin Shake," so, all things being equal in the absence of lyrics, the instrumental "Shake" of the Hypnomen is actually quite "Latin Shake"-esque in form! Amazing, hey? BEST SONG: "Shake" BEST SONG TITLE: "Shake" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Both "Shake" and "Latin Shake" were co-authored by Joey Levine, who sang lead on the original "Latin Shake," as well as the Ohio Express' "Yummy Yummy Yummy" "Chewy Chewy" and "Down at Lulu's," the Reunion Band's "Life Is a Rock (But the Radio Rolled Me)" and the original version of the oft-covered "Quick Joey Small." He also co-wrote "I Enjoy (Being a Boy)" by the Banana Splits (later covered by the Queers, as well as REM, oops, that was redundant). Levine also sang lead to original recipe "Shake" over the existing Shadows of Knight backing tracks, releasing same under the "Kasenez Katz Super Circus" name. Thank you for asking. —Rev. Nørb (Gearhead)

I EXCUSE: *...Is Dead: CD*

I've yet to complain if a band takes Leatherface as their template and lets their own passion fill in the gaps with bits of Hüsker Dü, Chicago-style punk (via Naked Raygun), and element X. What Japan's I Excuse immediately lack in a sound of their own they more than make up in current vitality and how much this feels like a fresh batch of tunes that are still blooming instead of a dated re-run. Gargling broken glass vocals, guitar and bass that are more tightly woven and wider in breadth than an illegal dragline fishing net, a record that places the drums up in the mix, and articulate pleas for peace from the only country that ever got a nuclear bomb dropped on it are all indications that this is getting a big thumbs up. —Todd (Snuffy Smile)

I EXCUSE:

Burn the Empty to Ash: CD

As if you needed one, here's another reason to go to Japan. I Excuse plays fantastic rough-and-tumble melodic punk, quite a bit like the Thumbs, especially vocally. That's great in itself, but what really lights this disc on fire is the white-fucking-hot, razor sharp guitar work straight out of the Leatherface songbook. Hear that, Thumbs? Put out a record and go on tour before this band steals your thunder. —Not Josh (Newest Industry)

I.R.D.:

Aldrig Kopt — Aldrig Sald: 7"

Word is that some of the dudes in Millincollin are in this Swedish band, but I.R.D. sound much more crusty than a squeaky clean skate pop punk band. Instrumentally, they're very much a hardcore band playing Motorhead, which put them in league with Born Dead Icons, but they're not as good. There's galloping and pounding drums, constantly sawing guitars, the occasional

solo, and a polyp-y lead singer. It's half in Swedish and half in English. The English half is a tad slower and more distinctively metal. Decent. -Todd (Combat Rock Industry)

IN THE WAKE OF THE PLAGUE: Self-titled: 7"

Ripping, balls-to-the-wall hardcore up to its eyeballs in Discharge influence, yet managing not to come off as yet another clone of that band. Impressive noise. -Jimmy Alvarado (In the Wake of the Plague)

INHUMAN: The New Nightmare: CD

This is what the kids call *hardcore* these days. Well, maybe, they might not call this hardcore. But they might! Me, I know my metal and I can not be swayed. This is metal: East Coast hardcore with the down tuned bass and guitars and the heavy riffing. The drummer busts a lot of double bass action through the songs. Only thing missing is the guitar solos. But that would be dating myself. The singer reminds me of the singer from Strife. Pretty fuckin' heavy, dude! -Donofthead (A-F)

IPANEMA: Je Suis un Baseball Bat vs. Skull: CDS
I know that it's cheaper to make a CD instead of a vinyl 7", but it sure seems like a waste putting out a two-song CD. I know, at least for the consumer, it would be cheaper to buy a 7" than a CDEP in most cases. If I had to pay like \$10 for this, I would be pissed. Looking at the packaging, it doesn't give me a clue that this is only basically a single.

The songs are about average in the melodic pop punk vein that has elements of Hot Water Music meets Strung Out. -Donofthead (Boss Tuneage)

JOLENES, THE: Rinse and Repeat: CD

Cutesy girly pop. Hand me a barf bag quick. -Jimmy Alvarado (Last Chance)

JOYKILLER, THE: Ready, Sexed, Go!: CD

This is an anthology of Jack Grisham's last band before he reunited TSOL. I personally liked the self-titled first album. Ron Emory played guitar on that record and he added that TSOL/*Beneath the Shadows* feel. I had lost interest when I heard the second record: *Static*. Ron Emory was not playing. I also thought at the time that they sounded too Cathedral of Tears/Tender Fury to me. I saw those bands a bunch of times but I was too punk rock and ignorant back then to enjoy it. Their last release was *Three*. I didn't even listen to that one. Hearing this band again is more enjoyable now and coming in with unbiased ears makes this interesting. The band experiments with more varieties of music and has developed a poppy, melodic expression over time. If you want punk, buy their first release or stay within the first nine tracks. If your mind is open, give the disc a full spin. -Donofthead (Epitaph)

JOYKILLER, THE: Ready, Sexed, Go: CD

Funny thing, drinking is. Seeing as I dug the last TSOL album, Todd gave me this 'cause I'd told him I'd never heard any

of Jack's post-TSOL/Cathedral of Tears bands. As soon as I pressed play, though, I found myself perplexed at my ability to sing along with damn near every track on this. Then it hit me: not only had I heard Joykiller before, I'd actually owned a couple of their cassettes, lost long ago and subsequently shrouded in the drunken haze that other people would probably identify as the 1990s. DOH! Sorry for unwittingly fibbing to you, homie, but you know how it is.... Anyway, this is an anthology of tracks culled from their three albums, plus a few unreleased tracks originally slated for release under the names "The Go" and "Gentleman Jack." While the songs are just as swell as they were when originally released, it's especially nice to hear the band's progression from "good punk band" to "good punk band with some startlingly solid songwriting skills," all in the space of one 80-minute disc, and the new tracks are just as swell as the older, more familiar tunes they accompany here. It's also interesting to hear what is arguably the bridge from vintage TSOL to the current TSOL. Kinda helps to make a little more sense of that "comeback" album of theirs, *Disappear*, which took a little digging to find that old magic, 'cause listening to this shows step-by-step what they piled onto that classic sound, thus making it easier to excavate it from their more recent work. But, in a sudden glut of overanalyzing, I digress. This is one fine album, buy many copies to make sure you always have one on hand and I thank both Epitaph and Todd for helping me to recapture some seriously lost memories. -Jimmy Alvarado (Epitaph)

KARST: Receive the Void: CDEP

Two of songs: "Lambs of God," "Circle of Ground" (bonus of third [lacking of title], best of three). Victoria of Damad. Damad of Savannah (Savannah of Georgia): vocals of monster, vocals of muppet. Metal of doom, overtones of black. End of review. -Cuss Baxter (Hater of God)

KICK, THE: Rumors, Rumors: CDEP

If I wanted to listen to the Goo Goo Dolls, I would go buy their CD or borrow it from my wife. -Donofthead (Dim Sum)

KID DYNAMITE: Cheap Shots, Youth Anthems: 2 X CD
I can't overstate how much I liked Kid Dynamite when they were around and how much I still miss them. They took the instrumentation of Minor Threat, Gorilla Biscuits, The Circle Jerks, and Bad Brains, the smart brains of Articles of Faith and Born Against, sucked out all the good stuff, and made melodic hardcore a contemporary force between 1997 and 2000. They were one band who looked at an already ridiculously high bar and raised it on themselves while reclaiming hardcore from bald, floor-punching metallers. Then they broke up at the release party for their second record, when the singer, Jason, wanted to go and make movies. This retrospective package is smartly put together. Track selection and order both make great sense (like all the covers are lumped together, as are the demo out-

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takes). The liner notes are fantastic. With every song, there are anecdotes about song writing, troubles and triumphs in the studio ("Dave and I had to do the hand clapping tracks numerous times. It sucked."), the general mood, sound secrets (what's that noise at the end of "Rise Above"?), stories on how the band became to be (Thomas of Strike Anywhere tried out as a vocalist), and the occasional car wreck. Besides the fact you don't have to track down a small slew of compilations for all of KD's songs, there's an original, unreleased song on here, started in 1998 and finished in 2003: "The Unheard Chorus." Plus, there's demo versions of five other songs, which is worth the price of admission itself. To round it out, there's live radio show off the soundboard. The DJ's a tool but the playing's great. The DVD that accompanies is a short affair: three camcorder songs, and preview for the KD documentary. Wholly worth picking up. -Todd (Jade Tree)

KING PRAWN:
Get the Thirst: CD

The UK's answer to Sublime, a decade too late and with a larger band personnel. -Jimmy Alvarado (Golf)

KNIFE FIGHT: Self-titled: 7"
Hardcore's like an elbow to the face: it's a reasonably simple formula, and pretty much anyone should be able to do it with some degree of success. But every once in a while, something comes along like a whirlwind, and by the time you realize that you're dealing with professionals your nose is

smashed beyond recognition and the front of your shirt is drenched in blood. That's what this 7" is like. Not only does it thrash at a thousand miles an hour, it's catchy as shit and it rocks like a motherfucker. Eleven songs, no metal. -Not Josh (My War)

KNUCKLEHEAD:
Voice Among Us: CD

Still another North American oi band with the obligatory Irish inflections added to the sound to provide them with some sort of pseudo-European street cred. Included is an earlier album that ain't all that much more interesting. -Jimmy Alvarado (www.ghetto-rock.com)

LAWRENCE ARMS, THE:
The Greatest Story Ever Told: CD

According to the press sheet, this band sounds like Jawbreaker and Crimpshrine. I'd say that's a decent comparison, if outrageously ambitious. Throw in some Alkaline Trio and early 90's wuss rock heroes the Posies and there you have it. Not exactly an ass whooping or anything, but pretty okay stuff nonetheless. Cool artwork, too. -Not Josh (Fat)

LEG HOUNDS, THE:
Self-titled: LP

I ordered a bunch of stuff from Demolition Derby (which, if you're looking for European releases, you should definitely check out) and they were nice enough to throw this in as well. The Leg Hounds are such a solid band. Everything I've heard is consis-

tently good. No frills, just rock'n'roll. The LP is recorded in mono, which works so well for them. I can't figure that out. On their CDs they have both mono and stereo recordings, but I always think the mono just sounds right. Another great release from a band that has a pretty predominant place in my collection. -Megan (Demolition Derby)

LEVELING, THE:
Self-titled: CD

I haven't heard anything that sounded this much like early DRI in a really long time: eleven tracks in twelve minutes, led by Chad from Brother Inferior, also available on a 7" (with less tracks?), from Oklahoma, political and societal lyrics that go beyond the clichés, and, oh yeah, the last track (perhaps this is the bonus one) has the gallopy feel of old (old? maybe all) Iron Maiden. Look for the one with skulls on the cover. -Cuss Baxter (Angry, Young, and Poor)

LIPSTICK PICKUPS: Better than You/Make Your Bed: 7"

If three chords of trashy, garage punk with female vocals give you an aural orgasm, this is your new booty for your shake! It's got two songs that blow by so fast, you jones for another fix. I keep having to get up to put the needle back on the record. Listening to this over and over, I feel soiled from the dirtiness of the songs. -Donofthedeath (Kapow)

LOCUST, THE:
Plague Soundscapes: CD

The name of the game for the Locust is

compression. They use, basically, the same instruments as the Rick Wakeman band: keyboard, guitar, distortion pedals, drum. Instead of attempts dethroning the "wizard of the keyboard" and making epic length songs about mythical beasts prancing through enchanted forests, the Locust turn the sock inside out, cut song length down to pretty much zip, and wad it into a little, radioactive ball. Then they file the songs under titles like "Your Mantel Disguised as a Psychic Sasquatch." And they're pretty fuckin' awesome at pulling it off. It's often silly ("it's time for the eyeball crotch to have a look-see"), but their tongues are firmly planted deep inside their powerviolence-inclined cheeks. Pretty sweet, and pretty much guaranteed to clear the room of people who can't handle a little noise. *Plague Soundscapes* is like *Cliff's Notes* for people with ADD. -Todd (Anti/Epitaph)

LONGBALL TO NO-ONE:
The Little Boy Picked Up a Rock...: CD

Japan's Longball to No-One have made a real leap. Shit-tons of diaper-butted, can-you-spare-a-hug emo bands claim excellent bands as influences - like Drive Like Jehu, Rites of Spring, and Jawbox. However, when I put on said emo bands' records, all I usually hear is a long, extended whine and the sound of money getting siphoned out of a trust fund. But, with LTN, I hear the updating of Jehu and Rites I've been waiting for, nigh since this emo thingy started crying its eyes out. LTN are dynamically experimental and are not

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afraid to shift tempo and show a softer belly, but when they roll over, the music's full of bristles and teeth and rocks the fuck out. Which puts us right at the doorstep of unadulterated emocore in the purest, best sense of the word. Give the album a bit to grow on you and it'll reward you. -Todd (Snuffy Smile)

LOVEHOPEANDFEAR:

Roseep: CD

Admitting once again that I don't know anything about hardcore, but I do know what I like. When asked if I know what I'm looking for all I can say is, "I'll know it when I see it" and this is a little too clean for as scary as it's supposed to sound. The vocals are over the top, in the "he needs a lozenge" hardcore way, but the music is just a bit too standard metal to make it all gel for me. -Wanda Spragg (State of Grace)

MAGGOTS, THE:

Do the Maggot!: CD

If you are a fan of '60s garage punk, you need to check out the bands on Sweden's Low Impact Records. I have heard great bands from that label, like The Strollers, Sewergrooves and The Skreppers. This band is no exception. I received a 7" of this band for review awhile back and I definitely decided it was a keeper. I feel the same way about this release. It has that garage sound with snotty energy of punk but rock is the focus here. The thing that makes this even more special is that it sounds like it was recorded in the '60s. It would fool many on first listen if this was on a record playing with the pops and ticks in the background. I don't know how big they are in Sweden, but I would think they would be popular here. The music is dead on and very easily consumed in these ears. Rock on, my brother and sisters! -Donofthead (Low Impact)

MAGIC BOX:

Bliss of a Madman: CD

Another moody, sonically expansive instrumental release from this label. Although it's very pretty, this would better serve as a soundtrack for a film, or at the very least a yuppie sex session, rather than a casual listen. -Jimmy Alvarado (Pascal)

MALEFACTION: Where There Is Power There Is Always Resistance: CD

Metal core that goes black sometimes, grinds a lot, never smiles, protests the standard protestibles, is from Canada, offers a list of resources for staying informed on the protestibles, and thinks doing a Death Sentence cover gives them license to program a "bonus track" at the end of two minutes of silence. -Cuss Baxter (G7 Welcoming Committee)

MANDRAGORA:

Full Bloom: CDEP

A mixture of '60s garage rock and psychedelia, like later period Redd Kross but with a darker sound. I

wonder: if it was recorded in mono, would it sound cooler?

-Donofthead (Mandradora)

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX/ I EXCUSE: Split EP

A Finnish band and a Japanese band who both kind of remind me of the best of Hüsker Dü, with the thick ringy guitars and the kind of proto-emo lyrics and fuzz and energy. Two songs each on red vinyl, it's a reissue of a 2001 issue on Snuffy Smile. Snuffy Smile's a cooler name than Combat Rock.

-Cuss Baxter (Combat Rock Industry)

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX: Self-titled: CDEP

Re-release of MJ's first 7" with bonus tracks that were on a split with I Excuse. This was the record that got the buzz going on this Finnish band. They released their first full length, *Desire*, on numerous labels in Europe and last year stateside released *Remedy* on BYO. If you like that post punk sound of Fugazi meets Hot Water Music, this band is for you. Any of their releases, including this one, is strong on musicianship and energy. It was good hearing these songs again since I had filed away their 7" a long time ago. -Donofthead (Boss Tuneage)

MATCHBOOK ROMANCE:

Stories and Alibis: CD

Broke my own "Jimmy will stay away from the Epitaph mystery meat piles" rule just for kicks and got bit in the ass by this disc of witty emo/pop punk. When, oh when will I learn to trust my better judgement? -Jimmy Alvarado (Epitaph)

ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES: Stevie: 7"

The score's simple. A punk supergroup plucks up a mailroom shipper, who can really fuckin' croon, out from a karaoke bar, and they continue to play long after the joke was supposed to get stale. Eventually, they get to tow a bar along with them on the Warped Tour with Heather of the Teen Idols being their personal bartender. Three albums down and countless 7"s on multiple independent labels, it's still really quite astonishing how good they are. I can't say I've ever voluntarily listened to Stevie Wonder (they do "I Just Called to Say I Love You" and "Isn't She Lovely") or seventy percent of what they cover, but their albums are great for family visits and long drives in mixed company (read people who like top forty or contemporary country). As always, thumbs up. The message in the matrix acetate is pretty funny too, but I don't want to ruin the surprise. -Todd (No Idea)

MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS:

Just to Spite You: CD

Solid, straight-ahead punk rock, long on "tude and short on extrane-

ous bullshit. Ladies and gentlemen, meet my favorite band of the month. Highly recommended. -Jimmy Alvarado (Dirtnap)

MINDS, THE:

Rip Out Your Eyes b/w Dead, "Blockout: 7"

If the Mummies clacked late seventies punk square in the jaw, instead of going back into the vaults of the '50s and '60s, that'd be the starting block for The Minds. Organ used sorta like a bat is prominent in the mix. Synchronized screaming interludes. All instruments wielded like weapons, but instead of committing some felony offence, these Portland, Oregonians slice, dice, and tumor up some nicely wrecked garage punk. The Minds fit perfectly right next to Smogtown, The Epoxies, and folks who like the new wave but aren't slaves to its charms and still know how to rock the fuck out. Recommended. -Todd (Alien Snatch)

MODERN MACHINES:

Thwap!: CD

So, just two days ago, I was jumping up (and down!) in a crowded punk house next to a freeway in New York City, rockin' out to the sweet sounds of the Modern Machines on tour! Straight out Compton, uh, Milwaukee, my friends (Disclosure! Disclosure!) rock the Hüsker Dü way, with drunken abandon! Get this CD if you like... punk rock, basement shows, dancing around like a moron 'cause you drank too much Blatz! Also, you need to track down their demo tapes - much crazier, faster, and, ack!, dare I say it, better! Still, this is Fruit Loops! Yum! -Maddy (New Disorder)

MODERN MACHINES:

Thwap!: CD

Well, here's an interesting change of pace: here's a punk band apparently influenced by *Sorry Ma-era* Replacements. You don't hear that much these days. Sure, they ultimately bored me to tears, but they garner massive points for thinking outside of the standardized pop-punk box. -Jimmy Alvarado (New Disorder)

MODEY LEMON:

Thunder and Lightning: CD

Two-man trash punk. My, how inventive and original. -Jimmy Alvarado (Birdman)

MOLOTONIC:

Self-titled: CD

Here's something genuinely different. It's not really country, but the banjo fits in just right. There's a saxophone in all the songs, which you wouldn't think would fit in well at the hoe-down, but it actually fills out the songs perfectly. There's male and female vocals that run the gamut from singing pretty to yelling angry. The drums sound like a freight train chugging up and racing down hills. And, when the songs get under your skin and you

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have to sing along, the lyrics are worth singing along to. I don't know how to classify this or what buzzwords to use, and they really don't sound like any bands I've heard, so the only frame of reference I can give is this: if you like This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb and Against Me, you'll probably like Molotonic. I can't stop listening to it. —Sean (Molotonic)

**MONDO TOPLESS:
Go Fast!: CD**

Ack! I have a problem! I can't tell if I either 1.) do not like any new garage rock because it's bad or 2.) do not like any new garage rock because I no longer like garage rock! Oh, the turmoil! I mean, I'm in no danger of relinquishing my membership in the Rip Offs fan club, but, whereas there was once a time when I liked about thirty percent of all new garage, the numbers have since plummeted to a measly five percent — at best! Anyway, this CD does not resolve my confusion. It sounds like all garage rock sounds. You know, organ, bass, drums, guitar. They cover The Stooges. They're not bad, but until I figure out my dilemma, I just can't say if they're any GOOD! I could be the new Kruschev, with old garage being, of course, Leninism and new garage rock being the new Stalinism! Give me a little time! I can't decide if I should take off my shoe and bang it on the table or not! Stupid? Yes! Is this Stalin-Os? I don't know! —Maddy (Get Hip)

**MONKEY POWER TRIO,
THE: Almost Clean: 7"**

The eighth release from a "band" that is apparently comprised of a group of friends who get together for one afternoon every year to record a bunch of songs, then release the crème de la crème from the session. This year's results are at times giddy, at times moody, at times more arty than is good for 'em, and interesting overall in a late-night college radio sorta way. Limited edition, clear vinyl, handmade covers and opaque packaging. Not bad overall, although I probably won't listen to this more than twice. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pocahontas Swamp Machine)

**MORSE CODE HEARTBEAT:
Paper Cuts: CD**

I know absolutely nothing about hardcore with the exception of what hardcore sounded like in the 1980s and, other than liking Los Crudos and Teen Cthulhu, I missed the whole thing. I honestly didn't even know that hardcore started to sound like Slayer until the '90s. With that said, I really liked the entire CD, but my lack of knowledge is holding me back from lengthy comparisons. —Wanda Spragg (Suburban Justice)

**MORSE CODE HEARTBEAT:
Self-titled: 7"**

Very arty cover, but the music contained therein was uninspiring metal-cum-hardcore. Purty pink marbled vinyl, though. —Jimmy Alvarado (Grey Sky)

**MOTOCHRIST: Greetings from
the Bonneville Salt Flats: CD**

Suck it, Motochrist. I got pissed by the cover, which has a picture of a dragster, yet the title makes a salt flats reference.

Call me picky, but top fuel dragsters with wide-open carburetor intakes and mushy, over-sized back wheels are for the quarter mile on paved roads. If the rig doesn't automatically die on the Bonneville Salt Flats from salt being sucked into the engine, it'd run about as fast as a senior citizen pushing a grocery cart up a steep incline. Perhaps the cover image is cool? Dunno. But the dude wearing a Valvoline shirt on the back cover should have it ripped off his chest. Motochrist sound like leather-panted, past middle-aged Guitar Center hair rock. No, not good. —Todd (Heat Slick)

**MOTORPSYCHOS:
Self-titled: CD**

Note to all aspiring bands: If you feel the need to add the word "rock" to your web address, the odds are it's because you don't. One needs look no further than this release for proof. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.motorpsychosrock.com)

**MUMMIES, THE:
Death by Unga Bunga: CD**

First of all, I'm psyched to have the Mummies on CD finally for the convenience of car rides and between class listenings. Secondly, this a collection of tracks from their singles. Some have been reissued, but one the whole you'd have quite a search to find all these songs. I don't know what it is that the Mummies have that other garage punk bands try to emulate, but very few come close. Worth it for the "Zip A Dee Doo Dah" cover alone. —Megan (Estrus)

**MURDER CITY DEVILS:
RIP: CD**

This is a recording of the Murder City Devils final show, after keyboardist Leslie Hardy had already left the band. It was also recorded at the end of their final tour, so even though one member was missing, her replacement had gotten pretty good at playing the songs, and the songs on this recording are tighter than I'd normally expect from a live recording. The recording quality on this is okay. When I listen to it in my truck, a lot of the cooler parts of the songs get absorbed by freeway traffic. Sitting at home, listening to this through a good stereo, though, I actually appreciate the added fuzz of the recording. It makes the CD sound like I'm hearing it bouncing off the concrete walls of a club while my ears are ringing. The Murder City Devils play a solid set here, too, including a pretty even mix of songs from their five-year career. I guess it's a shame that these guys broke up, but all in all, *RIP* is a pretty good parting shot. —Sean (Sub Pop)

**MUTILATED MANNEQUINS:
Lordship and Bondage: CD**

Low-rent goth trying desperately to sound inventive, but ending up sounding trite and rather silly instead. —Jimmy Alvarado (Mutilated Mannequins)

**NETWORK, THE:
Money Money 2020: CD/DVD**

Looks like the new wave revival is in full swing over at Adeline. There's hints of Berlin, Men Without Hats, Bow Wow Wow, some other ones I can't instantly recall (lotta one-hitters back then, you

know), but mostly it's redolent of *Freedom of Choice* Devo, which I'd be an asshole to even try to deny as a cultural touchstone (nay, milestone). Honestly, I was pretty ambivalent at first, but after a few forced listens, it's started to grow on me. They obviously know what they're working with and what to do with it (they all have funny names, like Snoo and Fink, and underpants on their heads, so you can't tell who they are – I suspect that Billy Joel fellow from Green Day is one but I'm no authority) and have access to probably the same instruments the original new wavers used (like those keyboards with the handle so you would wear it like a guitar) and, a couple duds aside, the whole package comes off sort of like listening to MTV circa 1983. I only watched the DVD part once because the video gave me a swelling, itching brain, and I don't really know how DVDs work so I probably missed some parts, but I'll tell you this: there's naked ladies on there. –Cuss Baxter (Adeline)

NEW BOMB TURKS: *Switchblade Tongues,* *Butterknife Brains:* CD

Bear with me. The New Bomb Turks are the Dunkin' Donuts of garage rock. For awhile they seemed to be everywhere. Almost everybody with an ounce of musical taste agreed that they were a high water mark for the game, neck and neck with the Devil Dogs and the Mummies. They appeared to be on a long, constant tour and seemed to have a release every month for five years straight. I can remember a stint when I saw them three times in four months without really even trying. From Eric's often imitated overdrive vocals to the adrenal stab to the heart guitars, to the almost supernatural songwriting sense, to their rock solid, no-earthquake-can-break-it rhythm section, there was no chink in the armor. There've been no bad New Bomb Turks songs. Sure, some are better than others, but none of them slurped shit. Donuts. People, such as myself, who appreciate the fine art of deep frying and cheap, plentiful coffee realize there are far too many pale imitators, far too many ways to fuck up the seemingly simple ingredients. In LA, there are no Dunkin' Donuts. I get an acute pain every time I take a chance on mom and pop donut shop and the apple fritter crumbles like a stale dough turd and the coffee tastes like used oil (this isn't to say that Star Donut doesn't make great donuts; they actually rule, but I digress). New Bomb Turks. I get an acute pain every time I take a chance on some pouty motherfucker who screams "brothers and sisters" or "Hallelujah" while their designer corporate garage rock sounds like acid poured in my ear (or a publicist spewing in my ear). I can't fault Dunkin' Donuts or the New Bomb Turks institutions for perfecting the game and delivering what I've been asking for the entire time. Long, strained metaphors aside, this cover-heavy album of outtakes, a lost EP, and harder-to-find international releases proves the continued power of band that can make odds and ends sound like a fully realized album that's sweet and fuckin' smokes.
–Todd (Gearhead)

NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD: *Self-titled:* CD

I've been searching really hard to find a melodic hardcore band that can pick up where Kid Dynamite left off, but more and more, I'm seeing what a tough thing that is. When I first popped in this New Mexican Disaster Squad, I thought I had a candidate for a carrier of the Kid Dynamite torch. The singer has the ability to switch from singing to screaming and still sound good, and to race through lyrics really quickly without completely losing coherence. The guitars blend some nice hooks into the songs, and the drummer keeps things moving. The songs start and finish pretty quickly. Still, after a few songs, my attention starts to wane. I start to feel like I'm listening to a three-song seven inch four times in a row, not one, twelve-song album. If this had been a three-song seven inch, I would've been really stoked on it. As it stands, this album is good background music, but I was hoping for more. –Sean (A-F)

NICOTINE: *School of Liberty:* CD

Here is a band going strong for ten years now. This Japanese band is supposedly described as the Japanese NOFX. I don't hear it. I hear a little Pennywise mixed with the Swedish band Venerea and a little Snuff thrown in for flavor. There's seventeen tracks total and I was able to listen to all of them. That is no small feat when this music junkie listens to a ton of shit. The songs are super tight and infectious. The lyrics might not make sense but they sure follow the music. The musicians are as tight as the production. The band seems to be able to stop on a dime. It sounds like they really worked hard on the songs. They let them mature before recording. All in all, these guys take the whole melodic-core thing and keep the bar raised. They know that the melody is the hook and I'm hooked. There are so many bands that try to play this style of music and so many who don't get it. –Donofthedead (Asian Man)

NO DECENCY: *This Is the Reason:* CD

I almost always wince when people I sorta know hand me a piece of music. It's not that I don't wish them well, I'm just not so big on having to tell bands that I think their music sucks. One of the axioms to reviewing music is that so many really nice people make really bad music. That all said, No Decency has quickly become one of my current favorite punk/hardcore bands in the LA area. Not only is lead singer/guitarist Aaron able to spawn a stage-diving session of four, with a running start from the kitchen at a house show, these three guys have learned their lessons well. And fast. They're young and ultra-excited/ borderline retarded (in the best ways, I assure you). The music's a great blend of Hot Water Music (for the slower, anthemic, fist-in-the-air parts), Strike Anywhere (for the house-is-on-fire, keep-playing bits), those hidden broken-back melodies in Panthro UK United 13 that most bands keep missing, and they bring a couple extra rounds of ammo of their own to the fight. So it's catchy, smart, rebellious, and shoots up the god-

damn place. Not only are their hearts in the right place, they can play in a way that'll make you care about what they're singing, too. On their website, they're promising to have hats you can drink beer out of for sale really soon. –Todd (Destroy All Records)

NO RETREAT: *Pray for Peace:* CD

Even with anti-war lyrics, cookie monster metal sucks ass. –Jimmy Alvarado (Da Core)

OI POLLOI: *Fuaim Catha:* CD

Oi Polloi are a long-time, multi- and-shifting member band out of Scotland. Politically, they take a stance similar to Crass (anarchism), while incorporating many of the same ethics and politics: anti-police, pro-animal, anti-industrialist, gay-friendly, pro-everyone's-land, anti-capitalist. Musically, one can really hear the influence these guys have had on the US band, Toxic Narcotic. Aside from the drum-circle monologue poem that opens this long CD up, the two bands can both play convincing, primitively thrash. Then they can switch effortlessly into slower folkloric, traditional numbers without betraying either approach to music. It's a lot to chew on in one large bite and the politics are extremely blunt, but after repeated listens, this has grown on me. There's surprising bits all over it. –Todd (Combat Rock Industry)

OPERATORS 780, THE: *Power Version:* CD

Yet another ska/rocksteady record to wholly ignore for the derivative umpteenth-generation, played-out piff it is. Can't wait 'til punta-core is the next big thing, 'cause, much as I love the original stuff, this focus on only one Caribbean rhythmic style is beyond ridiculous. Fuck, even the Skatalites branched out now and then. –Jimmy Alvarado (Longshot)

OSCURO: Self-titled: CD

Moody, atmospheric instrumental music that would no doubt compliment your average indie film quite nicely. –Jimmy Alvarado (Pascal)

OZOMATLI: *Coming Up:* CDEP

I have been on a Latin kick for a few years now and I still haven't learned the language. Right at the point when I need a change from the usual, Ozo puts out a new teaser EP. Excited like a little girl getting her first Barbie, I rushed out to get this. After self-releasing their debut EP and recording two full lengths on Interscope's Almo label, they jump ship and sign to a jazz label. From what I hear on this six-song release, nothing has changed from the label transfer. In fact, the songs seem more focused. The songs still have that party vibe that has lured thousands into their fan base. The mixture of funk and Latin makes for the horrifying sight of this Asian man trying to dance. At least I do it in the privacy of my home so I won't leave mental scars when people see me at shows. They may not be punk but they are more politically active than most.
–Donofthedead (Concord)

PANSY DIVISION:

Total Entertainment: CD
PD shouldn't need an introduction, but it's been awhile since Jon Ginoli and company have released a new LP. I fell for PD in 1994 when they put out the *Jack U Off 7"* and it's nice to hear that not much has changed in the ten-plus years since they started. The song writing has a formula and the words have always been more shocking and ground breaking than the music, but they have something charming about them that is still fresh even after a five year break. –Wanda Spragg (Alternative Tentacles)

PEELANDER-Z: *P-Bone Steak:* CD

Self-described as "The Japanese Noodle Samurai Punk Band," Peeland-Z is one weird bunch. Three Japanese guys from New York get some costumes together and decide to rock out. Vocals remind me of a cross of Biafra mixed with the guy from F.O.D. who's name escapes me. The songs have that late '70s, early '80s punk sound. The lyrics are either in broken English or Japanese. If you want something silly and has that garage feel, this is your new favorite band. –Donofthedead (Swell)

PENNYWISE: *From the Ashes:* CD/DVD

I won't deny my past. The year was 1991. I'd been in college a couple years. Then, as now, I was poor. At the time, in Flagstaff, Arizona, the cheapest way I could sample new music was the used cassette bin at an independent record store. They were three-buck gambles. Pennywise's self-titled made it through some rough winters and the roulette of putting a cassette into the Kraco taping machine. I played that tape multiple hundreds of times. It was one of those auto-repeat players. On the inside cover illustration, one of the members looked like wrestler Steven Nash (long hair, goatee, sunglasses) and another guy had "freestyle skater" hair (the feathery hair-blower swoop). I was still a rabid Bad Religion devotee, and Pennywise had the melodic, tight, muscular punk down to a tee. It was seamless and tough, like a ball bearing. It was perfect for driving and wishing harm on the entire hippie race. I was, largely, in a musical vacuum. To this day, I don't have cable TV, don't know much about the alignment of snowboard companies and extreme sports to whatever music they're pumping. There was no good radio station for hundreds of miles. When I moved to LA in '96, I got the chance to see Pennywise a couple of times and interviewed them twice. They were very nice, but, man, their fans, by and large, were almost as big of dicks as NOFX's fans. Meaty dudes with sexual/aggression issues and backward baseball caps punched and pulled one another's clothes off, circling in an ever-more-sweaty bliss of dirt and sweat. It was like watching a movie where you like the soundtrack but it didn't equate to what you're seeing. I had such different ideas in my brain when I played their tape, window down, through the forest, on roads where I wouldn't pass another car for at least an hour. Not one to hate a band by who they attract, I'd still pick up their releases, one after another. **RAZORCAKE 93**

Partially, it was nostalgia. Partially, I really liked them. Enter *From the Ashes*. In the past twelve years, Pennywise has gotten more politically savvy and tighter as a unit. They've always been a little bit more than pro – and thank equipment manufacturers frequently. Each album is sonically a little better than the previous. And although I enjoy parts of this album, I can't help but feel that they're painting themselves into an ever-contracting corner. Sure, all of the elements they've help define in previous albums are there, but the punk rock elements in their songs sound like they've been in captivity for too long. Their musical beast is no longer feral. It's been caged in and trained to a form of Pennywise musical perfection. I think that's their intention. (The DVD spends some time in showing the great pains they go through in recording an album.) But in doing so, for me, Pennywise has become more and more devoid of snarl, dirt, grit, and the unexpected explosions that I really enjoy in current bands. They want, and make, clean, proficient punk. I want dirty punk that leaves a rash and an infection. Ironically, their mostly pop songs, like "Yesterday," with a piano interlude, become their strongest efforts for me, because it stretches them, if even a little bit. –Todd (Epitaph)

PINHEAD GUNPOWDER:
Compulsive Disclosure: CD

I actually jumped around when I saw this, and I can be a pretty lazy fuck. I seriously can't understand why anyone wouldn't love Pinhead Gunpowder. They're still poppy, still simple, still just so catchy. It's only nine songs, which leads me to play it a minimum of two times every listen. It's the kind of album that your favorite song is always the one that you're listening to for each song throughout the whole album. Perfect for mix tapes, car rides, and dancing around. –Megan (Lookout)

PINK SWORDS:
One Night High: CD

What do you get when you take the dirt out of trash rock? This. I don't know if it's in the recording, but it just comes across so clean. There could be something there, but I lose it in the sterility. This makes me think of office girls going out for a night on the town and so they trade in their suit-dress for a mini skirt and a spiked bracelet thinking that they're so bad. However they do thank some awesome bands that you should check out if you haven't yet: Riverboat Gamblers, The Ends, and the Motards. –Megan (Mortville)

PLAN B:
Picturesque: CD

It's nice to see a bunch of God-boys singing about not getting the girl. Lord knows I wouldn't go near the whiney little dudes. –Megan (Dirty Work)

PLEASURE FOREVER:
Alter: CD

If Tom Waits were thirty years younger and had a hard-on for college rock, I bet his band would sound just like this. –Jimmy Alvarado (Sub Pop)

PLEBE, LA:
Conquista 21: CD

Think Voodoo minus the ska and with a

much better grasp of the Spanish language. –Jimmy Alvarado (www.laplebe.com)

POPULAR SHAPES:
Bikini Style: CD

Loosely, very loosely, the Popular Shapes are in the same camp as The Lost Sounds, the A-Frames, and Le Shock (RIP). Hyper-angular, almost robotic voiced, whelped guitars, Wire-loving, Gang of Four-idolizing, Stick Men With Rayguns-admiring punk for animated mannequins. There's nothing wrong with them, and I find myself really enjoying parts of songs, but like a spice that slips off the side of your tongue instead of blooming right in the middle, I can't hold my arms up in the touchdown position when listening to the Popular Shapes. What's weirder is that, on repeated listens, I'm both liking it more and liking it less. Huh. If you don't squint at adventure and don't need straight-ahead melodies holding your hand all the way through a song, I say give 'em a chance. I'll sit here and see if it grows on me. –Todd (On/On Switch)

PREACHER'S KIDS, THE:
Wild Emotions: CD

Retro-garage punk with enough Cochran, Bo Diddley and the Pagans in the mix to lend authenticity. Not a bad listen and I bet they raise quite a ruckus live. –Jimmy Alvarado (Get Hip)

PROCEDURE, THE:
Rise of New Reason: CD

Emo and hardcore mix about as well as Kool-Aid and frog piss. –Jimmy Alvarado (Blackout)

QUEERS/MANGES: Split: CD

Queers: Cover songs that make me feel like I'm watching Nick at Night. If the Queers were around in the 1950s or early '60s, they would be the shit. Manges: From Italy, play a Ramones meets Screeching Weasel brand of punk pop with added vocal melodies. When bands cover the Cheap Trick song "Surrender," I always put them up against Big Drill Car's version. Most bands don't reach that level of perfection and it's true here. –Donofthedeath (Stardumb)

QUICK FIX KILLS, THE:
Saint Something: CD

Angular college rock sure to get fans of Dischord Records all hot and bothered. –Jimmy Alvarado (My Pal Goo)

RAMBLIN' AMBASSADORS:
Avanti: CD

Twenty-four minutes of top-notch surf and spaghetti western instrumentals. Great soundtrack for your next *Fisful of Dollars*-themed shindig. –Jimmy Alvarado (Mint)

RE4M: Wordseye: CD

Every once in a while an album is, pure and simple, so friggin' cool that genres and pigeonholes are rendered meaningless. Such is the case with this, the work of underground hip hop producer/MC RE.4M, who, aided by a cadre of friends, has made one hell of an album here, a diverse blend of musical styles and influences married to some truly jaw dropping vocal gymnastics. The tracks alternate from furious exercises

in alliteration (courtesy of rappers Neila, Beond, Gajah, Olmeca and others), both a-cappella and backed by sparse, spacey beats, to instrumentals that occasionally bring to mind both Black Sabbath's "Planet Caravan" and the sun-damaged pseudo-Persian psychosis of Savage Republic. Of course, enough solid beats permeate the proceedings to please those only looking for something to facilitate shakin' that ass, but those who prefer to assess what they're listening to on a deeper level than merely providing background noise will also be more than satisfied with what's going down, 'cause this is literally sick with levels on which to take it. In short, regardless of whether or not you like rap music, RE.4M and his buddies have managed to come up with an album that is not just mandatory listening for hip hop fans, it's mandatory listening for fans of music, period. –Jimmy Alvarado (Nomadic Soundsystem)

RENO DIVORCE: You're Only Making It Worse: CD

I truly wish people would come to grips with the fact that they are not Mike Ness. Hell, Mike Ness isn't even Mike Ness anymore. It seriously sounds like the singer locked himself up and listened to *Somewhere Between Heaven and Hell* for a good week before stepping up to the mic to record. I don't think I'd lose friends if they played this, but I can't see myself ever putting it on through my own volition. –Megan (Boss Tuneage)

ROCKET SCIENCE:
Born in Hell: 7"

Really good '60s-inspired trash rock from Australia, true to the sound of the period and frenetic enough to keep from sounding dated. –Jimmy Alvarado (Voodoo Rhythm)

ROY: The Red EP: CDEP

College rock with country twang around the edges. The more up-tempo songs weren't too bad, but the mellow, acoustic shit was about as fun as Chinese water torture. –Jimmy Alvarado (Crash)

RUINS:
March-October 1997: LP

Jazzy, grindy skronk by this Japanese bass/drum duo, recorded live in Tokyo and Paris. Although the noise they make is interesting, the tracks begin to blend together by the third or fourth track and you're left pondering what you're gonna eat for lunch tomorrow instead of paying attention to what's coming outta your speakers. –Jimmy Alvarado (Enterruption)

SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS:
Self-titled: 7"

These are the guys who would've been intimidated by Fonzie. Fifties pop inspired pop punk with wimpy, not quite whining, but still annoying as all hell vocals. –Megan (Route 13)

SHOCKS, THE:
Bored to Be Zero 3: CD

Excellent eleven tracks of punk rock from this German three piece. I love it. The music is killer! It's snotty, fast, and snappy most of the time. They show a

little sign of new wave from time to time and sometimes they remind me a little of an early '80s post-punk pop band, but for the most part this is all-out punk. It's done very well. The cover art is great and the packaging is nice, too. The booklet is all high gloss. You can tell they put some time and effort into the design of this CD. It all worked out. I can't tell you what they are saying 'cause all the lyrics are in German, but if you can read German (unlike me) you will be set! If you like punk rock, get this CD. You will be glad you did! –Mike Beer (Dirty Faces)

SICK FITS: Are We the Young Savages?: CD

Lo-fi trash punk not unlike your average Rip Off Records release. Pretty good overall, sometimes sounding like a revved-up Controllers. Some "bonus" tracks here as well, including a live cover of the Urinals' "Ack Ack Ack" that is recorded so poorly that you can't help but wonder what the point was in including it. –Jimmy Alvarado (Longshot)

SKIP JENSEN AND HIS SHAKIN' FEET: self-titled: 7"

The one-man band seems to be making a comeback. This was mostly recorded in his bathroom, so there's definitely a low fi sound to it. The shakin' that his feet are doing is usually connected to a tambourine, which is a bit much for me. I'm more of a stomp kind of girl. –Megan (Yakisakana)

SKULLS, THE:
The Golden Age of Piracy: CD

The Skulls continue to impress. The sound on *The Golden Age of Piracy* is meatier and fuller than their stellar *Therapy for the Shy*, and instead of sounding more pro, they just sound bigger, punchier, and continue to slash through song after song. Still firmly planted in the spastic energy of early LA punk that infused the Dils, Gears, and Weirdos, they're not afraid to get better and more comfortable at what they do. I admire their ability to play the shit out of a song, fuck around with tempos, set moods, whip out short flashes of tasteful playing ability, and still not lose sight of making bare bones punk rock songs that you'll be humming for days on end. Let's not complicate matters. The Skulls playing is like a mousetrap. They know how to set it all up, bait it, and cock it with few wasted movements. Once sprung, their songs snap right into place. Job done. Surprisingly, however, is the fact that my favorite songs on this album are the slow burners. "Monet," "Black Day," and "Jerry #5" sound like long-lost archetypes to non-asp punk power ballads. Instead of merely meandering in the hopes of roping in some pussy (as per heavy metal formula), they all sound like quieter trips down dark allies filled with broken bottles, exposed syringes, and bruised dreams. –Todd (Dr. Strange)

SLEEPYTIME GORILLA MUSEUM: Self-titled: CD

Live recordings of a band that played moody, experimental music. I'm willing to bet my right arm that they were amazing live, but, while the sounds here are varied and interesting, **RAZORCAKE 95**

to say the least, they seem to suffer a bit without the accompanying visual stimuli. Wish I'd seen 'em. -Jimmy Alvarado (Sickroom)

SMOGTOWN:

Tales of Gross Pollution: CD
Could Smogtown really be as good as all the hype we've given them in *Razorcake*? Yes. Yes they are. And now those fuckers have gone and broken up. Money already wrote their obit in the pages of *Razorcake*. So what are we left with? One last offering of this now defunct, but someday legendary punk band. *Tales of Gross Pollution* is the CD version of Smogtown's original demo tape. They recorded it less than a month after they had formed as a band, and, amazingly enough, their science was tight even that early on. The songs are a little slower than most Smogtown songs. This album doesn't showcase the band at their best. Still, there's a real beauty to the rawness of the songs, and keep in mind that a not-at-their-best Smogtown is still a shitload better than most bands at their best. Also, for someone who already has pretty much everything else these guys have put out, it's nice to have one last new thing to listen to. Some of the songs from this first demo were later re-recorded and released on other albums. Four of the songs here popped up in different versions of the *Beach City Butchers 10'*, and one more of them was re-recorded for the *Führers of the New Wave* album, but the other fourteen songs are new to me. It's probably pretty obvious to you if you're still reading this review, but I highly recommend this one.
-Sean (Disaster)

SPONTANEOUS DISGUST: *North American Bald Beaver Preservation Society: cassette*

There was a little note that came with this tape, explaining that the guys in the band ransacked the used cassette section of their local Goodwill and dubbed their own album on to those tapes. My copy was dubbed over *Working Class Dog* by Rick Springfield, which means, to the credit of Spontaneous Disgust, there is now one less copy of "Jesse's Girl" in existence. Listening to this tape, they have done the world an even greater favor by recording their own songs for posterity. Nothing is sacred; they attack everything from VH1's favorite punk rocker ("Henry Rollins Get Off the Air"), buddyhead.com ("Attack of the 35-Year-Old Indie Rockers"), and the current state of punk rock ("Despite All the Rumors, Metal Still Sucks, Kids"), all the way to the self-explanatory "Why Do So Many People Like Tom Petty?" As for the music, it's like a cross between god, wet vaginas, and hot dogs, only better. I suggest you get this post-haste, maybe your copy will be taped over *Nightmare at Maple Cross* by Girlschool. -Not Josh (Pregnant Midget Porn)

STFU/MONSTER SQUAD: *Split: CD*

STFU: Swell, straight-ahead hardcore along the same lines as Insult during their *I Wanna Be a Burn Victim* period. Wicked good stuff. Monster Squad: More gallop-tempo hardcore, not as

immediately catchy as STFU, but they definitely grow on you by the third track. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rodent Popsicle)

STRAPONS: *\$4 Whore: CD*

Decent enough mid-tempo punk with some staggeringly stupid lyrics addressing asshole cops, being in love with bargain-basement prostitutes and the ineffectiveness of using a Glad baggy as a rubber. -Jimmy Alvarado (Naked Jain)

STRYCHNINE: *Oakland Stadtmsikanten "Live" in Bremen, Germany: CD*

A soundboard recording of an Oakland band playin' in the fodderland. Sound quality is good, naturally, and the performance is strong as well. Musically, their gallop-core didn't quite make me all giddy inside, but their cover of "We're Desperate" elicited many a belly laugh. -Jimmy Alvarado (TKO)

STUN GUNS: ... *And There Was Nothing We Could Do About It: LP*

I was handed this at about four in the morning from someone I think everyone was calling Buddha at someone's house I'd never been to while a Great Dane was eating dumpster pizza off of the counter. I was a little less excited the next morning. Hungover and finally home, I put it on. Holy shit! This album is so good. It's one of those albums where you can hear small glimpses of a band, but on the next listen you hear someone completely different because they've made it all their own. This listen I'm getting some Vindictives, but I've never heard that in there before. Songs range from Tiananmen Square to girls on drugs. I'd never heard of them before, and this is one hell of a taste. Apparently, Dan Destructo from No Fraud was involved in some of the recording for this. The packaging is right up there with the sound. It's on clear vinyl, which I've always liked the most for some reason, with a screen-printed cover (red on black), and a ton of goodies thrown in as well. Well worth looking for. -Megan (Shut Up)

SUBSET:

Dueling Devotions: CD

Jimmy got to Razocake HQ before me and all he left me to review was this lousy CD. -Donofthedeat (Tight Spot)

SUPPRESSION/ ATOMATRON: *Split EP*

I'd heard the tremendously noisy Suppression on a couple comps and expected big, fucked-up things from them, and ain't now yet disappointed as two of these three tracks do a slightly-less-maniac Lightning Bolt and the third is pure noise. One's called "Boy Vomits Hamburger in the Full Moon Light." Atomatron's more drug-oriented, what with the reverb motherfucked vocals and some of the tense breakdowns. No guitar, so there's a little Lightning Bolt shooting through these guys, too. Makes the sound "bwowdleowdedodoot."
-Cuss Baxter (C.N.P.)

SUSHIROBO: *The Light Fingered Feeling of: CD*

Smart "modern rock" screaming for

KROQ airplay. Sadly, they'll probably never get it. -Jimmy Alvarado (Pattern 25)

SWEETHEARTS, THE: *L.U.V.: CD*

I'd think it would be tough to combine solid Texas rock'n'roll with Nikki Corvette-style bubblegum vocals, but The Sweethearts blend them together seamlessly. The songs rock and make me want to sing along, and that's a good combination. *L.U.V.* comes across like the best of The Chubbies, or an Eyeliners live set when the Eyeliners are really on. It's good shit. -Sean (Mortville)

TEARS, THE: *Self-titled: CD*

One of the greatest tragedies of my generation is that I used up all my good Tears wisecracking in an earlier piece, as this band continues to fail to produce any manner of strong reaction with me other than an occasional acute appreciation for the glories of kneesocks and playing guitar on one leg. I mean, on the one hand, they're kinda good; on the other hand, they have like exactly zero by way of legitimate "A" material. On the mysteriously unaccounted for third hand, however, they do have a fairly decent supply of B+ material ("Miss Queen" "Never Alone" "Another Girl" and "Worst Lie" coming immediately to mind) (well, not immediately, I kinda had to look at the track listings to jog my memory, but, I mean, you know, fairly immediately thereafter), so who am I to be critical? Yet, on the one hand, the songs kinda lumber along when, by rights, they oughtta be snapping and crackling; on the other hand, maybe it's the lumbering that would theoretically set them apart from those who wouldst waste our time with their incessant snapping and crackling. Yet, back to the first hand, the whole "punk-fed, blues-weaned, and barely legal!" thing has been kinda universally beat to death for years; yet, then again, there are enough idiosyncratic aesthetic elements bouncing around in the mix that the band is managing to forge a collective identity regardless. But, then again, I really see no evidence of legitimate creative genius at work, nor indications of the latent presence of same. But, then again again again, how much of that does one really need to function effectively within the parameters of the rock & roll idiom? But, yet, on the one hand, a lot of those student-level blues string-bendin' riff things are pretty hokey and played out; yet, on the other hand, some of 'em are really fuckin' cool ("Worst Lie"), though, back to the hand we started on, I can't imagine anybody, anywhere, wanting to hear white kids from Wisconsin singing the phrase "Tuesday morning" as "Tuesday Mo'nin'," and what was the last truly great song written by caucasians that accented the 2 and the 4? "Taxman?" But then again, there's that last song ("I Know It's Hard"), reminiscent of that Joe King/Lisa Marr duet of a few years back, but sung by what sounds like a pair of short school bus riding coeds in matching his and her hockey helmets after their being partially euthanized with nail polish remover on the way to the studio. Now THAT'S a beautiful thing, man. BEST SONG: "Miss

Queen" or "Worst Lie" BEST SONG TITLE: "Blew My Baby Away," although "Fast Cars" worked pretty well for the Buzzcocks FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Back cover depicts guitarist Natalie perusing an issue of Cheri, which was the first skin mag I ever bought, back when I was confused about my sexuality (i.e. I thought I dug white girls with big tits)
-Rev. Nørb (Trick Knee)

THREE MINUTE MOVIE:

The Film Reflects a Dramatic City: CD

I can honestly say that I've loved everything I've heard from Snuffy Smile. They've introduced me to great Japanese bands like Baggage, I Excuse, The Urchin, Minority Blues Band, and Pear of the West, and they've released seven inches by some of my favorite American bands, like The Thumbs, Super Chinchilla Rescue Mission, and The Timversion. So I had a feeling that I'd like Three Minute Movie, and they didn't disappoint me. Actually, I had more than a feeling. I had one of Three Minute Movie's songs on a comp, and whenever the comp ended, I'd find myself singing the Three Minute Movie song in my head. It's good stuff. Mid-tempo punk that borrows a little from Leatherface (in the way that it can really crank up the tension in the songs) and a little from Hüsker Dü (pulling perfect melodies out of songs that sound like they could explode into chaos) and some guitar parts sound like they come straight from the Replacements, but ultimately it becomes its own thing: very tight and very skilled without being the least bit polished. It looks like the title of this album suffers a little in the translation from Japanese to English, but nothing is lost in the translation of the rest of the album. It sounds just right in any language. -Sean (Snuffy Smile)

TRAGEDY/

TOTALITAR: Split: 7"

Tragedy's the band that I've been looking for for over a decade. They hit all the right spots. Dark, edgy, full hardcore that isn't a throwback, that is intelligent musically and lyrically, and there's not one gap, from the artwork to the nuclear radiation flying off the record player as the vinyl spins. Not to sound like a hippie, but the songs simultaneously soar higher and snap louder than any hardcore band I've heard in years. These two songs, "No End in Sight" and "None of Your Business," were recorded at the same time as their debut album. Flawless. Totalitar: are fantastic in their own right but don't flick all of my switches like Tragedy. I sort of wish it wasn't on a split with Tragedy, because I know when I'll pick this out, I'll be playing the other side three or four times in a row. -Todd (Armageddon Label)

TRASH CAN SCHOOL: *Big Bang Radiation Blues: CDR*

This was sent to my brother Katz, who I believe has not written one word for this magazine. He was only involved before issue #1. I guess it was because of the *Flipside* magazine association of the other contributors and staff that this would be sent to *Razorcake*. Since it was for my brother, it was put in my box. I never bought, li-

tened to or saw this band before. I do remember the name and I equate it to the late '80s to the early '90s. If you are from the LA area from that time period, I would associate this band as a Raji's or Al's Bar type of band. To be more specific, I'm picturing Saccharine Trust. Noisy, dirty, jazz punk that bangs along while you go for that twelfth beer of the night. Not my thing. I will hand this to my brother since this was addressed to him and not keep it for myself. —Donofthedeath (Jinx)

TRAVOLTAS, THE: Endless Summer: LP

Jock #1: Duuuuuude, it's totally like a new Blink 182 record, brah! Plus there's this fuckin' sweet ass keyboard that makes 'em sound like No Doubt, dude!
Jock #2: Blink 182 mixed with No Doubt? Totally fuckin' sweet, dude. And have you heard the new P.O.D.?
—Not Josh (Radio Blast, www.radioblastrecordings.com)

TYRADES, THE: Self-titled: CD

If it's not painfully obvious by now, it will be. I'm a geek. On the toilet, I often read grammar rules. This time, I had the Tyrades on, blasting their spazzy, shouty, and noisy punk rock that knows how to cut the crap and slice the song down to bone and fur. Lead vocalist, Jenna, is a siren. The playing's perfectly demented, skewed, and always rushing forward, sort of like a drug-maniac early, proto Devo mated to a band that sounds like they break metric tons of instruments. Even when they repeat choruses over and over again, it doesn't seem like pointless repetition, but stalking, teeth-baring taunts. Then I came upon these two sentences in Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*. I only had to change one word. "Never imitate consciously, but do not worry about being an imitator; take pains instead to admire what is good. Then when you play in a way that comes naturally, you will echo the halloos that bear repeating." That's exactly what the Tyrades do. To a tee. —Todd (Broken Rekkids)

ULTIMATE EAKEBOOK: Electric Kissing Parties: CD

It's one of those bands that you see at the local club on a week night that are almost punk but mostly rock. They put out a CD! —Donofthedeath (Law of Inertia)

UNICORNS, THE: Who Will Cut Our Hair When We're Gone?: CD

Do you ever pick something up because it looks so terrible that you assume it has to be good? This is a perfect example. First, they're called the Unicorns for fuck's sake. That should be such a badass band in my book. Second, the cover has a rainbow and lightning drawn in colored pencils. Finally, the back is hot pink with super curly-q letters that you can barely read. That being said, this is quite possibly worse than the packaging. Sort of like Portishead, but without any redeeming qualities like decent vocals and music. —Megan (Alien8)

UNPERSONS: III: CD

By-the-numbers emo-tinged metalcore. Lotsa tempo changes, lotsa screaming,

lotsa crunch, but I couldn't keep myself remotely interested. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.atalossrecordings.com)

UNSEEN, THE: Explode: CD

It's tough for me to wholeheartedly endorse The Unseen partially because it bugs me when bands go so far to dress up like classic punk rockers. It's my hang up, I know, but really, it's not Halloween and you're not shocking anyone. You'd be better off just wearing what's comfortable. Also, I think The Unseen's over-the-top crusty look tends to stick them in a category with much lesser bands like the Casualties, which is a shame, because The Unseen is way better. My other hang up with The Unseen is that I liked guitarist Paul Russo's first band, The Pinkerton Thugs, so much better. When I can get beyond those two things, which really are my problem and not the band's, I have to admit that The Unseen is a solid band. They bring a lot of energy to their songs, and, though it's fast and angry throughout, there's enough difference between songs to keep things interesting. I like the way Paul sings, too, and he seems to be singing more on *Explode* than he did on their last album. Overall, it makes for a pretty good listen. —Sean (BYO)

UPPERCUT: Four Walls: CD

Your average NYHC release, meaning that it's up to its Marshall stacks in metal and boring as fuck to wade through. —Jimmy Alvarado (Blackout)

URINALS, THE: What Is Real and What Is Not: CD

To give all due respect, the Urinals have been around for a long time — starting as a punk parody band in 1977. They quickly developed into a real band, had disagreements, changed their name to 100 Flowers, called it quits, then reformed in a slightly different form, and changed their name to Trotsky Icepick. The Urinals were a supporting band the night Black Flag was arrested onstage in LA for disturbing the peace. Somewhere in or after all that, Amphetamine Reptile released a compilation of many of the difficult-as-fuck to find 7"s, titled *Negative Capability... Check It Out*. That's a great listen. You get to hear how they began like Wire and where the Minutemen quite possibly got their knack for short but full songs. A bunch of more well-known bands have gone to cover Urinals songs. The Butthole Surfers pop right into mind. *What Is Real and What Is Not* is their first release of new material since 1984's *Drawing Fire*. The Urinals have always been arty, but I remember more bits of shattered glass in the listener's ear. This CD is nice. Nice. It's not patently disappointing, like Devo going into the studio and re-recording "Whip It" specifically to make an advertisement for a home duster, but it's also not patently exciting, like the charge the first time I heard "Ack Ack Ack" or "Sex." A lot of the songs on this CD are extremely light and fluttering, like David Byrne's solo work after the Talking Heads, which can be clever and pretty, but I just don't find myself hankering for it. In other words, they're covering the ground well covered and sown in late-'90s indie pop instead of

jumping into the noisy direction of whence they came. That all said, "I Make Love to Every Woman on the Freeway" is pert, catchy, and as itchy a song you're bound to hear this year. The Urinals are a band who've gone from angst to a more dust-free environment. Take that as you will. —Todd (Warning Label/Happy Squid)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Boston Scene Report: CD

Four bands from Boston are highlighted in the first scene report series put out by TKO. Suspect Device: two really solid tracks. They've nailed down catchiness without embracing a pop sound. Tommy and the Terrors: I can't recommend them highly enough. These guys have been around for awhile now and never leave me less than impressed. It's bands like them that let me keep my head held high when I say I like street punk. A-Team: on the first song I thought I heard a lot of Motorhead influence. The second track was a Motorhead cover. The Fast Actin' Fuses: psychobilly meets metal riffs. Not necessarily a combo I'd recommend. I don't know how well a full length would fare with me, but the two tracks aren't enough to keep me from listening to the comp. So, I guess I'll get used to it. On the whole, a good comp. I just wish there was more — either of tracks or bands. —Megan (TKO)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Get into the Underground Groove: 7"

Four bands each contribute one song to this seven inch. One of the bands is called the Goxsip and they're fronted by the singer from the Gossip, and another band, The Supreme Indifference, has Kim Gordon from Sonic Youth and Jim O'Rourke, who often plays with Sonic Youth. I really like the Gossip. I really like Sonic Youth. I often like Kill Rock Stars releases, too. So I would think that this would be a pretty good record, but I was dead wrong. I couldn't find anything I liked about this seven inch. I could hardly stand to listen to it all the way through. It's just too much noise and not enough song to hold it together. —Sean (Kill Rock Stars)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Punk Seven Inch CD, Volume One: CD

This is a collection of six seven inches that Lookout released in 1988 and 1989, and it was a cool thing for me to pick up because I used to order a lot from Lookout ten years ago, and I always wondered what these seven inches sounded like, but I never dropped the three bucks down to find out. So now I have my answer. The first two bands, Corrupted Morals and Isocracy, sound so similar that I can never tell when one band ends and the next begins. They both bridge the gap between the Dead Kennedys and Green Day, but neither Corrupted Morals nor Isocracy has anywhere near the talent of the bands that came before and after them. Both bands are snottier than a six year-old's sleeve on a rainy winter day. The next band, Plaid Retina, sounds like a sped up Corrupted Morals or Isocracy. Still snotty. Still forgettable. Next up is the Yeastie Girls, who do a cappella raps about women's issues and left wing pol-

itics. I'm not sure if it's a joke or not, but I know I'm not listening to it twice. The next band is Surrogate Brains, and finally, you can hear some of the sense of humor and infectious melodies that made Lookout famous. These guys even forgo the snottiness for some sincere, gruff vocals. The Surrogate Brains EP would've been worth my money ten years ago. Finishing this disc off is Kamala & the Karnivores. Man, Kamala's so nice; I'm such a dick. (Sorry, couldn't resist). They put out four awesome, female-fronted pop punk songs (pop like the Go-Gos, punk like the Ramones. You can't go wrong). So this basically comes down to a forty-seven song disc with ten good songs on it. That's not a very high batting average. If the original singles are still in print, you'd probably be better off picking up the Surrogate Brains and Kamala & the Karnivores records and letting the rest of it fade into obscurity. —Sean (Lookout)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: The Sound of San Francisco: CD

A compilation bands currently making the scene in San Francisco, including Black Cat Music, The Coachwhips, Big Midnight, The Aktion and others. Although it serves as a nice primer of the myriad of sounds the SF rock scene has to offer, some of the stuff here veers closer towards '70s rock than is comfortable. —Jimmy Alvarado (Alive)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Tower 13: LP

Compilations are a harder and harder racket. On one side, you usually have to sell them for less than a regular album, you have to deal with the personalities, logistics, and maintain consistent recording environments of seventeen bands, but mostly, comps have been smeared by the assy sampler. (A sampler collects previously released tracks under the premise of introducing the listener to new bands by luring them in with the bigger name bands.) The fact that the tracks on *Tower 13* were made specifically for this comp and aren't just donky, cast-off mediocre covers should give you some idea how much faith is put in Hostage by bands that aren't necessarily under its wing. Heap on top of that if you have the guile/cajones to release a comp only on LP, you're almost committing financial suicide. That is, if no one cares a lick about any of the music on it. The power of *Tower 13* is that not only are Hostage honchos Rick and Paul upright citizens and righteous defenders of both vinyl and the true OC punk sound, they have great taste in music that's wide enough for the bands and songs to differ from one track to the next, but their tastes are contracted enough so it all sticks together with some dysfunctional, sandy glue. Say you lived in Croatia. If you listened to this fucker all the way through carefully, you'd have to shake the dirty water out from the sleeve and get a hepatitis shot after the needle returned to its cradle. The OC I know is fully representing, staring you right in the face, cracked stucco, stained teeth, neck tattoos and all. This comp is a little different from *Cuts*, the last blazing Hostage comp, in that there are few run-away favorites. It's solid from **RAZORCAKE 99**

tip to tail and I like best it as a whole unit, like an hour of the best radio show you can imagine. It's rare that I'll say a comp is essential. This one is. I, literally, bought five of these to give to friends. Here's the band list: The Drips, The Fakes, Smogtown, Broken Bottles, The Pegs, The Main, The Decline, Ciril, Smut Peddlers, The Crowd, D-Cup, The Revlons, Discontent, The Negatives, Thee Indigents, and Cell Block 5.
-Todd (Hostage)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS:
Voodoo Rhythm Label
Compilation: CD**

It's a pretty decent compilation of very primitive rock and roll on the VooDoo label. Taking cues from the likes of Norton, Sun, Estrus (the years of 1994-1997) and Crypt as far as musical direction, but adding in a spooky halloween record and a European bent; giving a home to Lightning Beat-Man, John Schooley and DM Bob and the Deficits. It's a good introduction to a label that has put out a slew of records in the past eleven years, but still hasn't seen much American recognition, except from a few Beat-Man fans.-Wanda Spragg (VooDoo Rhythm)

VAZ: Dying to Meet You: CD

Plopped this in with the expectation that I was about to be annoyed by yet another two-man band trying to cash in on the fluke that is the White Stripes, so imagine my glee at being blown away by some of the best skronk-pop to come along since Sonic Youth started laying off the sheets-of-noise approach and actually tried to adhere to conventional song structure. This is rife with guitar noodling that would make Lee and Thurston beam with pride, complimented by some seriously wicked drumming. Derivative, yes, but a rehash? No. While reminiscent of that famous New York band, these guys have enough of their own twist to keep the proceedings inventive and fresh. Most astonishing of all, they've managed to create the same amount of racket with half the band personnel.-Jimmy Alvarado (GSL)

**VELCRO LEWIS /
THE DUTCHMEN: Split: 7"**

Velcro Lewis: In the lineup somewhere after Mick Collins, Rudie Ray Moore, and Andre Williams, Velcro Lewis shakes and cruises through some rough-voiced R & B punk. Dirty and filthy. A tad solo-y at the end, but as a whole, not bad. The Dutchmen: Sort of sounds like a funkier, riff-alicious Mog Stunt Team. I hated the radio growing up in the seventies - that hasn't changed - and the "classic rock of the 2000s," such as these fellows play, I still have no patience or admiration for.-Todd (Shit Sandwich)

**VODKA JUNIORS:
...All Them Clowns: CD**

Fast, melodic, harmonic singalongcore that sounds to me like 54% of everything that passes for punk these days, with almost nothing (besides funny names) to belie that fact that they're from Greece! I don't remember having heard any Grecian punk before, but I would've expected it to sound like the stuff that comes (or used to) out of the Eastern Bloc, all creepy and weird and

somehow wrong but right. This stuff is right, but wrong. Comes with a comic book, though! -Cuss Baxter (Cannonball 666)

**VOLUME 69:
Karthore All the Way: CD**

Fuck technology. This CD wouldn't work in either of my CD players. I would, however, like to point out that Volume 69 is a really dumb name.
-Not Josh (volume69@societyx.net)

**VORTIS: God Won't
Bless America: CD**

Mid-tempo punk, arty political punk with vocals vaguely reminiscent of the Crucifucks, courtesy of a fifty-nine-year-old who spends his days as political philosophy professor at Purdue University. Interesting, rabbleroising tuneage overall. -Jimmy "Big Head" Alvarado (www.thickrecords.com)

**WAGE OF SIN, THE:
A Mistaken Belief in
Forever: CD**

Kittie fans take note. Here is a new group of females ready to kick ass. Musically, picture a summit of Norwegian death metalers and East Coast youth crew types discussing a recording project. Have them switch uniforms and this is the new sub-genre that is created. I would have never guessed this was an all-female band until I looked at the liner notes. The cover of the Journey song, "Separate Ways," was brilliant. -Donofthead (Immigrant Sun)

**WASTED:
Suppress & Restrain: CD**

I dug up that this is a re-issue of their first LP that went out of print quickly. Most copies were sold within Finland and this is co-released by their original label, Combat Rock Industry, and Boss Tuneage. I read that they have been touring a lot in Europe and gaining in popularity. The songs are tight, melodic and mid-paced. This album can be matched up against any of your favorite oi and early UK punk bands. The production is solid but maintains that raw edge. I've also read about them being compared to early period Rancid. I don't hear it. But who am I to judge? It's only my opinion. This is another great release for us outside of Finland or Europe who have never heard of this band before. -Donofthead (Boss Tuneage)

**WE INVENTED
TORNADOES: Self-titled: CD**

Well, they look like hardcore kids, so I was all primed to have my head peeled back by the ensuing onslaught of noise I was expecting, but the music that's coming outta my speakers is some lame college/indie rock crap. What a fucking disappointment. -Jimmy Alvarado (Learning Curve)

**WEAKERTHANS, THE:
Reconstruction Site: CD**

Some of the songs on here are kinda good. They're kind of upbeat and remind me of bands that I like, such as Superchunk and Dirt Bike Annie. At best, the other songs sound like Jets to Brazil, which is to say pretentious crap; at worst, these songs wouldn't be out of

place at a coffee shop where they spell it "shoppe." It seems like there's more bad songs than good ones, though.
-Not Josh (Epitaph)

**WEAKERTHANS, THE:
Reconstruction Site: CD**

The first thing you need to understand about this album is that it is not punk in any traditional sense. The politics are not obvious, the music is not fast nor would it be likely to appeal to your average Fat Wreck or, oddly enough, Epitaph fan. Instead, The Weakerthans focus on the subtleties of politics - the effects on people, the real implications and results of policies... and, in almost every case, offer some hints at transcending these things. Essentially, The Weakerthans craft songs which are stories, documents of lives (their own, their friends, people they've imagined) that resonate because the details are all too true. The music veers between country-inflected pop and straight-forward rock and roll, ringing with instrumentation which doesn't seem to have much of a place in most contemporary music - found gadgets that make interesting percussive noises, lap and pedal steel, glockenspiels, keyboards... the list simply goes on. The strength of this album isn't in its catchiness - the first two Weakerthans discs were far more immediately accessible. This album's strength lies in how much repeated listening it bears. I have easily heard this record more than one hundred times since I got it (for about two months, it was my morning rotation - period) and I still can't get enough of it. It's true that these songs seem gentle and comforting, that they present a form of musical solace for the lonely and disenfranchised, for people who are struggling merely to *feel* alive, if not actually *live*. It's also true that they represent what music, at its best, can be - something which replaces the "bitter songs [we] sing," which reduces the humiliation and anger which results from the "small defeat[s] the day demands," which reminds us that we all possess reserves of inner strength which we have not yet begun to tap. -Puckett (Epitaph)

**WEIRDOS: We Got
the Neutron Bomb:
Weird World Volume 2: CD**

A second helping of rarities and such from this, arguably LA's first (and in the top three of the "best" category) official punk rock band. While it is easy to start complaining about what is included (yet another, albeit differently mixed, version of "Neutron Bomb," and a rehearsal take of "I'm Not Like You," a studio version of which was included on Volume One) and what isn't ("Why Do You Exist" is conspicuously absent, making it the only remaining track from the *Destroy All Music* 7-inch on neither volume of this series; their take on the Door's "Break on Through" or any versions of live favorites "Do the Dance" or "I'm a Mole"), there are more than enough goodies to keep fans' appetites sated, such as Denny Brothers' "solo" work like "Skateboards from Hell" and a track or two from their *Warhead* 12-inch, an early rehearsal with Dave Trout in tow for a run-through of "I Want What I Want," alternate takes of previously released tuneage and unreleased

live songs that appear nowhere else in any form. Plus, it's the Weirdos, for chrissake, so you know going in that, no matter what, the proceedings are gonna be at worst top notch. I'm not gonna rip into you about what utter wannabes you're gonna look like if you don't soon have a copy of this in your collection, 'cause I think that little fact is glaringly obvious. -Jimmy Alvarado (Frontier)

**WHATEVER IT TAKES:
A Fistful of Revolution/
Stars & Skulls: CDEP**

According to the inside of the CD, this is a collection combining both *A Fistful of Revolution* and the *Stars and Skulls EP*. I gave this a listen and, although it wasn't my thing, it was interesting and well done. The songs are mostly mid-tempo and melodic and soulful. There were some fast parts and some upbeatness in some songs, too. I don't think it's what you would call emo but it is mellow. The last track is mostly an acoustic number with some whistling (whistling is good). This band also has at least one member of Anti-Flag in it. If you like W.I.T. you will be stoked cause they have a split 10" out now with The Code. Like I said, not my thing but if you like the mellow DC type of thing, this would be for you.
-Mike Beer (A-F)

**WHITE OUTS:
Solid State b/w
Coffin Nails: 7"**

How the Motards could be the tightest sloppy band on the planet and make mumbling and gurgling almost poetic, the White Outs hold the same charm, although it's more on the heels instead of hanging from the rafters. Fuzzed-out guitars, Goodwill budget rock that's far from sterilized and has that worn-at-the-elbows charm. The A-side, "Solid State" is the keeper. It's a great split personality song that almost seems like two. It gains momentum, stops, pauses, then introduces what sounds like a well-tuned Fisher Price organ (but could be anything), then collects itself at the end. Neat. The B-side's a mite repetitious and sows the fields of the not-so-triumphant parts of the Seeds catalog.
-Todd (Shit Sandwich)

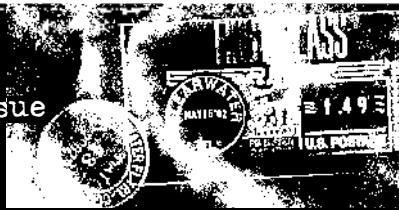
Y, THE: Soooo Intense: 7"

The Y, from Gainesville, just made the journey out to the west coast and I got to see them in Riverside, CA. They played in someone's bedroom, which had at one time been the garage and was about the size of a small to mid-size car. Despite this, as The Y started to play, the best four-man mosh pit started. I'm talking tackling, running across the kitchen and diving into the room, and quite possibly the most brilliant idea ever - hitting people with other people's hands. And The Y? They rocked through it all. I've been told by two people, on separate occasions, that The Y would change my life. I've seen their tattoo on at least five people. The 7" captures all of this pretty well. Best song is either "O.O.C. in the U.S.A." or "M' Jus' Waggin' M' Tail A' Cha," depending on the mood you're looking for. Shirts off, dudes on. -Megan (Sooooo Intense)



CONTACT ADDRESSES

to bands and labels that were reviewed either in this issue or posted on www.razorcake.com in the last two months.



- **Adeline**, 5245 College Ave. #318, Oakland, CA 94618; <www.adelinerecords.net>
- **Aerodrome**, PMB #133 302 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211
- **A-F**, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15216
- **Alive**, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510
- **Alone**, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126
- **Alternative Tentacles**, PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141
- **Angry, Young, and Poor**, 140 N. Prince St., Lancaster, PA 17603; <www.angryyoungandpoor.com>
- **Asian Man**, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030
- **Attention Deficit Disorder**, PO Box 8240, Tampa, FL 33674; <www.addwreckedkids.com>
- **AVD**; <<http://www.avdrecords.com>>
- **Bestial Onslaught**, PO Box 230494, Boston, MA 02123; <www.bestialonslaught.com>
- **Big Neck**, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195
- **Birdman**, PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050
- **Blackout**, 931 Madison St., Hoboken, NJ 07030
- **Boss Tuneage**, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK
- **Broken Rekkids**, PO Box 460402, SF, CA 94146
- **Burn Burn Burn**, 4040 Woodland Park Ave. N, Suite #4, Seattle, WA, 98103
- **Business Lady**; <bizlayday@yahoo.com>
- **BYO**, PO Box 67609, LA, CA 90067
- **C.N.P.**, PO Box 14555, Richmond, VA 23221
- **Cannonball 666**, PO Box 52817, N. Erithreal, 4671 Athens, Greece; <www.cballrec.com>
- **Cheetah's**, PO Box 4442, Berkeley, CA 94704
- **Chemical Valley**, 205 E. Alluras, Tucson, AZ 85703
- **Cochebomba**, PO Box 546, Randolph, MA 02368)
- **Combat Rock Industry**, PO Box 65, 11101 Riitimaki, Finland; <www.combatrockindustry.com>
- **Concord**, 100 N. Crescent Dr., Suite 275, Beverly Hills, CA 90210
- **Consume**, 1916 Pike Place, Ste. 12-719, Seattle, WA 98101-1097
- **Contaminated**, PO Box 41953, Memphis, TN 38174
- **Crash**, 1122 East Pike St., PMB 1037, Seattle, WA 98122
- **Crimes Against Humanity**; <<http://www.cahrecords.com>>
- **Da Core**, 4407 Bowes Ave., West Mifflin, PA 15122
- **Dead Tank**, 2351 Ernest St., Jacksonville, FL 32204
- **DeathXDeath**; <www.deathxdeath.com>
- **Demolition Derby**, PB 4005, 2800 Mechelen 4, Belgium
- **Deranged**, PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, Canada
- **Destroy All Records**, PO Box 56173, S.O., CA 91413
- **Detonations**, 5012 Dauphine St., New Orleans, LA 70117
- **Dim Sum**, 1705 Van Arsdale St., Oviedo, FL 32765
- **Dirtnap**, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111
- **Dirty Faces**; <<http://www.dirtyfaces.de>>
- **Dirty Work**, 61 Weston St., Wilbraham, MA 01095
- **Disaster**, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510
- **Doghouse**, PO Box 8946, Toledo, OH 43623
- **Dr. Strange**, PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701
- **ECFU**, 518-346-7291
- **Enterruption**, PO Box 884626, SF, CA 94188-4626
- **Epitaph**, 2798 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90026
- **Eugene**; <www.eugenerecords.com>
- **Fat**, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119-3690
- **Finger**, 9231 W. Central Ave. Unit D, Santa Ana, CA 92704
- **Fornicators**; <www.fornicators.net>
- **Frontier**, PO Box 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353
- **G7 Welcoming Committee**, PO Box 27006, 360 Main St Concourse, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 4T3
- **Gearhead**, PO Box 421219, SF, CA 94142
- **Get Hip**, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317
- **Golf**, Unit 15 Bushell Business Estate, Hithercroft, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 9DD, UK
- **Grey Sky**, 1339 NE Roselawn, Portland, OR 97211
- **GSL**, PO Box 65091, LA, CA 90065
- **Half-Day**, PO Box 3381, Bloomington, IN 47402
- **Hater of God**, PO Box 666, Troy, NY 12181
- **Heart First**, Florian Helmchen, Landsberger Str. 146, D-80339 Munchen, Germany
- **Heat Slick**; <www.heatslick.com>
- **Hostage**, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-7736
- **I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison**, Schäferstrasse 33a, D-44147 Dortmund, Germany
- **Immigrant Sun**, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215
- **In The Red**, PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050; <www.intheredrecords.com>
- **In the Wake of the Plague**, 548 Broderick St., SF, CA 94117
- **Infect**, PO Box 1201, Tacoma, WA 98401
- **Jade Tree**, 2310 Kennwyn Rd., Wilmington, DE 19810
- **Jinx**, 113 1/2 N. La Brea Ave. #102, LA, CA 90036
- **Jonny Cat**, PO Box 82428, Portland, OR 97282
- **Kapow**, PO Box 286, Fullerton, CA. 92836 USA; <www.kapowrecords.com>
- **Ken Rock**, c/o Stefan Hultman, Fabriksgatan 39b, 412 51 Goteborg, Sweden
- **Kill Rock Stars**, PMB 418, 120 NE State, Olympia, WA 98501
- **Know**, PO Box 90579, Long Beach, CA 90809; <www.knowrecords.com>
- **KOB**; <<http://www.kobrecords.com>>
- **Last Chance**, PO Box 42396, Portland, OR 97242
- **Law of Inertia**, 61 E. 8th St. #125, NY, NY 10003
- **Learning Curve**, 2200 4th St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418
- **LEM**, PO Box 3052, Summerville, SC 29484-3052
- **Lengua Armada**, 1010 1/2 Rivertine Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701
- **Longshot**, PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211
- **Lookout**, 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703
- **Low Impact**, Box 475, 701 49 Orebro, Sweden
- **Mad Butcher**; <<http://www.madbutcher.de>>
- **Mandradora**; <www.mandradora-music.com>
- **Mint**, PO Box 3613, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6B 3Y6
- **Molotonic**, 1236-B NW 14th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32601
- **Molten Metal**; <<http://www.moltenmetalusa.com>>
- **Mortville**, 2508 West 12th St. 306, Austin, TX 78703
- **Mutilated Mannequins**, 876 Valencia #C, SF, CA 94110
- **My Pal Goo**, 47 Hardy Dr., Princeton, NJ 08540
- **My War**, 36 Kings Cir., Malvern, PA, 19355
- **Naked Jain**, PO Box 4132, Palm Springs, CA 92263
- **New Disorder**, 115 Bartlett St., SF, CA 94110
- **Newest Industry**, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Rd., Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK
- **Ninety-Six**, PO Box 932, Yucaipa, CA 92399-9998
- **No Idea**, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604-4636
- **Nomadic Soundsystem**, PO Box 291578, LA, CA 90029
- **OHEV**, PO Box 772121, Coral Springs, FL 33077
- **On/On Switch**, PO Box 641122, SF, CA 94164
- **Pandacide**, PO Box 2774, Petaluma, CA 94952
- **Pascal**, 11684 Ventura Blvd., #906, Studio City, CA 91604
- **Pattern 25**, 610 20th Ave. E, Seattle, WA 98112
- **Plan-It-X**, 5810 W. Willis Rd., Georgetown, IN, 47122-9117
- **Pocahontas Swamp Machine**, PO Box 980301, Ypsilanti, MI 48198
- **Pop Riot**, PO Box 14985, Minneapolis, MN 55414
- **Punk Core**, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953
- **Radio Blast**; <www.radioblastrecordings.com>
- **Radio**, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476
- **Rat Town**, PO Box 50803, Jax Beach, FL 32240
- **Recess**, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733-1666
- **Refried**, 430 Lennox Ave., East Patchogue, NY 11772
- **Robotic Empire**, PO Box 4211, Richmond, VA 23220
- **Rocknroll Radio**, Oosthamsesteenweg 129, 3581 Beverlo-Beringen, Belgium
- **Rodent Popsicle**, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134
- **Route 13**, 1109 Prospect Ave, Willmington, DE 19809
- **Shit Sandwich**, 3107 N. Rockwell, Chicago, IL 60618
- **Shut Up**, PO Box 1671, Oakland, CA 94604
- **Sickroom**, PO Box 47830, Chicago, IL 60647
- **Snuffy Smile**, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, Japan
- **Sooooo Intense**, 507 E. Carcas St., Tampa, FL 33603
- **S-S**, 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814
- **Stardumb**, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, The Netherlands
- **State of Grace**, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707
- **Sub Pop**, PO Box 20367, Seattle, WA 98102
- **Suburban Justice**, PO Box 56055, PDX, OR 97238
- **Super Secret**, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767; <www.supersecretrecords.com>
- **Swami**, PO Box 620428, San Diego, CA 92162
- **Swell**, PO Box 287004, NY, NY 10128
- **Teen Beat**; <www.teenbeat.net>
- **Teenacide**, PO Box 291121, LA, CA 90029
- **The Only Label In The World**, c/o Seidboard World Enterprises, PO Box 137, Prince St. Station, NY, NY 10012
- **Tight Spot**, PO Box 49543, Austin, TX 78765
- **TKO**, 3126 W. Cary St. No. 303, Richmond, VA 23221
- **Trick Knee**, PO Box 12714, Green Bay, WI 54307-2714
- **Union Label Group**, 78 Rachel E. Montreal, QC, H2W 1C6, Canada
- **Voodoo Rhythm**, Jurastrasse 15, 3013 Bern, Switzerland
- **Yakisana**, 51 Rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, France
- **Zaxxon Virile Action**; <zaxxonaction@hotmail.com>



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.



ALT.CULTURE.GUIDE:
The Journal of (Un)popular Culture, #1, \$10

7 1/2 x 9, glossy cover, perfect bound, offset printing, 147 pgs. This is an extremely mixed bag. There's a great series of columns looking at the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), and how they're more than partially to blame for putting the music-loving consumer over a barrel. It even provides some revolutionary (to the RIAA) steps to stem the hemorrhage of sales that major labels are currently experiencing, like lowering unit price, long-term artist support, and not putting out so much crap. Rev. Keith A. Gordon brought up many salient, effective points and facts that would help to read if you're a musician or just a passionate music listener. That's what I really like about this publication. What I don't quite get is why it's ten dollars and has advertising. I thought the reason ads are involved is to keep the price down. Ten bucks is a mighty big gamble on a magazine. I'm also not sold on their take on "new rock sound" spearheaded by the likes of the Strokes, the White Stripes, and The Ravoneettes. Any serious discussion of garage rock, I believe, shouldn't omit or gloss over the deep legacies Estrus, Rip-Off, In the Red, Gearhead, Crypt, or the institution known as Tim Kerr. Instead, it's a list dominated by major label poop and folks in designer clothes. Hail the Mummies, Loli and the Chones, The Gories, New Bomb Turks, and The Jewws, put the heads of the Mooney Suzuki on a pike, and we'll call it even. -Todd (826 Old Charlotte Pike East, Franklin, TN 37064)

ARTCORE #18 & 19, \$4 ppd, 3 Euros Europe, £1.50 U.K., 8 x 11, glossy cover, offset, 34 pgs. Put together by Welly of Four Letter Word (UK, not LA, and not the non-existent boy band that sued for the name, either), this is a densely packed zine that has a deep love for older punk rock but it doesn't let that love overshadow current asskickers. #19, for instance, has an interview with Roxy of Epoxies sidled next to essays on three bands that you should go out of your way to listen to: The Offenders, The Avengers, and The Subhumans (the Canadian one with Dimwit). The essays are far from boring, are peppered with great details (I didn't know the venue, the Mabuhay Gardens, was a Jewish synagogue), and aren't told from overtly academic hanger-on or never-been-there perspective, but by long-time fans still in the thick of it. Hey, if punk rockers don't preserve their own

memories, who else will do it right? My only complaint, and it's a small one, is that some of the contributors take quite a few too-easy stabs at Blink 182 and their ilk. There's so much great stuff out there. It's just tougher to dig down and find it. Ignore MTV. It's pretty easy to do. #18 has interviews and essays on CH3, DFA, Pitch Black, Our War, Send More Paramedics, Kill From the Heart (the great website), The Effigies, The Big Boys, The Adolescents, SST, and artist Shawn Kerri (who drew the Circle Jerks skankin' guy). #19 has End on End, Steel Rules Die, Shatterhand, The Freaks Union, the art of Banksy, Vaultage, Th'Inbred, and X-Claim Records. Highly recommended for any long-term punk fan. -Todd (1 Aberdulais Rd., Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 2PH Wales, UK)

CATHEDRAL, #1, \$2, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 40 pgs. I'm skeptical about underground lit journals because they usually suck, but I gave this one a shot because it's cheap, it's unpretentious, and it's named after Raymond Carver's best story. And *Cathedral* didn't disappoint me. This issue features the work of three writers. Emerson Dameron writes surreal vignettes, the best of which was about a town that set up its public transportation system as a roller coaster. Patrick King (who's also the editor) contributes two stories that come off like cautionary tales about how people have gotten too separated from one another. The stories are better than I just made them sound, though. My favorite of the three writers is Karl Koweski, who writes down-to-earth stories about ordinary, working class people, but Koweski is smart enough to add a plot. One story is about kids dragging from bumpers of moving cars on snowy days (intentionally; it's a game; cool story). Another is a funny, sad story about a guy planning to rob a bank. It's definitely worth your time and two bucks. -Sean (Patick King, 138 Overland Rd. #3, Montevallo, AL 35115)

CHUMPIRE, #163, a stamp, 5 1/2 x 4 1/2, 8 pgs. *Chumpire* is a personal-type zine that has been around for thirteen years. The author talks about everything from shows to school to going to a gay pride picnic held at a local brewery. It's still a quick read, even though there's a lot of stuff crammed into these eight pages. -Not Josh (Chumpire, PO Box 27, Annville, PA 17003-0027)

CRACKS IN THE WALL, #4, \$1, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 26 pgs. One way to get my attention is to name your zine (or dog, or sand-

wich, or whatever) after a Jerry's Kids song, so you can bet that I had high hopes for this one. He starts out by listing his Top Eight (because Top Tens are overused) records to listen to while at work, which is always a cool thing. But then he goes into a really long story that he came up with while at work, and to tell you the truth, it's kind of boring. The drawings interspersed throughout the magazine, however, are pretty neat. If anything, this guy should stick to drawing comics and writing stories that are short enough to read on one trip to the bathroom. -Not Josh (Cracks in the Wall, 2 Tinkham Glenn, Wilbraham, MA 01095)

DESTROY ALL MONSTERS, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 24 pgs. Apparently, this was written in 1895 by the author of such works as *The Smell of Fuck* and *The Erotic Adventures of Edmund Fitisk*. Okay, what the hell, I'm gullible. This is a reprint of his guide to battling monsters, and it offers such sage advice as, "Simply assume that there are Monsters out in the hall or outside your windows, because nine times out of ten there are," and the always helpful, "If that pile of filthy laundry looks to you to be a Monster crouching, go right up to it. Poke it or ask it a few simple questions." Weird. -Not Josh (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

DESTROY, #6, no price listed, 8 1/2 x 11, glossy This is the *Destroy* that comes out of the UK, not to be confused with *Destroy All Monthly* that comes out of LA. This zine rules. You have interviews with Rupture, Force Macabre, Cathedral and more. The featured band of this issue is the Plasmatics. You can't go wrong with that! There is even an interview with the owner of MCR records and with that jerk who owns Beer City! Tons of reviews and even a CD that is coming with it. (My copy was a promo and the CD hadn't come back from the pressing plant yet, but I'm sure it's going to be a good one.) Let me tell you something: this mag totally stands out from others. The content is good. The layout is all cut-and-paste (but he does a damn good job!), and the whole mag is printed on a glossy paper that will hold up to all the reading and passing around this mag is sure to get. (MRR coordinators take note of this!) This mag had a very mid-'80s feel to it. Very to-the-point, no BS, and a good read. It took him a few years to get this out 'cause of some problems, but it was worth the wait and he assures us the next one will come out really soon. I don't know

what the price is on this but send the guy \$10 and you won't be disappointed. -Mike Beer (Destroy, PO Box 1122, Bristol BS99 2HX, United Kingdom)

DIE SWEET, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 28 pgs.

This zine is basically two short stories about living with roommates, only the stories are adapted into comics. The artwork is pretty good, and it kind of reminded me of a comic book called *Urban Hipster*, if any of you have ever read that. The stories are straightforward and easy to relate to, especially the part about getting people to clean up vomit, which is like pulling teeth. Man, I like comic books. -Not Josh (Cybele Collins, 29 Hudson St. #2, Providence, RI 02909)

DUNK AND PISS, "the first ten issues," \$2, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied (but with a color cover!), 70 pgs.

Dunk and Piss is great. Alex tells really good stories about school, fucking up, caffeine, and stuff like that. This is an anthology of his favorite stories from the first ten issues, except the first four, because "those are really hard to find cuz they suck and I burned the ones I had and yeah." If you missed out on these issues the first time (like me), or if you're curious as to what color the color cover is, pick this up. It makes me nostalgic for the days when I, too, had bedsheets with minimal stainage. -Not Josh (Dunk and Piss, 11 Alger Dr., Rochester, NY 14624)

EAVES OF ASS, #2, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 22 pgs.

I like zines where people just write whatever the hell they want. At the very least, it makes for an interesting read. The author of this zine published his theory of how the *Highlander* movies are really about Jesus and might have even been written by Jesus. There's no telling how drunk this guy was when he wrote this stuff. The record review section is him and a couple of friends getting drunk and discussing why such-and-such band sucks or rules or whatever, which is pretty funny. The funniest part of the zine is a copy of a really steamy love letter that he found on the ground somewhere, mostly because it was a love letter that somebody just threw on the ground like yesterday's news. *Eaves of Ass* is a pretty funny name, too. -Not Josh (Craven Rock, PO Box 406784, Louisville, KY 40204)

FROM THE DIANE FILES, #1, 10 cents, 4 1/4 x 5 1/2, copied, 46 pgs. In November of 1992, the editors of this zine placed a fake classified ad in *MRR*. This is a collection of the

responses. As you can probably expect, there's not a whole lot of sunshine and flowers here. The responses range from "mildly disturbing" to "pretty fucked up," by my standards, at least. It's kind of an interesting look into the psyche of fringe culture. -Not Josh (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

GARAGE AND BEAT, #9,

\$4, 8 1/2 x 11, 56 pgs.

I kinda like the vibe (man) of this zine: Relaxed and devoid of pretension. The writing is almost neo-vanilla, in a way, but that acts as a plus: Unlike other publications that also cover the wide temporal swath of pop and rock (er, excuse me, i forgot whom our sponsor was: make that "garage" and "beat") that *G&B* does, but are so hipster/nut-case-densepacked with arcana and/or attitude that anyone who comes in not up to speed can only watch helplessly from the sidelines, i actually feel like i could be part of the dialogue here, as opposed to just sitting at my desk, taking notes. I mean, during the interview with Emmitt Rhodes, there's a friggin' PICTURE of his garage, but NOBODY asks him about the first Detonators album (which was, as you'll doubtless recall, "recorded in Emmitt Rhodes garage" unless you think Juan was lying when he made up the liner notes), and then Emmitt is getting tanked at Red Lobster™ and starts babbling about Pythagoras, which is where i would jump in with return-fire babbling about the Pythagorean "musical mean" (which - i THINK - is the number that, given a smaller number X and a larger number Y, divides the difference between X and Y in the same proportion it divides the difference between X and the mean average of X and Y. For instance, if X = 6 and Y = 12, the mean average is 9, but the musical mean is 8, because 8 is two greater than 6 and four less than 12, and 8 is also two greater than 6 and one less than 9 - in other words, 8 is exactly twice as far from 12 as it is from 6, but it's also twice as far from 6 as it is from 9. HOW THIS AFFECTS YOU, AL FRANKEN: Well, about a million years ago, i figured out - how exactly i figured this out escapes me - that if you set X equal to an A-chord, then, by definition, 12 is equal to a high A [octave = pitch doubling]. BUT, AS IF BY MAGIC, THAT MAKES THE MUSICAL MEAN EQUAL TO A D-CHORD AND THE ARITHMETICAL MEAN IS EQUAL TO AN E! That is to say, X is the root chord - the First - and the musical and arithmetical means are the IV and the V, respectively - THAT IS TO SAY, PYTHAGO-

RAS INVENTED FUCKING "LOUIE LOUIE." I'll take music of the spheres over music of the squares ANY ol' time, baybee!!!) But, yeah, Emmitt Rhodes is drunkenly babbling about Pythagoras, and i wanna jam my head thru the page and either call him on his shit, or have him call me on my shit, or have someone call someone on someone's shit, or heck, as long as there is called shit, i guess i'd be happy. But, i mean, yeah: I do not feel helpless in the face of this magazine, and that is good. I was also proud of myself for recognizing the name "Jerry Kennedy" as the guy who produced the first Roger Miller album, and for owning a Buggs album that has a completely different song called "Soho Mash" than the editor has (seemingly pretty much one song every album was called "Soho Mash," even if it was really a cover of "It's In His Kiss" or whatever). Other features include a blow-by-blow analysis of the Beatles' "Revolution 9," interviews with the Bippies and Larry Taylor (who played bass on a bunch of Monkees songs, as well as being in Canned Heat [pointless anecdote #429: When i used to work for Domino's™, we used to still have a bunch of old cans of Sterno™ in the back, that i guess drivers in the olden days used to use to keep the

pies warm before some brain surgeon invented the insulated bag... anyway, when things got slow, i would occasionally fetch a can of Sterno™, and walk thru the restaurant, bobbing the can around like it was singing, whilst i busted out "Goin' Up the Country" in my worst falsetto. Er, maybe you had to be there?]), and a feature on Them written as a high school English class assignment. Hey, i TOLD you it was unpretentious. -Rev. Nørb (P. Edwin Letcher, 2754 Prewitt St., LA, CA 90031)

GENERATION: DEAD, #1, 8 1/2 x 11, 16 pgs.

I like this guy's attitude: "I know what you're saying: 'Man, there's totally 1000 magazines out there just like this one.' Well, guess what, now there's 1001." Right on. This just talks about obscure movies and stuff, which I like reading about. My main problem is that it's really light on content. Hopefully, if this gets beefed up in the future, we might have another *Film Geek* on our hands. -Not Josh (Louis Perchikoff, 1017 Fountain St. #2, Ann Arbor, MI 48103)

GOBSHITE QUARTERLY, #2, \$5, 8 1/2 x 11, 70 pgs.

The cover of *Gobshite Quarterly* claims that it is the **RAZORCAKE 105**

“Rosetta Stone for the New World Order.” That’s strange, I didn’t think that the New World Order was ready for its very own crappy goth band. Bad music geek jokes aside, this is a slick, literary journal-type of magazine, and some of the content is pretty good. Not much else to say here, other than the fact that these fuckers totally ripped off of the last Vitamin X album for one of the illustrations, and they also misspelled “Portland.” –Not Josh (Gobshite Quarterly, PO Box 11346, Portland, OR 97211-0346)

GRIND THAT AX!, #1, a stamp, 5 ½ x 8 ½, copied, 28 pgs. The premise behind this is simple: people have stuff to gripe about, and they need a forum to do so. That’s a pretty good idea. That way people can vent their frustrations without annoying the people around them. Most of the stuff in *Grind That Ax!* is kind of petty and self-serving, but I guess you could say that about most people’s complaints, and this way you can just stop reading instead of telling people to shut the hell up. –Not Josh (Stephanie Shank, 830 17th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122)

GRUMPY HORIZON, 4 ¼ x 5 ½, copied, 8 pgs. Hey, this is pretty funny. On each page there’s a cool drawing, and the accompanying caption of each drawing is taken from the weekly recap of *Passions* (a soap opera), and the results are way funnier than I make them sound. Short but sweet. –Not Josh (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

HOLY TITCLAMPS, \$3, #17, 6 x 9, bound, copied Does anybody use page numbers in zineland anymore? Just a thought. Holy Titclamps is a gay zine celebrating its tenth anniversary with this issue (“promoting the homosexual lifestyle since 1989”) and included in this special issue are smatterings of poetry (Ennoblement of Cocksucker, Illuminations), prose (The View From Here, Pope) some novel excerpts (Chapter 2 of Sarah Schulman’s *The Mere Future, Pack of Men* by D. Travers Scott), and comics, work from fallen comrades stricken by AIDS and more pictures of dick than yer average zine. Founder Larry-bob started the zine in ’89, inspired by the newly birthed homocore scene coming out at the time. The last few pages include a chronological timeline. An eye opening read for this heterosexual. –Greg Barbera (Holy Titclamps, PO Box 590488, SF, CA 94159)

HUMMINGBIRD SYMPTOM, 4 ½ x 5 ½, 30 pgs. Love Bunni Press put out a shitload of zines this time around. This one is mostly a bunch of mopey intellectual writing with a few pictures here and there, but at the end there’s a bunch of cool drawings by the same person who did the drawings in *Grumpy Horizon*. I bet if you send these folks a few bucks, they’ll send you a whole bunch of stuff, and it’s worth it for *Grumpy Horizon*. –Not Josh (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

JERK!!, #7, a stamp, 5 ½ x 8 ½, copied, 4 pgs. In case you missed my review of the two previous issues of Ben Trogdon’s zine, here goes. The name of the zine changes with every issue (*Bow Wow Wow, Thanks for Nothing, Death of a Toaster*, etc.). It’s one page folded in half, making it a quick read. And I can’t stress this enough: it fucking rules. Ben’s really enthusiastic about everything. This is the last issue he made before he started school, and it’s got short interviews with the Teen Idols and Ken Dirlap. Did I mention that it rules? –Not Josh (Ben Trogdon, 191 Glen Oban Dr., Arnold, MD 21012)

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL, #245, \$4, 8 ½ x 11, newsprint Although by no means perfect, *MRR* is a really important zine. Not only do they have easily the best coverage of international punk and hardcore, they also have a really broad range of musical coverage, so while I might not like “extreme powerviolent grindcore” or whatever, somebody out there does, so it’s good that those two people can read about their favorite bands. Tons of columns, reviews, and interviews with La Fraction, Artimus Pyle, Intense Youth, the Gimmies, and I’m just scratching the surface. –Not Josh (MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760)

METAL RULES! #16, \$4.95, 8 ½ x 11, glossy cover, 99 pgs. More metal, metal, metal than you can shake a metal detector at. Loads of cheesy interviews with mostly European guys in bands that have an unreadable band name logo that looks like a loose wad of half-chewed tarantula parts that someone spit out. Plenty of pix of churlish, hairy doods locked in constipated tough guy poses. And if that in itself isn’t strange enough for you (and if it isn’t, just how fucking numb are you?), they throw in interviews with third-string actors like Steve Guttenberg and the guy who played “Neidermeyer” in

Animal House. King Diamond meets *Entertainment Tonight*. Odd. –Aphid Peewit (Metal Rules! 2116 Sandra Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043)

MODEST PROPOSAL, #2, \$3, 8 ½ x 11, 60 pgs. A lot of comedy is hit-or-miss. Such is the case with the comedy magazine *Modest Proposal*: some of the stuff in here is really funny, and the rest of it is just kind of “ughhh.” I think that if the people who put out this magazine had some kind of quality control, it would be a lot better. –Not Josh (Modest Proposal, PO Box 3211, Tempe, AZ 85280)

MURMUR, #2, \$2.50, 5 ½ x 8 ½, 43 pgs. I don’t really know what to say about this one. The content is really dense and poetic, so it’s not exactly light reading. I could just say, “Fuck you, ya fuckin’ fuck,” and be done with this review, but everything about this, from the layout all the way down to the way the pages are folded, shows that a ton of effort went into putting this together. So I won’t say that it sucks, because it doesn’t. It looks really cool, it’s just hard to pay attention. –Not Josh (Boing! Collective, 608 S. 500 E. #2, SLC, UT 84102)

NEUS SUBJEX, #54, a stamp, 3 ½ x 8 ½, 6 pgs. If you’re not familiar with Shawn Abnoxious of blankgeneration.com, he writes really long reviews of records that you probably don’t want and he never really gets to the point. This is the zine that he puts out and it’s pretty much like the other stuff that he writes, only more dumb. But hey, it’s folded up like a travel brochure! –Not Josh (The Neus Subjex, PO Box 18051, Fairfield, OH 45018)

THE PERFECT MIX TAPE SEGUE, #2, Brutal Honest Tea, 4 x 5, copied, 16 pgs. A personal zine about the trials and tribulations of living on couches in community punk rock houses in places like Portland. I love the small format; it reminds me a lot of Portland’s Mike Daily and his series of *Spun* titles where beatnik stream of consciousness prose meets blog-like self disclosure. Standing alone, I could take or leave this zine. But if it’s one in a long line of serials, sign me up for the fall season. –Greg Barbera (PO Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293)

THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS, #6 & 7, 5 ½ x 8 ½, copied, 48 pgs. This is where Wred Fright finishes up his year-and-a-half long enterprise of publishing a serialized

novel. If you haven’t read my five previous reviews of this zine, it’s a novel in seven installments about the adventures of an unsuccessful (financially, anyway; there are some things they’re successful at) garage band. After reading the first issue of this, I was hooked. I emailed Wred and told him that, if he didn’t finish writing the book, we were gonna fight. Well, the fight’s off and the book’s over, and I kinda want to read it again. It’s hard to review just the end of the book, because you don’t want to give too much away. Suffice it to say, Wred wraps everything up nicely. Actually, for such an unorthodox novel, *TPFE* ends much in the same way as a classic British novel like Tom Jones would. Though I’m not really comparing this to Tom Jones. Wred’s got a real handle on the absurd. His sense of humor is spot on, and, by the end, I felt really close to the characters. All in all, the whole book is a good read. He’s got the whole thing up on a web site somewhere, but don’t rely on this. Write to Wred and get all seven zines before they’re all gone. –Sean (Wred Fright, PO Box 770332, Lakewood, OH 44107)

SHREDDING PAPER, #16, \$2.95, 8 ½ x 11, glossy cover, newsprint inside The tagline on the cover of this San Rafael, Calif.-based zine boasts: “America’s Record Review Magazine.” And let me tell you they ain’t kidding. The bulk of this zine is record reviews – over 500 of them – including everything from metal (25 Suaves) and Belgian oi (Discipline) to modern rock (Eels), reggae (Lee Perry), twee pop (the Lilys), and psyche rock reissues (Clearlight) and country (Nashville West). These cats cover all sides of the spectrum and for that alone I give them two thumbs up. Toss in some prerequisite columns (from editors Mel C and Steve Yaver to contributor J. Edward Keyes) and smattering of band interviews (posthumous Exploding Hearts, former Wedding Present/current Cinerama David Gedge and Japanese pop Mummy The Peepshow) and a handful of single reviews (single reviews?) and you’ve got a very well-spent three bucks. –Greg Barbera (Shredding Paper, PO Box 2271, San Rafael, CA 94912)

SHUTTLE BUS, Vol. 2, #1, \$1, 6 ½ x 10 ¼, copied, 16 pgs. Ann Arbor-centric zine that features an interview with Pittsburgh power trio (((microwaves))) that includes one of the best questions ever asked: Black Flag or Slayer? Another article on **RAZORCAKE 107**

how to run a CDR label, which focuses on four Michigan-based labels (Scratch & Sniff, Stop/Eject, Hanson, Bulb) and a New York entity (We're Twins), equating yesterday's photocopied zines with today's CDR labels. Yet again we find another gem of a quote tucked inside this tiny zine: "Don't be held down by the tyranny of jewel cases; there are dozens of ways to package your CDR." Then there's the Top Ten Things That Don't Suck About Ann Arbor piece that's downright humorous and not only includes the obvious band, radio station, or local outsider artist plug but also functions as a quick guide to hipsterism: championing a comic shop, video store, some restaurants and the Kiwanis Club rummage sale. Did I forget to mention the comics? The Quick & Tasty Recipes For Poor People? Goddamn if this 'lil zine doesn't pack a wallop of a punch for a measly dollar bill. —Greg Barbera (Shuttle Bus, PO Box 7504, Ann Arbor, MI 48107)

THIS TIME LAST YEAR, #3 Early June 2003 (with a woodcut hand-printed cover) and #4 (The Exploding Hearts) June 2003, 5 1/2 x 7, copied, 42 pgs. The lady who puts these together is the extremely talented photographer, Chrystaei Branchaw. She works

closely with a bunch of Northwestern punk bands and takes shots of bands coming through her town. It's a photo zine. The more geographically close a band is, the more intimate they seem in these zines. Like, instead of a performing up on a stage, the people in bands — like the Diskords — seem so comfortable with Chrystaei taking their picture, it almost seems like an extended family album. Except the photography's all top notch. #3 has pictures of Pho Bang, The Epoxies, The Electric Eye, and others. #4 is as beautiful as it is sad, as it's almost all pictures of The Exploding Hearts. Rest in peace. Some of the pictures were from the photo session for their last album. Some of them are the guys goofing off, playing live, and being human. Their personalities seemed to leap right into her lens. Wonderful work. —Todd (PO Box 40342, Portland, OR 97240)

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN #18, \$4.95, 8 x 10, offset, color cover, perfect bound, 64 pgs. Those not familiar, Shannon Wheeler is the brain and pen behind the *Too Much Coffee Man* comic. In this magazine, he's corralled an impressive array of writers and cartoonists in addition to showcasing his own work. I had no

expectations going in, and was mighty impressed the further I read into it. It's unpretentious, funny, and well-written. This is the "Yellow Fever" issue so it looks into Asian culture from some many engaging signposts. Anime? What's that? "Enjoying anime," Kyle Davis writes, "is predicated on a willing suspense of disbelief, a profound love for ninjas and robots, or a desire to see hot cartoon chicks bound by tentacles." Sign me up. I also never fully understood why I like the old Godzilla and have been ho-hum about the fancy, computer-generated one. Will Viharo offers a helpful hand: "Keep away from the CGI, guys, there's no greater corporeal, organic pleasure than watching a guy in a rubber monster suit stepping on toy tanks. It's a timeless artform." There's really no dead spots in this mag at all. Also covered are why so many American guys dig Japanese ladies, Zatoichi (a highly successful Japanese film franchise), a look into seriously tuning up street racers, and much more. Extremely enjoyable. —Todd (Adhesive Press, Box 14549, Portland, OR 97293)

UNCERTAIN NERVOUS SYSTEMS, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 50 pgs. What? Love Bunni Press? I've never heard of such a thing. You

mean they publish stuff, and then send it to other people for review? No kidding! This is the more political side to their publishing empire, I guess, with a short article about how product placement in television shows became an acceptable practice after 9/11 and a really long and well researched article about Donald Rumsfeld, among other things. They'll probably send you this even if you don't want it. —Not Josh (Love Bunni Press, 2622 Princeton Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

VINYL A GO GO, #2, \$1, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 48 pgs. This here rock and roll fanzine focuses mostly on new wave and power pop. There's a bunch of reviews of bands like the Cinch and the Fevers, plus a really funny interview with the Riff Randells. There's also a lot of sappy emotional stuff about girls and an article by Josh Rutledge (not to be confused with yours truly) called "The Humble Aspirations of a Fascist Dictator," which is somehow funny and pathetic at the same time. Pretty cool shit. —Not Josh (Lew Houston, 100 W. High St. #1A, Topton, PA 19562)





Dance of Days: Two Decades of Punk in the Nation's Capital

by Mark Andersen & Mark Jenkins, 446 pgs.

It's probably somehow inevitable, in an Orwellian "Room 101" sort of way, that a person like me – a one-trick gadfly who's taken more than a few untoward stabs at some of the more zealous strains of straight-edgerdom out there – would wind up having to stare a book like this straight in its clean and sober eyes. I probably had it coming. Just like I had a DWI coming and just like I had to stare straight into the clean and sober and wildly-caffeinated eyes of the chain-smoking, court-appointed drug counselor who kept telling me over and over what a wretched substance abuser I am. Thinking back to all the times I immaturely pantsed clear-minded soldiers in the sXe army (figuratively, of course. I'm too much of a wuss to do it in real life) – why, in the pages of this very magazine – egad, I shudder to think what else I might have coming. Will some black, laughing winds of fate somehow plop me into a "reality" TV show where I'm trapped in a room for a month lifting weights, playing Parcheesi and drinking Yoo-hoo with Ray Cappo and Porcell from Youth of Today? The mind reels. But I am, of course, exaggerating the solemnity of having to grapple with this tome.

It seems to be a knee-jerk reaction of mine that whenever I'm surrounded by starched-up, neatly-pleated seriousness, I inevitably feel compelled to make a roaring ass of myself just to break up all the seriousness hanging in the air. In truth, reading this book is not as bad as being arrested for drunk driving. It's much better than that, really. And it is chock full of information in much the same way that bran cereal is full of dietary fiber. Be that as it may, I must admit to feeling slightly uneasy as I made my way through *Dance of Days*; I felt a nagging feeling like I was somewhere I wasn't supposed to be,

membership card through the secret passageways of some ancient hermetic order that has secret hand shakes and arcane rituals. Though this isn't a straight edge book, it chronicles many of the people and events that were to set the stage for sXe and later become a major influence on the movement (and eventually even <shudder> emo.)

This is a book – akin to *England's Dreaming* and *We Got the Neutron Bomb* – that sets out to document the spawning activities within a particular musical/cultural pool or "scene." The spawning beds here, of course, are those that loosely fall within the geographical area of Washington DC. But the lava lamp-like protoplasmic coupling, de-coupling, dividing, and multiplying of so many earnest young punk rockers in so many DC-area bands is downright dizzying, even for a sober reader. My Attention Deficit Disorder simply will not allow me the luxury of assimilating all the comings and goings of so many characters – especially when so many of those characters are cranky, diaper-rashy yits with blooming messiah complexes. Take for example, one of the main focuses of the book, HR of Bad Brains: a colorful, interesting guy until his "interestingness" is swallowed whole by his own ponderous self-righteousness and prejudice. So while this

book and its meandering storyline are crawling like an ant farm with characters, there just aren't any real *characters* in it. I like Minor Threat as much as the next guy, but I've always found Ian MacKaye to be about as interesting as a box of wet-naps. Oh, here and there you have a few ill-mannered "bent-edge" punks (like Fear, Black Market Baby, some guy named Don Diego) who stumble briefly into the narrative and then right back out again; Tesco Vee and the Meatmen pop up a few times only to be dismissed by the author(s) as important buffoons and quickly pushed aside to make room for someone or some band more full of moral rectitude. But this is a quibbling and flimsy complaint because this is, of course, a work of "nonfiction" and the authors are merely reporting on the activities of real people in space/time – they are not responsible for which characters come across as being "important" and which characters come across as being "minor." Or are they? Here again another age-old bias of mine creeps in: I'm a bit Henry Fordish in my opinion of history on the whole; most of it's probably "bunk" of some kind of another and calling any of it "revisionist" is redundant. But I'm teetering harrowingly close to the bubbling, stink-festering abyss of epistemology here, which is a slippery turd ride we don't need to go on right now. And to be fair, though falling short of any Howard Zinn-like appraisals of their own "objectivity," the authors do admit their short comings and limited perspectives right up front.

Dance of Days is very informative (I finally found out where those X'ed hands came from) and though the authors make sure to get a message out along with the storyline, they generally avoid the type of wringing over-intellectualizing that bogged down parts of *England's Dreaming*. With its clear, even-paced journalistic writing and wealth of behind-the-scenes information, *Dance of Days* will be gluttonously gobbled up by anyone with more than a passing interest in

the formative years of harDCore, straight edge and riot grrrls. For me though, pretty much any book that tries to recapture the spirit and intensity of anything bursting with as much raw, gritty, unbridled life as a burgeoning punk scene – straight edge or bent edge, DC or London – is doomed to disappoint. It will be as brittle and lifeless as butterfly carcasses stuck with pins to styrofoam slabs. For history buffs and those with a passion for the particular scene in general, it can provide a scaffolding with which to build an understanding of the intricacies of that scene. For a more disinterested outsider like myself, it can serve only as a dusty visit to someone's attic full of old photo albums and letters and a few taxidermied grandparents and great uncles and aunts propped up here and there. –Aphid Peewit (Akashic, PO Box 1456, New York, NY 10009)

Guy Debord: Complete Cinematic Works

Translated and edited by Ken Knabb

Guy Debord, best known for his writings such as *The Society of the Spectacle*, also made six films. He founded the Situationist International group of avant-garde artists, advocating all forms of art for everyone above the capitalistic work society, fighting alienation. The group was very influential in Europe, especially in the 1968 student revolt in France. This book on his movies gives a glimpse into what they were with complete scripts, description of the imagery, and some stills. Alas, after Debord's producer was assassinated, he pulled the films from circulation. In 1994, at age sixty-two, Debord committed suicide. His widow re-released the films after his death, but they are still hard to find.

Judging from the book, the films sound like a strong companion to French New Wave films – although Debord did not like Godard – and today's conspiracy master Craig Baldwin (*Tribulation 99, Sonic Outlaws*). The text of the films comes from Debord's famous writings on the destruction of human interaction and the worship of advertising image, as capitalism sells the idea that only by buying things can someone really be happy and successful. Actual human interaction and the creativity everyone has inside them are stifled. It's a short leap to today's cult of celebrity and war by television channel.

Without the films available, it is hard to judge them and the book. In my mind it is a great thing, inspirational and intelligent, but the stills cannot convey the true feeling of the films, where editing and shot length were very controlled. Debord's text is great, I assume serving as cliff notes to his longer writings. The film stills are interesting; all found from other sources, thus the comparison to Baldwin's genius connections of found footage. Side text does a nice job of explaining the images on screen but it only hints at the possibility.

The author, Ken Knabb, who first published *The Situationist International Anthology* in 1981, is probably the best writer possible for this book, since he is a respected voice on the history of the group. Any present day anarchist and DIY-er will obviously be into this book – so will anyone simply tired of being gagged by shitty Hollywood movies, TV politicians, and backyard billboards. Hopefully, the interest in the book will push a future release of the actual films. –Speedway Randy (AK Press, 674-A 23rd St., Oakland, CA 94612-1163)

Saving Private Power, The Hidden History of "The Good War"

By Michael Zezima, \$20 (hardbound), 214 pgs.

Zezima does an excellent job debunking many of the myths surrounding America's involvement in World War II. This book, thankfully, begins to pick away at the historical monolith of warm fuzzies that Tom Brokaw (author of *The Greatest Generation*) and Steven Ambrose (the popular historian whose research has been faulty and guilty of plagiarization many times) have hammered at over and over again. WW II wasn't purely good against evil. It was a war, like any other war; innocent people died and were used as pawns. Inhuman deeds were done on both sides. Zezima also accomplishes a lucid treatment of a complex situation, much like Howard Zinn. He gives a fair shake to not only the generals and ultra-powerful industrialists (who had the most to gain from this war), but also the working class (who had the most to lose, namely their lives). As stated in this book, by WW II's end, 75,000 American troops were MIA (missing in action). Most of them were blown into unrecognizable chunks.

Zezima also has a good knack for looking at the wider picture. War is not just men in battle, nor strategists vying for power and property, but the ability to get nations of citizens foaming at the mouth. Enter the Creel Committee – the first government agency for outright propaganda in the U.S. Formed during WWI, it published seventy-five million books and pamphlets with one goal in mind: make war sound like a fantastic idea. During WWII, the publicity firm of Young and Rubicam was hired. They solidified that notions that best propaganda appealed to the emotions (not intellect), is understood by the "lower third" of the populous, and should never show photographs of dead U.S. soldiers (which is a large reason why the war in Vietnam lost favor with the American population). These propaganda models are still in effect today.

But, WWII was a war of democracy vs. fascism, right? That's good, right? That's a gross oversimplification. Here are a couple of the hundreds of transgressions that corporations hope you forget or have never caught wind of.

Prescott Bush, grandfather of our current president, along with Union Banking Corp., raised fifty million dollars for the Nazis by selling German bonds to American investors from 1924-1936. They only confessed when the feds shut the enterprise down in 1942 under the Trading with the Enemy Act. In 1933, Standard Oil of New York invested one million dollars in Germany for technology that turned soft coal into gasoline, that if Germany didn't have, it couldn't have declared a long, protracted war. Standard Oil also, well in to the war, up to 1942, honored chemical contracts that were directly responsible for the making of Zyklon-B, which was used in the concentration camps. Okay, so some corporations suck, but, overall, our side was good, right?

Just because the Nazis were bad doesn't mean that America and its allies are beyond reproach. Dresden was the seventh largest city in Germany. It was being flooded with refugees and was a huge, largely unscathed target. In the context of war and strategy, I can understand – and not agree with – the idea of bombing. But Winston Churchill, Britain's prime minister and war director, wanted to create a "new kind of weather" in Dresden, and had scientists develop new bombs built for maximum destruction of life and property. The rationale is that Churchill wanted to flex his arm so brutally that Stalin (our ally at the time) wouldn't think that the rest of the allies were soft. Gasoline bombs (the predecessor to napalm) were dropped with conventional bombs from the bellies of over 2,000 airplanes for eighteen hours straight. The result was an enormous flame, eight miles wide. It created a firestorm. There were literally tornadoes of flame, which scattered pieces of victims up to fifteen miles away. Over 100,000 people were killed in less than twenty-four hours. Think of the town or city you live in, and even if you imagine, on the outside, several thousand troops occupying it, how can any side of a war kill 90,000 innocent people *in a day* and still be considered good? I don't think it can.

Besides providing a rounded view of the ins and outs of WWII, I also appreciate Zezima's thirst for details that haven't been repeated over

and over again. For instance, I didn't know that on July 28, 1945, an American B-25 bomber ran into the Empire State Building, killing fourteen. Nor did I know that Cole Porter's 1934 song "Mona Lisa" originally contained the lyrics, "You're the tops, you're Mussolini." That's fun stuff to know.

Zezima – aside from the occasional school-yard taunts and name calling of established historians – does a great job of showing that, quite a few, if not all, of the levers of power and modes of rhetoric that were developed during WW II are still in place today. They're glaringly obvious in America's current wars and foreign policy. Although this is a book primarily about a war that happened over fifty years ago, it's also a timeless reminder of how little nations have learned about compassion, how much they've learned that wars work to the top one percent's advantage, and what they gain if the population at large remains ignorant to these facts. Highly recommended. –Todd (Soft Skull, 71 Bond St., Brooklyn, NY, 11217)

The Zine Yearbook: Volume 7

Ed. by Jen Angel & Jason Kucsma, 164 pgs.

The title of this book is fairly self-explanatory. Like a high school yearbook, the *Zine Yearbook* highlights what has been going on in the past year or so. To continue the analogy, it's pretty broad in terms of what it covers, so a lot of stuff is going to fall through the cracks. There's also that uncanny quality about the whole thing where you can look through it and see a bunch of stuff that you don't give a shit about. But I don't want to be all nitpicky and negative about the whole thing, so I'll just stick to the positive stuff. Some of the neat zines included that I'll be on the look out for are *America?*, *Cryptozoa*, *Cudgel*, *Ration*, *Scenery*, and *Slop*. As for the rest of the stuff, some of it is okay, and some of it is pretentious "look at me, I'm a zinester" crap, so this is more like an overview of the zine community than a "best of"-type book. Wow, it looks like I can write short book reviews. –Not Josh (Soft Skull Press, 71 Bond St., Brooklyn, NY 11217)



DOA: Greatest Shits: DVD

Thirteen (get it?) DOA videos created between 1978 and 1998 by the band that served as the Canadian Clash, the Canadian Ramones, and the Canadian Sex Pistols (exchange rates, i guess) and should certainly need no introduction for any *Razorcake* reader. As one might assume, the best clips are the three from '78-'81 ("punk" era, if you will) – a live version of "Disco Sucks" shot with perplexed motorcycle cops watching punk-addled audience members rending a Canadian flag asunder (on Canadian Independence Day no less), an out-of-tune bang-thru of "Get Out of My Life" shot at the Peppermint Lounge in NYC, and the "real" 1979 video for "World War 3" – where a fresh-faced lineup of Shithead, Rampage and Biscuits lip-synch poorly but earnestly to the original 45 version of the song (the later LP version was even better) which coined the phrase "New Clear Day" well ahead of D. Fenton & Co. The five "rock" era ('82-'90) videos are highlighted by "Takin' Care of Business," where the band plays hockey in matching lumberjack shirts (while coached by no less a Canuckian music luminary than Randy Bachman) against a team of evil, suit-wearing businessmen ("DOA v. The Man" being pretty much the theme of every video here, except for "World War 3," where the theme is merely "DOA v. Lip-Synching"), and are the kind of thing one



assumes one might occasionally play for overnight guests. The remaining five videos from the "Career in Barely Listenable Rock Activism" era ('92-present), are, not surprisingly, barely watchable as well, with the exception of "It's Not Unusual," which is kinda painful to sit thru anyway, simply on accounta it makes you realize how head-and-shoulders the Tom Jones cover was above their own material at the time. The whole ordeal concludes with a concise seven-minute documentary on the band's career (incl. testimonials from Biafra, Rollins,

Dave Grohl, et al) that at least partially mitigates the band's later unlistenableability. Ultimately, not being much of a rock video aficionado (hey, if you're not Mud or Freddie & the Dreamers, you don't NEED to make a video), in a perfect world, i'd rent this for a buck at Family Video, watch it once (and enjoy it), tape "World War 3" and "Disco Sucks" for the archives, bring it back the next day and be done with it. You, consumer, are welcome to improvise your own strategy. BEST VIDEO: "World War 3" (hey, i only like videos where the band stands somewhere and pretends they're playing their song. Music videos need "plot" like porno movies need "plot," yaknowhaddimesayin? MOST IRONIC FEATURE: Well, it's sort of a toss up between A. how pretty much every video is DOA railing against THE MAN, yet the first thing that

popped up on the teevee screen when i put this in the player is that big red "WARNING" thing that says how if i break copyright laws, Interpol is gonna come get me, and B. the fact that the Canadian Home Video people only gave this a PG rating. -Rev. Nørb (Sudden Death, Cascades PO Box 43001, Burnaby BC Canada V5G 3H0)

Guttermouth: Live at the House of Blues: DVD

"My name is Mark and I'm just an alcoholic singer of a mediocre punk band." Guttermouth on DVD is what you expect. It probably won't make any converts, but fans of the band should eat it up if somehow they weren't at the House of Blues. One of the Orange County comedy skate punk bands that Kung-Fu specializes in (Ataris, Vandals), Guttermouth plays painless, catchy songs about girls and assholes. Kung-Fu puts on a great production with perfect video and sound. The DVD is worth the dough, including twenty songs, band commentary about rocket science and interview footage. A live concert CD is in the package with an extra song ("A Perfect World"). -Speedway Randy

Noisy!, The First Punkervision Comp! DVD

\$20, world-wide shipping, ninety-four minutes

Punkervision does a great job of using multiple cameras, clear photography, and soundboard-quality sound to capture some great performances. None of it is blown out, shaky-as-hell, back-of-the-club, on-an-extended-arm footage. That takes some dedication, especially for a band like Good Clean Fun, where there's hardly any existing light and there's a ton of bodies jumping around. In no small way does this comp remind me of the first couple rounds of Flipside's videos, where there'd be ten bands, each doing healthy slabs of sets. (In case you're wondering, what kept those original Flipside videos from resurfacing is that many of the bands sold away the rights to their own songs, and legal matters were too expensive and complex to keep them the videos in print. That's why only the "Best Of's are available.) I also enjoy footage that just isn't a music video in-the-making. There's sweat, minor fuckups, mis-steps, angles that show Eddie Spaghetti's tubby belly, and Nørb taking his glasses off before he does a handstand on stage in his Wolverine getup. My favorite set on here is by the Fleshies. Their shock therapy stage presence front-

ed by the lead spazz, Johnny, who seems to be ever-healing from self-inflicted wounds, is definitely good times. The beauty and curse of this DVD is how diverse it is. I'd be hard pressed to find anyone who likes all the bands, and the styles of punk they play, but there's a good chance there's more than a couple in here to grab your attention. Here's the list: Propagandhi, Supersuckers, Good Clean Fun, Diesel Boy, Atom and His Package, Fleshies, Boris the Sprinkler, the Line, Blocko, and Degrassi. -Todd (www.punkervision.net)

Dillinger Four, Toys That Kill, and Rivethead, Tour Summer 2002, \$10, DVD

This is worth the ten bucks for the belt fighting footage alone. (Belt fighting is just that. Take off your shirt, hold the buckle in your hand, and start swinging. It devolves into plantation-style whippings. Billy D4 to someone: "You're not bleeding... bad.") It's all rough and tumble footage, but it's all clear and clearly done by fans of the bands. If you poke around long enough on the DVD, there are lots of in-between candid shots - like tops-sawn-off Coke cans that hold beers on the driver's console of Rivethead's van along with their fucking with the Julianna Theory's merch guy - and live performances by three of my favorite bands. Highlights are many. Here are a few. Rivethead play in front of a gigantic stained glass window that no one falls through. There's a dance-remix video of their drummer, Half Pint, dancing with his dog. Todd, of Toys That Kill, in his Crazy Larry alter ego, plays in a white trash bag. Sean Cole demonstrates proper form for dumpster diving, and bassist Chachi gets a royalty check for wearing a Razorcake t-shirt on stage. That translates into a beer or two, at least. You can also hear what Mary J. Blige taught Paddy of Dillinger Four. While being let in on his urinal confessionals, Paddy also makes new friends in the bathroom. My only warning with the DVD is that, although I didn't hold up a stopwatch to it, about half of the material is hidden and some of it will seriously fuck with your DVD player so you'll have to get up and eject it. I've had it for six months and just found a hidden Hot Carl audio track. Monkeywrench "street team"/ "pro gear, pro attitude" punk rock and order this one direct. -Todd (Nate Gangelhoff, PO Box 8995, Minneapolis, MN 55408; zerooverhead@hotmail.com)

